

WE GO!

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WE GO!3

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From individual IPV empowerment to community activation

Policy Lab Methodology



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INTRODUCTION

Economic independence is a plank for the realization of women's rights and empowerment. It is particularly important for women survivors exiting intimate partner violence (IPV). The root cause of lack of economic autonomy for women is based on gender stereotypes which see men as superior and women as inferiors, from interpersonal relationship to all levels, including in the way governments and the economy are shaped. The same stereotypes are cause and consequence of gender-based violence against women.

One of these stereotypes sees women as 'natural' caretakers against men as breadwinners – this means that women tend to earn less than men and their participation in the labor market is more precarious because of the disproportionate amount of unpaid care work they perform. Women's income, when they work, is considered an accessory to the breadwinner's which has a wide range of repercussions on women's lives: they earn less, tend to be taxed at a higher marginal rate and contribute less to pension pots.

The connection between unequal balance of unpaid care, IPV and the ability of finding a decent job creates a perfect storm of challenges for women trying to escape a violent relationship. According to the WEGO! project, 82,5% of women experiencing IPV who sought support by the antiviolence centers involved in the project had a low level of economic independence, 59,1% were unemployed, 73,7% had dependent children, only 13,3% owned a house and 14,8% co-owned their house with their husband/partner.

Qualitative data showed that women with higher levels of social support, including support from employers (training on the job, specific arrangements for women owning a job position, sensitivity to family circumstances, flexible working hours), were more likely to hold their jobs.

The past We Go! Projects promoted IPV survivors' empowerment through individual support paths. They also shed light on the insufficient policy coherence and integration among support, empowerment, labor and anti-discriminatory policies and practice which generates a system unable to support women to achieve economic and social autonomy.

Within this context and following on from the first and second edition of We Go! Projects, the EU-funded *WE GO! 3 - From individual IPV's empowerment to community activation* project established a methodology called Policy Lab Path to co-design policy proposals and practices to support women leaving violent relationships.

This is a step-by-step guide on how to set up and run a Policy Lab Path aimed at co-designing policy proposal and measures for the support of IPV's economic empowerment. This document illustrates

how the Policy Lab Path should be structured and organized, by:

- » Establishing the need and purpose of the Policy Lab.
- » Selecting and inviting participants.
- » Preparing the policy lab.
- » Planning the meetings (including agenda and facilitation).
- » Conducting the Policy Lab and reporting the results; trial and analyses of selected measures.
- » Conveying meetings to discuss results.
- » Finalising an advocacy plan.
- » Monitoring and evaluating the path.

Why do we need a specific methodology for this project? As feminists, we recognise that women are not a homogeneous group and face intersecting discriminations based on other characteristics beyond gender such as race, age, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability and so on. In order to understand how the needs and demands of different women are shaped by structural and overlapping forms of oppression we need to use an intersectional lens. In this perspective, a Policy Lab Path is not a moment of supposedly objective collection of information but a transformative and empowering process in itself. Women involved start the process to become conscious of their life circumstances and the inequalities underpinning them using tools such as power analysis to interrogate inequalities from their personal life to the structural level and identify how to break down these systems. In other words, a place where all women have a voice and can make it heard.

Most policies are produced by white, cisgender, middle-class and middle-aged men, and even when some of them are carried out by women (this is often the case in the field of equal opportunities and GBV) they do not have an intersectional perspective. It is therefore mandatory to take an intersectional feminist approach in the policy lab methodology in order to advance a comprehensive solution to the IPV problem that takes in account inequalities, differences and practical and strategic needs of all women¹.

In the following pages a blueprint for the Policy Lab Path methodology is presented. It can be customized to address the needs of a specific community. In the case of WEGO!3, the policy lab path aims at co-developing solutions, services and policies promoting IPV survivors' socio-economic empowerment, considering how different policy areas and different actors can contribute to this overarching goal.

¹ For example, see Tuhiwal Smith, 2019, *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous people*, Zed Books or Rachele Borghi, 2020, *Decolonialità e privilegio: Pratiche femministe e critica al sistema-mondo*, Meltemi.

WHAT IS A POLICY LAB?

This preamble shows how different stakeholders understand what the policy lab methodology is. It is not homogeneous but rather depends on context.

Policy labs have been defined as:

- » Individual units that apply the traditional principle of scientific laboratories (experimentation, testing and measurement) to social problems, as in the case of the Policy Innovation Labs.²
- » Spaces designed to foster creativity and engagement and to develop interactions, processes and tools able to bring innovation into European policymaking. The EU Policy Lab is defined in this way, and poses an emphasis on testing, experimenting and co-designing, to explore, connect and find solutions for better policies.³
- » Creative spaces to develop policies in a more open, data-driven, digital and user-centred way⁴.
- » Multi-disciplinary government teams experimenting with innovation methods to actively involve citizens at multiple stages of the public service and policy development process.⁵
- » A group of actors with various competencies that want to develop a regulatory framework, using a set of user-centric methods and competencies to test, experiment and learn to develop new policy solutions.⁶
- » A “place” where it is important to build trust among involved actors; some translation is needed among different languages (e.g., translation of evidence into practice, but also of recommendation and experience into policies); another important element is time which calls for finding the right “policy window”.⁷

In summary, a policy lab can be a physical or online space, a structured team or organisation, but also a set of activities, aiming at developing new policies or improving existing ones. Important elements are innovation, testing and creativity, but also relations, trust and participation. Here we refer to a structured discussion involving actors with different backgrounds but common values, working together to develop proposals and recommendations for new policy measures.

² <https://thelivinglib.org/the-rise-of-policy-innovation-labs-a-catalog-of-policy-innovation-labs-across-canada/>

³ <https://blogs.ec.europa.eu/eupolicylab/about-us/>

⁴ <https://openpolicy.blog.gov.uk/about/>

⁵ <https://www.beda.org/news/policy-lab-what-is-the-future-of-design-for-policy-making/>

⁶ <https://www.vinnova.se/en/m/Smart-policy-development/what-is-a-policy-lab/>

⁷ <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-020-0453-0>

METHODOLOGY

How is this methodology different from others?

Within this project we will implement a bottom-up policy lab path. Bottom-up policy labs gather stakeholders from civil society (in particular Anti-Violence Centres', AVC, staff who are experts on the subject and who bring women's voices to the centre through specific focus groups), private sector, institutions and citizens themselves to improve the responsiveness and accessibility of private and public services and to promote a participatory approach to policy development. It is based on multi-stakeholder roundtables and workshops organized to design and experiment one or more potential solutions, including the development of policies and management plans, the start-up and management of services and sustainability plans.

- » **Bottom-up approach:**⁸ where civil society actors engage other stakeholders to participate; make policy issues, gaps, needs and tools accessible for the understanding of all; and facilitate workshops to produce possible solutions ranging from scenarios development, trials implemented and evaluated, development of policy asks and lobby and advocacy plans and activities.
- » **Participatory:** WEGO!3 policy labs will involve not only policy experts, but also other key stakeholders, from ACVs operators, possibly IPV survivors (respecting their privacy), the private sector, trade unions, job placement agencies, training providers, NGOs, institutions, feminist activists, etc. The involvement of the AVC operators is key: on the one hand they bring their experience, collected and systematised over the years, and on the other hand they represent survivors' voices. In fact, when it is not possible to listen to their voice directly for legal, privacy or simply choice reasons, we believe that it's better to create a safe space (like a closed focus group) where women can freely express themselves and entrust their voices to the AVC operators. Also, the role of feminist activists in this sense is not to be underestimated because they bring the voice of some of the women who share and process experiences of systemic gender-based violence within feminist movements.
- » **Inclusive:** in addition to the involvement of different categories of stakeholders, this methodology also calls for the application of an intersectional feminist approach to all steps, acknowledging that each woman's experience is different. In practice this means starting from the needs of IPV survivors as group of people but paying attention to intersecting discrimination that can act within this group as well (e.g., analysing the needs and think about solutions for women of different age, with different levels of education, migrant women, disabled women, trans women etc.). These and other groups must not be seen as a checklist, but rather as different identities that call for a complex analysis of the oppressive structures that shape the life of each single woman.

Participants in policy labs are not objects of research but subjects who bring about change. For this reason, it is important that the objective is clear and that participants feel an active part in the project.

⁸ The most representative experience of ActionAid Italy in this domain is "Sicuri per Davvero" (Safe for Real), a policy lab campaign which included 12 meetings (4 promotional meetings, 7 policy labs), involving more than 400 stakeholders, including local and national associations, research bodies, universities, professionals, officials and representatives of local authorities. The path produced a set of recommendations for the emergency management cycle. These recommendations were presented to the Department of the Presidency of the "Casa Italia Council" under the form of Guidelines to be included in future policy development.

The policy lab must:

- » **Be empowering:** it should build on participants 'power within'⁹, equipping them with different tools and concepts and enabling collective reflections, analysis and action together as collaborative participants.
- » **Build alliances:** a policy lab that builds alliances through the involvement of different actors can build solidarity across different levels to ensure collective action for change and create or solidify a territorial network.
- » **Shift power:** policy lab products (report, white paper) can play a role in influencing decision makers to bring about changes in power supporting survivors to secure their rights by addressing the structural causes of GBV and offering feminist alternatives.

This methodology will be a **hands-on guide for all those willing to replicate participatory policy labs** after experimenting within WEGO!3. This document will thus summarise the preliminary steps which are part of other project activities in preparation for the policy lab path, which is thought to be performed online to ensure wider participation in geographic terms. Specific mention will be made of methodologies which can also be used in physical meetings.

Is this lab for everyone? Are you wearing your intersectional feminist glasses?

- » Have you drawn on an intersectional feminist lens to consider who is invited and who is missing? have you adopted an inclusive approach that takes into account different axes of discrimination and oppression such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation etc.?
- » Is the space a safe space?
- » Is the space accessible to everyone?
- » Have you made sure there are no religious symbols within the space?
- » If the space is virtual, have you made sure that everyone has adequate Internet connection and devices? Have you budgeted for this?
- » Have you ensured a budget for translation/interpretation?
- » Have you promoted capacity development where needed?
- » Have you taken action to mitigate negative power dynamics?
- » Have you checked your data sources?
- » Have you used appropriate and feminist language? If your language does not allow the use of the gender-neutral terms always use feminine and masculine or agree with the participants on the choice. Define the use of certain common terms and give reasons for the choice (e.g., use survivors instead of victim)
- » Have you agreed to share you results and final products?
- » Have you checked your privileges? Does the team project have a diverse staff base, including women, young people, people with disabilities, people of colour, precarious people from outside big cities and LGBTIQ+ people (the list is not exhaustive)?

⁹ Within the methodology of power analysis 'power within' refers to a person's sense of self-worth and self-knowledge. It involves fostering a sense that "I can" and "I will".

General objective

The general objective of the WEGO!3 policy lab path is to promote the socio-economic empowerment of survivors of IPV through the participatory design of policies, initiatives, or recommendations to address the needs of this specific community.

Specific objectives

- » Facilitate dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders belonging to different spheres of civil society to improve services for the benefit of the whole community.
- » Raise awareness of those stakeholders who have a role to play in the empowerment of IPV survivors, but who may not be already acting. This may be the case of the private sector.
- » Improve knowledge and competences of those actors who do already have a high level of awareness on the needs and gaps in women's empowerment but may not have the tools to dialogue and propose specific solutions. This applies to AVCs and civil society organisations (CSOs).
- » Strengthen the understanding, knowledge and implementation of collaborative governance tools for policy making. This objective is particularly relevant for institutional actors.

Expected outcomes

- » Women's perspective is at the centre of the development of solutions targeting their needs.
- » AVCs and civil society are actively involved in policy-making processes.
- » The private sector becomes a relevant player in the development of policies and solutions for women's empowerment.
- » Spaces for deliberative participation between authorities and citizens are created.

Expected outputs

Each national policy lab is expected to produce a White Paper, detailing the co-developed measures, solutions, policy recommendations and strategies to improve policies to promote women's socio-economic empowerment, but also to improve the cooperation of the public and private sector to achieve this overarching goal. White papers will be shared before the final draft with all participants.

Within these policies and solutions, one will be selected for the Local Trial, which will be another output of this process. The trial will serve to test and assess in depth a selected suggestion. Local trials can range from the adoption of certain procedures within a company or an organisation to the testing of a service, but they will be defined through the policy lab process.

Finally, both the trials and selected solutions will be assessed through ex-ante impact assessment and in the form of case studies to produce final recommendations of the project that will also be brought to European Institutions.

STEPS

STEP 1. Establish the need and purpose of the Policy Lab

This first step involves two macro-actions: on the one hand, the purpose of the policy lab must be grounded in **real needs and gaps identified** within a specific community; on the other hand, it must **consider what already exist**, measures that may already tackle the specific needs but may not be fully effective, measures that apply to larger groups but do not consider the specificities of the community who is the target of the policy lab, best practices that can be experimented but are not consolidated yet into policy and practice.

Within WEGO!3 the purpose is to increase the local multi-agency networks' capacity to foster the IPV survivors' socio-economic independence through the design and adoption of gender-responsive labour policies. This will be done through a **light needs assessment** involving 12 AVCs to collect their views, an **in-depth assessment** where selected AVCs will acquire the methodology to implement specific needs assessment directly with IPV survivors. An additional action will **collect existing policies and best practices**, at the European, national and local level, tackling the needs of IPV survivors but also of women in the labour market in general.

STEP 2. Select and invite participants

In parallel with the first step, to organise an effective policy lab it is important to adequately map stakeholders. In the case of the WEGO!3 project this stakeholders' mapping is rooted in what was already produced in the second edition of the project. We report here the main steps of the stakeholder mapping guidelines produced by project partner Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale (IRS) back then.¹⁰ Those guidelines have been used by the project partner to build a strong and effective stakeholder network and to promote the creation of Territorial Protocols¹¹.

¹⁰ The complete document has been reported in DXXX of the WEGO!2 project.

¹¹ https://www.wegoproject.eu/sites/default/files/media/WEGO2_Territorial_Protocol_Model.pdf

SHORT SUMMARY FROM IRS MAPPING GUIDELINES

The following are the main steps of the mapping:

Definition of needs and objectives: identification of main issues/topics of interest and on this basis the most relevant categories of stakeholders to be involved.

Recognition of/search for the specific stakeholders to be included in the mapping and identification of their main characteristics, which shall be reported in an Excel database to facilitate analysis.

Definition of stakeholder specific relevance/role for the network and initiatives to be carried out during the project, in this case for the policy lab path.

Definition of the ways of contact and involvement and timeline (priority of involvement).

In the WEGO! Programme stakeholders have been grouped in the following five categories: **institutional actors** (namely, politicians, administrative staff, public offices/services); **experts** (universities; public and private research institutes; single experts/academics/professionals); **civil society actors** (voluntary organisations, social cooperation organisations, associations, charities, foundations, activists etc.); **social partners** (trade unions, chamber of commerce, sectoral organisations); **enterprises** (both for profit and no-profit).

The mapping should also identify for each stakeholder: **type of actor**; **form** (public or private); **territorial dimension** (European, National, regional, local); **size of the organisation** (little enterprises /association, big enterprise/association, grouping of enterprises or Umbrella organisations/associations); **area of intervention** in connection with women's socio-economic empowerment; **possible pre-existing ties** with the mapping specifying the degree (no ties, sporadic contact, regular contact, frequent contact), but also the nature of the connection (part of a same anti-violence network or other kinds of networks, previous partner in a project, members of the same association, other...).

The level of **power/ influence/impact** as well as the **level/kind of needs/expectations/ interest** shall be assessed to identify *necessary* and *desirable* stakeholder for the network as a whole and for the specific activities related to the policy lab path.

In addition to these guidelines the level of expertise, knowledge and awareness of stakeholders must also be mapped. To ensure fruitful dialogue, different groups will participate to either capacity building or awareness raising activities, briefly discussed in Step 3.

A specific addition to the more general mapping guidelines is that the policy lab must ensure that multi-stakeholder participation is as horizontal as possible. In general, this approach aims to feed a discussion that is

- » Sensible to differences
- » Oriented on the general interest
- » Inclusive
- » Questionable and open to change
- » Not manipulated

STEP 3. Prepare the policy lab

This step includes both the selection of materials that will serve as a basis for discussion and the preparation of **participants**. Starting from the latter, as described above, the idea of a participatory lab is that of having different stakeholders “around the virtual table” to foster discussion and exchange and compare different perspectives. Groups will thus be heterogeneous, bringing their own perspective to the co-design, but it is important to prepare the dialogue among those stakeholders, who may already have worked together or not. For this reason, the project tests a methodology which can become a model for future co-design activities, and which involves activities to raise the awareness of those actors who have not worked directly with IPV survivors, who may be insufficiently aware of the issue and of their possible role in finding solutions. This awareness raising has also been part of previous project activities and will continue here with a specific focus on the private sector and civil society partners. A parallel capacity building, which started already in the previous version of the project, will ensure that AVCs staff, possibly women survivors, and other CSOs will acquire the tools and knowledge to co-design policy, including the capacity of collecting structured needs and visions, and the knowledge of labour related policies that can influence women’s empowerment. The part of institutions here is instead that of co-building the participatory paths and acquiring tools and networks to promote this kind of practice also in other areas.

Concerning **materials**, the policy lab shall be prepared with a set of suggested readings, both specific legislation and academic articles, but also from specialised journals, and other type of material (e.g. from previous projects, videos, websites) showing the point of view of women on specific issues and measures. It is preferable that the materials are in the language of the country where the policy lab takes place in order to facilitate the participation of non-English speakers. In addition to this, the language of the materials should also be accessible to those who do not have a medium-high level of education. A further recommendation concerns the accessibility of the materials and any visual or hearing aids that might be needed. Specific material will also be produced through the light and deep analyses described in STEP 1, as well as with the policy and practices collection that will be contained in a dedicated online booklet. The material will be stored in a dedicated online space that shall be made accessible to participants for their preparation to the meetings.

TIP: Use the capacity building and awareness raising occasions as moments of exchange of practical/personal experiences and as an opportunity to get to know each other in order to create an enabling environment to bring to the policy lab.

STEP 4. Plan the meetings

A meeting plan has to be developed including the timing and duration of meetings in accordance with the topics to be discussed and the logistics in case of face to face meetings. The time and duration must also respect the unpaid care needs of the participants, possible travel and financial needs and physical needs that might be caused by a long duration of the meeting. When a food catering is provided, it must be ensured that the food offered respects religious and dietary needs, as well as various allergies and intolerances.

Choosing whether to do the meetings in presence or online is a decision to be taken according to the context, but also taking into account what facilitates participation and interaction. The more the topics and the discussions cover wider geographical levels (e.g., national versus local), the more a set of online meetings will favour transversal participation. It is recommended to make sure that everyone has adequate access to the internet and an appropriate device. In case of meetings in presence budget shall be dedicated and timing shall be allowed for people to reach the chosen location. In this case it is necessary that the space is accessible to all.

Depending on the stakeholder analysis, and on the topics that will be discussed, the plan will also specify if all actors will participate to all meetings or different actors will be involved at specific times. In that case, given that the path will include three moments of discussion on different topics, the strategy may be mixed. The final plan will be based on the examples provided in the second part of the present document, further refined or modified depending on the results of the first project activities.

The overall path is expected to cover several months since envisaged meetings are three half days to develop the white paper, plus the implementation of the trial, and a final meeting to discuss results and analysis and finalise recommendations.

This methodology allows timing between the different meetings where project partners will share materials and updates with the other participants online. Otherwise, the summary of the three days discussions and proposal will be circulated in the form of a working document to all participants. A webspace where to share materials and updates must be secured, which in this case will be the project website (<https://www.wegoproject.eu/>) and the blog (<https://closed4women.it/>). It is important to foresee a webspace especially for those paths that happen online or that do not have the same participants to all meetings, but it is anyway useful also for face-to-face policy lab paths and may be either a website or a shared document folder. Also mailing lists are a useful tool to keep all participants up to date and involved at different steps.

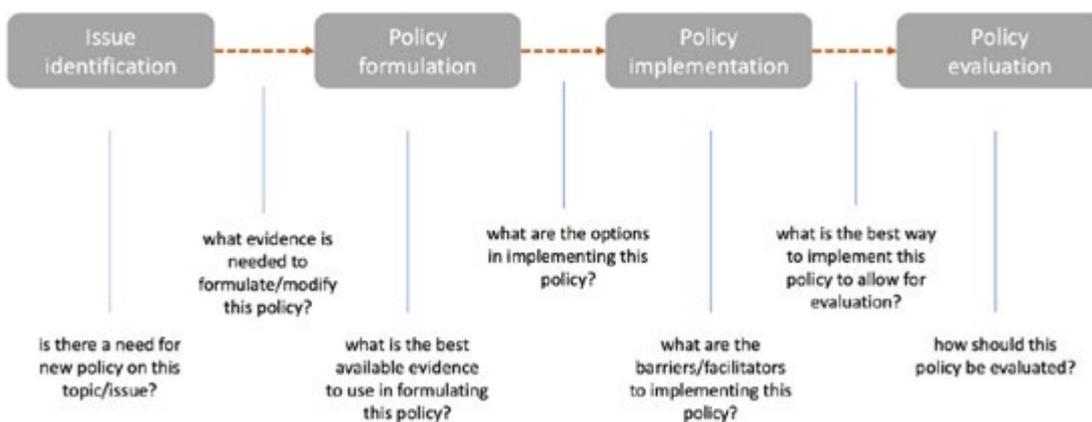
STEP 5. Plan the agenda and facilitation

How to choose specific topics to discuss to focus the meetings within the general topic.

We deem it important that the actor who organises the policy lab path either knows the needs that will be discussed because of their experience with the group targeted by the policies, or because they have performed a needs assessment. The topics for discussion must be chosen on the basis of this knowledge and experience. Moreover, it is important to set realistic objectives, meaning that the recommendations shall be guided in the direction of feasible policy changes, to avoid setting unrealistic target and risking of deceiving participants, rather than engaging them.

In this specific case, the topics given as examples are based on the experience of the project partners, and moreover they are topic that concern all the countries involved. Focusing the agenda on the needs shared by different communities will increase the usefulness of the recommendations, as the results of policy changes will affect larger groups.

Finally, some practical suggestions concerning the construction of guiding questions / statements: they must be clear and focused, meaning that all participants shall understand them but at the same time they must not be too generic nor pre-empting effective discussion on the issue.



Depending on the specific topic it will be possible to either discuss how to improve an existing measure or to design a new one. The examples above are taken from Hinrichs-Krapels et al, “Using Policy Labs as a process to bring evidence closer to public policymaking: a guide to one approach” and can be overarching questions to be chosen depending on the specific step of the policy to be discussed.

Moreover, specific guiding questions can be formulated to foster the discussion (see the examples below). They can either be actual questions, or statements based on which participants will be asked to take a position.

TIPS:

Guiding questions/statements can also be circulated before the Policy Lab to guide preliminary reflections and increase the effectiveness of the discussion.

Prepare the taking notes structure before the Policy Lab: during the meetings, sharing with the participants a visual structure to attach post-its or an online board with organised sections will help guide the participants thoughts and inputs.

STEP 6. Conducting the Policy Lab

Methodologies to facilitate the discussion

First, it is important to select the person(s) that will conduct the policy lab. They must be able of guiding the reflection, bringing participants back to the focus if needed, and encourage the largest participation as possible. It's necessary to consider that the facilitator is not an abstract entity but has a body. It is important here to consider that it has a body with a gender, and this is not neutral in a discussion concerning GBV. The facilitator has an age that can influence the reaction of the participants, and s/he has a body that might indicate her/his geographical origin. The best setting is that of having at least one facilitator for group and a co-facilitator, who can exchange the role with the first, and support smooth and participated discussion throughout the meetings. A person shall also have the role of taking notes of what is said during the meeting, for the sake of analysis and reporting, but also to wrap up at the end of the meeting itself.

Given that the present policy lab path will be implemented online, it is important to choose a platform which allow for good connection of a relatively high number of participants. Online paths ensure larger geographical participation, but also calls for considering the need to make tools accessible and understandable. Certain platforms already provide spaces for taking notes, but a mixed solution can be envisaged, including a separate tool for tacking notes or for participants to work on the same material (e.g. virtual post-it).

The meeting shall be organised with a brief introduction by the facilitator and co-facilitator, followed by the description of the tools and methodologies used for the discussion. With online tools, the person taking notes can directly share the screen or virtual wall where the material is collected. Participants can also be called in specific moments to participate themselves to write notes, opinions, or to participate to virtual votes. Example of tools that can be used are:

- » Online collaborative platforms such as <https://www.mural.co/>, <https://miro.com/index/>
- » <https://www.mentimeter.com/>, where one can create live polls, quizzes, word clouds, Q&As and more to get real-time input from participants

The discussion can be organised around guiding questions or statements to discuss. If the group is large enough also smaller discussion groups can be organised which shall afterwards report to the plenary, for example Zoom allows this function. The methodology for discussion is like that of focus groups, even if here the objective is not to collect data but to co-design solutions. The facilitator and co-facilitator shall ensure an environment that encourages participants to share their views openly. The facilitator must ensure that there is enough space for all participants, that turns to speak are respected and that one person does not speak out of proportion compared to others. The facilitator must also ensure that everyone avoids derogatory terms and uses appropriate and understandable language, encouraging participants to use simple terms, speak slowly and clearly.

Finally, it is important to allow enough time to wrap up at the end of each session.

TIPS:

Maintaining heterogeneity of participants also within smaller discussion groups will enrich the debate.

The facilitator shall be familiar with the topic that will be discussed and ensure a correct use of the language.

The facilitators shall aim to devote enough discussion time to the proposals and avoid focusing only on the gaps and critical issues.

STEP 7. Report the results

The objective of the three days is to produce a white paper including the proposals or solutions co-developed within the three meetings. This means that at the end of each day preliminary conclusions will be drawn on each specific topic suggesting one or more changes to existing measures or completely new measures. The preliminary conclusion will be further elaborated and refined and will become the policy asks that represent the White Paper.

As stated above, this material shall be shared with participants in digital space. In accordance with the intersectional feminist approach adopted, it's desirable to ask participants (or a larger stakeholder group) to provide feedback about the level of priority, feasibility and expected impact of the different policies including also through online surveys.

STEP 8. Trial and analyses of selected measures

Following the three meetings, a second level feasibility assessment will be made by facilitators with respect to both feasibility and expected impact of proposed measures / changes of measures. The proposed trial will be funded through the current project iteration, but other funding strategies may be developed in case the path includes a trial. In this case one measure will be selected per country.

Once the measure is selected, a specific implementation plan shall be developed, including objectives, workplan, budget, risk mitigation strategy, targets, monitoring tools, timing. The monitoring and evaluation tools are of crucial importance because the test is expected to provide lessons learned and further information to refine the specific policy ask.

Also, additional measures can be subject to an ex-ante desk impact assessment which can contribute to substantiate the request demonstrating what the impact could be in case of adoption or identifying the obstacles and risks that shall be considered.

This assessment phase will transform the requests contained in the white papers into real policy and advocacy asks.

STEP 9. Convey a meeting to discuss result and finalise advocacy plan.

The results of the assessment will be discussed at a final meeting, where participants can be asked to provide additional feedback before finalising the results of the overall path. This meeting will also agree on an advocacy plan and have all stakeholders onboard to promote the selected requests. Certain institutions will already participate to the policy lab path, but additional ones may become the target of specific requests. Public facing campaigns may also be effective tools to mobilise citizens around a specific topic.

STEP 10. Monitoring and evaluating the path

It is important to assess the advancement of the policy lab discussion and its effectiveness and inclusiveness throughout its implementation and efficiency at the end i.e., “did it achieve its objectives?”. Monitoring participation, both in terms of numbers and in terms of inputs provided, allows to identify possible issues and adjust the process to ensure the achievement of objectives.

Tools that will be used can be participant lists, collection of participant feedback at different stages, risk register and risk mitigating measures.

Main references for further information:

ActionAid International, April 2020, Feminist Research Guidelines

<https://actionaid.org/publications/2020/feminist-research-guidelines>

WEGO project website: <https://www.wegoproject.eu/>

ANNEX: POLICY LAB PATH EXAMPLE

Policy Lab – First meeting

How to promote and maintain the economic autonomy of women?

Introduction

During the policy lab session, basic info on the following points will be given:

- » Data on the economic autonomy of survivors;
- » Main difficulties experienced by women in job placement processes;
- » IPV impact on companies.
- » The lack of decent work standards - especially in jobs requiring low qualifications - disproportionately impacts on women in temporary or structural vulnerability.
- » Survivors' vulnerability to multiple forms of discrimination.
- » General overview of the legislation concerning job placement of women who have suffered violence in the country of reference (by a job centre, trade union representatives or a facilitator). It will be highlighted how the current labour policies are not adequate to facilitate the socio-economic autonomy of survivors.

Then the guidelines will be introduced:

It is possible to divide labour policies that impact on women who have experienced violence into two categories:

- » Policies that directly benefit women. These include “paid leave for IPV survivors” (for health, judicial, or exit reasons), flexible working time, and work-life balance measures;
- » Policies that directly benefit companies. These include legislation to prevent the dismissal of women who have suffered violence (e.g. through punitive measures against companies), the obligation for companies to adopt protocols and guidelines to make the workplace safe for women who have suffered violence, and legislation to promote the re-employment of women. For example, tax relief for companies that could facilitate reintegration into the labour market and guarantee long-term hiring (counteracting the employment instability that could have a negative impact on women's exit from violence); or paid internships that would help women enter the labour market.

In addition to these, solutions should be thought of in two terms:

- » Policies favouring the reintegration into work or promoting job security of women who have experienced violence
- » Policies to increase awareness and safety in workplace.

Guiding questions/statements:

- 1) Several nations have introduced tax breaks and/or other tools for companies that employ women and/or survivors. Pros and cons of this instrument.
- 2) Which instruments are you aware of, how much are they used and what are their main issues?
- 3) It has been proven that a safe and welcoming environment helps women to keep their job and at the same time makes them a better worker for the company. How to facilitate this process?
- 4) Proposal: create a direct link (one e-mail per week, one telephone contact, one contact person) between the AVC and the company in order to facilitate communication on job offer/demand. What do you think about it?

Participants

AVC, companies, Job Centres, Trade Associations, Trade Unions

Possible Output

Guidelines for the Department of Equal Opportunities and Employment of the country of reference.

Supporting Materials

[C190 - International Labour Organisation](#)

[Double Jeopardy: VAW and economic inequality](#)

[Ted talk on economic empowerment](#)

[End gender-based violence ILO](#)

Towards a non-discriminatory work-life balance

Introduction

Several recent studies, show that the absence of effective welfare and work-life balance policies is one of the major obstacles for all women to achieve economic autonomy.

During this policy lab session the following topics will be addressed:

- » Care work as a barrier: according to the ILO (2018), the work that women do for free every day globally accounts for 76.2% of all work. Being employed and at the same time having to take care of children or dependent relatives is reflected in labour market participation.
- » The specificities of the care workload that a woman coming out of a violence pathway must face. In most cases, IPV survivors have a mononuclear family and have interrupted their network of friendship, family and/or territorial relationships.
- » Recent data on female unemployment have made the need to invest in social infrastructure increasingly evident. The International Monetary Fund itself (2019) has illustrated how the amount of unpaid domestic and care work performed by women is inversely proportional to the economic development of countries.
- » It is necessary to rethink the welfare system to meet the needs of an ageing population and to support families in managing parental care, for example by enhancing 0–3-year-old education services (which currently cover only 25.5% of potential users with unequal coverage throughout the country).
- » However, policies aimed at making care work a matter of public importance must not be resolved in mere assistance measures or fragmentary monetary allocations. They need to be rethought in such a way that they can positively affect women's employment on the one hand by freeing up women's time and on the other hand by offering them new, quality paid jobs.
- » It is necessary to overcome what has been called the 'Mediterranean model' of welfare characterised by the strong central role of families, especially women, and the limited supply of public care services. It is necessary to invest in public services, to recognise the economic value of care work, and to connote it with a responsibility that goes beyond that of the family but is also social and institutional.
- » This paradigm shift cannot be separated from a cultural change necessary to go beyond predefined and stereotyped social roles and to give equal dignity to formal and informal work and to the different economic sectors.

Guiding questions/statements:

- 1) What are the positive/critical aspects of existing work-life balance measures for women?
- 2) What specificities should be considered for women coming out of violence?
- 3) How useful can corporate flexibility be?
- 4) Is there any work sector which is more suitable than others?
- 5) How to guarantee access to services that can help women reduce the burden of care work?
- 6) what is the role of men in shouldering more care work?

Participants

AVCs, Social Services, Educational Services, Parents Network (informal groups created especially during the Covid-19 emergency), Third Age Health Services, Job Centres, Companies, Trade Associations.

Possible Output

Guidelines for the Department of Equal Opportunities and Employment of the reference country and/or at European level.

Supporting Materials

[UNPAID CARE AND DOMESTIC WORK DURING COVID-19](#)

[Redistributing care work for gender equality and justice](#)

[Ted Talk on work-life balance](#)

Or

[Ted Talk Blending work and family](#)

Is a Territorial Protocol a good practice?

Introduction

The economic empowerment of IPV survivors is a complex issue and a challenging task that requires attention and efforts from a wide range of stakeholders. Addressing this complexity requires the establishment of a multi-sectoral, multi-agency network involving different actors to ensure the effectiveness and coherence of measures addressing the economic empowerment of IPV survivors. Yet, comprehensive interventions in this field are still limited and often lack coordination, fully formalised agreements and procedures. As of today, different priorities, principles and standards are employed, resulting in a duplication and/or inconsistency of actions, which can lead to a failure to achieve the goal of implemented interventions, i.e. the economic empowerment of IPV survivors and their rights and needs.

In this context, the EU-funded project WE GO! 2 - Building Economic Independence: The Way Out of Intimate Partner Violence designed a step-by-step guide for the development of a Territorial Protocol to establish and manage a formalised local mechanism to promote the economic empowerment plans of IPV survivors in a coordinated and coherent manner.

During this session we will address the following issues:

- » Who are the relevant actors involved to develop, improve and formalise professional relationships, understandings and practices to serve their ultimate purpose, i.e. to jointly contribute to women's ability to live violence-free lives by acquiring skills, power and control over decent work opportunities;
- » The importance of stakeholders' ownership;
- » The importance of sustainability;
- » The role of the local and national Institutions.

Guiding questions/statements:

- 1) Do you know of any examples of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), not limited to the field of GBV? What are their positive and negative aspects?
- 2) How to mediate between the specificities of women and the need for procedures that can facilitate

the work of ACVs and the different services that support them?

3) What role should Institutions play in this process?

4) What is necessary to make this process sustainable?

Participants

AVCs, Social Services, Job Centres, Companies, Trade Associations, Local Councils

Possible Output

Guidelines for the municipality and/or local councils

Supporting Materials

[WEGO!2 Territorial Protocol Model](#)

[OFF WE GO! Local Networks for the Socio-Economic Empowerment of IPV survivors](#)

[Ending Violence against woman and girls: if not you, who?](#)

Partnership

ActionAid Italia, Italia

Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale (IRS), Italia

Rel.Azioni Positive Società Cooperativa Sociale, Italia

Center for Sustainable Communities Development, Bulgaria

Fondation Agir Contre l'Exclusion (FACE), Francia

Women's Center Of Karditsa (WCK), Grecia

WEGO!



wegoproject.eu



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