

APPENDIX F

Providers Discussion Guide Instructions

Communications Focus Groups for Remaking the Safety Net

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BURDEN: Through this information collection, ACF is gathering information to provide constituent research designed to understand target audiences with experience with economic and social safety net programming. The focus group and research will help identify experiences and perception of participants, and identify ways for the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) to produce communications messaging about safety net programming in a clear and resonant manner. The focus group will assist the program office in; (1) gathering feedback on safety net programming, (2) creating resonant communications messages, and (3) identifying trustworthy and relevant channels for communication with program service providers and beneficiaries. Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to average 2 hours per respondent, including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. This collection of information is not required to retain a benefit. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB # for this collection is 0970-0531 and the expiration date is 7/31/2022. If you have any comments on this collection of information, please contact Lizeth Hester, Program Specialist, Training and Technical Assistance - Office of Family Assistance, Lizeth.Hester@acf.hhs.gov (202) 205-8283.

INTRODUCTION (5 Minutes)

INSTRUCTION: [MODERATOR INTRODUCES THEMSELVES AND BRIEFS PARTICIPANT AS TO PURPOSE AND MANNER OF ONLINE FOCUS GROUP. INFORM PARTICIPANTS THE DISCUSSION IS RECORDED FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEVELOPING A REPORT AND OTHER RESEARCHERS ARE CURRENTLY OBSERVING THE GROUP. INFORM PARTICIPANTS THAT THE GROUP IS PART OF A PROJECT OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, AND THAT THEIR RESPONSES WILL IN NO WAY IMPACT THEIR ORGANIZATION'S ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANTS, CONTRACTS, ETC. ALL INFORMATION DISCUSSED WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL AND NOT TIED BACK TO THEM INDIVIDUALLY. REMIND PARTICIPANTS THAT INFORMATION DISCUSSED IN THE SESSION SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH ANYONE AFTER THE FOCUS GROUP].

INSTRUCTION: MODERATOR TO ASK FOR INTRODUCTIONS

EXPERIENCES PROVIDING SAFETY NET PROGRAMS (15 minutes)

1. **INSTRUCTION:** LISTEN AND RECORD; PROBE FOR DAY-TO-DAY EXPERIENCE AND EMOTIONAL REACTIONS
2. **INSTRUCTION:** LISTEN AND RECORD
 - a) **INSTRUCTION:** PROBE How would you resolve this challenge if it were up to you?
3. **INSTRUCTION:** LISTEN AND RECORD
 - a) **INSTRUCTION:** IF NO, PROBE: What specific services or support structures need to change?
4. **INSTRUCTION:** LISTEN AND RECORD

MESSAGE MAP TESTING [35 MINUTES]

INSTRUCTION: READ RSN DESCRIPTOR:

This project is about a new government effort called Remaking the Safety Net. The safety net is made up of more than 80 distinct government programs, totaling more than \$1 trillion in benefits, goods, and services. But these programs are

uncoordinated, and too often fail to help people achieve independence. Remaking the Safety net envisions a system that is designed and operated so it helps people grow their capacity to the point they no longer need safety net programs.

5. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD
6. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD
7. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD; PROBE FOR WHY

INSTRUCTION: READ - *Next, I am going to share some specific messages for "Remaking the Safety Net." The first message is the foundation or core of the strategy. It is a mission statement of sorts.*

INSTRUCTION: SHOW MESSAGE MAP CORE STATEMENT ON SCREEN

To strengthen society, we must strengthen people who are most vulnerable. Remaking the Safety Net (RSN) starts with what individuals or families need to grow beyond dependency, not with what government programs have to offer. This is what we mean by inverting the equation—we address the crisis facing an individual or family, then quickly move on to building a life plan.

8. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD
9. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD
10. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD
- INSTRUCTION: PROBE FOR UNDERSTANDING OF SPECIFIC TERMS
- a) INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

11. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

- a) INSTRUCTION: PROBE - How might it change their current experiences with the safety net?

12. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

INSTRUCTION: SET UP NEXT SECTION AND SHARE CREATIVE

INSTRUCTION: SHOW REMAINING MESSAGE MAP COMPONENTS ON SCREEN ONE AT A TIME. AFTER SHOWING EACH NEW IDEA, ASK

13. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

(S18)

The safety net will start with what the individual or family needs to grow capacity, then align the needed goods and services from there.

(S47)

We must be willing to try new approaches. We will evaluate our work to determine if it actually grows capacity and reduces dependency.

(S53)

We have made a mistake trying to create a one-size-fits-all safety net. Government must help each community develop and implement its own vision for creating and growing capacity.

(S39)

Government can bring all sectors together to move the safety net from one that is transactional—we provide goods and services—to one that is relational—we partner with individuals and families.

(S24)

We exist in a state of mutual interdependence. It is the individual's responsibility to make life work. But it is society's responsibility to create the enabling conditions. Society has fallen down on its end of the bargain. We need to fix that.

(S68)

Employment is a fundamental tool for growing capacity. It is a means by which you take control of life and destiny. As an individual strives to make a life-sustaining wage, government can provide a subsidy as he or she grows toward independence.

(S72)

We will provide support, while growing an individual's or family's capacity—we will address the gap between current capacity and what someone needs to achieve independence.

14. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

15. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

- a. INSTRUCTION: PROBE FOR CLARITY IN COMMUNICATIONS—HOW ARE THEY INTERPRETING THE MESSAGE AND DOES THAT MIRROR ITS INTENDED PURPOSE

16. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

17. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

18. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

19. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD; PROBE AS BELOW

- a) INSTRUCTION: S47 PROBE Do you believe it is time to try “new approaches” to help your clients and people like your clients? Why or why not?
 - INSTRUCTION: PROBE; LISTEN AND RECORD
- b) INSTRUCTION: S39 PROBE This statement says government can unite all sectors to move from a system that is transactional to one that is relational, to create a partnership with individuals and families. What does this mean to you?
 - i. INSTRUCTION: PROBE; LISTEN AND RECORD
- c) INSTRUCTION: S72 PROBE What does it mean to grow an individual's or family's capacity? How do we address the gap between current capacity and what someone needs to achieve independence?

INSTRUCTION: SET UP ACTIVITY FOR PARTICIPANTS TO WRITE THOUGHTS DOWN INDIVIDUALLY BEFORE GROUP SESSION

20. INSTRUCTION: HAVE PARTICIPANTS READ STATEMENTS AGAIN

- a. INSTRUCTION: PARTICIPANTS TO WRITE DOWN ELEMENTS THEY LIKE
- b. INSTRUCTION: PARTICIPANTS TO WRITE DOWN ELEMENTS THEY DO NOT LIKE
- c. INSTRUCTION: PARTICIPANTS TO WRITE DOWN ELEMENTS THEY FIND CONFUSING OR REQUIRE MORE INFORMATION

21. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

22. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

23. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

“DESIGN A SAFETY NET” CREATIVE EXERCISE (20 Minutes)

INSTRUCTION: READ INTRODUCTION AND EXERCISE INSTRUCTIONS

24. INSTRUCTION: PARTICIPANTS TO WRITE THOUGHTS/IDEAS

25. INSTRUCTION: PARTICIPANTS TO WRITE THOUGHTS/IDEAS

26. INSTRUCTION: PARTICIPANTS TO WRITE THOUGHTS/IDEAS

27. INSTRUCTION: PARTICIPANTS TO WRITE THOUGHTS/IDEAS

INSTRUCTION: GROUP DISCUSSION OF RESPONSES TO Q 27-30

SAFETY NET STRATEGY AND IDEATION RECAP (5 minutes)

28. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

29. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

- a) INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

30. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD; PROBE FOR SPECIFIC MESSAGING SOURCES SUCH AS EMAIL/NEWSLETTER, DEDICATED WEBSITE, EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS (SUCH AS SEMINARS), EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS, PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION, ETC.

- a) INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

31. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

32. INSTRUCTION: LISTEN AND RECORD

CLOSING

INSTRUCTION: THANK PARTICIPANTS; EXIT INSTRUCTIONS; END SESSION