## [Tool G4] Communication Worksheet

[downloadable word document]

Good communicating can avoid some problems: reminding people of goals and action plans, re-grouping to change the plan, meeting again as a team when things happen or actions don’t go as planned.

Communication when dealing with violence is hard because the details are private and teamwork is informal. Email and social media might not be ideal because of privacy. In-person meetings might be hard because people are busy or spread out.

Emergencies and opportunities will come up. People may need information to make decisions.

These are some guiding questions about how to communicate:

1. Is there one person who directs communication or checks that people know what is going on?

* The facilitator? Note-taker? A communications person?
* Someone who has good communication skills:
  + Direct and diplomatic
  + Careful and thorough
  + Good judgment
  + Enough time and access to phone, internet, etc
  + Good memory for details or takes notes
  + Understands the values, goals, bottom-lines and action plan
  + Will inform but not gossip.

2. Who gets to know what?

* Think about people or roles. What can they know? What should they know? Are there things they should not know?
  + Facilitator
  + Person who was harmed
  + Person doing harm
  + Parents or guardians of affected children
  + Everyone involved in the intervention
  + Regular team members who are also helping
  + Everyone in the community.

3. What needs to be shared?

* Goals, bottom-lines and updates
* Action plan and updates
* Action steps taken and results of those actions
* New, unexpected changes, like:
  + Risks and safety problems
  + New opportunities to take action or involve people
  + Big changes in people’s feelings about the intervention or a part of it, time to think and change course
  + Big changes in people’s ability to carry out the intervention or a part of it, time to speed up, slow down or change course
* Requests for support—emotional, financial, other.

4. What are the safety issues and how do they affect communication? (See How do you stay safe [link to phase 1B, 2b, 3b]) [breadcrumbs to right section?]

* Are there risks or dangers to anybody if certain people find out?
  + See Risk assessment chart in How do you stay safe [link to tool b1]
* Are there risks or dangers to the intervention, for example, if certain people find out?
* Are there risks and dangers if the State finds out? Police, schools, mandated reporters, child welfare, immigration?

5. What are the best ways of communicating with people who need to know?

* Think about how easy it is, making sure information is accurate, and communicating in ways that build trust. Different methods may work for different people and situations
  + In-person one-on-one?
  + In-person meetings?
  + Phone calls? Conference calls? Skype?
  + Written notes? If they need to be private, how can you make sure they stay private?
  + Emails? List serves? Do these need to be private and protected?
  + Social media tools? Do these need to be private and protected?
* Is there a system to share information that will work with your group? For example:
  + Everyone communicates to everyone (if there are very few people)
  + One person communicates to everyone and makes sure they get the information they need
  + People divide up who they communicate to.
* Unless the person harmed or doing harm have main roles in the intervention, they might drop out of the communication loop. They might feel isolated or worried when they don’t know what’s happening. Who can make sure they get the information they need?
  + Person harmed: Do you have agreements on what information is shared with the person harmed, who communicates, how and how often?
  + Person doing harm: Do you have agreements on what information is shared with the person doing harm, who communicates, how and how often?