

IAWG Frontline Implementer Support Working Group Launch Meeting, March 12, 2026

Meeting objectives/agenda:

- **Briefly (re)introduce (20 mins):**
 - IAWG's new Working Group (WG) structure
 - The elements of IAWG's Strategic Plan relevant to the Frontline Implementer Support Working Group
 - The process for launching the Working Groups
- **Discuss and agree on the following, building on the IAWG Strategic Plan (60 mins):**
 - WG's scope (15 mins)
 - WG's overarching mission (15 mins)
 - WG's priorities for 2026 (30 mins)
- **Share next steps for the launch of the Working Group (10 mins)**

Meeting summary: Draft mission statement and 2026 priorities for the Frontline Implementer Support Working Group

Draft mission (one sentence summarizing the overall aim or goal of the WG): The Frontline Implementer Support Working Group expands and strengthens implementation of SRHR programming across the full continuum of emergency response by fostering bidirectional exchange with frontline implementers and elevating their voices, providing implementers with practical technical and operational guidance that addresses gaps and implementation challenges, and collaboratively advancing broad uptake of best practices.

- **Key question for the group to consider as it finalizes its mission:** Does this group include as part of its scope strengthening the mental health and well-being of frontline workers? Some participants felt that this should be a critical component of the group's work, while others felt that this is outside the scope of the group.

Potential 2026 priorities, for ongoing discussion as the WG launches:

Participants had a broad range of suggestions for priority areas for 2026, but the following two areas rose to the top when participants voted:

- Engage the SRH WG in country/regions as a link to frontline workers
- Do a mapping/inventory of existing technical/operational resources, including what needs updating and what the gaps are with respect to content, languages, and format, considering digital accessibility and operational digestibility (building on the SRH task team's work) (9 votes)

Detailed notes are below. See also the [slides](#) and [recording](#).

DETAILED MEETING NOTES

Background on IAWG's new Working Group structure

Following a multi-year consultative process to identify the best ways to adapt to IAWG's growth and the shifting context for SRHR in humanitarian settings, IAWG revised its leadership structure, transitioned to a new host organization, and restructured its working groups.

IAWG now has three leadership bodies:

- Executive Committee: The highest governing body of IAWG, leading IAWG's strategy, operations, and performance monitoring.
- Technical Oversight Committee: Provides technical, operational, and strategic input to the Executive Committee and Secretariat, approves and monitors working group workplans, and has final approval of IAWG's technical products.
- Secretariat: Now hosted by the Canadian Partnership for Women and Children's Health, the Secretariat focuses on IAWG operations, membership, and advocacy and communications. Currently, the Secretariat is made up of a full time coordinator and a part-time comms assistant.

Additionally, IAWG consolidated 14 sub-working groups into three working groups aligned with the strategic plan, complemented by task teams and communities of practice.

Working Groups

Standing groups that meet regularly to advance the core pillars of IAWG's work



Task Teams

Time bound teams that lead IAWG's work related to a specific initiative or event



Communities of Practice

CoPs focused on specific technical or cross-cutting topics

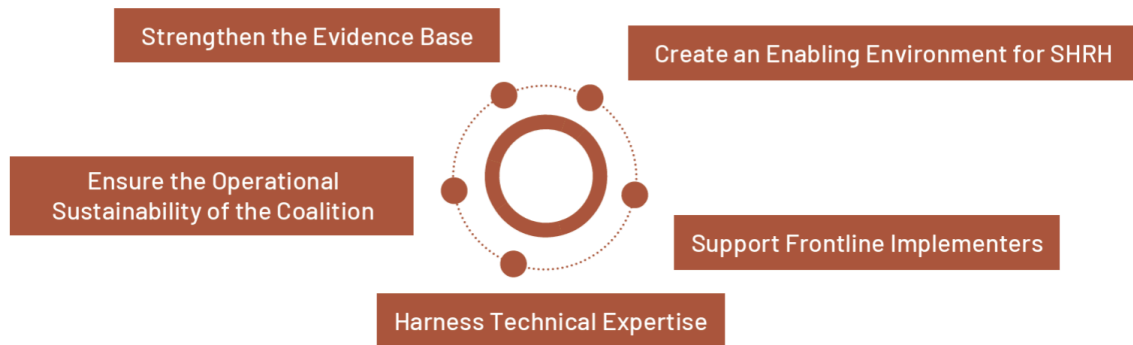
Background on IAWG's strategic plan, focusing on the elements that are relevant to the Frontline Implementer Support Working Group

IAWG's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan provides the basis for the working group restructure. It

includes five priority areas.

Strategic Priorities to Expand Reach and Accessibility

IAWG is committed to fostering meaningful and diverse coalition participation; local-national-regional-global linkages; equitable partnerships; and strong coordination across the full spectrum of an emergency. Over the next five years, IAWG will focus on the following principal areas of work to expand our reach and improve accessibility of our coalition resources and expertise:



The Frontline Implementer Support WG advances the pillars focused on supporting frontline implementers and harnessing collective technical expertise for SRHR in humanitarian settings.

SUPPORT FRONTLINE IMPLEMENTERS

IAWG's work is driven by and for SRHR frontline implementers. **IAWG will broaden its reach and strengthen its infrastructure so that more frontline implementers have the resources and support they need to implement high-quality SRHR programming throughout the continuum of an emergency. IAWG will continue to center frontline implementers' experience and expertise across all of our work.** IAWG will:



- Identify and support the capacities and needs of frontline SRHR implementers.
- Innovate to extend reach and access to capacity strengthening and quality improvement resources such as trainings, tools, guidelines, and mentorship opportunities.
- Support SRHR surge capacity in acute emergencies.
- Create vibrant communities of practice and equitable participation in the coalition.

HARNESS COLLECTIVE TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

A key strength of the coalition lies in the breadth and depth of IAWG members' expertise - our guidance is expertly vetted and grounded in practical application. ***IAWG will serve as the touchstone for technical excellence within and beyond the SRHR sector so that humanitarian and development spheres incorporate best practices and contribute to the institutionalization and standardization of SRHR across existing and emerging areas.*** IAWG will:

- Increase uptake of existing IAWG and partner technical resources.
- Fill resource gaps identified by our members and partners from local to global levels.
- Align technical resources from across health and related sectors with the *Inter-Agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings*.



Process for launching the Working Groups

IAWG is developing three adaptable templates to guide the launch of each WG:

- **WG Terms of Reference:** Defines the WG's mission, value proposition, and functions/ways of working
- **WG Annual Workplan:** Outlines the WG's annual objectives, activities, outputs, and timelines
- **WG Leadership TOR:** Describes the WG leadership roles and responsibilities, terms, eligibility, and selection processes

Additionally, IAWG is hosting two launch meetings for each WG:

- **First meeting (today):** Agree on the overarching WG **PURPOSE** and **WHAT** its priorities are (building on IAWG's strategic plan)
 - Open to everyone
- **Second meeting:** Agree on the nitty gritty of **HOW** the WG will function – WG **governance**
 - Open to IAWG members who wish to join the WG

IAWG will provide the three templates to the WGs with proposed language based on these launch meetings. As the WG gets going, it can revise and adapt any and all language to meet its needs, as well as flesh out its 2026 activities.

Participants were asked if they had any feedback on the process, and they agreed it works well.

WG Scope and Mission

This WG aims to bring together two components of the IAWG Strategic Plan:

- Part 1: SUPPORT FRONTLINE IMPLEMENTERS: Frontline implementers have the resources and support they need to implement high-quality SRHR programming throughout the continuum of an emergency
- Part 2: HARNESS COLLECTIVE TECHNICAL EXPERTISE: Humanitarian and development spheres incorporate best practices and contribute to the institutionalization and standardization of SRHR across existing and emerging areas

Proposed starting point for discussion of the WG’s scope, identifying the “throughline” for these two pillars: Support, expand, and strengthen implementation of SRHR programming throughout the continuum of an emergency

Proposed starting point for discussion of the WG’s mission (one sentence summarizing the overall aim or goal of the WG): The Frontline Implementer Support Working Group improves implementation of high-quality SRHR across the full continuum of emergency response by supporting and strengthening capacity of frontline implementers, addressing gaps in technical and operational guidance, and advancing broad uptake of best practices.

Feedback from participants on the scope and mission during and after the call:

- Participants generally liked the focus on implementation as the throughline
- Several participants suggested emphasizing frontline staff’s needs and challenges in practice, including implementation barriers and social/mental support (i.e., addressing burnout and strengthening their resilience). However, other participants questioned whether addressing implementers’ mental health and well-being is outside the scope of IAWG. This is an important issue for the group to continue discussing and refining.
- Participants also wanted the scope/mission to reflect that IAWG isn’t just supporting or strengthening capacity of frontline implementers but also learning from them - it’s more of an exchange; the mission should reflect the importance of integrating frontline implementer voices and supporting peer-to-peer exchange
- Participants liked the focus on addressing/filling gaps in technical and operational guidance but commented on the need for this WG to also promote uptake of existing technical resources, ensuring they are practical, accessible, and digestible to frontline implementers to facilitate the translation of evidence to action
- Several comments reflected a desire for the group to emphasize collaboration/coordination - with other IAWG WGs, with the development sector, and cross-sectoral collaboration (i.e., with GBV, nutrition, and WASH sectors)
- A few commenters suggested that this group provide context-specific/localized guidance and solutions. For discussion: Is this within the scope of the WG? Context-specific and localized tools are very important but would this be more in the scope of national/regional bodies?

Proposed revision of the WG’s mission: The Frontline Implementer Support Working Group expands and strengthens implementation of SRHR programming across the full continuum of emergency response by fostering bidirectional exchange with frontline implementers and elevating their voices, providing implementers with practical technical and operational guidance that addresses gaps and implementation challenges, and collaboratively advancing broad uptake of best practices.

- **Key question for the group to consider as it finalizes its mission:** Does this group include as part of its scope strengthening the mental health and well-being of frontline workers? Some participants felt that this should be a critical component of the group's work, while others felt that this is outside the scope of the group. The group may also want to consider whether providing context-specific/localized guidance and solutions is within the scope of the WG.

WG 2026 priorities:

Participants brainstormed potential priorities for the WG to focus on in 2026. A broad range of suggestions came in. Participants then voted by “liking” the suggestions that they felt were most important.

The following two areas received the most support:

- Engage the SRH WG in country/regions as a link to frontline workers (11 votes)
- Do a mapping/inventory of existing technical/operational resources, including what needs updating and what the gaps are with respect to content, languages, and format, considering digital accessibility and operational digestibility (building on the SRH task team's work) (9 votes)

Other areas that got several votes, some of which are linked to the areas above, included:

- Strengthen work with the SRH task team (7 votes)
- Multisectoral integration (6 votes)
- Promote MISP prioritization in HRPs (5 votes)
- Support frontline implementers to sift through the universe of guidance and tools during a response (4 votes)

Other areas also emerged but received three or fewer votes (including documenting impacts of funding cuts, linking to climate change, ASRH programming, GBV/SRH integration).

After the meeting, one reviewer also suggested that a priority area for 2026 would be more clearly defining the group's responsibilities, objectives, strengths, and weaknesses.

This brainstorming session provides a starting point for the WG to build on as it launches and fleshes out its 2026 priorities, objectives, and activities.

Next steps

- IAWG will schedule the second WG launch meeting to discuss the group's functions/ways of working and leadership roles, responsibilities, and selection processes. Please note that this conversation will focus on the governance of the WG and is intended to be for participants who plan to join the WG.
- If you have not done so already, submit your 2026 IAWG membership application. Both new and renewing members must submit an application. Once your membership is approved, you will be eligible to participate in IAWG Working Groups and other bodies.

Organizations should apply [here](#) and individuals should apply [here](#). Please note that 2026 membership fees have been waived. If you have membership questions please reach out to Sarah Knaster at sknaster@canwach.ca.