Western Education | Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children

LearningNetwork

EVALUATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN TRAINING INITIATIVES: A PRIMER

Facilitate. Educate. Collaborate.

LearningNetwork

The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Ontario.

Authors: Ryan Broll
Claire Crooks
Linda Baker
Anna-Lee Straatman

We are grateful for the contributions from the Learning Network Resource Group.

Funded by:

Ontario

July 2012
Learning Network
Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children, Western University.
Download copies at no cost from:
www.vawlearningnetwork.ca

© 2012 Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children

Contents

Purpose of an Evaluation 3

Effectiveness of VAW Training Initiatives On … 4

… Increasing Awareness? 5

… Changing Attitudes or Behaviours? 5

… Producing Organizational Change? 6

… Reducing Violence? 6

Evaluating VAW Training Initiatives 7

Types of Evaluations 8

Logic Models 10

Domestic Violence Core Competencies 12

Sexual Violence Core competencies 12

Common Challenges in the Evaluation of Training Initiatives 12

Checklist for Critical Steps in the Evaluation of Training Initiatives 13

Conclusion 14

References 15

Additional Resources 17

Appendix A: Core Competencies for DV Training Initiatives 19

Appendix B: Core Competencies for Sexual Violence Training 22

The Violence Against Women (VAW) Learning Network, funded by the Province of Ontario, at the Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children (CREVAWC) was developed based on the recommendations of the Domestic Violence Advisory Council's 2009 report, *Transforming our Communities.* The VAW Learning Network operates as a clearinghouse for VAW training and public education organizations across Ontario, and aims to provide easier access to VAW resources, including curricula, research reports, and evaluation tools. It also aims to support and promote education and training resources to serve professionals, the public, and the government. All women risk experiencing gender-based violence. Women who are further marginalized by differences including race, class, ability, faith, sexual orientation, age, etc. are even more vulnerable to this violence (Domestic Violence Advisory Council, 2009).

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief overview on the evaluation of VAW training initiatives. We begin by briefly describing the purpose of evaluations, before reviewing the current evaluation literature on the effectiveness of VAW training initiatives in increasing awareness; changing attitudes, behaviours, and organizational processes; and reducing violence. We then describe the role of evaluations in VAW training programs and outline the types and levels of evaluation available. Finally, we discuss the importance of logic models, providing examples and guides on how to construct them, identify common evaluation challenges, and offer several critical steps to consider when conducting an evaluation of VAW training programs.

Purpose of an Evaluation

With hectic schedules and little additional funding aside from what is necessary to conduct the training itself, evaluations of VAW training initiatives can be overlooked. However, program evaluations – which are systematic investigations of the value of a training program (Zarinpoush, 2006) – are an important component of any training. Evaluations can help to identify criteria for successes and challenges, lessons learned, areas for improvement, and new goals (Zarinpoush, 2006).

Imagine Canada's *Project Evaluation Guide for Nonprofit Organizations* (Zarinpoush, 2006) notes that "evaluation is an important tool that your organization can use to demonstrate its accountability, improve its performance, increase its abilities to obtain funds or future planning, and fulfill the organizational objectives" (p. iv). Figure 1 below presents Imagine Canada's four-step process for planning, implementing, analyzing, and sharing the results of your evaluation.

Figure 1. Imagine Canada's Process for Conducting a Program Evaluation Process (Zarinpoush, 2006)

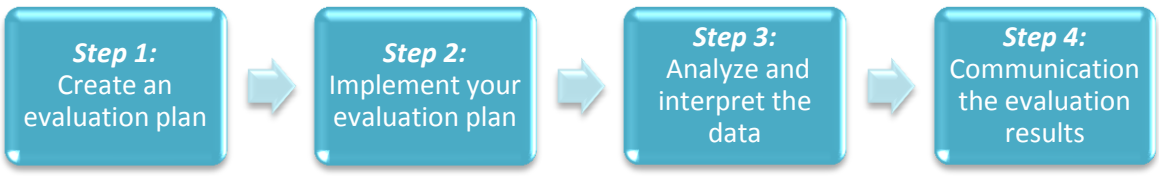

Figure 2 outlines Imagine Canada's explanation of why undertaking an evaluation is a worthwhile endeavor.

Figure 2. Purpose of Evaluation (Zarinpoush, 2006, p. iv)

> The purpose of an evaluation is to provide information for actions such as decision-making, strategic planning, reporting, or program modification. Project evaluation helps you understand the progress, success, and effectiveness of a project. It provides you with a comprehensive description of a project, including insight on the
>
> - needs your project will address;
> - people who need to get involved in your project;
> - definition of success for your project;
> - outputs and immediate results that you could expect;
> - outcomes your project is intended to achieve;
> - activities needed to meet the outcomes; and,
> - alignment and relationships between your activities and outcomes.

As shown in figure 2, a well-designed and implemented evaluation does more than satisfy funders' requirements. It is a critical tool for maximizing the impact and sustainability of your training initiatives.

Effectiveness of VAW Training Initiatives On …

Stemming from a meeting of developers and deliverers of domestic violence training programs in Ontario that have received funding from the Ontario Women's Directorate (OWD), the CREVAWC put forth 14 "Promising Practices" for VAW training initiatives. These practices range from targeting training to specific audiences, being mindful of cultural and language barriers, and using the principles of adult education to effectively communicating the strategy of the training to increase credibility, and improving the sustainability of initiatives (CREVAWC, 2011). While adhering to these practices is an important first step towards developing effective VAW training programs, a necessary second step involves evaluating the effectiveness of these initiatives.

Presently, the VAW field is characterized by, "few evaluations and therefore by a dearth of knowledge on proven approaches that can guide policies and programs" (UNIFEM, 2012, p. 21). As a result of this lack of rigorous evaluation, it is difficult to identify best practices despite consensus that a great deal of knowledge has been accumulated and disseminated (UNIFEM, 2012). Further confounding this problem is that when evaluations have been conducted they vary greatly in methodology, scope, and scientific rigour, making it difficult to generalize findings to other populations or settings (UNIFEM, 2012).

Recognizing these limitation of the field in general, the following sections highlight what evidence is available in the literature on the effectiveness of VAW training on increasing awareness, changing attitudes and/or behaviours, producing organizational change, and reducing violence.

… Increasing Awareness?

An obvious short term goal of many training initiatives is to increase participants' awareness of the many issues surrounding VAW. Fortunately, many training programs are successful in accomplishing this task and numerous evaluations have demonstrated that training often increases participants' awareness and identification of VAW (Magen & Conroy, 1997; Shastri & Wald, 2007). For example, an evaluation of a state-wide training program in Victoria, Australia found consistent improvements in participants' abilities to identify risk indicators and the presence of family violence and to refer clients to appropriate agencies (Family Violence Reform Coordination Unit, 2010).

Importantly, the benefits of training programs may extend beyond the individuals who actually receive the training – that is, those who receive training have been found to share the information they acquired with others, thereby extending the reach of training initiatives (Shastri & Wald, 2007). Because these third parties with whom information is shared are unlikely to be included in formal evaluations, the impact of information sharing is unknown. Nonetheless, it is promising that training participants attempt to increase the awareness of others.

… Changing Attitudes or Behaviours?

A second goal of many training programs is to change participants' attitudes and behaviors with respect to VAW. Several systematic evaluations of training initiatives have demonstrated their effectiveness in producing such changes. Stemming from an increased awareness of issues surrounding VAW is an improved skill set for those working with victims, such as significant reductions in behaviours like blaming the victim for their abuse (Shastri & Wald, 2007). In many cases, a focus on analysis and assessment has proven important to producing attitudinal and behavioural changes (Hoddinott, 2005).

Magen and Conroy (1997) found that VAW training can significantly alter attitudes from pre- to post-test on several constructs, including: VAW is justified, women gain from beatings, offenders are responsible and should be punished, and help should be given to victims. Gendered differences are also notable – whereas before training men and women differed on four of five dimensions, after training they differed on only one (Magen & Conroy, 1997). Similarly, following a two day training program for child protection personnel, respondents were provided with scenarios and asked how they would respond. After being trained, respondents were less likely to hold the victim responsible for stopping the violence, tell the victim she must end the relationship, and to make referrals to couples counseling (Saunders & Anderson, 2000).

Some evaluations have also demonstrated that training programs – such as the Common Risk Assessment Framework training program, a state-wide training program for service providers, police, and members of the courts, in Victoria, Australia – can have a long-term impact on the practices of trainees (Family Violence Reform Coordination Unit, 2010). For example, several months after training

72% of participants reported asking questions about family violence, 68% incorporated risk assessments into their work, 84% had developed safety plans, and 74% were referring clients to other services (Family Violence Reform Coordination Unit, 2010). This same training program was also found to increase empathy and understanding amongst participants – one trainee remarked, "I am more able to place myself in the shoes of a woman experiencing domestic violence to assist me to identify hidden factors and to consider the complexity of a woman's situation" (Family Violence Reform Coordination Unit, 2010, p. 4).

However, not all programs are effective in changing behaviours. For example, although a one-hour training on intimate partner violence has been found sufficient to increase health care practitioners perceived-self efficacy in dealing with VAW in some instances, it is not always sufficient to actually change behaviours (Mason & McMahon, n.d.). Indeed, much research has shown that it is easier to change attitudes and increase knowledge than to change behaviour (e.g., Schoening et al., 2004; Hinderliter et al., 2003). These findings underscore the importance of evaluating both attitude/knowledge and behaviour change before declaring a program effective.

… Producing Organizational Change?

As fiscal responsibility and the financial outcomes of training (or, returns on investment) become increasingly important, the effect of training programs on organizational processes and outcomes is increasingly important to understand (Antle & Martin, 2003). While it is generally recognized that VAW training initiatives seem to be most successful when they are targeted at specific audiences (CREVAWC, 2011), some evidence is beginning to suggest that training can produce organizational change. For example, training programs that increase awareness among service providers of the experiences, limitations, and policies of other agencies may be helpful in producing organizational-level changes, such as policies and procedures, professional development opportunities, and the development of agreements with other services (Family Violence Reform Coordination Unit, 2010; Hoddinott, 2005). Training programs have also been found to improve communication, improve attitudes towards domestic violence and sexual assault, improve collaborations, and enhance programs (Shastri & Wald, 2007).

In Victoria, Australia, 67% of participants who received VAW training reported organizational changes to practices following training, such as incorporating the Common Risk Assessment Framework into intake, assessment, and case management; professional development; data collection and evaluation; and the development of formal connections with other agencies (Family Violence Reform Coordination Unit, 2010).

… Reducing Violence?

The effectiveness of VAW training programs on reducing violence is difficult to accurately determine. Not only can it be difficult to establish the counterfactual and to identify what changes would have occurred without training, but ascertaining the impact of a training program on a complex social problem (such as violence) is complicated. Nevertheless, some research suggests that reducing violence is a worthwhile long-term goal for some VAW training initiatives when high levels of community

involvement are included. The Violence Awareness and Action Training (VAAT) Program provides one such example. The VAAT is a one-day workshop offered in Newfoundland that is co-facilitated by several partnering agencies and delivered within an inter-departmental-community model intended to improve interagency communication and coordination, and collaboration with community partners. An evaluation of the VAAT program found that the content addresses root causes of violence, which is fundamental to preventing violence (Hoddinott, 2005). However, Hoddinott (2005) did not actually demonstrate a reduction in violence, and such results may not be an appropriate goal for many training programs.

Nevertheless, training programs for professionals involved in the justice system, such as police officers, lawyers, and judges, have proved beneficial in increasing awareness around VAW-related issues. As a result of this increased awareness, in-depth evaluations have demonstrated improvements in investigations, which helps to ensure victim safety and may reduce violence in the long-term (Shastri & Wald, 2007).

Evaluating VAW Training Initiatives

Given the trend towards evidence-based practice and increased fiscal constraints, funders and other stakeholders often want to know the impact that training has on participants, and not merely whether participants were satisfied with the experience (CREVAWC, 2011). When such questions arise, a program evaluation should be considered. Although the findings and recommendations stemming from an evaluation are often the primary purpose for undertaking an evaluation, the process itself is useful for encouraging dialogue and learning (Mickwitz, 2003). Other benefits noted in the literature include supporting accountability, building capacity, increasing understanding (e.g., the intended and unintended results of a program, why a program is or is not successful, how to address challenges, etc.), providing information for decision making, and increasing program improvement (Burt et al., 1997; Kahan, 2008). It is also important to ensure that a program may not be unintentionally producing negative outcomes. For example, some evidence shows that programs recommending mandatory reporting of VAW by health-care providers to the police jeopardizes confidentiality and may put the victim at increased risk (Short et al., 1998). Similarly, increasing self-efficacy without increasing competence can be problematic. For example, trainees might be left with the impression that they can easily discuss abuse with a victim simply by watching a video of a practitioner speaking to a client (Short et al., 1998)

There is a need in the VAW field to move beyond obtaining anecdotal feedback to conducting effective evaluations to advance learning (CREVAWC, 2011). Problematically, VAW training initiatives and funding programs have rarely included resources for formal assessments and evaluation (CREVAWC, 2011; UNIFEM, 2012), which makes it difficult to determine the impact of interventions on observed change (UNIFEM, 2012). Nevertheless, “the promotion of evidence-based practice and policy encourages practitioners and scholars to aim for comprehensive and systematic review of initiatives” (Carson et al., 2009, p. 10). Moreover, to better develop sustainability strategies, evidence of the long-term impact of VAW training initiatives is required (CREVAWC, 2011).

Types of Evaluations

Although most training initiatives include some type of evaluation, there is little consistency in the tools and methods used (CREVAWC, 2011). In a gathering of those who offer domestic violence training funded by the OWD, some participants described using pre- and post-assessments, others used qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques, and still others used simulation "clients" to test trainees some time after the training was received (CREVAWC, 2011).

It is important to begin by asking what must be learned and how the findings will be used, because these questions determine the type of evaluation (Burt et al., 1997). With this in mind, a widely accepted evaluation approach was developed by Kirkpatrick (1996) and is credited with revolutionizing the evaluation of training programs (Thackwray, 1997). The approach outlines four levels of measurement that identify the range of training effects:

- **Reactions.** Immediately measuring "customer satisfaction" with a training program.
- **Learning.** Assessing changes in attitudes, increased knowledge, and/or improved skills.
- **Behaviour changes.** Assessing changes in participants' performance or ability to apply learning.
- **Results, or problem impact.** Assessing the impact or applied results of the training (Kirkpatrick, 1996).

Each level of assessment provides important information for the development, evaluation, and revision of trainings (Gramckow et al., 1997). Table 1 models Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation and how they apply to common goals of VAW training initiatives. The timing of evaluations at each level is also taken into account (Gramckow et al., 1997).

To date, most training evaluations have focused exclusively on reaction and learning (Gramckow et al., 1997). There is an important distinction between these first two levels that is often muddied; often participants' perceptions of learning (i.e., reaction level) are described as evidence of actual knowledge acquisition (i.e., learning level). In general, the latter requires some sort of pre-test to measure the gains in knowledge that can be attributed to the training. Antle and Martin (2003) note that many evaluators and administrators avoid level four evaluations because they are more time consuming and data may not be routinely available. According to the CREVAWC (2011, p. 11), the long-term impact of many violence against women training programs is difficult to measure for four reasons:

1. The time frames for funding are often too short to do follow-up;
2. Evaluation of "knowledge to practice" is not strong;
3. Refresh (follow-up) training and a plan to deal with new workers who have not been trained are not often considered in the design of the training; and,
4. Organizations lose the ability to promote the tools and continue training after funding is gone.

Nevertheless, Kirkpatrick (1996) argues that data should be collected at all levels to meaningfully assess training outcomes (see also Kahan, 2008). As Carson et al. (2009, p. 12) explain,

> When the focus switches to outcomes of programs rather than just usage or throughput…it is harder because comprehensive evaluations seek to go beyond descriptive data to establish the

counterfactual. That is, they need to determine whether desired changes did happen, but also what would have happened in the absence of the program, and whether the assistance for one group is at the expense of another group.

Table 1. Kirkpatrick's Levels of Evaluation Applied to VAW Training Initiatives (Granckow, 1997)[1]

Evaluation Level	Training Goals	Timing
Reaction	Perceived knowledge gained Perceived attitude change Perceived skills acquired New behavioural intentions	Immediate
Learning	Knowledge gained Attitude change Skills learned Plan in place for carrying out behavioural intentions	Before (baseline) Immediate Short-term Long-term
Behaviour change	Skills use on the job Own behaviour change beyond use of skills Changes in behaviours of others Changes in "behaviours" of organizations	Short-term Long-term
Impact on VAW	Improved victim outcomes Reduced levels of VAW in the community	Long-term

In addition to different levels of evaluation to measure impacts of training, there are also various types of evaluations that may be conducted at different points in a program's development or implementation (see Figure 3). For example, a needs assessment is an evaluation conducted before the training is even developed. Other evaluations conducted during training implementation may measure whether the program is being implemented as intended and identify barriers to implementation. Finally, questions about the extent to which the desired goals of a program are being met, and the cost effectiveness of a program merit different types of program evaluation (Kahan, 2008).

Program developers and evaluators must recognize that not every program is ready for an outcome evaluation, nor does every program require the same level of evaluation. Because resources are often limited, it is important to consider the type of evaluation that best suits your program and what information you require the evaluation to provide (Burt et al., 1997). Oftentimes, formative evaluations

are conducted before outcome evaluations to measure implementation fidelity, or the extent to which programs are implemented as intended. Implementation fidelity can be thought of as moderating the

[1] Notes: *Immediate* evaluations are conducted during a training session or before participants leave. *Short-term* evaluations are done once participants' have returned to work for a short time, usually two to three months (but sometimes up to six months) after training. *Long-term* evaluations can be conducted months or years after the training – the timing depends on how long it is expected for the impact of training to materialize.

relationship between interventions and their intended outcomes – how well a program is implemented affects its success (Carroll et al., 2007). A number of factors may influence implementation fidelity, including the content, frequency, and duration of trainings, as well as the complexity of the intervention, quality of delivery, and participant responsiveness (Carroll et al., 2007).

After such evaluations, an outcome evaluation may be warranted in order to better understand the effects achieved by a program, or the effectiveness of the intervention in generating change (UNIFEM, 2008). It is at this point that one may attempt to answer questions such as whether the program achieved the planned results, what strategies worked and did not work, and whether the program made a difference for those it was intended to impact (UNIFEM, 2008).

Figure 3. Types of Program Evaluations (Kahan, 2008)

Prelimary Evaluations

- *Needs Assessment.* Used to learn what the people or community that you hope to reach might need.
- *Resource Assessment.* Used to assess the resources or skills that exist among the people or communities with which you hope to work. Often conducted alongside a needs assessment.
- *Evaluability Assessment.* Conducted to determine whether a project is ready for a formal evaluation. It can suggest which evaluation methods would best suit the project.

Formative Evaluation (or Process Evaluation)

- Tells how the project is operating, whether it is being implemented the way it was planned, and whether problems in implementation have emerged.
- A primary goal is to identify areas where project administration and delivery can be approved.

Outcome Evaluation

- Examines the extent to which a project has achieved the outcomes it set at the outset.
- Outcomes are sometimes designated as short-term, intermediate, or long-term.

Economic Evaluation

- *Cost-effectiveness Study.* Examines the relationship between project costs and project outcomes. It identifies the cost associated with each level of improvement in an outcome.
- *Cost-benefit Analysis.* Similar to a cost-effectiveness analysis in that it examines the relationship between project costs and outcomes (or beneifts), but it assigns a dollar value to the outcome or benefit so that a ratio can be obtained to show the number of dollars spent and the number of dollars saved or positive benefits achieved.

Logic Models

In the context of an evaluation, it is important to begin with a clear understanding of a program's goals and objectives. It is also important to carefully consider the activities that make up a program and your beliefs about how those activities eventually relate to achieving the program's desired goals (Burt et al., 1997). In considering these questions, it is often helpful to create a logic model, which clearly outlines

the expected sequence of steps from the training program to eventual client outcomes (OHPE, 2009; Rossi et al., 2004).

There is no 'right' way to develop a logic model, as the format varies based upon the requirements of those creating the logic model and the needs of the evaluators and other stakeholders (OHPE, 2009). However, an Ontario Health Promotion E-Bulletin (OHPE, 2009) presents several common steps that are found in the development of most logic models:

1. Form a small workgroup consisting of program planners, staff, evaluators and other stakeholders. This group will likely need to meet several times to develop and revise the model.
2. Set boundaries for the program by focusing on a particular target group and recognize resource limitations.
3. Conduct a review of program reports, planning documents, and relevant literature.
4. Make a list of project goals.
5. Define the target group(s) – be as specific as possible.
6. Outline the program's process or implementation objectives (i.e., what will the individuals who implement the program be doing?).
7. Outline the process indicators (i.e., how will you know if the program activities have been implemented as planned?).
8. Outline immediate and intermediate objectives, and consider the desired short-term outcomes of the program. Objectives should Include a direction (increase, decrease, alleviate, expand, etc.), and be specific, measurable, realistic, and based on rationale such as a review of the literature, previous experience, or other relevant data.
9. Determine immediate and intermediate indicators or outputs and identify how you will know when your short-term objectives have been achieved.
10. Outline the long-term objectives of the program.
11. Determine long-term indicators or outputs and identify how you will know when the program's long-term objectives have been achieved.
12. List the project activities – what is the program intended to do in order to achieve its objectives? Note that activities should be driven by objectives rather than determining the objectives based on planned activities.
13. Group program activities into components or strategies (activities that fit together conceptually) such as counseling, social marketing, training, advocacy, coalition building, educating, etc.
14. Check your logic and ask whether each element of the model is causally linked to the next. Are causal linkages realistic? Are objectives clear and measurable? Are activities clear and measurable? Are there other potential activities for achieving the outcomes? Are resources adequate?
15. Verify your logic model with stakeholders and program staff who are not a part of the workgroup and modify accordingly.

Although developing a logic model may be a lengthy and detailed process, the result is a model that is critical and highly useful in program implementation and evaluation (OHPE, 2009). Indeed, presenting the logic of a program in the form of a logic model often makes it easier to identify questions that an

evaluation might reasonably answer (Rossi et al., 2004). An added benefit is that the development of a logic model necessitates a systematic review of all aspects of a program, which helps the evaluator ensure no critical issues have been overlooked (Rossi et al., 2004).

Domestic Violence Core Competencies

The Knowledge Exchange Workshop on Domestic Violence Training (CREVAWC, 2011) proposed a set of core competencies to serve as a standard for VAW training. The core competencies, or outcomes, include 'Recognition' (what is violence? what are the impacts?), 'Response' (interventions, self-reflection/reflective practice), and 'Refer and Reduce Risk' (professional role and practice, inter-intra professional collaboration). A sample logic model for these competencies is presented in Appendix A.

Sexual Violence Core competencies

A sample set of core competencies for sexual violence (SV) training and a logic model are presented in Appendix B. Factors such as the length of the training and for whom the training is being designed, influence which competencies will be addressed in a particular training, and accordingly, the main components of the logic model. [2]

Common Challenges in the Evaluation of Training Initiatives

Briefly considering some of the challenges of evaluations may help to increase the likelihood of a successful evaluation (Kahan, 2008). Most notably, if one does not have clear evaluation guidelines, insensitive and harmful evaluation research may follow (McLoyd & Randolph, 1985). Additional evaluation challenges are noted in Figure 4 (Kahan, 2008).

[2] Sexual violence competencies created by Nicole Pietsch, OCRCC and Linda Baker, VAW Learning Network, CREVAWC

Figure 4. Common Evaluation Challenges (Kahan, 2008)

Lack of Resources
- Time
- Funding
- Personnel
- Skills

Measurement Problems
- Inappropriate indicators
- Exclusive use of quantitative or qualitative methods
- Easily measured items driving the evaluation rather than the entire program

Inappropriate Data Collection
- Insufficient data
- Misrepresentation of data
- Failing to consider non-program outcomes

Imbalance
- Only conducting process or outcome evaluations
- Ignoring long-term outcomes
- Overemphasis of financial costs at the expense of human costs

Follow-up
- Ignoring the results of an evaluation

Complexity
- Especially when multiple sites are involved

Checklist for Critical Steps in the Evaluation of Training Initiatives

Van Marris and King (2007) offer a series of steps to follow when conducting an evaluation. Their approach is not only more comprehensive than many others – thereby lending itself to being used as a checklist to ensure all major steps are included – but an additional strength is that it recommends engaging stakeholders (Kahan, 2008). While this step may not be relevant to all programs, it is useful for collaborative evaluations and is in keeping with the standards developed by the Knowledge Exchange Workshop on Domestic Violence Training (CREVAWC, 2011). The steps outlined by Van Marris and King (2007) are described below:

- ❒ **Clarify your program.** This includes defining goals, your population of interest, outcome objectives, activities, and measurable indicators.
- ❒ **Engage stakeholders.**
- ❒ **Assess resources for the evaluation.** It is important to identify staff skills and funding available for the evaluation.
- ❒ **Design the evaluation.** Select the evaluation type, consider ethical issues and confidentiality.
- ❒ **Determine appropriate methods of measurement and procedures.**
- ❒ **Develop a work plan, budget, and timeline for evaluation.**

- ❒ **Collect the data using agreed upon methods and procedures.**
- ❒ **Process and analyze the data.**
- ❒ **Interpret and disseminate the results.**
- ❒ **Take action.**

Conclusion

There is currently a dearth of rigorous evaluations of VAW training programs, which makes the identification of best practices difficult (UNIFEM, 2012). Nevertheless, there is some evidence to suggest that VAW training may increase awareness of issues surrounding VAW (Family Violence Reform Coordination Unit, 2010; Magen & Conroy, 1997; Shastri & Wald, 2007), lead to changes in attitudes and behaviours (Family Violence Reform Coordination Unit, 2010; Hoddinott, 2005; Magen & Conroy, 1997; Saunders & Anderson, 2000; Shastri & Wald, 2007), and produce organizational change (Antle & Martin, 2000; CREVAWC, 2011; Family Violence Reform Coordination Unit, 2010; Hoddinott, 2005; Shastri & Wald, 2007). The impact of VAW training initiatives on long-term outcomes, such as reducing violence, is less clear.

Despite these promising findings, the majority of VAW training programs are not evaluated beyond the reaction or learning levels (Gramckow et al., 1997). To fully understand the value and impact of VAW training initiatives, evaluations must move beyond customer satisfaction towards understanding the real-world impact of training (Kahan, 2008; Kirkpatrick, 1997; Rossi et al., 2004; UNIFEM, 2010). Utilizing logic models (OHPE, 2009; Rossi et al., 2009) to guide outcome evaluations may make the task seem less daunting.

Regardless of the type of evaluation undertaking, it is important to remember that conducting in-depth evaluations of training programs is only an important first step. A necessary second step, and one that ought not to be overlooked, is to make use of the information gathered (CREVAWC, 2011). Making use of the information obtained from rigorous program evaluations is critical to ensuring VAW training programs are as effective as possible, which is necessary if we are to most effectively serve victims of VAW.

References

Antle, B. & Martin, M. (2003). *Training to outcomes: The impact of training on organizational outcomes*. Louisville, KY: National Resource Centre on Child Welfare Training & Evaluation. Available Online: http://www.kentcareteam.org/documents/monographfiles/Trainingoutcomesfinal.pdf

Burt, M.R., Harrell, A.V., Newmark, L.C., Aron, L.Y., Jacobs, L.K. et al. (1997). *Evaluation guidebook for projects funded by S.T.O.P. formula grants under the Violence Against Women Act.* Washington, DC: Urban Institute. Available Online: http://www.urban.org/uploadedPDF/guidebook.pdf

Carroll, C., Patterson, M., Wood, S., Booth, A., Rick, J. et al. (2007). A conceptual framework for implementation fidelity. *Implementation Science, 2*(40), 1-9.

Carson, E., Chung, D., & Day, A. (2009). Evaluating contracted domestic violence programs: Standardisation and organizational culture. *Evaluation Journal of Australasia, 9*(1), 10-19.

Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children (CREVAWC). (2011). *Knowledge exchange workshop on domestic violence training, June 16-17, 2011: Report of the meeting.* London, ON: Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children. Available Online: http://www.crvawc.ca/documents/Knowledge%20Exchange%20Report_FINAL.pdf

Domestic Violence Advisory Council. (2009). Transforming our communities. Available online: http://www.springtideresources.org/sites/all/files/Transforming_Our_Communities.pdf

Family Violence Reform Coordination Unit. (2010). *Summary of the evaluation report of the statewide training program.* Victoria, AU: Office of Women's Policy Department of Planning and Community Development.

Gramckow, H.P., Nady Sigmon, J., Gaboury, M.T., & Burt, M.R. (1997). Measuring the impact of training. In Burt, M.R., Harrell, A.V., Newmark, L.C., Aron, L.Y., Jacobs, L.K. et al. *Evaluation guidebook for projects funded by S.T.O.P. formula grants under the Violence Against Women Act* (pp. 201-220. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Hinderliter, D., Doughty, A., Delaney, K., Pitula, C., & Campbell, J. (2003). The effect of intimate partner violence education on nurse practitioners' feelings of competence and ability to screen patients. *Journal of Nursing Education, 42*(10), 449-454.

Hoddinott, S. (2005). *Violence prevention initiatives: Violence Awareness and Action Training evaluation.* St. John's, NL: Women's Police Office. Available Online: http://www.gov.nl.ca/VPI/violenceawareness/vaat-hoddinott.pdf

Kahan, B. (2008). *Review of Evaluation Frameworks.* Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Ministry of Education. Available Online: http://www.idmbestpractices.ca/pdf/evaluation-frameworks-review.pdf

Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1996). *Evaluating training programs: The four levels.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Magen, R.H. & Conroy, K. (1997). *Columbia University School of Social Work training of child welfare workers on domestic violence: Final report.*

Mason, R. & McMahon, E. (n.d.). *Evaluation of a hospital-based training program on intimate partner abuse.* Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre and the Canadian Nurses' Foundation.
Available Online: http://www.canadiannursesfoundation.com/reports/McMahon_MasonNov2005Eng.pdf

McLyod, V.C. & Randolph, S. (1985). Secular trends in the study of Afro-American children: A review of *Child Development*. In Smuts, A.B., & Hagen, J.D. (Eds.), *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 50*(4-5).

Mickwitz, P. (2003). A framework for evaluating environmental policy instruments: Context and key concepts. *Evaluation, 9,* 415-436.

Ontario Health Promotion E-bulletin (OHPE). (2001). *The program logic model: What, why, and how?* Retrieved April 27, 2012, from http://www.ohpe.ca/node/152

Rossi, P., Lipsey, M., & Freeman, H. (2004). *Evaluation: A systematic approach* (7th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Saunders, D.G. & Anderson, D. (2000). Evaluation of a domestic violence training for child protection workers and supervisors: Initial results. *Children and Youth Services Review, 22*(5), 373-395.

Schoening, A.M., Greenwood, J.L., McNichols, J.A., Heermann, J.A., & Agrawal, S. (2004). Effect of an intimate partner violence educational program on the attitudes of nurses. *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic, & Neonatal Nursing, 33*(5), 572-579.

Shastri, K. & Wald, H.P. (2007). *An evaluation of the STOP Violence Against Women training program.* Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

Short, L.M., Johnson, D., & Osattin, A. (1998). Recommended components of health care provider training programs on intimate partner violence. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine, 14*(4), 283-288.

Thackwray, B. (1997). *Effective evaluation of training and development in higher education.* London: Kogan Page.

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). (2008). *Monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management framework.* New York: UNIFEM.
Available Online: http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/untf_monitoring_eval_knowledge_framework.pdf

Van Marris, B. & King, B. (2007). *Evaluating health promotion programs (version 3.6).* Toronto, ON: The Health Communication Unit, Centre for Population Health, University of Toronto.
Available Online: http://www.thcu.ca/resource_db/pubs/107465116.pdf

Zarinpoush, F. (2006). *Project evaluation guide for nonprofit organizations: Fundamental methods and steps for conducting project evaluation*. Toronto: Imagine Canada.
Available Online: http://library.imaginecanada.ca/files/nonprofitscan/en/csc/projectguide_final.pdf

Additional Resources

Cox, P.J., Keener, D., Woodard, T., & Wandersman, A. (2009). *Evaluation for improvement: A seven step empowerment evaluation approach for violence prevention organizations.* Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Available Online: http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/evaluation_improvement-a.pdf

This document outlines Centres for Disease Control and Prevention's seven steps for conducting an evaluation, and covers topics such as preparing to hire an evaluator, writing a job announcement, finding potential evaluators, assessing the candidates, writing an evaluation contract, building an effective relationship with your evaluator, and sustaining the evaluation.

McLaren, J. (2000). *Evaluating programs for women: A gender-specific framework*. Winnipeg, MB: Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence.
Available Online: http://www.pwhce.ca/pdf/evaluatingPrograms.pdf

This evaluation examines the characteristics of effective gender-specific programs, describes models for evaluating gender-specific programming, analyzes existing health-related evaluation frameworks, and offers recommendations for an effective gender-specific evaluation framework.

Parmer, A. & Sampson, A. (2007). Evaluating domestic violence initiatives. *British Journal of Criminology, 47,* 671-691.

This paper highlights some of the problems associated with transferring projects designed for one context into others. Examples are provided and solutions are proposed.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

Learning Network (vawlearningnetwork.ca)

The Learning network operates as an electronic clearinghouse for violence against women training and public education organizations across Ontario, and aims to provide easier access to VAW resources, including curricula, research reports, and evaluation tools. It also aims to support and promote education and training resources to service professionals, women with lived experience, the public, and the government.

Centre for Research &Education on Violence against Women & Children (learningtoendabuse.ca)

The Centre promotes the development of community-centred, action research on violence against women and children. Its role is to facilitate the cooperation of individuals, groups, and institutions representing the diversity of the community to pursue research questions and training opportunities to understand and prevent abuse. Information is provided on awards and grants, training and education, research, curricula, and upcoming events. The Centre is home to the VAW Learning Network.

GrantCraft (www.grantcraft.org)

GrantCraft provides information to those offering grants, including guides, videos, workshops, and other resources (many of these lessons can be extrapolated to those applying for grants, as well). The website also contains a helpful section on evaluations, covering topics such as mapping change, outcomes and evaluations, and participatory action research.

Ontario Women's Directorate (www.women.gov.on.ca)

The OWD promotes women's equality with a focus on ending violence against women and increasing women's economic security by proving research, analysis, and advice to the government, providing grants for programs that support women's safety, and collaborating with women's organizations and government to advance women's equality. Their website contains information on government initiatives, key programs, information on grants, and many additional resources.

Appendix A: Core Competencies for DV Training Initiatives

Recognition Competencies

1) What is violence?
    a) Characteristics
    b) Prevalence (gender analysis)
    c) Dynamics of abusive relationships (what is abuse, what is not abuse, what is a healthy relationship, what does conflict look like in a healthy relationship)
    d) Understanding violence from a broader context (human rights, decolonization framework, social determinants model)

2) What are the impacts?
    a) On the woman experiencing or having experienced violence
    b) On her children and family
    c) Health effects
    d) Other relationships (including therapeutic relationships)
    e) On vulnerable populations
    f) Understanding trauma
    g) Child sexual abuse legacy
    h) Intersectional impacts of mental health, addictions, criminalization
    i) Systems that the woman has to interface with

Response Competencies

3) Interventions
    a) Having the conversation so trust is built
    b) Creating safe environments for disclosure
    c) Disclosure response
    d) Other realities in her life that complicate intervention
    e) Risk management/threat assessment
    f) Safety plans
    g) Unintended consequences
    h) Supports available
    i) Resource materials to provide

4) Self-Reflection (reflective practices)
    a) Personal values, attitudes and beliefs specific to the professional/worker/learner
    b) Engagement with self-care
    c) Compassion fatigue
    d) Commitment to continuous learning

Risk Reduction Competencies

5) Professional role and practice
    a) Roles/responses and mandate
    b) Documentation, confidentiality and information sharing
    c) Workplace policy
    d) Making effective referrals
    e) Worker's safety
    f) Understanding strengths and limitations of the professional framework – work within one's sector/organization

6) Inter/intra Professional Collaboration
    a) Developing an integrated approach to intervention
    b) Confidentiality (information sharing)
    c) Mapping the network
    d) Strengthening professional relationships and networks

Sample Logic Model for Domestic Violence (DV) Core Competencies

Main Components		
Recognition	Response	Risk Reduction
Activities		
• Teach participants about the characteristics of DV • Teach participants about the short- and long-term impact of DV on victims/survivors	• Develop components of effective response that support victims/survivors • Identify components of unhelpful responses • To encourage participants to become more self- aware	• To increase organizational effectiveness in responding to DV • To increase familiarity around relevant policies • To strengthen relationships with other professionals and agencies
Outputs		
• Number of participants trained • Number of follow-up activities conducted • Percent of participants reporting satisfaction with training		
Short-term Outcomes		
• Increased knowledge amongst participants of the characteristics of DV • Increased understanding amongst participants of the impacts of DV	• Percent of recommended intervention activities used by trainees • Increased self-awareness reported by participants • Increased enrollment in additional professional development courses by participants	• Increased understanding of organizational policies by participants • Increased sharing of information with other professionals/agencies by trainees • Increased collaboration with others amongst trainees
Intermediate Outcomes		
• Increased knowledge of DV	• Consistent implementation of effective responding practices	• More effective collaborations
Long-term Outcomes		
More effective responses to DV		

Appendix B: Core Competencies for Sexual Violence Training

Recognition Competencies

1. What is sexual violence?
    a. Defining sexual violence (See *Sexual Violence Action Plan*, page 6)
    b. The prevalence of sexual violence (using a gender analysis).
    c. Acknowledging social myths about sexual violence
    d. Countering myths about sexual violence
    e. What is consent? (Saying yes and no to sexual activity)
    f. The dynamics of sexual coercion, sexual violence and sexism (using a gender analysis)
    g. Understanding violence from a broader context (Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression, Human Rights, Decolonization framework, Social determinants model).
    h. Rape in the context of war/political conflict
    i. Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation

2. What are the impacts of sexual violence**?**
    a. What happens to women experiencing or having experienced sexual violence, including multiple victimizations?
    b. The effects of childhood sexual violence (child sexual abuse and incest) on women?
    c. The effects of experiencing sexual violence on adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse
    d. The effects on women of living with sexism and sexual violence against women (societal context)
    e. What are the health effects and costs of sexual violence?
    f. What is the impact on personal relationships?
    g. What is the impact on other relationships (i.e. therapeutic/helping relationships)?
    h. What is the impact of sexual violence on vulnerable populations?
    i. What are some common short-term and long-term responses to sexual violence?
    j. What are the intersectional impacts of mental health, addictions and criminalization?
    k. What are some of the benefits of engaging with social and helping services (i.e. healthcare, counselling) for survivors of sexual violence?
    l. What are some of the challenges of engaging with social and helping services (i.e. Healthcare, counselling) for survivors of sexual violence? (include stigma, confidentiality, victim-blaming/re-victimizing rhetoric, pressure to report from professionals, etc.)
    m. What are some of the benefits of engaging with the criminal justice system for survivors of sexual violence?
    n. What are some of the challenges of engaging with the criminal justice system for survivors of sexual violence?
    (highlight how reporting processes and outcomes differ considerably from, or alternately, may incorporate aspects of, criminal justice processes related to domestic violence, i.e. mandatory charging)

Response Competencies

3. Interventions
    a. Creating safe environments for disclosure.
    b. Respectful disclosure responses.
    c. Disclosure responses to avoid.
    d. Threat assessment/Risk management
    e. Information about medical interventions following sexual violence
    f. Information about forensic evidence following a recent episode of sexual violence
    g. Information about engaging the criminal justice system following sexual violence
    a. the unintended consequences of any intervention (include emotional and confidentiality consequences)
    b. Physical safety plans
    c. Emotional safety plans
    d. What supports are available when intervening?
    e. Resource materials to provide to women.

4. Self-Reflection (reflective practices)
    a. Personal values, attitudes and beliefs specific to the professional/ worker/learner on sexual violence and working with women.
    b. Considerations when advocating for survivors of sexual violence.
    c. Engagement with self-care.
    d. Compassion fatigue.
    e. Commitment to continuous learning.

Risk Reduction Competencies

5. Professional role and practice
    a. Roles, responses and mandate.
    b. Documentation, confidentiality and information sharing.
    c. Workplace policies impacting survivors of sexual violence.
    d. Making effective referrals.
    e. Worker's safety when dealing with sexual violence situations.
    f. Understanding the strengths and limitations of the professional framework of each of our respective sectors/organizations

6. Inter/intra Professional Collaboration
    a. Mapping the network
    b. Strengthening professional relationships and networks

SAMPLE LOGIC MODEL FOR SEXUAL VIOLENCE (SV) CORE COMPETENCIES

Main Components		
Recognition	Response	Risk Reduction
Activities		
• Teach participants about the meaning of SV – including rape in the context of war/political conflict and human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, its prevalence, social myths, and coercive strategies • Teach participants about the broader context of sexual violence • Teach participants about the short- and long-term impact of SV on victims/survivors • Teach participants about the benefits and challenges of engaging with helping services and the criminal justice system	• Develop components of effective responses that support victims/survivors • Identify components of unhelpful responses • Provide information on resource materials for victims/survivors • To encourage participants to become more self- aware and to engage in reflective practices	• To increase organizational effectiveness in responding to SV • To increase familiarity around relevant policies • To strengthen
Outputs		
• Number of participants trained • Number of follow-up activities conducted • Percent of participants reporting satisfaction with training		
Short-term Outcomes		
• Increased knowledge amongst participants of the meaning of SV, its prevalence, the broader context of SV, social myths about SV, and coercive strategies • Increased understanding amongst participants of the short and long-term impacts of SV on victims/survivors • Increased understanding of the benefits and challenges of engaging with helping services and the criminal justice system	• Percent of recommended intervention activities used by trainees • Increased self-awareness reported by participants • Increased enrollment in additional professional development courses by participants	• Increased understanding of organizational policies by participants • Increased knowledge of the services/resources for victims/survivors
Intermediate Outcomes		
• Increased knowledge of SV	• Consistent implementation of effective responding practices	• More effective referral processes
Long-term Outcomes		
More effective responses to SV		

Notes