

Guidance note on scaling up social norm change

Brief 04

Risk management and monitoring

April 2019

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This paper is one of four companion Briefs to the main guidance note:

Brief 01 Scaling up social norm change: Concepts and resources

Brief 02 Scaling up social norm change: Types of scale-up

Brief 03 Scaling up social norm change: Resourcing and value for money

Brief 04 Scaling up social norm change: Risk management and monitoring

Authors

Becky Carter

Institute of Development Studies

Marina Apgar

Institute of Development Studies

Shandana Khan Mohmand

Institute of Development Studies

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Introduction and assessing risk

This Brief looks in further detail at a selection of the steps suggested in the main guidance note. Please see the main note for the full set of points regarding risk management when planning scale-up of social norm change.

At the start of developing the scale-up strategy, undertake participatory assessments of risks involved.

Explore possible consequences of the scale-up for the most marginalised and vulnerable (e.g. the women and girls suffering or at risk of violence; children and adults with disabilities who are excluded from resources and services) as well as the whole communities involved. Involve a wide range of stakeholders, and in particular the groups and communities that will participate in or be affected by the scale-up. Key considerations include:

- Ensure the assessment answers these key questions (taking the example of violence against women):
 - * How visible is the issue in the community?
 - * What are the existing social consequences/reactions when women speak out about violence?
 - * Ask local leaders how they typically handle cases (if they say they just send them home and that it is a private issue you will know there is considerable resistance).
 - * Are there examples of men being held accountable for violence?
 - * What is the community capacity to support norm shifting (e.g. community cohesion, level of traditionalism)?
- When there has been pilot, review any implementers' issues that arose and how they were handled, as key learning on the sensitivities that may arise during scale-up will need to be managed.
- Participatory assessment should also identify the level of knowledge and skills of staff for managing programming and the sensitive issues. This information should feed into the scale-up budget/time allotted/skills development plan for staff (and community activists).
- A participatory political economy and power analysis (at the start and throughout scale-up) can identify opportunities and champions for the initiative.



Key tools include:

- The [Social Norms Exploration Tool](#) (from the Learning Collaborative to Advance Normative Change), which includes community-based participatory approaches to determine the specific norms related to an outcome of interest, reference groups and sanctions. This information is useful in planning for and mitigating risks.
- The [Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix \(AIM\)](#) enables identification of stakeholders and suggests a possible course of action towards them (Mendizabal, 2010).
- The IFPRI [Net-Map](#) is a participatory interview-based mapping tool to visualise and discuss situations where many actors influence outcomes. The tool helps determine what actors are involved, and their linkages, influence and goals (Schiffer et al., 2017).
- [Management Systems International \(MSI\)](#) sets out tools for establishing pre-conditions for scale-up including: stakeholder analysis, network mapping, force field analysis and advocacy strategy profiles (Cooley et al., 2012, pp. 25–37).
- [Participatory situation analysis](#) (for a violence against women prevention programme) (McLean & Devereux, 2018).

Assessing risk

03

Analyse – with local stakeholders – potential flash points for backlash during the scale-up programme pathways.

It should be assumed that engaging with long-held social norms will generate backlash. The intervention needs to address this from the beginning – and understand how to address it at scale. Key considerations include:

- Consider carefully how to frame the programme and introduce it into the community, to be inclusive from the start. For example, it may not be helpful to start discussions with issues related to one group of people (e.g. women), but rather start from a broader perspective (e.g. power and how each of us uses power). Also consider the terminology used to support local ownership (see section “B. Context, methodology and terminology” in the main guidance note). Also consider how to frame introductions to the government and other stakeholders (e.g. broader civil society).
- Understand who will be affected by the scale-up at each stage of the programme’s implementation and along each scale-up programme pathway – and how.
- Use the initial stakeholder mapping and political economy analysis to identify actors who could potentially cause or help mitigate risks and backlash (for all the scale-up pathways). Consider the wider relationship networks and key societal (formal and informal) actors that the scale-up strategy will involve either directly or indirectly through diffusion effects.
 - * Who will be most sensitive/resistant to the ideas? What one-on-one relationship building (if possible, or small group if not) is necessary prior to implementation? What impact will this have on time frames and budgets?
 - * Who are the local, regional and national leaders and potential champions, and external catalysts and incentives (for actors and institutions) for adopting change?
 - * What links with rights groups and other important local/national/international initiatives could undermine or improve the reach and relevance of the scale-up?
- Set out a stakeholder engagement strategy, recognising that this will require building in more time and resources.

Assess the existing response services.

Interventions with social norm components are likely to cause a rise in demand for response services. For example, interventions designed to prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG) are likely to cause a rise in women and girls seeking help or being identified as VAWG survivors, so links to response mechanisms such as social, health, security and justice services, and child protection authorities are vital (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016, p. 20).

The scale-up strategy should be informed by a careful assessment of the available formal and informal response mechanisms and their quality in practice. Service providers may hold and propagate the same beliefs and attitudes as communities; for example, they may reinforce unequal gender norms. The lead-up/preparation of a scaled intervention should take into consideration time and resources required to support and train service providers (including informal providers that women typically want to be used).

Addressing risk

Set out a risk management strategy to respond to the above assessments. Tips for what to consider include:

Develop an approach centred on ethical practice, with appropriate safeguarding and staff training and support.

The foremost core principle of any scaling-up approach must be to do no harm, uphold human rights, embed an understanding of ethical issues that may arise during implementation and how to guarantee these during the scale-up, and set out an appropriate safeguarding strategy.

The organisations involved in the scale-up have a safeguarding duty of care to beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, including children and vulnerable adults in the community who are not direct beneficiaries but may be vulnerable to abuse. DFID's [Enhanced due diligence – safeguarding for external partners \(2018b\)](#) details the code of conduct (which describes the ethics and behaviours required of all parties to ensure a robust safeguarding environment) which organisations need to have, alongside actions in five key areas (i.e. safeguarding; whistleblowing; human resources; risk management; and governance and accountability).

Staff training plans should include discussion on ethics of implementation, and cover, as relevant: ethical behaviour; confidentiality; respect for colleagues; child or vulnerable adult safeguarding; modern slavery; conflicts of interest; counter-fraud and anti-bribery; and equality, diversity and inclusion (DFID, 2018a, p. 13).

Staff and change agents require training in how to react and manage the effects of normative changes; for example, protecting early adopters of new behaviours. McLean & Devereux (2018, p. 7) recommend “interactive and iterative methods to promote self-reflection, shifts in attitudes, and skills-building” as well as ongoing training and mentoring for staff and volunteers. *(Continued on p.5)*.



Key tools: A key resource on working in humanitarian settings.

Organisations are beginning to adapt and implement SASA! in various humanitarian settings around the world. “These communities share distinct characteristics that can both challenge and facilitate prevention programming, such as the experience of collective trauma, psychological distress, impermanence, restricted mobility, disrupted livelihoods and networks, as well as rapid shifts in social and gender norms (both positive and negative)” (Raising Voices, 2018, p. 2). The Raising Voice’s 2018 Brief provides guidance for humanitarian actors to determine whether to use SASA!, and, if so, how to adapt and implement the programme in a way that respects the dignity of crisis-affected communities and upholds the “do no harm” principle. [\(Raising Voices, 2018\)](#).

Develop an approach centred on ethical practice, with appropriate safeguarding and staff training and support.
(Continued)

Ensuring that scale-up does no harm is particularly important when working on politically and socially sensitive issues that affect nuanced aspects of people's lives (Harper et al., 2018, p. 36). It is important to think through how the scaling-up approach will adhere to ethical guidelines and protect participants. Consider these suggestions:

- At the start of planning the approach, in addition to the relevant DFID policies, identify (1) available international guidelines on ethical development and research practice, with a particular focus on the intended beneficiaries (e.g. women, girls, people with disabilities), and (2) national standards and guidelines. Make a plan for how to operationalise these guidelines within the scale-up process from the outset of programme design. Make this risk management plan explicit and ensure all implementing partners understand, adhere to and have necessary funding and time to operationalise it. Establish accountability mechanisms to ensure safeguards are reported on.
- Develop talking points for how staff and community activists/researchers can explain the importance of safeguarding and reducing risk for all programme participants. Ensure they have basic skills for managing high-risk situations that may emerge in the course of their work. Develop safety plans for staff/activists and a referral network. Encourage (not penalise) staff/activists when programming goes wrong. Invest in relationships not based solely on delivery of results.
- Ensure there is a clear process for monitoring direct and indirect consequences and the ability to make programmatic adjustments as necessary. (See McLean & Devereux (2018) for a summary of unintended consequences of VAWG programming.)
- Establish and support community mechanisms to monitor harmful behaviours; for example, an increase in VAWG (a recommendation from the Nigeria Voices for Change programme) (Bishop & Parke, 2017, p. 15).
- Establish an ongoing, robust beneficiary feedback mechanism for programme accountability, and a strategy for managing this mechanism and responding to the feedback.
- In conflict-affected and other humanitarian settings consider that these types of contexts will present particular challenges for addressing risk.

Case study:
Participatory approaches

EVA-BHN in Pakistan found that the participation of civil society leaders, religious leaders, media representatives, and lawyers in the district advocacy forums was critical. Embedded in the community with natural constituencies, these actors have an invaluable level of legitimacy, power, and respect among both the wider community and the state duty-bearers.

Source: [Palladium, 2016](#), p. 10.

Similarly, winning over the critical gatekeepers to influence the level of inclusion of girls with disabilities in schools in Kenya is identified as a key success driver for the DFID-funded Leonard Cheshire project. Working in one of Kenya's poorest regions, the programme's multi-level systems change approach to tackling education inequality for girls with disabilities was successful: 2,180 previously out-of-school girls with disabilities were identified and enrolled in school, exceeding initial targets, with improved retention and learning outcomes. The impact evaluation pinpointed the crucial role of parent support groups, community resource workers and training male mentors, all of whom helped transform the attitudes and behaviours of family members, guardians, and the wider communities.

Source: [Leonard Cheshire, 2017](#).

Support a locally grounded, participatory approach that involves local stakeholders – including the most marginalised – from the outset.

Involve local stakeholders, in particular survivors and those at risk of the harmful behaviour, but also whole communities, in planning and implementation of the scale-up process. (See section “E. Identifying an opportunity for scale-up” in the main guidance note for more details.)

Consider how to engage with state stakeholders at the design stage to bring them on board (IRH et al., 2017). Identify if obstacles are due to a lack of knowledge or whether there is a more deep-rooted basis for maintaining the social norm. A lack of knowledge may require advocacy and training efforts. (See Brief 2, “Types of scale-up” for more on vertical scale-up.)

McLean & Devereux (2018, p. 8) suggest involving a wide range of stakeholders (including those directly and indirectly affected by the scale-up, and those not targeted by the programme). Suggested activities include: “Periodic interviews with different individuals and groups as part of the research and M&E process; Consultation/feedback workshops with different groups engaged; Local program advisory or monitoring committee; Informal conversations; Regular triangulation of data from different sources to identify challenges and further discussion to develop strategies to address them as they arise.”

Case study:

Experience with participatory research: Girl Hub Rwanda

To understand girls’ needs and appropriate activities in Rwanda, Girl Hub prepared a report on the state of girls in Rwanda. This includes video stories from girls, adding a personal dimension. Research agencies trained local girls in research methods so they could carry out the necessary discussions, speaking directly to other girls in their native language. This research was used to help shape interventions, and Girl Hub planned to repeat this approach

in Nigeria and Ethiopia. However, “some NGOs raised concerns that girls were unpaid and of potential unintended social consequences of an ‘elite’ group of girls interviewing poorer girls”. These are examples of the type of risks with participatory research that need to be identified and managed. (ICAI, 2012, pp. 8–9).

Source: [ICAI, 2012](#).



Key tools:

The [Communication for Social Change \(CFSC\) consortium](#) provides resources to support participatory monitoring and evaluation of social change. Methods and tools for communities to monitor social change include photovoice and phone videos (Byrne et al., 2005).

IRH’s GREAT project embedded ethnographers to document change.

Addressing risk

Embed in the scale-up strategy rapid, regular community feedback and an accountability mechanism (and flexibility within the programme to respond to learning from this mechanism, and course correct as needed) (Cooley et al., 2016).

Use the risk analysis to identify likely (and clear) triggers for backlash and set out how backlash will be monitored and identified during implementation. Build this into programme monitoring plans and budget for them.

There are different types of monitoring to consider. They are all relevant to risks and impact but serve different purposes, need different mechanisms and (are likely) operated by different people. The different types include:

- 01. Regular programme monitoring of unintended consequences.
- 02. Regular programme monitoring of progress towards impact.
- 03. Anonymous mechanism to raise concerns.
- 04. Beneficiary feedback loop for programme adaptation (part of 1 and 2, but easily left out of both and often not designed or resourced appropriately).

Raising Voices has developed a range of M&E tools for SASA! that staff use to keep track of activities and community response, to detect challenges, and then adjust programming as needed (McLean & Devereux, 2018). These include (ibid., p. 5):

- “A rapid assessment survey implemented at the end of each SASA! phase.”
- “Two simple community activity reports (one for staff and one for community activists) to monitor activities.”
- **Outcome Tracking Tool** “to measure shifts in community members’ knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours during each phase.” This is used in community activities to assess the level of resistance to or acceptance of an idea in SASA! This allows programme staff to be aware of programming risks in real time and with a sensitive approach (rather than asking direct questions). At scale, this tool would be used by different staff to monitor activities across the area, the data analysed, identifying hot topics across the programme or disaggregated to identify high-risk neighbourhoods and then programmatic action taken.



Resources:

The Practice Brief from the Prevention Collaborative’s Programming to Prevent Violence Against Women, entitled “Adaptive Programming: Addressing Unintended Consequences” (McLean and Devereux, 2018) provides further guidance and examples on assessing and responding to unintended consequences.

A key recommendation is that “monitoring tools and processes need to be systematically designed to detect unintended consequences. Field staff, community gatekeepers, and even participants themselves can use simple forms to track changes on a regular basis. These can be designed with a mix of closed and open questions. Examples include:

- Periodic rapid assessment surveys with different categories of beneficiaries or others to ask questions about impacts including shifts in their own knowledge, attitudes, practices and of others around them.
- Self-assessment/tracking tools such as forms and diaries for trained community agents to complete e.g. after an activity or reported VAW case.
- Activity report form for an observer to monitor activities – type of activity, participants, quality of activity, quality of facilitation, participant responses.
- Anonymous feedback mechanism for community members to raise concerns about the program” (McLean & Devereux, 2018, p. 8).

Addressing risk

Ensure basic care and support services of decent quality are available.

Consider these options:

- Intentionally select an area with services, or negotiate/leverage time, staff and funds to improve services in the area. This could mean working in consortia or coalitions.
- Establish partnerships and set up linkages early on (e.g. referrals).
- Build in training and mentoring of service staff at the outset before the programming begins in a community and then continue engagement with them, building their ongoing support and training right into the programming.
- Consider pre-allocation of emergency funding for affected vulnerable groups (e.g. VAWG; marginalised children and people with disabilities) to access support, including physically (e.g. financing transport). (Learning from DFID-funded Voices for Change Nigeria programme, Bishop & Parke, 2017, p. 15).
- Monitor to improve as needed and make sure linkages are effective as scale-up is under way.

Set up partnerships for effective coordination and collaboration on risk management between the various involved organisations.

Consider what incentives and accountability (such as monitoring and evaluation against goals, benchmarks) will be used to establish and support partnerships between the key organisations involved in the scale-up (Cooley et al., 2016). Actions could include:

- Establish clear expectations of safeguarding and risk mitigation from the outset. Ensure all partners agree with and are funded for these aspects and are required to report on them.
- Establish MOUs with partners and a cross-organisational work plan for monitoring of scale-up benchmarks.
- Establish regular all-partner meetings to review data and troubleshoot scale-up issues and document challenges and successes.
- Hold regular check-ins/assessments.

Set out tangible milestones, strategic communications for sharing results with stakeholders, and an explicit strategy for maintaining commitment and resources over the long term (Cooley et al., 2016, p. 25).

- Build a consensus around realistic expectations of results within a short time frame (WHO & ExpandNet, 2010; Cooley et al., 2012, 2016).
- Build understanding of the value of experimental scaling up even when progress is slow or uncertain (CUSP, 2018).
- Plan how to cope with the complexity of communicating highly sensitive research findings for different audiences (Cooley et al., 2016).
- Ensure funding and time frames match the resource requirements and that time frames set out an intervention's theory of change (CUSP, 2018).

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Contact

Email info@k4d.info

Twitter [@K4D_info](https://twitter.com/K4D_info)

Website www.ids.ac.uk/k4d

