



women's aid
until women & children are safe



Shared Roadmap for System Change

Women's Aid and SafeLives Joint Evaluation Tender Brief

This document is aimed towards those interested in evaluating an exciting new initiative led by the two leading national domestic abuse charities. This is a five-year programme (July 2016 – June 2021) with an evaluation budget of £350,000. Both Women's Aid and SafeLives will be implementing new approaches and between us there will be eight new interventions in areas across England. We are looking for an evaluator to undertake a dynamic and rigorous evaluation of the programme which evidences outcomes for survivors through a systemic change to policy, practice and commissioning.

Background

The impact of domestic abuse on women and girls is severe and long-lasting, and it frequently leads to long-term complex needs and dependency on services. Yet in terms of solutions, it appears intractable.

Women's Aid and SafeLives are the two leading national organisations in the domestic abuse sector. We have each separately spent two years working with our stakeholders and consulting extensively with a wide range of agencies and with survivors of domestic abuse. We have analysed what we believe needs to happen system-wide to 'move the needle' on domestic abuse.

These two considerable pieces of work have led to two separate approaches. Women's Aid's approach - Change that Lasts - comes from a needs-based perspective, placing the survivor at the heart and building responses around her needs and the strengths and resources available to her, acknowledging that if services listen to what women say they need and build on their strengths, outcomes are often better and sustained. SafeLives' approach - Getting it Right First Time - starts from a risk-led perspective, namely that victims who are in danger of the greatest harm need to be prioritised, focusing on supporting the whole family from identification through to step down and recovery, to respond more effectively to families living with different kinds of abuse.

The DV sector is under considerable strain as a result of funding pressures, competition from non-specialised organisations and poor commissioning, which is increasing the fragmentation of the sector and leaving a large population of women and girls underserved. To help address this we are working in partnership.

We have come together in a five-year programme to bring together the approaches that we have developed. By implementing a range of interventions, this programme will test both the needs-based and risk-led approaches independently – through shared evaluation and 'real-time' information sharing. Our aim is to learn from the best of both organisations' approaches so that we end up with a joint Roadmap for System Change. This is ground-breaking because for the first time there will be a clear, evidence-based approach, endorsed by the two leading sector organisations, which can be used by frontline services, the community, commissioners, funders, and policy makers, to support women and girls who are affected by domestic abuse.

The programme therefore covers the two approaches, and each approach has a number of interventions, which will fulfil a set of jointly agreed outcomes. Further information about the two approaches and the interventions that will be tested as part of this programme can be found below.

The programme has been funded by the Big Lottery Fund, with a grant of £5.75 million. The Women's Aid interventions are entirely funded by this BLF grant. The SafeLives interventions have been match funded with additional funding from other sources of £2.9 million. The Big Lottery Fund are providing 100% of the funding for the evaluation.

Shared Programme aims, outcomes and outputs

Our shared programme aim is to:

Transform the lives of women and girls by a systemic change to policy, practice and commissioning that promotes early intervention and reduces the prevalence, impact and tolerance of domestic abuse.

Achieving our aim will transform the range, quality and scale of the current response to women and girls in England. We believe the development of a shared approach to ending domestic abuse, championed by both organisations, will create a unique opportunity for change. The ambition of our project is to achieve national system change on a wider scale than either of us could achieve alone.

Our shared programme outcomes are:

- A. Women and girls experiencing domestic abuse are supported by coordinated holistic approaches that increase safety, early intervention and resilience
- B. Survivors take a greater role in co-producing the services they want and need
- C. Evidence-based national and local strategies for responding to domestic abuse are informed by survivors
- D. Better quality evidence of what works influences policy, practice and commissioning decisions
- E. Reframed state, private and specialist sector response to domestic abuse that creates positive change for women and girls
- F. Local communities mobilised to challenge domestic abuse and advocate for good quality support for survivors

Our shared programme outputs are:

- A. A range of DA responses and recovery pathways tested, in a variety of settings to establish what works for different groups of survivors
- B. Tools, training and guidance for agencies to support a range of new approaches, improved responses, quality of provision and increased coordination based on shared outcomes
- C. Greater understanding of DA in communities and willingness to act to prevent it
- D. Independent evaluation, National Advisory Group, Action Learning Sets, engagement with commissioners, survivor scrutiny panel
- E. Findings from a range of learning shared and a survivor-centred outcome menu based on improved interventions is jointly described and promoted England-wide
- F. Partnership working and joint voice/message / clarity for stakeholders

A more detailed Theory of Change for the programme is included as an attachment.

Our Interventions

Women's Aid has developed its approach – *Change that Lasts (CtL)* – based on comprehensive consultation with survivors both nationally and locally, and in partnership with its federation of local, needs-led, specialist dedicated domestic abuse services, and other specialists on related areas of need. To address the gaps identified, it will test the three elements of CtL.

The three interventions are being implemented at a total cost of £3 million over five years, of which the whole amount comes from BLF:

- ask me – Developing a community-based response to domestic abuse.
- Trusted Professional – Better utilising the positive relationships that survivors already have with non-sector support workers and equipping these practitioners to understand and address the impact of trauma on women and girls and further widening the opportunities for early intervention.

- Expert Support for women with complex needs – Developing strengths-based needs assessment and support planning, testing this within dedicated domestic abuse services to better support women with complex needs.

All of this will be piloted in three Change That Lasts Adopter sites: Northumbria, Nottingham/Nottinghamshire and Surrey. In delivery Women's Aid will partner with specialist women's dedicated support services, our 'ask me' partners (the selection of these will be informed by women and girls in each area), and Trusted Professional partners. Women's Aid will also conduct pilots with member services and three Trusted Professional partners: Action for Children, Addaction and Victim Support. The approaches will provide multiple routes for women to access the support they need, based on where and how they choose to seek help.

SafeLives has developed a whole system response for the whole family – “Getting it Right First Time” – in consultation with our national survivors group, front-line specialist services, local government and commissioners engaged in a multi-agency approach. The whole system will be piloted and evaluated in two 'beacon' sites – West Sussex and Norfolk. This programme will test five new interventions that form part of the approach.

The five interventions for this evaluation are being implemented at a total cost of £5.7 million over five years, of which £2.7 million comes from the BLF, and £2.9 million has been secured from other sources.

They include the following five interventions known as 'penta':

- Medium-risk – Development of quality services for women identified as at medium risk of harm
- Staying together – Developing a pathway/ intervention that supports and protects women who remain with the perpetrator, focusing on the safety of the woman and her children
- Children & young people - Testing specific interventions to work with children and young people who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse, supporting both the children and their mothers
- Complex needs – Ensuring dedicated and extra specialist support for women with complex needs, who are vulnerable and/or requiring intensive support
- Recovery and step-down – Support healing and building resilience in women and girls who have experienced domestic abuse

We will pilot all interventions as a whole in our Beacon sites. The crossover between each area of need and the interventions will be wide-ranging. It is anticipated that many survivors will require more than one intervention.

Alongside this, the approach also includes One Front Door (a swift, pre-emptive response to safeguarding concerns), the Drive project (challenging perpetrators of domestic abuse), and the existing community-based domestic abuse services. One Front Door and Drive will both be separately funded and evaluated.

The Women's Aid and SafeLives interventions will be running on different timescales; Women's Aid's pilots will begin in July 2016 and SafeLives' pilots will begin in July 2017, both to conclude by June 2021 at the latest.

Evaluation Aims

The aim of the evaluation is:

- To demonstrate and map mechanisms for sustainable improvement to the delivery of help and support for women and girls experiencing domestic abuse.
- To reach a consensus on a theory of change for such mechanisms, with the aspiration of sharing good practice across communities in England.

- Where possible, to contribute to the knowledge about ‘what works’ in addressing domestic abuse in communities.

Evaluation Expectations – In Scope

We expect the evaluator to:

- Serve as the independent expert on evidence and evaluation for the project.
- Lead a co-production team for a complex evaluation providing creative leadership which will draw on internal resources of SafeLives and Women’s Aid.
- Enable, where possible, an assessment of system change including the key components [‘good practice’] that contribute to any change split by strands of work.
- Design a dynamic approach to evaluation that supports a view of how well individual components of the project ‘worked’ as a mechanism for meeting the needs and achieving safety, independence and freedom for different groups of women and girls.

Design considerations

We would like the evaluator to work with us to design the most appropriate evaluation methodology, including helping to refine the key research questions. The following list identifies the aspects that we expect to be taken into consideration both in terms of how the evaluation is conducted and its outputs.

Evaluation approach:

- **Co-production** - the evaluation design should be a co-production between survivors, the evaluator, Women’s Aid and SafeLives.
 - **Survivors** - it is important that survivors’ voices are integrated into the work we do, including co-production of the evaluation design. The successful evaluator will need to identify how they will ensure survivors are central to all stages of the evaluation.
 - **Women’s Aid and SafeLives**- research and evaluation teams will lead on the collection of data, with the evaluator advising on the data that is required for the evaluation.
- **Gendered approach** - a gendered approach will need to be adopted both in terms of what is examined and how this is undertaken.

Deliverables:

The evaluation should include the following deliverables¹:

- **Theory of change** - evidence of the costs, outputs and outcomes of each of the interventions and how these link to system change and individual outcomes for women and girls affected by domestic abuse.
- **Sustainability measures** - enabling us to measure how sustainable the outcomes are over time. We suggest this could be done at two time points (such as 6 months and 18 months) and welcome evaluator input into the best way to measure sustainability. It should also include the benefits of early intervention. As delivery of the two projects unfolds, we may wish to review the timing of the second time point for some of the interventions to ensure that we have a large enough data set from which to draw conclusions.

¹ We acknowledge that the deliverables set out in the tender documents may appear to be restrictive; we have ambitious aims for this programme and evaluation but recognise that we do not have all the answers. We would welcome bidder’s expertise and input into how best to use our resources to achieve the aims of the evaluation and we are open to consider suggested alternatives to the deliverables and methods we have set out in the brief.

- **Costings** - a cost-benefit analysis of the interventions; we expect the evaluator to advise on the best way of incorporating this into the evaluation.
- **Evaluating the partnership** - a light-touch evaluation of the impact of the partnership on our shared programme outcomes.

Methods:

- **Baseline** - we believe it is necessary to measure and collect detailed baseline information prior to the implementation of the partnership approaches, and for this to be refreshed each year for four years. The design and collection of the data required will be led by Women's Aid and SafeLives, with advice and validation provided by the external evaluator. There will be a set of common metrics across each area, with some additional data to be agreed for the different approaches. The baseline figures will need to be collected at consistent time-points across the interventions. The baseline will include information on a range of contextual factors, for example demography, policy context, funding context, service availability and usage.
- **Stakeholders** - we would like regular interviews with a group of stakeholders to be included in part of the evaluation in order to capture information on the area context and system change. Women's Aid and SafeLives will be able to help identify appropriate stakeholders in each of the areas and could provide resource to collect the data, with the support of the evaluator who will advise on the process and validate the data. The stakeholders will need to be contacted regularly, for example at six month intervals, in order to map any changes. It is expected that the evaluator will be able to advise on the most appropriate methodology, but this may include an online survey.

Support and key contacts for the evaluator

There will be a single point of contact between the evaluator and both of the commissioning organisations for queries. They will have the support of the evaluation working group (made up of researchers and project managers from each organisation) who will be able to draw on additional expertise as required.

Our Research teams

Women's Aid has a highly qualified and experienced in-house research and evaluation team. The team manage a wide range of both quantitative and qualitative data. This includes data from UK Refugees Online, the national database of domestic abuse services and refuge vacancies (run in partnership with Women's Aid Federation of Northern Ireland, Scottish Women's Aid and Welsh Women's Aid) and the Women's Aid annual survey, which together comprise the largest and most comprehensive set of national data on domestic abuse services. The annual survey also includes in depth information about the survivors accessing these services each year, and on a census day and week. Other data sources include the Femicide Census, a seminal observatory of data on femicide, and On Track, a bespoke case management and outcomes measurement system providing detailed information on the needs and experiences of survivors, their children, and the services and agencies that support them.

The Research and Evaluation team currently comprise six women, all of whom hold a minimum of a postgraduate qualification in subjects including Education, Public and Social Policy, Women's Studies, Political Philosophy and Criminology, with specialisms in research methods and VAWG. Between them, they also have decades of experience working in and with frontline services, research, policy and evaluation, and have contributed significantly to developments in these fields. This evaluation will be led by Sarika Seshadri, Research and Evaluation Manager, who holds a PhD in Socio-Legal Studies and has several years of experience of applying academic research to practice. There is also a team of staff rolling out the Change that Lasts pilots, some of whom have a specific research background, and all of whom will be able to support with data collection and analysis.

The SafeLives Research team are experts in designing, collecting and analysing research and evidence for the domestic abuse sector using a full range of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

We hold the largest national dataset on domestic abuse including our Insights dataset with more than 50,000 cases providing detail of victims' and children's experiences, needs and service provision. We have an overview of the national response to high risk domestic abuse via the Marac process. Our experienced research team of 12 people have a range of qualifications including an MA in Individual Differences and Social Psychology and an MPhil in Psychology.

The following team members in particular will be able to support the evaluation:

- Susie Price, Head of Research, Analysis and Evaluation. Susie has been working in the domestic violence and abuse sector for the past 17 years in differing capacities (both practice and managerial). Over the past 18 months Susie has been working on the Drive Project as the Expert Resource in relation to working with perpetrators of domestic abuse and victims and children's safety. Susie is in the final stages of completing an MA in the Dynamics of Domestic Violence.
- Jane Evans is a Senior Research Analyst with over four years of social research experience, primarily in the children and young person sector. Before joining SafeLives Jane worked for a school leadership union where she led a research team to produce evidence to inform policy development. She has worked on qualitative and quantitative research projects using a range of methods including surveys, case studies and large scale dataset analysis.

Available data

Both SafeLives and Women's Aid have developed two separate outcomes measurement systems for recording client profile, outputs and outcomes and we anticipate that this quantitative data will form the bedrock of the evaluation. SafeLives pilot sites will use the SafeLives system, Insights. Women's Aid pilot sites will use the Women's Aid system, On Track. Although On Track and Insights are entirely separate, it will be possible to compare elements of the data gathered by each system.

Other possible pre-existing data sources include:

- Other data gathered by SafeLives and Women's Aid e.g. the Women's Aid Annual Survey, Women's Aid national database of UK domestic abuse services, SafeLives' national data (Marac data and Insights), Idva survey
- Other data from local domestic abuse services e.g. Case file data from the individual caseworkers
- Other agency data where possible and subject to consent e.g. health/mental health/substance misuse/ adult and children's social care/police data
- Self-reported data (survivor/children)
- Other government data e.g. the crime survey, demographic data, poverty data
- Social and other media e.g. news stories, Twitter activity

Outputs and reporting

The key milestones throughout the duration of the research are:

1. Baseline tool developed in June 2017².
2. An evaluation framework covering both approaches across the programme to be agreed and completed by July 2017.
3. Appropriate data collection tools (supplementary to data gathered through Insights and On Track) agreed and in place by end of July 2017.
4. Baseline survey, capturing the system in each site before the start of the work completed July-August 2017.
5. We expect interim and final reports to be published and will seek input from the evaluator on the most appropriate time points for each report.

The evaluator will be expected to participate in publicity and stakeholder communications around the findings of the evaluation.

² The dates indicated for baselining are our suggested timeframe; to be discussed and agreed with the appointed evaluator.

Progress reports based on the submitted project timetable and milestones will be required at approximately six month intervals.

Request for proposals

Please submit a proposal that includes:

1. A description of your **methodology**, including how you:
 - a. Address the evaluation aims
 - b. Demonstrate methodological rigour and the appropriateness of the proposed conceptual/analytical framework and methodology
 - c. Ensure a gender-responsive evaluation both in what the evaluation examines and how it is undertaken
 - d. Ensure the evaluation will be co-produced with survivors, and your understanding of how this will benefit the outputs
 - e. Ensure effective project management, including planning, quality control and project monitoring
 - f. Will include a cost benefit analysis and how you will measure the sustainability of outcomes over time.
2. A **project implementation timeline** including any necessary mobilisation period
3. Information about the **evaluation team** – include short biographies of the principal investigator and proposed team members. This should include qualifications and experience demonstrating that the evaluation team has:
 - a. Academic credibility and depth of skills
 - b. Capacity to deliver to the timescales described
 - c. An in-depth knowledge of the issue
 - d. The credibility to influence Policy makers/DA sector/Criminologists/Survivors, children and perpetrators/ Commissioners/Psychologists
 - e. Experience of/understanding of partnership working
 - f. Can demonstrate objectivity towards both organisations' approaches
 - g. A relevant track record in producing evaluations that have been used to inform practice
4. Details of **ethical considerations** that may arise and approval procedures that will be followed
5. Identification of anticipated **risks and suggested mitigation** strategies
6. Any other **added value** your team can bring, such as potential funding opportunities from other sources
7. A **budget** summarising the costs of data collection and evaluation activities. Please provide key assumptions including any costs for overheads, VAT, and anticipated travel and other expenses. This must work within the budget limits included here, and demonstrate how it delivers value for money.

Mandatory Requirements

The following criteria are mandatory and must be achieved in order to bid:

- 1) Responses to all seven elements of the request for proposals section above are returned, unless a satisfactory explanation has been provided and accepted
- 2) The lead evaluator to be a woman
- 3) The ability to demonstrate objectivity to both organisations' approaches
- 4) Proposed pricing does not exceed available budget
- 5) Legal, policy and ethical requirements

Please submit completed proposals to Sarika Seshadri (S.Seshadri@womensaid.org.uk) no later than 9am on 10th March 2017. Queries can be addressed to Sarah Salter (s.salter@womensaid.org.uk).

All proposals received will be treated as confidential documents.

Interviews with shortlisted evaluators will be held on w/c 20 March 2017.

Please state in your application whether you have worked previously with either organisation, and in what context.

See Appendix A for the scoring system that will be used to assess applications.

Budget

We have secured a budget for the evaluation of £350,000 (including VAT) from the Big Lottery Fund for this project. Women's Aid and SafeLives have allocated around a further £300,000 for their in-house Research and Evaluation teams to collect data and manage the evaluation. We would also be interested in evaluators who can leverage additional funding to support the evaluation.

Timelines

Evaluator appointment timeline:

2017

Friday 13 January	Invitation to tender
9am, Friday 10 March	Deadline for proposals
w/c 20 March	Meetings with shortlisted potential evaluators
w/c 27 March	Final decision
Early April	Draft contract issued
Early May	Contract signed

Suggested timeline for baselining activity:

2017

June	Baseline design agreed
July - Aug	Baseline survey conducted
May - July	Evaluator preparation
1 Sept	Data collection start

High level programme timeline:

July 2016 – June 2017	Intervention development
July 2017 – June 2020	Pilots live Evaluation data collection ongoing Interim report published (timing to be agreed)
July 2020 – June 2021	Pilots close Evaluation final report published Shared Roadmap for System Change finalised

Ownership/copyright

All parties who have made a substantive contribution to the evaluation should be listed as authors. Principal authorship, authorship order, and other publication credits should be based on the relative scientific or professional contributions of the individuals involved, regardless of their status. The participation of the expert panel/steering group must be acknowledged in any report published. Women's Aid and SafeLives will retain copyright in the work as well as the sole and exclusive right and licence to publish for the full legal term of copyright. We will review potential licence rights with the successful evaluator.

Appendix A

Question weighting as follows:

Refers to the 'Request for Proposals' section above:

Ref	Question	Weighting %
1	Methodology	40%
3	Evaluation team	20%
4	Ethical considerations	6%
5	Risks and mitigation	12%
6	Added value	12%
7	Budget	10%
	Total	100%

Scoring as follows:

Score	Evaluation	Description
0	Poor	No response to question, or response provides no evidence which demonstrates requirements can be met effectively
1	Weak	Response provides insufficient evidence, or poor evidence, that requirements can be met effectively
2	Satisfactory	Response provides sufficient evidence to demonstrate minimum required standards can be met in most areas, but some aspects are poor or weakly evidenced
3	Good	Response is comprehensive and provides strong evidence that requirements can be met in all areas
4	Very good	Response is comprehensive and provides strong evidence that requirements can be exceeded in most areas
5	Excellent	Response is comprehensive and provides strong evidence that requirements can be exceeded in all areas