

# SUICIDE Assessment

## 1. Assessing Suicide Ideation of Vulnerable Persons

- ☐ **Observe** non-verbal cues for distress (e.g. mood changes)

Note: Some people with suicidal intent may not present any non-verbal cues

- ☐ **Ask** the person if there is an adverse situation affecting him/her and the coping with the situation

- ☐ **Recognise** if the person has intent to end his/her life

Note: Needs to explicitly be asked

*If yes, establish the following...*

- 1 **Intent** of living VS. dying or ambivalence

- 2 **Severity** of the intent

- 3 A clear **understanding** of 'why', 'when', 'what', 'who', 'how' in the context of the suicidal behaviours

**WHY** Incidents/sequence of events leading to the suicidal thought and/or act

**WHEN** Outset of suicidal thought and/or act; time/date of suicidal thought and/or act occurrence and its frequency

**WHAT** Content of the thought and/or act; what thought and/or act to put him/herself at risk

**WHO** Who may be of help to the person; who is likely to trigger the thought and/or act

**HOW** Details involved in carrying out the act; coping methods (what helps, what does not?)

- 4 **Intensity** of emotions towards current situation; sense of hopelessness and helplessness

- 5 **Means** involved in ending one's life; if means are lethal and/or accessible

- 6 **Influence** of drugs and/or substances

- 7 **History** of self-harm and/or suicidal attempts (personal and family)

- 8 **History** of mental health or psychiatric health; if the person has the rational thinking capacity

- 9 **Availability** of social support



## 2. Formulating Risk Level Assessment and Follow-up Actions

**Intermediate**  
Close monitoring;  
Establish safety plan

**Low**  
Enhance self-control  
and social support;  
Establish safety plan

**High**  
Keep the person  
safe by providing  
crisis intervention



**Risk Level**

## 3. Safety Plan

Requires collaboration across  
multiple systems



**1**

### Person-at-risk

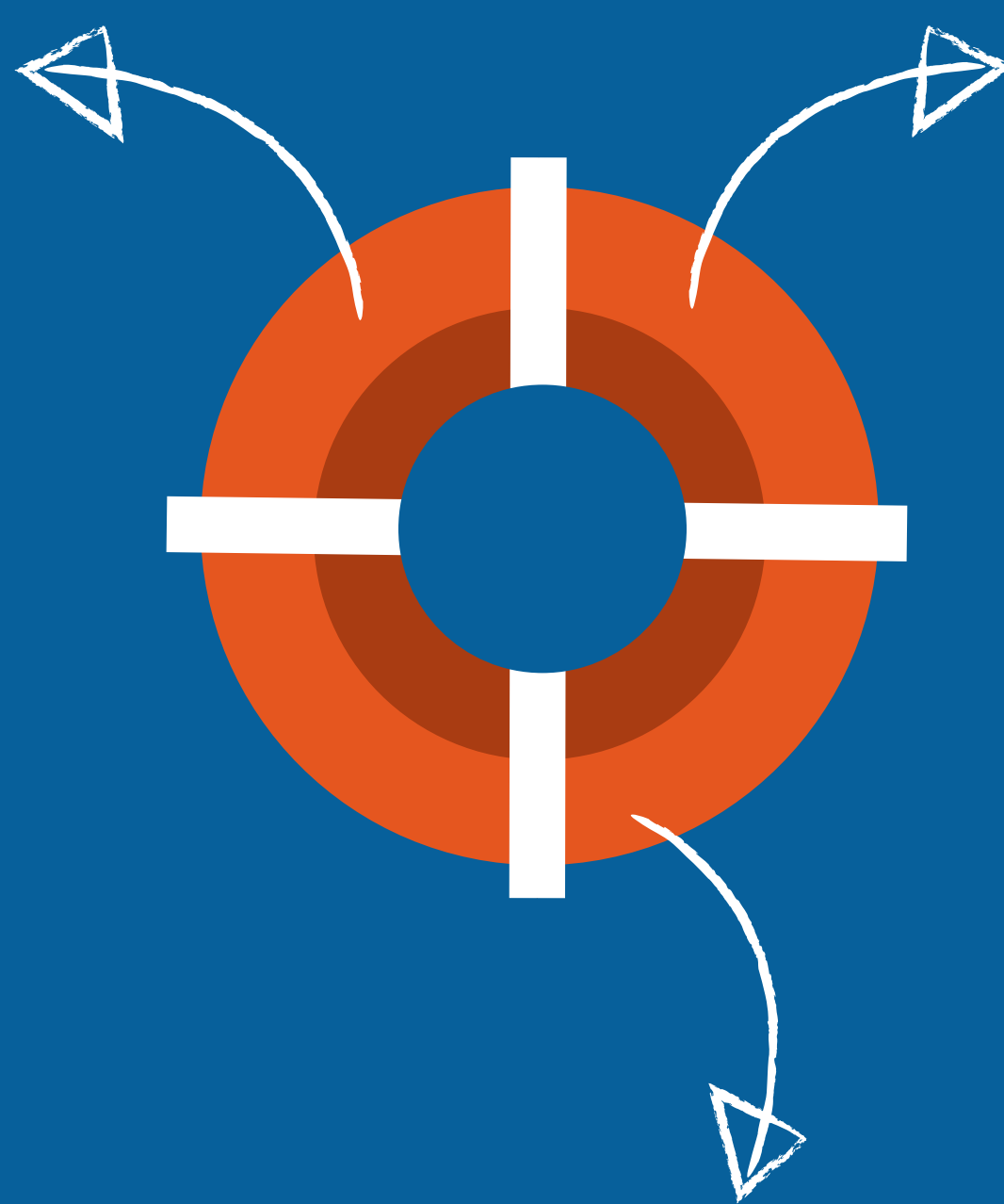
- Increase awareness of suicidal behaviours/ideations
- Increase knowledge on medical and therapy support
- Increase knowledge on getting formal/informal support
- Increase awareness of symptoms of depression and suicidal ideation
- Increase motivation to get help
- Increase commitment to working towards safety



**2**

### Family and/or Close Ally

- Increase awareness of person-at-risk's risk level
- Increase in supportive behaviour and eliminate negative behaviours that trigger person-at-risk
- Increase skills in disabling suicide plan
- Increase awareness in broaching the subject of suicide/suicide ideation with person-at-risk



**3**

### Community

- Increase public education to destigmatise suicidal behaviours
- Ongoing training for those in contact with potentially vulnerable persons
- Screen vulnerable persons
- Provide training for gatekeepers

#### References:

Silverman, M. M., Berman, A. L., Sanddal, N. D., O'Carroll, P. W., & Joiner, T. E. (2007). Rebuilding the Tower of Babel: A Revised Nomenclature for the Study of Suicide and Suicidal Behaviors Part 2: Suicide-Related Ideations, Communications, and Behaviors. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 37(3), 264-277.