Activity: Referral Web

Expected duration: 25 mins

Objective: identify aspects of referral mechanisms that may compromise a survivor-centred response

* It is recommended to adjust the activity prior to the session, ensuring that the roles are appropriate to the context, using names of local service providers and adapting the script to the context.
* Item required: ball of wool/yarn.
* Ask for volunteers to play the roles of different individuals. Distribute the pre-made “service provider” name tags (see below) to the appropriate number of people. Ask these individuals to play the role of the person noted on their name tag.
* Seat the service providers in a circle. Ask the remainder of participants to stand on the outside of the circle so they can easily see the activity.
* Explain that the ball of wool/yarn represents a 20-year-old woman who was sexually assaulted. Confirm with participants that everyone understands what that means.
* As the facilitator, stand outside the circle and give the ball to the Mother. Explain that the woman has told her mother about the incident.
* Instruct Mother to hold the end of the string firmly.
* Tell the story according to the below, of what happens to this woman. Each time an actor is involved, the ball of wool/tarn is tossed across the circle to that actor. Each actor who receives the ball will wrap it around a finger and then toss the ball to the next actor as instructed.
* Stop the game when the script is completed.
* At the end of the game, there will be a large web in the center of the circle, with each actor holding parts of the string and facilitate a discussion.

Discussion

Pause to look at the web and ask some questions to generate discussion:

* What do you see in the middle of this circle?
* Was all of this helpful for the survivor? Traumatic?
* Observers: How many times did the girl have to repeat her story?
* Might a situation like this happen in your setting?
* What could have been done to avoid making this web of string?

Key considerations

* This activity provides an example of the challenges a survivor of GBV often experiences, reliving the traumatic event more than once due to unorganized response.
* It is critical to efficiently coordinate and communicate with other actors in order to protect the wellbeing of survivors.
* All frontline workers are responsible for being aware of and reinforcing a functional referral mechanism in which survivors’ care and support can be streamlined in accordance with survivor-centred practices.
* A functional referral mechanisms ensures the safety and confidentiality of survivors; one way to do this is to limit the number of times a survivor needs to access services, and when accessing services to be able to do so in an informed way with appropriate support. For this reason, case managers/case workers to play a critical role in the management of response services, providing information both to the survivor and to other professionals (abiding by ethical protocols and ensuring the security of the survivor).

**Script**

A 20-year-old woman was sexually assaulted by a man just outside an evacuation center, and she tells her mother:

* **Mother** takes the survivor to **Community leader** in order to report what has happened.
* Community leader refers the survivor to the **Traditional birth attendant** because he is concerned about her medical condition.
* The Traditional birth attendant helps, but the survivor needs immediate medical care for injuries. The Traditional birth attendant asks the woman to go see her close colleague—the **Midwife**.
* The Midwife realizes that the survivor should be seen by a doctor, so she immediately contacts the **Doctor.**
* The Doctor provides treatment for injuries and a general check-up, and sends the survivor back to **Midwife** hoping that the Midwife might provide some extra support.
* The Midwife knows the survivor may need psychosocial care and refers her to the **Community Services Worker.**
* The Community Services Worker promises the Midwife and the Mother to help, and to make sure that the survivor receives all the services that she should. The Community Services Worker provides emotional support and refers the survivor to the **Community Services Officer of the Department of Social Welfare and Development** for an assessment, and asks about other programmes or services that the survivor should access.
* The Department of Social Welfare and Development Community Services Officer talks with the survivor and discovers the survivor wants to involve the police. Knowing this is time sensitive, the survivor is immediately referred to the **Protection Officer of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.**
* The Protection Officers of the Department of Social Welfare and Development meets the survivor and takes her report. However, a medical report is needed for the report, and so the survivor is referred back to the **Doctor.**
* The Doctor completes the medical documentation and sends the woman back to the **Protection Officer of the Department of Social Welfare and Development**.
* The Protection Officer of the Department of Social Welfare and Development sends the survivor to the **Police** with the medical file.
* The Police take a full report of the incident. However, in order to protect the survivor once the report is filed, they refer her to a **Lawyer** to ensure that she is represented.
* The Lawyer would like to discuss the case with the **Prosecutor**, so he/she contacts the Prosecutor to speak with the survivor.
* The Prosecutor calls the **Doctor** about the survivor to get information about the medical exam. The Doctor asks to see the survivor again because he/she forgot to collect a needed sample during the exam.
* The Doctor refers the survivor to a **Social Worker** for psychosocial support.
* The Social Worker meets routinely with the survivor and sends her back to the **Doctor** for a check-up, and then to the **Protection Officer of the Department of Social Welfare and Development** to make sure that the case is progressing.
* The survivor then goes to talk with the **Community Leader**, whom she first saw, because she is confused about the process.
* The Community Leader contacts the **Prosecutor** to find out the status of the case.
* The Prosecutor suggests that they contact the **Police** for a clear update.
* The Police refer the Community Leader to the **Protection Officer of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.**

Derived and adapted from the IASC Guidelines Training Package, Module 4, 2015 (https://gbvguidelines.org/en/capacity-building/module-4-responding-to-gbv-incidents/).

**Service provider name tags**

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| Mother | Protection Officer of the Department of Social Welfare and Development  |
| Community leader  | Police |
| Traditional birth attendant | Lawyer |
| Midwife | Social worker |
| Doctor | Prosecutor  |
| Community Services Officer of the Department of Social Welfare and Development  | Community Services Worker  |