

Capacity Building Training Programme for GBV Professionals

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Introduction

This training programme has been developed to enhance the capacity of GBV professionals working with Roma women who are survivors of gender-based violence. The programme is grounded in trauma-informed, survivor-centred, and culturally sensitive approaches, and it is designed to promote equity, trust, and effective support for Roma communities. Roma women face intersecting forms of discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. This often results in reduced access to support services, increased vulnerability to GBV, and deep-rooted mistrust of institutions. As GBV professionals, it is essential to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to work with Roma communities in a way that is respectful, empowering, and inclusive.

Throughout this programme, participants will gain knowledge and practical skills across six key modules:

1. Introduction to the Roma Community
2. Understanding and Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Roma Communities
3. Effective Communication with Roma Women
4. Supporting Roma Women – Counselling, Services, and Collaboration with Roma Mediators
5. Trauma-Informed Care for Roma Survivors of GBV
6. Addressing Discrimination and Stigma in Service Delivery

Each module blends theory with practical tools and real-life scenarios to build competence, foster empathy, and equip professionals to work collaboratively with Roma mediators and support networks. Activities are grounded in reflective practice, group work, role play, and case study analysis.

By participating in this programme, professionals will be better prepared to challenge systemic inequalities, respond to the needs of Roma GBV survivors, and become champions for stigma-free, inclusive service delivery.

Module 1: Introduction to the Roma Community

Lesson Overview

Title	Introduction to the Roma Community
Target Group	Gender-based violence professionals
Aim	The aim of this lesson plan is to introduce the intricacies of Roma culture and communities to GBV professionals by engaging them in the historical and socio-cultural context of this minority group through discussions and mapping exercises.
Duration	120 minutes
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theoretical context of the Roma community• Women's rights within the Roma community
Preparation	<p>Prior to undertaking this lesson plan, the facilitator should prepare:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The names for the "heads up" icebreaker2. Additional handouts/information leaflets for participants related to the project and its aims3. Any theoretical knowledge that they might need relating to the socio-cultural context of the target group by reading this publication: <p>Nowhere to turn: Gender-based violence against Roma women by Nataša Milenković, found here: https://bit.ly/3YgSZiO</p>

Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan	
Overview	<p>This session is the introductory session to the training programme for GBV professionals and their first encounters with Roma culture and the role of women within those communities. As such, this lesson plan begins with an ice-breaker challenge to get the professionals communicating and involved in the sessions, followed by a brief introduction to the topic. The participants will take part in a group activity where they will map their experiences and understanding of the Roma community and participate in a group discussion about the circumstances of women in these communities.</p>
Training Methods	Group work, peer learning, and interactive activities
Required Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sticky notes • Markers • Flipchart paper
Activity Instructions	<p>Heads Up Icebreaker (30 minutes)</p> <p><i>Step 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facilitator introduces the workshop by welcoming participants to the session. <p><i>Step 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write the name of a famous person, character, or profession (e.g., “astronaut”, “doctor”, “superhero”) on each sticky note or card. Keep it a secret. <p><i>Step 3</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the participants to form pairs and give each participant a sticky note that they must keep secret. Once each participant has a sticky note, ask the participants to stick the sticky note on their partners forehead without letting them see it. Everyone should see each others’ cards except their own. <p><i>Step 4</i></p>

- Participants take turns asking yes/no questions to figure out their own identity from their partners, for example:
 - “Am I a real person?”
 - “Am I a musician?”

Step 5

- The game ends when each person successfully guesses their identity.

Understanding and Empathy Mapping (80 minutes)

Step 1 - Introduction (10 minutes)

- The facilitator introduces the topic of the historical context of Roma women and their unique challenges regarding gender-based violence, highlighting the importance of culturally sensitive approaches.

Step 2 – Mapping Exercise (30 minutes)

- The facilitator splits the participants into smaller groups of 2-3 and provides each group with a large sheet of paper and markers.
- The facilitator asks each group to create an empathy map addressing the following questions:
 - What are the experiences of Roma women regarding GBV?
 - What challenges do they face in seeking help?
 - What are their strengths and resilience factors?
 - How can professionals build trust and support?

Step 3 - Presentation (20 minutes)

- The facilitator asks each group to present their empathy map to the wider group.
- Once each group presents their map, the facilitator facilitates a discussion on common themes and insights.

Step 4 – Group Discussion (15 minutes)

- As a reflection exercise, the facilitator asks participants to write a short reflection using the following prompts:
 - What assumptions did I have about Roma women that were challenged today?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How can I change my approach to supporting Roma women more effectively? ○ What steps will I take to continue my learning about the Roma community? <p><i>Step 5 – Conclusion (5 minutes)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The facilitator concludes with a discussion on the importance of continuous education and engagement with the Roma community. ● The facilitator encourages participants to explore the resources and training on cultural competence and GBV available through the project. <p>Conclude (10 minutes)</p> <p>The facilitator concludes the session by thanking participants for their participation in the sessions. The facilitator asks each participant to write down one thing they have learned from the session on a sticky note. The facilitator collects all the sticky notes and displays them on a flipchart in the room.</p>
<p>Additional Resources</p>	<p>Romani Culture: An Introduction by Yaron Matras (Roma and Travellers Team): https://rm.coe.int/factsheets-on-romani-culture-1-0-romani-culture-an-introduction/1680aac363</p> <p>Discrimination against and living conditions of Roma women in 11 EU MS: Roma survey – data in focus by European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2014-roma-survey-dif-women-2_en.pdf</p> <p>Roma women – known and unknown: Family life and the position of women in the Roma communities by Malina Voicu and Raluca Popescu (Euromanet): https://bit.ly/4eBkeuc</p>

Module 2: Gender-Based Violence in Romani Communities

Lesson Overview

Title	Understanding and Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Roma Communities
Target Group	Professionals working in gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and support, including social workers, counsellors, and community outreach specialists.
Aim	This lesson plan aims to enhance GBV professionals' understanding of the unique socio-cultural factors influencing gender-based violence in Roma communities. It focuses on fostering cultural competence, improving communication strategies, and developing effective interventions.
Duration	120 minutes
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prevalence and forms of GBV in Roma communities• Socio-cultural factors contributing to GBV• Legal frameworks and resources• Effective communication strategies• Trauma-informed care and intervention approaches
Preparation	Facilitators should review current research and statistics on GBV in Roma communities, including cultural, historical, and legal contexts. Prepare multimedia resources, including case studies and testimonials, to illustrate real-life scenarios. Ensure familiarity with local support services and legal protections available to GBV survivors. Create a respectful and empathetic learning environment, encouraging open discussion of sensitive topics.

Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan	
Overview	This training session provides GBV professionals with a deeper understanding of gender-based violence within Roma communities. Participants will explore the cultural and societal factors influencing GBV, learn practical intervention strategies, and enhance their communication skills through role-playing and group activities. The session emphasises a trauma-informed approach to supporting survivors while fostering trust and cultural sensitivity.
Training Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group discussions • Role-play activities • Case study analysis • Peer learning • Reflective exercises
Required Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laptop and projector • Flip chart and markers • Printed handouts and case studies • Pens and notebooks • Multimedia resources (e.g., videos or presentations)
Activity Instructions	<p>Icebreaker Activity: Cultural Perspectives on GBV 20 minutes</p> <p>Step 1: Ask participants to share their understanding of how cultural factors influence perceptions of GBV.</p> <p>Step 2: Facilitate a group discussion to identify common themes and unique aspects related to Roma communities.</p> <p>Role Play Activity: Building Trust with Survivors 45 minutes</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: Divide participants into pairs and assign roles. Provide scenario cards detailing Miri's background and the GBV professional's objectives. Use the case study template in Annex I to help with this.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 2: Allow 10 minutes for the first round of role play. Character 2 should use active listening, validation, and culturally aware strategies to address Miri's concerns. • Step 3: Facilitate role swaps, so participants can experience both perspectives. Conduct the second round for another 10 minutes. • Step 4: Reconvene as a group for a debrief. Discuss challenges encountered, strategies used, and lessons learned. <p>Group Activity: Designing Survivor-Centred Interventions</p> <p>Duration: 30 minutes</p> <p>Step 1: Divide participants into small groups and ask them to design an intervention plan for supporting GBV survivors in Roma communities.</p> <p>Step 2: Groups present their plans, including steps to address cultural barriers and build community trust.</p> <p>Step 3: Facilitate a group discussion to refine the plans and share insights.</p> <p>Reflective Activity: Lessons Learned</p> <p>Duration: 20 minutes</p> <p>Step 1: Ask participants to write down one key takeaway from the session and how they plan to apply it in their work.</p> <p>Step 2: Share these reflections in a group discussion and explore implementation strategies.</p>
<p>Additional Resources</p>	<p>Council of Europe: Combating Violence Against Women – Minimum Standards for Support Services.</p> <p>Full Link: https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF(2007)Study%20rev.en.pdf</p> <p>European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) EU gender-based violence survey</p> <p>Full Link: https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2024/eu-gender-violence-survey-key-results</p> <p>OSCE Gender and Security Toolkit</p>

	<p>Full Link: https://www.osce.org/odihr/gender-security-toolkit#:~:text=The%20new%20Gender%20and%20Security%20Toolkit%20provides%20practice-based,in%20security%20and%20justice%20policy%2C%20programming%20and%20reform</p>
References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council of Europe (2008) <i>Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services</i>. Available at: https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF(2007)Study%20rev.en.pdf 2. European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) (2024) <i>EU gender-based violence survey - Key results</i>. Available at: https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2024/eu-gender-violence-survey-key-results 3. OSCE (n.d.) <i>Gender and security toolkit</i>. Available at: https://www.osce.org/odihr/gender-security-toolkit#:~:text=The%20new%20Gender%20and%20Security%20Toolkit%20provides%20practice-based,in%20security%20and%20justice%20policy%2C%20programming%20and%20reform



Activity Sheet 2.1

Role Play Scenario - Understanding and Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Roma Communities	
Description	This role-play activity aims to enhance professionals' ability to build trust and offer support to survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) within Roma communities. By practising empathetic communication and culturally sensitive approaches, participants will develop practical skills for effective intervention. The exercise enables participants to refine their ability to navigate stigma and mistrust, fostering a supportive and trusting relationship with survivors.
Scenario	Miri, a Roma woman, seeks support after experiencing domestic violence but is reluctant to share details due to fears of stigma and a lack of trust in authorities. She explains that she has been suffering abuse from her partner but worries that seeking help will bring shame upon her family. Her concerns are heightened by the potential reaction of her community and previous negative experiences with authorities, which left her feeling judged and unsupported. The GBV professional must respond with empathy and cultural sensitivity, creating a safe, non-judgemental space where Miri feels heard, respected, and empowered. The professional should gently guide Miri to understand her rights and the support available to her, while addressing her fears by emphasising confidentiality, cultural awareness, and practical, respectful steps forward.
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role 1: Miri, a Roma woman, who expresses fear and reluctance to trust, shaped by community stigma and past negative experiences with authorities. • Role 2: A GBV professional who demonstrates active listening, empathy, and cultural sensitivity, working to build trust and provide supportive, non-judgemental guidance.

Questions

1. How did you create a safe and supportive environment for the survivor?
2. Which communication techniques were most effective in building trust?
3. In what ways did cultural awareness influence your approach?
4. What additional resources or strategies could improve the survivor's experience of support?
5. Which techniques helped you establish trust with Miri?
6. How did you respond to her fears about stigma and previous negative experiences?
7. What strategies proved most effective in fostering a supportive atmosphere?
8. How can these insights be applied in real-world support situations?



Module 3: Effective Communication with Roma Women

Lesson Overview

Title	Effective Communication with Roma Women
Target Group	GBV Professionals
Aim	<p>The aim of this module is to give useful tips and strategies to the GBV professional for the best possible communication with Roma GBV survivors services. In this module GBV Professionals will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the survivor-centred approach in the light of communicating with Roma women• Learn communication strategy to better serve Roma GBV survivors• Explore ways & communication tips to establish trust with Roma GBV survivors
Duration	120 minutes
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Survivor-centred approach in communication with Roma women• Communication strategy and tips focused on servicing Roma women GBV survivors• Ways & tips to communicate & build trust with Roma women- GBV survivors
Preparation	<p>Before delivering this training, take time to familiarise yourself with the lesson plan and activities. Consider your target group and make any necessary adaptations. You can also discuss the lesson with participants in advance to identify any specific areas they would like to focus on. Ensure all materials for the lesson are prepared in advance. Create a space for the training that is open, accessible, and inviting!</p>

Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan	
Overview	<p>This lesson plan focuses on increasing participants' understanding on the survivor-centred approach in the light of communicating with Roma women survivors of GBV. Moreover, the lesson encourages the participants to explore and learn communication strategies to better serve Roma GBV survivors in the GBV centres and services they serve. Last but not least, the lesson helps participants to get familiar with ways of communication and learn useful communication tips to establish trust with Roma GBV survivors.</p>
Training Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual reflection • Group work • Peer learning
Required Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laptop • Projector/whiteboard • Pens, markers • Paper, sticky notes • Internet access
Activity Instructions	<p>Survivor Centred Approach to Communication with Roma Women</p> <p>30 minutes</p> <p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of a video or audio of GBV professionals communicating with GBV survivors to show the way the language and approach of the professional is communicated to the trainees. Examples may be given within PowerPoint. <p>Step 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants to split into 2 groups to choose and examine by discussing with each other for 10-12 min about the video and highlight which elements and key features of the Victim/Survivor Centred Approach they



	<p>notice in the video and create a short list of these to present to the plenary.</p> <p>Step 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants of the 2 groups present to the plenary their responses on the characteristics of the Victim/Survivor Centred Approach they identified and discuss in plenary for 10 minutes about the approach used and why it is important to use it. <p>Active listening & non-judgemental communication important characteristics & tools when dealing with GBV survivors a discussion between professionals</p> <p>35 minutes</p> <p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trainees/participants are divided into 3 groups and discuss their experiences and concerns around the application of tools and techniques such as active listening and non-judgemental communication. Each group simultaneously discusses these issues for 15 minutes and shares their experiences and examples of what has happened to them using active listening & non-judgemental communication in the GBV context and how they dealt with them. <p>Step 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 3 groups then create within 10 minutes each a list of the main challenges, important issues and details that GBV professionals should be aware of when using active listening & non-judgemental communication in the GBV context. <p>Step 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The groups discuss their results in the plenary and come to useful conclusions <p>Closing Activity</p> <p>10 minutes</p>
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	<p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using Mentimeter (https://www.mentimeter.com/), ask participants to share what they have learnt from the training. Encourage them to reflect on whether anything has changed their perspective or how they might approach these scenarios differently in the future. <p>Step 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> End the session by thanking participants for their engagement. Offer to answer any remaining questions they may have and share additional resources for further learning, providing the links as needed.
<p>Additional Resources</p>	<p>Video story of survivor: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfJXZ3Gxl5g</p>

Module 4: Supporting Roma Women – Counselling, Services, and Collaboration with Roma Mediators

Lesson Overview

Title	Supporting Roma women. Counselling, services, and collaboration with Roma mediators
Target Group	Gender-based violence professionals
Aim	The aim of this lesson is to put into action best practices in counselling and supporting Roma women, with a focus on cultural sensitivity and trauma-informed care; to get to know the resources and support services available to Roma women, including mental health and social services; to recognise the importance of collaboration between GBV professionals and Roma mediators for comprehensive care; and to identify the benefits and strategies of building effective working relationships and shared referral protocols between professionals and Roma mediators.
Duration	120 minutes
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting Roma women• Sensitivity and trauma-informed care• Counselling and services• Cooperation with Roma mediators
Preparation	When facilitating activities in this lesson plan, it is crucial to frame the session around cultural sensitivity and the unique challenges faced by Roma women in accessing GBV counselling and services. Begin by fostering an open and

	<p>respectful dialogue about the barriers that Roma women may encounter, such as distrust of institutions. Emphasise the importance of adopting an intersectional approach that respects cultural identity while prioritising the safety and empowerment of survivors.</p> <p>During the exercises, encourage the GBV professionals to reflect on their existing practices and explore how collaboration with Roma mediators can enhance trust, communication, and the effectiveness of interventions.</p>
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Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan	
Overview	This module focuses on the critical importance of supporting Roma women through tailored counselling and services. It emphasises the need for collaboration with Roma mediators, who play a pivotal role in bridging cultural gaps, fostering trust, and ensuring that the specific needs of Roma women are addressed effectively. By exploring best practices and strategies, this module aims to empower practitioners with tools to promote inclusivity, equity, and culturally sensitive approaches to service delivery.
Training Methods	Group work, peer learning, and role-play activities
Required Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sticky notes ● Markers ● Flipchart paper ● Printed scenarios ● Timer
Activity Instructions	<p>Icebreaker: Shared connections</p> <p>30 minutes</p> <p>Step 1: Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask each participant to think of one reason why they became a GBV professional. <p>Step 2: Group activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draw a circle in the centre of the paper/whiteboard and write "Shared Connections". ● Each participant takes turns sharing something they value about their role as a GBV professional or a positive experience working with women. ● For every shared value or experience, draw a line from the central circle and write it down. <p>Step 3: Reflection</p>

- Reflect on the common themes that emerged, emphasising the strength of shared values and collaboration in their work.

Activity: Supporting Roma women and collaborating with Roma mediators

75 minutes

Introduction: Roma women face specific challenges that gender-based violence practitioners need to consider. These barriers include double discrimination based on gender and ethnicity, which exposes them to increased vulnerability. In addition, cultural stereotypes can make it difficult for them to access support services, as they often face institutional rejection or misunderstanding. It is essential to respect their cultural identity, build trust, and work from an intersectional perspective that takes into account their specific needs and community dynamics.

Step 1: Group division

- Split the participants into two groups, ideally with an equal number of participants in each group.

Step 2: Introduction

- Begin by reviewing key principles of collaboration with Roma mediators, including respect for cultural identity, active listening, and creating trust between professionals and mediators.
- Highlight the role of GBV professionals in providing emotional, legal, and practical support to survivors while working with mediators to bridge cultural gaps and enhance accessibility.

Step 3: Role-play

Scenario 1: The first group will explore a scenario emphasising trust-building and sensitivity when working with a Roma mediator in a GBV case.

- A Roma woman confides in a mediator about ongoing emotional abuse by her partner. The mediator invites the GBV professional to a joint meeting. The GBV professional's role is to assess the woman's needs and provide support while relying on the mediator to maintain cultural sensitivity.
- One person will take the role of the mediator; one person will take the role of the GBV survivor; and one person will act as the GBV professional; other participants will observe and

	<p>take notes on the GBV professional's ability to work alongside the mediator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encourage the woman to share her concerns. ○ Provide culturally sensitive explanations of available support and services. ○ Build trust by leveraging the mediator's rapport with the woman. - Debrief: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discuss what worked well in the role-play. ○ How did the GBV professional collaborate with the mediator? ○ What strategies were used to build trust with the Roma woman? ○ Were cultural sensitivities and confidentiality respected? <p>Scenario 2: the second group will practice a scenario focusing on joint safety planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Roma woman has experienced physical violence and is considering leaving her partner. The GBV professional and mediator meet with her to discuss a safety plan. The mediator ensures cultural considerations are addressed, and the GBV professional outlines practical resources. - One person will act as the mediator; one person will be the woman experiencing abuse; one person will play the role of the GBV professional; and other participants will observe and take notes on how the mediator and the GBV professional work together to empower the woman to make informed decisions. - After the role-play, the group will reflect on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Was cultural sensitivity balanced with the need for immediate safety? ○ Was clear information provided about resources, such as shelters or legal assistance? - Debrief: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How did the GBV professional and mediator collaborate effectively? ○ Were the woman's autonomy and cultural identity respected?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How was the safety plan tailored to her specific situation? <p>Step 4: Large group reflection and key takeaways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bring the two groups together to share their experiences and insights from the role-plays. ● Use the flip chart or whiteboard to list key points. <p>Step 5: Summing up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emphasise the importance of collaboration, cultural sensitivity, and survivor-centred approaches. ● Encourage participants to continue building partnerships with Roma mediators and reflect on how they can integrate cultural understanding into their practice to better support Roma women. <p>Conclusion: Time to reflect</p> <p>15 minutes</p> <p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bring everyone back together and ask: “What is one takeaway you have from today’s session that will help you grow as a GBV professional? How can you apply it in your future work?” <p>Step 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conclude the activity by summarising the importance of continual reflection for personal and professional growth. Emphasise the value of their role as GBV professionals in maintaining collaboration and understanding with Roma mediators, the Roma community and beyond.
Handout Sheets	2 case scenarios
Additional Resources	<p>Weaving Strong Relationships Within Roma Women Associations to Overcome Violence Against Women International Journal of Roma Studies. (s. f.).</p> <p>https://hipatiapress.com/hpjournals/index.php/ijrs/article/view/13580/4425</p>



Module 5: Trauma-Informed Care for Roma Survivors of GBV

Lesson Overview

Title	Trauma-Informed Care for Roma Survivors of GBV
Target Group	Gender-based violence professionals
Aim	The aim is to enhance participants' understanding of how trauma affects Roma survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), while equipping them with culturally sensitive, trauma-informed approaches to provide effective support. Additionally, the training seeks to promote empathetic, respectful, and inclusive practices when engaging with Roma individuals and communities.
Duration	120 minutes
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding trauma and its impact• Historical & cultural context of Roma communities• Key principles of trauma-informed care• Cultural competence and intersectionality• Practical strategies for GBV professionals• Case studies & best practices

Preparation

At the start of each session, provide an overview of the topics to be covered and offer a clear trigger warning, as some content may be distressing or uncomfortable for participants. Emphasise that activities and content can be adapted as needed, and that participants are welcome to take breaks or step out at any time. Aim to create a relaxed, supportive, and open environment throughout.

Trainer Preparation:

- Understand the local context, history of discrimination, and cultural norms of Roma communities.
- Review trauma-informed care frameworks (e.g. SAMHSA's Trauma-Informed Approach).
- Prepare slides or flip charts covering key concepts.

Materials Setup:

- Ensure the training space is comfortable.
- Print or collate handouts (if using).
- Set up digital resources (slides, videos, case studies).

Participant Preparation (optional):

- Share short articles or infographics on Roma communities and trauma-informed care.



Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan	
Overview	<p>The session begins with a welcome, introductions, and a brief icebreaker to explore participants' familiarity with trauma-informed approaches, followed by an overview of the session's aims and agenda. A presentation then outlines the six key principles of trauma-informed care: Safety, Trustworthiness, Peer Support, Collaboration, Empowerment, and Cultural, Historical & Gender considerations, with a focus on cultural sensitivity in supporting Roma survivors. This is followed by a short presentation on the history, cultural norms, and discrimination experienced by Roma communities, including its impact on trauma, with time for questions to address misconceptions.</p> <p>Participants then take part in two interactive activities: first, small-group discussions to identify barriers Roma survivors may face and ways to build trust; second, case study exercises to apply trauma-informed support strategies such as safety planning and culturally respectful communication. A role-play activity allows volunteers to practise responding to GBV disclosures in a culturally sensitive, trauma-informed manner. The session ends with individual reflection, group discussion, and a summary of key takeaways and resources.</p>
Training Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture/Presentation: Key concepts and frameworks. • Group Discussion: Encouraging peer learning and exchange of experiences. • Case Studies/Scenario Analysis: Practical application of trauma-informed principles. • Role-Play: Skill-building in realistic interactions. • Reflection: Self-assessment and personal insight.
Required Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laptop/Projector (for presentations)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flip charts, markers (for interactive exercises) • Printed or digital handouts (summary of trauma-informed principles, cultural notes on Roma communities) • Case study sheets (physical or digital) • Name tags or table tents (optional but helpful for group work)
Activity Instructions	<p>Introduction</p> <p>10 minutes</p> <p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the session outline and objectives. <p>Step 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Icebreaker: Ask participants to share one word that comes to mind when they hear the phrase ‘trauma-informed’. <p>Trauma-Informed Care Principles</p> <p>20 minutes</p> <p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start the activity by playing this video about trauma and the brain. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Link to video. <p>Step 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a brief overview of trauma-informed care, highlighting the key principles outlined in Annex I. You may use visual aids such as PowerPoint slides or a flip chart to support your presentation. <p>Step 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End the activity with an open Q&A to ensure comprehension.

	<p>Cultural Context: Roma Communities</p> <p>15 minutes</p> <p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give an overview of Roma history and discrimination (using 3–5 slides or bullet points). Use the information from Annex II to support you. <p>Step 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afterwards facilitate a Q&A to address assumptions or biases. Encourage the participants to reflect. <p>Interactive Activity 1: Identifying Barriers & Building Trust</p> <p>15 minutes</p> <p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants should go into small groups of 3-4. <p>Step 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They should brainstorm perceived barriers (e.g., stigma, language obstacles) and propose trust-building approaches. <p>Step 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Debrief: Collect and summarise strategies on a flip chart. <p>Interactive Activity 2: Case Studies</p> <p>30 minutes</p> <p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute prepared case studies describing Roma survivors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Link to case studies <p>Step 2</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups should discuss and identify trauma-informed interventions and cultural considerations that may be useful for the given case. <p>Step 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To end the activity, the groups should present their solutions to the larger group. <p>Role-Play</p> <p>15 minutes</p> <p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the participants with the role play scenario outlined in Annex III. Explain that the survivor (Roma teenager) is confiding about concerns regarding home safety due to violence, and the professional (GBV support worker) must engage using trauma-informed care principles. • Emphasise the goals of the role play: practising active listening, building trust, and ensuring cultural sensitivity. • Select one participant to act as the survivor and another to play the professional. <p>Step 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selected participants should act out the scenario for the group. • Encourage the rest of the group to note strengths and areas for improvement. <p>Step 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief: Focus on communication style, empathy, confidentiality, and cultural competence. • Use the reflection questions in the scenario to close the activity and discuss feedback and improvements.
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	<p>Reflection & Closing</p> <p>15 minutes</p> <p>Step 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Reflection: Have each participant write down one action they will implement in their practice going forward. <p>Step 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite a few participants to share. <p>Step 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close by thanking participants and providing final remarks/resources.
Handout Sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma-Informed Care Principles (Annex I) • Cultural Considerations for Working with Roma Survivors (Annex II) • Role-play Scenario (Annex III)
Additional Resources	<p>SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach</p> <p>Full Link: https://library.samhsa.gov/product/samhsas-concept-trauma-and-guidance-trauma-informed-approach/sma14-4884</p> <p>How to support survivors of gender-based violence when a GBV actor is not available in your area</p> <p>Full Link: https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/GBV_PocketGuide021718.pdf</p> <p>EIGE (European Institute for Gender Equality) Roma Women Talk</p> <p>Full Link: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/good-practices/roma-women-talk?language_content_entity=en</p>

	<p>National Helplines and Referral Networks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Helpline for Women Experiencing Violence: Available 24/7 and free of charge, offering support in Slovak and English. Phone: 0800 212 212. NOMORE Global Directory+2European Institute for Gender Equality+2help.unhcr.org+2 • In-Person Emergency Crisis Intervention (Blue Angels): Provides on-the-spot emergency crisis intervention by psychologists, with support available in Slovak, Ukrainian, and English. Phone: 0944 171 272. help.unhcr.org • Legal Help in Cases of Discrimination (Slovak National Centre for Human Rights): Provides assistance in Slovak, English, and Ukrainian. Phone: +421 220 850 121; Email: pravnapomocutecencom@snslp.sk. help.unhcr.org
<p>References</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council of Europe. (n.d.). <i>Roma and Travellers</i> portal and policy documents. 2. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). (n.d.). <i>Roma and Gender Equality</i> resources. 3. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). (2014). <i>SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach</i>. 4. World Health Organization (WHO). (2013). <i>Responding to Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence against Women: WHO Clinical and Policy Guidelines</i>.



Activity Sheet 5.1

Trauma-Informed Care Principles

Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) is an approach that recognises the widespread impact of trauma and prioritises creating environments that promote safety, healing, and empowerment, while actively working to avoid re-traumatisation. It shifts the perspective from asking “What’s wrong with you?” to “What happened to you?”, acknowledging the importance of lived experiences in shaping a person’s response to support.

Definition of Trauma

“Trauma” refers to a deeply distressing or disturbing experience that can have lasting negative effects on an individual’s emotional, psychological, and physical well-being.

Key Principles of Trauma-Informed Care (as defined by SAMHSA):

1. **Safety** – Ensure that physical and emotional safety is maintained for everyone involved, including clients, staff, and participants.
2. **Trustworthiness & Transparency** – Build trust through honesty, consistency, and clear communication.
3. **Peer Support** – Involve individuals with lived experience to support others, fostering empathy and connection.
4. **Collaboration & Mutuality** – Promote shared decision-making and recognise the value of each person’s role in the healing process.
5. **Empowerment, Voice & Choice** – Support individuals in recognising their strengths and maintaining autonomy in their care and choices.
6. **Cultural, Historical & Gender Sensitivity** – Be mindful of and responsive to cultural identities, historical trauma, and systemic oppression.



Additional Key Terms



Re-traumatisation: A situation or interaction that reminds someone of past trauma, causing them to feel as though it is happening again.



Trigger: A stimulus—such as a sound, smell, or phrase—that causes someone to relive or recall a traumatic experience.

Reflective Prompt



How might your organisation unintentionally re-traumatise someone?

What changes could you make to reduce this risk?



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Activity Sheet 5.2

Cultural Considerations for Working with Roma Survivors

When working with Roma survivors, it is essential to approach the topic with cultural sensitivity, avoiding assumptions and stereotypes. Emphasise that every individual is unique, no one person can represent the entire Roma community. Acknowledge that many Roma women may be wary of institutions or professionals due to past experiences of discrimination and exclusion. Privacy and trust are especially important, and facilitators should be mindful of not pressing for information too quickly.



- Be aware that gender dynamics can influence how freely Roma women feel able to speak, especially in group settings or when men are present.
- Traditional roles and family expectations may affect levels of participation or openness.
- Prioritise building trust through respectful, consistent, and non-judgemental engagement.
- Recognise that trust is not immediate and often needs to be earned over time.
- Use culturally appropriate communication, taking into account language barriers and varying literacy levels.
- Pay attention to non-verbal cues, body language, and tone, as these may have different meanings across cultures.
- When needed, use interpreters who are trusted and culturally competent.



Roma History & Discrimination – A Brief Overview

The Roma, also known as Romani people, are Europe's largest ethnic minority, with an estimated 10–12 million people living across the continent. Their origins trace back to northern India over a thousand years ago, and their migration to Europe occurred over several centuries. Importantly, the Roma are not a single, unified group, there is immense diversity within the community, including different subgroups such as the Sinti, Kalderash, and Lovari, each with distinct customs, dialects, and traditions.

Historically, Roma communities have endured deep and long-standing marginalisation. Many were enslaved in Eastern Europe until the mid-19th century, and for centuries they faced segregation, forced assimilation, and expulsion. One of the darkest chapters of this history is the Porajmos, “The Devouring”, in which an estimated 500,000 Roma were murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust.

Today, discrimination against Roma communities remains widespread. Many face poverty, limited access to healthcare, education, and employment, and are often subjected to hate speech, police violence, and institutional exclusion. Stereotypes continue to fuel negative attitudes and discriminatory policies.

However, despite these challenges, Roma communities have shown remarkable resilience. Their cultural contributions, particularly in music, dance, storytelling, and craftsmanship, are rich and vibrant. Strong family networks and cultural pride persist, and many Roma activists and organisations are working to challenge discrimination and promote justice, visibility, and equality.



Note: As a facilitator, encourage participants to reflect on how systems can perpetuate harm and what role they can play in creating more inclusive, respectful, and empowering support for Roma survivors.

Activity Sheet 5.3

Role Play Scenario – Trauma-Informed Care for Roma Survivors of GBV	
Description	<p>The aim of this role play is for gender-based violence (GBV) professionals to practice trauma-informed care techniques when working with Roma survivors. Participants will focus on active listening, empathy, while respecting privacy and cultural sensitivity. The scenario encourages professionals to engage in non-judgemental, culturally aware support, avoiding stereotypes and recognising the unique challenges faced by Roma survivors.</p> <p><i>This scenario may not be suitable for all groups. Please be sensitive when carrying out this activity as it may be triggering for some people. Realise that you never know who has been affected by GBV. Provide a disclaimer ahead of the activity and give participants the option to opt out.</i></p>
Scenario 1	<p>A Roma teenager confides in a support worker that they are experiencing violence at home but are hesitant to seek help due to concerns about cultural stigma and mistrust of authorities. The support worker must listen actively, demonstrate empathy, and collaborate with the teenager to create a safety plan that addresses both immediate and longer-term needs. Cultural sensitivity and respect for the teenager's privacy are key throughout the interaction.</p>
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role 1: Person experiencing GBV (Roma teenager) • Role 2: The GBV Professional (support worker or professional)
Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What approaches were used to ensure cultural sensitivity and avoid assumptions or stereotypes (if any)? 2. How did the GBV professional build rapport and trust with the survivor throughout the interaction? What strategies worked well? 3. What additional support or resources could the survivor have been referred to, considering their cultural background, personal context, and immediate needs? 4. What trauma-informed care principles were applied by the



	<p>GBV professional during the role play, and how effective were they in supporting the survivor's needs?</p> <p>5. Do you have any other feedback or suggestions for improvement in how the GBV professional could enhance their approach to trauma-informed care in this type of scenario?</p>
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Module 6: Addressing Discrimination and Stigma in Service Delivery

Lesson Overview

Title	Module 6: Addressing Discrimination and Stigma in Service Delivery
Target Group	GBV Professionals (including healthcare providers, social workers, law enforcement officers, and legal personnel engaging with Roma GBV survivors)
Aim	To raise awareness and build practical capacity among GBV professionals to recognise, challenge, and dismantle discrimination and stigma in service delivery. Participants will explore cultural bias, institutional barriers, and survivor-centred approaches, and co-design solutions that foster inclusivity and respect.
Duration	120 minutes
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sources and forms of stigma in service delivery• Consequences of discrimination for GBV survivors• Survivor-centred and culturally competent practice• Strategies to challenge bias and promote equity• Professional accountability and advocacy
Preparation	Facilitators should familiarise themselves with the intersection of stigma, GBV, and Roma identity. Prepare printed materials: case studies, bias cards, and workshop prompts. Ensure a safe, respectful training space with inclusive language and visual cues.

Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan	
Overview	Participants will explore real-world examples of discrimination and its impact on Roma GBV survivors. Using interactive methods such as empathy mapping, reflective discussion, and solution-focused groupwork, professionals will identify unconscious biases, consider survivor perspectives, and co-create strategies for stigma-free service delivery.
Training Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenario-based discussion • Empathy mapping • Group reflection • Role play • Peer learning • Visual workshop
Required Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flipchart/Whiteboard • Bias reflection cards • Case Study Handout • Empathy Map template • Pens • Sticky-notes • Handout 2
Activity Instructions	<p>Icebreaker Activity – Labels We Carry</p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes</p> <p><i>Step 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants: “What labels have others used to describe you, positive or negative?” <p><i>Step 2:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In pairs, ask participants to share one that felt limiting and one that felt empowering. <p><i>Step 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief with the group:

- How do labels affect trust?
- What if a survivor is already labelled before you meet them?

Activity 1: Role Play - Ilona's Story

Duration: 25 minutes

Step 1:

- Introduce the role play using the Role Play Scenario Handout.

Step 2:

- Divide participants into small groups of 3-5.
- Assign each participant a role (character) from the Role Play Scenario Handout.

Step 3:

- Ask each group to perform a short, improvised role play (5-10 minutes).

Step 4:

- Ask each participant to self-reflect on the activity through the following prompts:
 - What forms of stigma are visible/invisible here?
 - How did unconscious bias affect service delivery?
 - What might Ilona need that she did not get?

Activity 2: Empathy Mapping

Duration: 30 minutes

Step 1:

- Distribute a copy of *Handout 1 – Empathy Mapping* to each group
- Introduce the Empathy Map (four quadrants: *Thinks, Feels, Says, Does*).

Step 2:

- Ask each group to complete the map for Ilona based on the Case Study from Activity 1.
- Ask participants:
 - What might Ilona think/feel that was not expressed?

Step 3:

- Ask each group to share and compare their maps.
- Draw attention to how stigma can silence or isolate victims.

Activity 3: Co-Designing Stigma-Free Services

Duration: 30 minutes

Step 1:

- Distribute a copy of *Handout 2 – Principles of Stigma-Free Support* to each group.
- Ensure participants remain in their groups.
- Ask participants to reflect on the following prompt:
 - If you had the power to redesign how Ilona was treated, what would you change?

Step 2:

- Ask each group to write 3-5 concrete strategies for addressing bias and improving inclusivity in their own professional context (eg; intake process, language, outreach).

Step 3:

- Ask each group to present their ideas to others as a “*Team Charter for Change*”.

Activity 4: Reflection of Personal Commitments

Step 1:

- Ask participants the following prompts:
 - What bias did you notice in yourself today?
 - What one change can you commit to in your own practice?



	<p><i>Step 2:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants to write it down on a sticky note and share it with the whole group. • *Optional: Ask participants to stick their sticky notes on a wall to create a “<i>Service Pledge Wall</i>” of their personal commitments.
Handout Sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study Handout – Ilona’s Story • Handout 1 – Empathy Map • Handout 2 – Principles for Stigma-Free Support
Additional Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Women – Facts and Figures: Ending Violence Against Women • World Health Organization (WHO) – Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018 • International Rescue Committee (IRC) – What is Gender-Based Violence and How Do We Prevent It? • Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) – Women’s Human Rights and Gender-Related Concerns in Conflict Situations • Canadian Women’s Foundation – The Impact of Gender-Based Violence on Mental Health • United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) – Gender-Based Violence: A Shadow Pandemic
References	<p><i>Canadian Women’s Foundation (2021). Impact of GBV on Mental Health.</i></p> <p><i>IRC (2022). What is GBV and How Do We Prevent It?</i></p> <p><i>OHCHR (2022). Women’s Human Rights in Conflict Situations.</i></p> <p><i>UNFPA (2021). Gender-Based Violence: A Shadow Pandemic.</i></p> <p><i>United Nations Women (2023). Facts and Figures: Ending Violence Against Women.</i></p> <p><i>WHO (2021). Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates.</i></p>



Activity Sheet 6.1

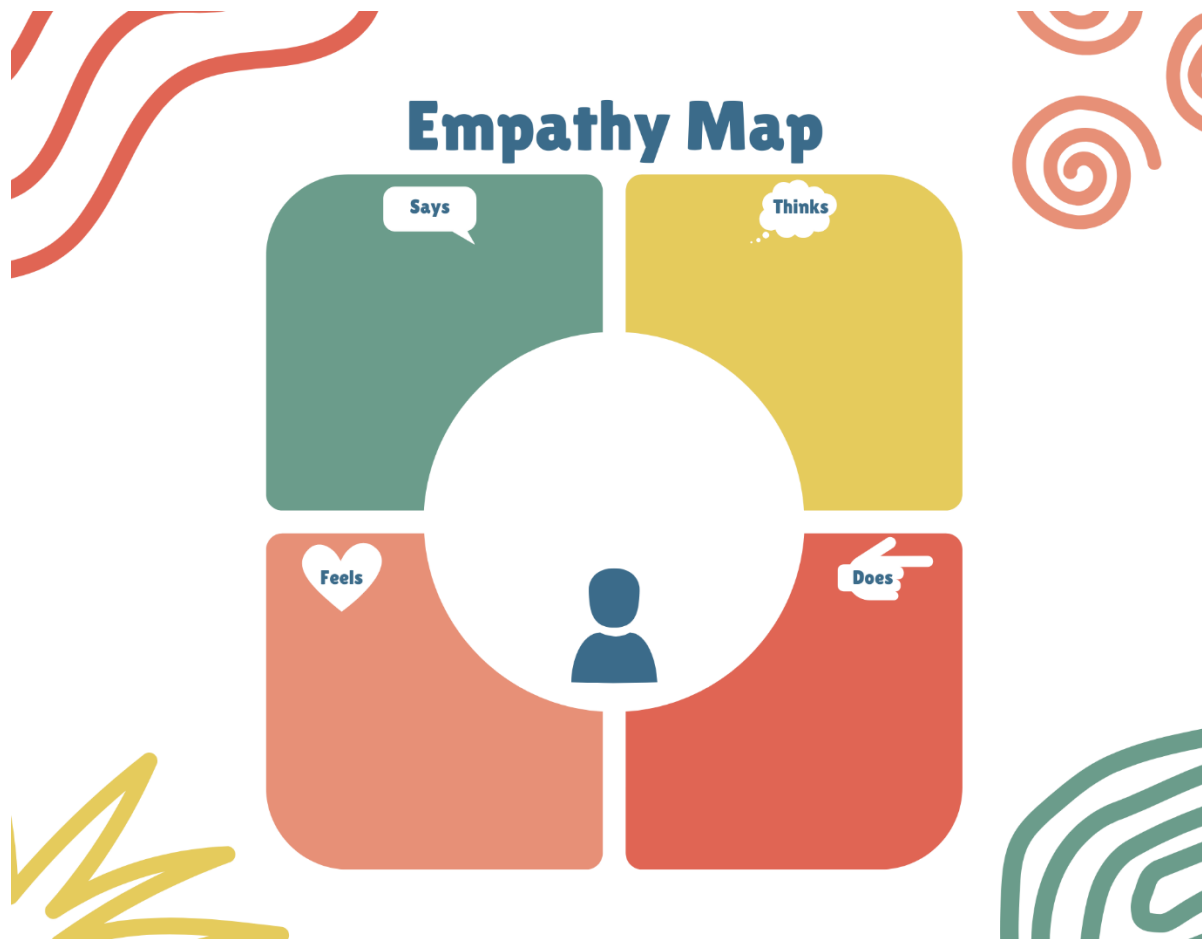
Role Play Scenario	
Purpose	To help GBV professionals explore stigma, unconscious bias, and barriers faced by Roma women in accessing services through an immersive and reflective activity.
Scenario	<p>Ilona arrives at a women's support centre after being referred by a local Roma community group. She is nervous, unsure if her concerns will be taken seriously. She fears being stereotyped or blamed.</p> <p>The Support Worker is responsible for carrying out an intake session and building trust. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is Ilona greeted? • Is cultural sensitivity shown? • Are assumptions made (about her education, lifestyle, etc.)? • How is the discussion framed around support, confidentiality, and safety? • How can the mediator/interpreter enhance or challenge this interaction?
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character 1: Ilona A young Roma woman experiencing domestic abuse. She is anxious, guarded, and uncertain about how services will treat her. She has had negative experiences with institutions before and fears being judged. • Character 2: Support Worker A GBV professional who is meeting Ilona for the first time. They are trained but may hold unconscious biases or lack awareness of Ilona's cultural context. • Character 3: Interpreter or Roma Mediator (Optional) Present to bridge language or cultural gaps. This role can support or challenge the dynamic, depending on how it's played.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character 4: Friend or Family Member (Optional) • Accompanies Ilona to the service. They may be supportive or hesitant about Ilona seeking external help, based on cultural norms or fear of discrimination. • Character 5: Service Manager (Optional) Observing the interaction or debriefing the Support Worker after the session. May represent systemic issues or offer guidance on best practices.
Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did Ilona feel during the interaction? 2. Were there moments where stigma or unconscious bias surfaced? 3. What did the Support Worker do well? What could be improved? 4. What role did cultural understanding (or lack thereof) play? 5. How could services better support someone in Ilona's situation?



Activity Sheet 6.2

Empathy Map



Activity Sheet 6.3

Handout 2 – Principles for Stigma-Free Support

Key Principles for Working with Roma Women Survivors of GBV:

1. **Cultural Humility**
Approach every interaction with respect and openness. Avoid assumptions about cultural norms or behaviours.
2. **Non-Judgemental Attitude**
Create a safe space where clients can share without fear of blame or shame.
3. **Empowerment Over Rescue**
Support clients to make their own decisions. Do not position yourself as the “saviour.”
4. **Confidentiality & Safety First**
Prioritise clear, culturally appropriate explanations about confidentiality and safeguarding.
5. **Language Access & Representation**
Use trained interpreters or mediators familiar with Roma culture. Avoid using children as translators.
6. **Systemic Awareness**
Recognise institutional bias and racism. Advocate for system-level change and inclusive practices.
7. **Continuous Reflection**
Reflect on your own biases, privilege, and power. Commit to ongoing learning and development.

Tips for Facilitators

Facilitating this training programme requires more than subject knowledge — it calls for emotional intelligence, sensitivity to cultural dynamics, and a deep commitment to trauma-informed and inclusive practice.

The following tips will support a safe, empowering, and effective learning environment:

Establish Psychological Safety

- Begin each session by setting clear ground rules around respect, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.
- Acknowledge that some discussions may be emotionally challenging and allow space for participants to step away if needed.

Use a Trauma-Informed Lens

- Provide trigger warnings before role plays or case studies that include sensitive material.
- Model empathy, non-judgemental listening, and the importance of choice throughout all activities.

Be Culturally Respectful

- Avoid assumptions or generalisations about Roma communities. Encourage participants to approach the topic with curiosity and humility.
- Emphasise diversity within the Roma population and invite open dialogue.

Facilitate Reflective Practice

- After each major activity, lead structured debriefs using guiding questions.
- Ask participants to consider how their own experiences, identities, and biases influence their work.



Encourage Peer Learning

- Position participants as co-creators of knowledge. Invite them to share case examples, personal insights, and best practices.

Adapt to the Group's Needs

- Gauge the comfort and energy levels of the group regularly. Be flexible in pacing and modify activities if necessary.

Challenge Bias with Compassion

- When moments of discomfort or resistance arise, hold space for learning rather than confrontation.
- Encourage honest dialogue while gently challenging harmful assumptions or stereotypes.

Support Self-Care

- Integrate moments of grounding, breaks, or mindfulness throughout the session.
- Remind participants of support networks and resources available to them.

Model Collaboration

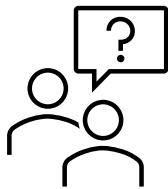
- Reflect the value of working alongside Roma mediators and community members by sharing examples of effective partnerships.
- Highlight the role of trust and mutual respect in collaborative service delivery.



Conclusion

The Capacity Building Training Programme for GBV Professionals is a call to action to build services that are safe, inclusive, and effective for Roma women who have survived gender-based violence.

Through this capacity-building training programme, you have explored the rich cultural context of Roma communities, gained insight into the unique challenges Roma women face, and developed tools for effective communication, counselling, and collaborative care. You've had the opportunity to engage in critical self-reflection, to challenge unconscious bias, and to commit to creating meaningful change in your professional practice.



The work ahead requires courage, humility, and continued learning. Whether you are a social worker, counsellor, healthcare provider, or legal professional, your role is essential in creating supportive pathways for Roma survivors, pathways that are free from stigma, grounded in empathy, and rooted in justice.

We encourage you to continue engaging with Roma communities, building partnerships with Roma mediators, and advocating for system-level change by visiting the [RoW-Power eLearning Platform](#). We hope that the knowledge and skills developed in this training programme act as a foundation of compassion, commitment, and willingness to listen to the Romani community. Together, we can ensure that every Roma woman who seeks support is met with dignity, understanding, and unwavering solidarity.



ROW-POWER

Enhancing support for Roma women victims of GBV



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