

IAWG Learning & Evidence Working Group Launch Meeting, **March 16, 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 Learning and Evidence Working Group
 - The process for launching the Working Groups
- **Discuss and agree on the following, building on IAWG's Strategic Plan and two recent SRHRiE research scoping and prioritization exercises (60 mins):**
 - WG's overarching mission (15 mins)
 - WG's value proposition (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, value proposition, and potential 2026 priorities for the Learning & Evidence Working Group

Draft mission (one sentence summarizing the overall aim or goal of the WG):

The Learning and Evidence Working Group collectively sets research and implementation learning priorities and promotes the generation, dissemination, and utilization of evidence to strengthen SRHR across the emergency response continuum.

Draft value proposition (three to five bullet points articulating the unique value-add that the group offers):

- Go-to body for thought leadership on SRHR research and implementation learning in humanitarian settings and translation of evidence to practical guidance
- Forum to exchange and share information on current and planned research and evaluation - avoiding duplication and identifying opportunities for collaboration
- Convening space to build consensus among leading experts on SRHRiE evidence gaps and priorities, rather than driven by any one donor or organization's priorities
- Co-creation space for adaptive, context-driven, inclusive, and innovative approaches and partnerships for SRHRiE research in humanitarian settings
- Strong and trusted platform to identify new learning and evidence on SRHRiE for dissemination through the broader IAWG platform

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

- Define and operationalize strategies to build and sustain engagement in the WG (i.e., what is the hook for a broad range of researchers? is there a specific profile of who we want to engage in the WG?)

- Produce evidence briefs for policymakers, donors, and implementers to support evidence to action and ensure evidence reaches decision-makers and field operations
- Consider how to utilize/maximize the [RAISE](#) Initiative's weekly literature review email and library of articles spanning 20 years
- Document/consolidate best practices and lessons learned on partnerships with local research organizations
- Systematically examine the effects of localization on shifts in power and resources (potentially starting by developing a methodology to do so)
- Synthesize evidence on SRHR preparedness interventions that support service continuity (potentially in coordination with the SRH task team)

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

Advocacy & Accountability

Frontline Implementer Support

Learning & Evidence

Task Teams

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

General Member Meetings

Field Manual Revision

Global Evaluation

Current Emergencies

Communities of Practice

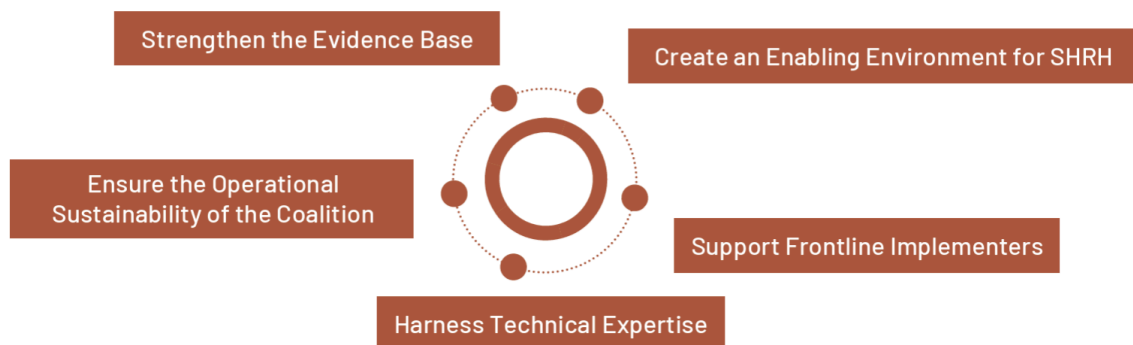
CoPs focused on specific technical or cross-cutting topics

Background on IAWG's strategic plan, focusing on the elements that are relevant to the Learning and Evidence 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 Learning & Evidence Working Group advances the pillar focused on strengthening the evidence base for SRHR in humanitarian settings.

STRENGTHEN THE EVIDENCE BASE

Data is critical to understanding the magnitude of needs, gaps, progress, and best practice in humanitarian settings. ***IAWG will generate and strategically disseminate evidence needed to drive the field forward over the next 10 years. Our coordination role will ensure new research is not duplicative and informs public health action at the frontlines.***

IAWG will:

- Undertake a Global Evaluation to assess the current state of SRHR in humanitarian settings.
- Set and move forward the priority research agenda for the field.
- Identify opportunities for and pursue transformative research through equitable partnerships.
- Support dissemination and uptake of evidence conducted by IAWG and its coalition members.



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 and two recent SRHRiE scoping and research prioritization studies)
 - Open to everyone
- **Second meeting:** Agree on the nitty gritty of **HOW** the WG will function – **WG governance**
 - Open only 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. They highlighted:

- The importance of focusing on how we will build and sustain engagement in the WG
- The need to avoid duplication by grounding discussion in existing research prioritization and scoping exercises, as well as what other groups already do

WG Mission (one sentence summarizing the overall aim or goal of the WG):

Starting point for discussion, based on the IAWG Strategic Plan: The Learning and Evidence Working Group leads IAWG's efforts to set research priorities and support the generation and dissemination of evidence needed to strengthen SRHR across the emergency response cycle.

Feedback on the starting point from participants during the call:

The two pieces of feedback that emerged most clearly were:

- Participants suggested and generally agreed on explicitly mentioning implementation learning, since a lot of valuable evidence in humanitarian settings comes from operational experience, not only from formal research.
- Participants wanted better reflection of utilization/uptake and translation of evidence into practical guidance for implementers that they can use during operational response.

Proposed revision: The Learning and Evidence Working Group collectively sets research and implementation learning priorities and promotes the generation, dissemination, and utilization of evidence to strengthen SRHR across the emergency response continuum.

WG value proposition (three to five bullet points articulating the unique value-add that the group offers):

Starting point for discussion:

- Go-to for thought leadership and guidance on research in humanitarian settings
- Convening space to build consensus among leading experts on SRHRiE evidence gaps and priorities that are not driven by any one donor or organization
- Co-creation space for innovative approaches to research in humanitarian settings
- Strong and trusted dissemination platform
- A forum to share information on current and planned research - avoiding duplication and identifying opportunities for collaboration

Feedback on the starting point from participants during the call:

- Participants agreed that "avoiding duplication and identifying opportunities for collaboration" is a very important function of the WG
- Participants wanted the value proposition to explicitly highlight implementation learning and the translation of evidence into practical guidance for implementers.
- Participants wanted the value proposition to reflect using the WG as a space for exchange of ideas and feedback, such as discussing challenges to SRHR research in humanitarian settings and providing input/feedback on draft research documents
- Participants found the word "innovative" to be too limiting and suggested adding other words like adaptive, responsive, and inclusive

Proposed revision to the value proposition based on participant feedback:

- Go-to body for thought leadership on SRHR research and implementation learning in humanitarian settings and translation of evidence to practical guidance
- Forum to exchange and share information on current and planned research and evaluation - avoiding duplication and identifying opportunities for collaboration
- Convening space to build consensus among leading experts on SRHRiE evidence gaps and priorities, rather than driven by any one donor or organization's priorities
- Co-creation space for adaptive, context-driven, inclusive, and innovative approaches and partnerships for SRHRiE research in humanitarian settings
- Strong and trusted platform to identify new learning and evidence on SRHRiE for dissemination through the broader IAWG platform

WG 2026 priorities:

Facilitators grounded the discussion by sharing findings from two recent SRHRiE research scoping and prioritization exercises:

- [IAWG's scoping study to inform the next Global Evaluation](#)
- [Elrha's SRHR in humanitarian settings implementation research agenda](#)

Participants then discussed what the group should prioritize in 2026.

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

- Define and operationalize strategies to build and sustain engagement in the WG (i.e., what is the hook for a broad range of researchers? is there a specific profile of who we want to engage in the WG?)
- Produce evidence briefs for policymakers, donors, and implementers to support evidence to action and ensure evidence reaches decision-makers and field operations
- Consider how to utilize/maximize the [RAISE](#) Initiative's weekly literature review email and library of articles spanning 20 years
- Document/consolidate best practices and lessons learned on partnerships with local research organizations
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- Synthesize evidence on SRHR preparedness interventions that support service continuity (potentially in coordination with the SRH task team)

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.