



RAISING VOICES

ANNUAL REPORT 2013

preventing violence against women and children

 *Raising Voices*



WE ARE FINDING OUR WAY TOGETHER

“Community members believed [that] . . . violence [was] the solution in any misunderstandings in relationships. Now many people have changed and now say violence is not acceptable in their communities. Many even come to us and thank us and bring us presents to appreciate what has changed in their relationship.”

SASA! Community Activist
from Salaama

“In the past, . . . we still used to get visitors, but mainly to follow up on school dues payments and academic performance. This year, we hosted over five schools, including teachers and children, and several other community members asking about . . . the changes happening in our school as a result of opting [for the] Good Schools approach.”

Head Teacher
from Bombo Common Primary School

IT'S BEEN A YEAR TO REMEMBER

2013 brought growth and expansion at an unprecedented rate. As our new strategy began to gain traction, the need for senior staff and technical support emerged with greater urgency. Larger scale funding agreements required us to reexamine our management systems and governance structure. As our work expanded into more and more communities, we began to grapple with real questions of scale and sustainability.

Amid this acceleration of organizational learning were some key achievements that unified our team. In our Violence Against Women (VAW) work, we completed the *SASA!* Study, confirming that *SASA!* is effective in preventing violence against women. In our Violence Against Children (VAC) work, we received support to launch the Good School Toolkit in 1,000 new schools over three years. These two experiences sparked a new sense of possibility. They renewed our shared vision of preventing violence at a community level and reaffirmed the instincts that carry us through each new day of work.

Now, each step forward requires more courage than ever before. As we move from 10-plus years immersed in on-the-ground practice to having a deliberate focus on learning and influencing, we are finding ourselves beginners again.

The success of our methodologies and expansion of our influence are pulling us into unfamiliar terrain, where we must define what it means to meaningfully grow our reach, have a global voice and support our partners' success.

In the end, 2013 was one of those milestone years in which we could feel ourselves growing up. As Raising Voices matured as an organization, we felt an increased sense of responsibility—that we must interrogate our assumptions more rigorously and learn to stretch beyond our comfort zone in new dimensions of our work. In 2013, we began the work of diversifying leadership, and expanding our engagement at a more global scale. None of it would have been possible without the extremely committed team we have been able to assemble at Raising Voices. Nor would it have been possible without trust, support, friendship and solidarity from our long-term donors and collaborating partners. We look forward to continuing this journey into 2014 with a keen awareness of the opportunities ahead and a heightened sense of anticipation.

This report captures the highlights of our year. We would be glad to share a more detailed perspective upon request.

PRACTICE

THE STRENGTH TO ACT LIVES IN EVERYONE

"About one month after I began working at Raising Voices, I ran into an old schoolmate, and she asked where I worked. I said I worked with Raising Voices and that we did work to prevent violence against women and children. And I added that we also worked for a society in which men and women would enjoy equal rights and status. She said, 'So you're one of those women.' And I asked, 'What women?' She answered, 'Those feminists.' And I said, 'Yes, I'm one of those women.'"

Farida Bagalaaliwo, Raising Voices staff member

PRACTICE

local activism / institutional activism / creating methodologies



SASA! INSPIRES ACTIVIST ORGANIZATIONS

This year, partners from our first *SASA!* cohort expanded their use of *SASA!* across diverse settings—urban, refugee, pastoralist, faith-based, rural and more—with the creativity and commitment of true activist organizations. At the same time, our longtime collaborator CEDOVIP built on the momentum of engaging over 250,000 community members through the *SASA!* pilot, and joined us in providing technical assistance to now 10 national and 5 regional *SASA!* partners. By the end of 2013, *SASA!* was being used by over 25 organizations from over 12 countries, within and beyond Africa.



NEW *SASA!* ADAPTATIONS

Now four years since *SASA!*'s launch, we are seeing new ways to expand *SASA!*'s effectiveness and reach. The experiences of activists have inspired three adaptations of the methodology. Beyond Borders in Haiti and Civil Society Support Programme in Ethiopia are each collaborating with us on major adaptations for their contexts. We are also working with Trócaire Uganda to create *SASA!* Faith—an adaptation that engages faith institutions and leverages their unparalleled role in shaping social norms.



GOOD SCHOOLS BECOME "MODEL SCHOOLS"

Many partners using the Good School Toolkit are becoming "model schools" within their localities. These schools have transformed their day-to-day operations to include positive discipline measures; functional children, teachers and parents committees; pupils courts and other councils; reward systems to motivate their learners and more. Drawing examples from their experiences, we created a series of short films for bringing the Toolkit to life when presenting in other educational and advocacy spaces. While proud of this progress, we have also noted that caning and other forms of corporal punishment seem to be declining at school but not at home. In 2014, we hope to engage in more community-based activism that can help carry the values and practices of "good schools" into the broader community.

PRACTICE

local activism / institutional activism / creating methodologies



1000 MORE GOOD SCHOOLS

We have always strived for the Good School Toolkit to become a mandated requirement from the Ministry of Education and Sports. This year we took some of our greatest strides toward that goal. The success of our participating schools allowed us to make a strong case for funding from the Department for International Development (DFID), prompting their commitment to support a roll out to an additional 1,000 schools over three years, along with research on how the Toolkit can be used to help marginalized girls. While preparing for the DFID expansion, we distributed learning materials to 1,100 schools and continued to support and learn from the over 450 schools already using the Good School Toolkit—including 21 new, direct partnerships in Luwero.



MORE ACCOUNTABILITY TO PARTNERS

For both *SASA!* roll out and the Good School Program, this year was full of rewarding moments and challenging lessons that reinforced the importance of partner support. In some cases, we enhanced our upfront, in-person assistance and saw immediate benefits to programming. However, we also saw partners lose funding and momentum, and become unable to complete their work. Action was needed. For the Good School Program, we created a plan for Good School learning courses, onsite resource persons and a stronger Peer Learning Network. For *SASA!*, we organized an external evaluation of our technical assistance, which revealed the need for a stronger mutual commitment, onsite and contextualized assistance, flexible program implementation and more—all leading to the new Learning Center, which will launch in 2014.

PRACTICE

local activism / institutional activism / creating methodologies



TWO AWARDS FUEL OUR EFFORTS

This year Raising Voices won two awards. Organized by the Tumaini group, including UNICEF and Save the Children, the Tumaini Awards recognize individuals and groups who have made a significant contribution to improve the lives of children in Uganda. These awards honored the national communications campaign for its creativity and “out of the box” thinking and honored the Good School Program for developing fresh approaches for preventing violence against children in schools.

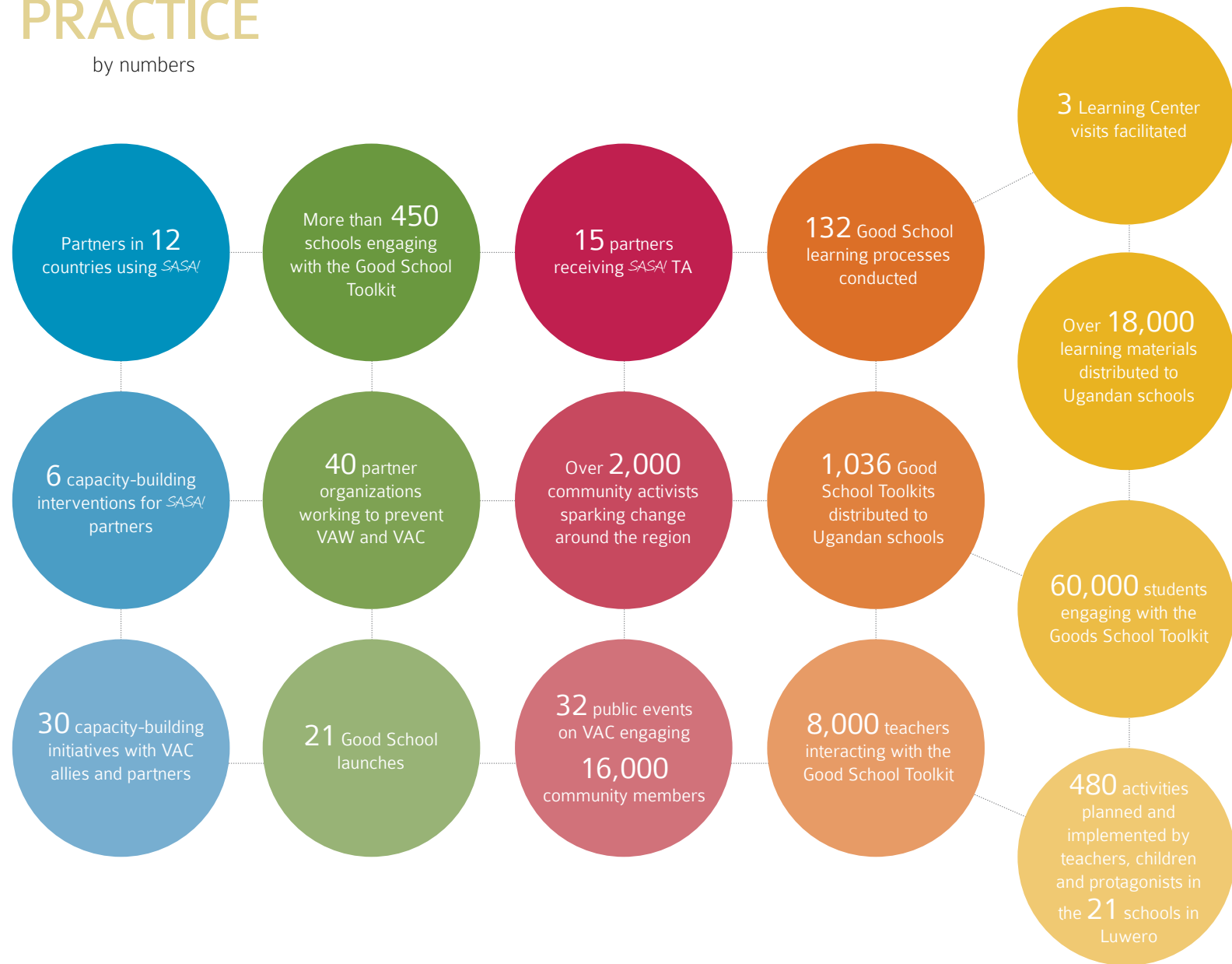


VAC ACTION CENTERS COMING SOON

This year, we signed eight partnership agreements for operating eight Violence Against Children (VAC) Action Centers, which we will create in 2014. These will be community-based centers where children experiencing violence could go or be referred to for help. Approximately \$30,000 will be sub-granted to each of these partners to run these centers based on jointly developed action plans. In preparation, we spent 2013 solidifying these relationships and strengthening existing capacity.

PRACTICE

by numbers



LEARNING

THE COURAGE TO LEARN ACCELERATES CHANGE

"When the M&E team first provided feedback about our Good School work in Luwero, I felt like they were out to find fault and implicate us. However, with time, the more objective I became, the more I saw how the feedback was helpful. I learned to ask myself searching questions, and I watched our entire team benefit from this new skill and others. Now, we have incorporated M&E into everything we do. As an individual, I have learned that in order to improve the way I do my work, I need to learn with an open mind."

Yvonne Laruni, Raising Voices staff member

LEARNING

generating evidence / disseminating ideas



SASA IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The results from the *SASA* Study are in. This rewarding collaboration with CEDOVIP, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and Makerere University has now produced evidence of *SASA*'s impact, showing how it successfully reaches beyond the individual and affects change at the community level. The results demonstrate substantial shifts in people's beliefs and behaviors. Most notably, the level of physical partner violence against women was considerably lower in *SASA* communities after less than three years of programming. Conducted as a cluster randomized control trial—the gold standard in research—these results can now equip policy makers and donors with compelling reasons to support community-based processes focused on balancing power, changing social norms, and actually eliminating violence from women's lives.



ENGAGING OTHERS IN SASA RESULTS

The *SASA* Study results are inspiring a broad spectrum of stakeholders to reflect on what makes violence preventable. Throughout 2013, we shared the study results using a range of processes, meetings and gatherings—engaging academics, donors, government officials, civil society, community members and more. Some of these events were true celebrations, enabling us to give back to the communities where data was collected. From these celebrations, local activists left determined to double their efforts, now that they knew their hard work had been effective. We also shared the results at three global forums: the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI), the Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence, and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). While the study results and analysis have taken longer than anticipated, delaying our advocacy efforts, we look forward to the main trial results, popular report and various other papers to be out in the first half of 2014.

LEARNING

generating evidence / disseminating ideas



SASA ACTION RESEARCH AND LEARNING

It is imperative that we build a culture of learning for *SASA* that extends beyond the trial itself. With this in mind, we supported all national and regional *SASA* roll out partners in conducting a midterm review: a community-level rapid assessment survey to uncover impacts at the end of the Start and Awareness phases. Some partners conducted a quantitative survey in control and *SASA* communities, while others evaluated only *SASA* communities or used an alternative qualitative evaluation. When the results were in, we supported partners in using them to improve and strengthen programming. Lessons learned included the importance of sustained support to activists and communities, the challenges in affecting deeply held beliefs, the power of multiple exposures to ideas, and more. We also took the time to capture the immense learning that came from our partnership with Trócaire about what it means to work with the Catholic Church. We documented and shared this experience in a Learning Paper, including ideas and insights that we are now using to create the *SASA* Faith adaptation and to scale up in four new dioceses in Uganda.



GOOD SCHOOL TRIAL UNDERWAY

While the Good School Toolkit is being used in over 450 schools, we had not gathered systematic evidence regarding its impact. Thus, in 2013, we began a randomised controlled trial, testing the hypothesis that the Good School Toolkit prevents violence against children at school. We secured the funds for this research, support from local authorities, endorsement from the Ministry of Education, 42 schools willing to participate, and a skilled and experienced research partner (LSHTM). Our first attempt to find a research partner led to a poorly designed study and a waste of three months' time and resources. However, once we established the LSHTM partnership, we got off to a new start, completing the baseline data and publishing in a peer-reviewed journal. Already, the study has generated much interest and will be, to our knowledge, the first study of its kind.

LEARNING

generating evidence / disseminating ideas



COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN RAPID ASSESSMENT

Knowing that our communications campaign reaches Ugandans in the millions, we are now systematically tracking how these communications are affecting people's attitudes and behaviors toward children. In 2013, we conducted a rapid assessment survey in the districts of Wakiso and Mukono. The results indicate that there is a positive engagement with the communications campaign and increasing understanding that violence against children is a problem. The campaign has impacted attitudes and behaviors among nine in every ten people exposed to its content and influenced more than three quarters of the people in the survey area. For example, 47% of community members indicated how they now talk more to children and 30% indicated that they no longer beat children. A more comprehensive impact study will be conducted in 2014.

CAN A CHILD FIND HELP?

While response systems are mandated in law, in our baseline data collection for the Good School trial, children reported in large numbers that the services were inaccessible to them. In collaboration with LSHTM and UNICEF, we conducted a systematic study of how children navigate the existing referral system (in a district with a school-based intervention) and whether they were actually helped when they experienced violence. The findings were shocking. The study has been submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal for 2014.

STRONGER M&E SYSTEMS LEAD THE WAY

To ensure quality expansion of our approaches, we created more effective and accessible M&E frameworks for our three core methodologies: the Good School Toolkit, *SASA!* and *Get Moving!* These M&E frameworks will allow us to gain greater programmatic insights from quantitative and qualitative data, and to more effectively engage individuals on the ground in data collection. For the Good School Toolkit, the M&E systems were developed with Price Waterhouse Cooper and Coffey International. Similarly, the International Center for Research on Women is helping us develop an M&E system for the organization as a whole.

LEARNING

by numbers



INFLUENCE

ENGAGEMENT INSPIRES NEW PERSPECTIVES

“Previously, I had little engagement with violence against children issues. Since I joined Raising Voices, I have found myself questioning my actions and reactions toward my daughter a lot. When deciding something for her or telling her to do something, I question if I am being child-centric, or if it is all about what I think without considering her perspective. I have found myself explaining to her more why I do this or that, or why she has to do this or that. Overall, I feel it is having a positive impact on our relationship. We understand each other much better.”

Nancy Abwola, Raising Voices staff member

INFLUENCE

media and communications / informing programs and policy / networks and alliances / global dialogue



A REVISED NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

As the year came to a close, we watched the 2013/14 National VAC Communications Campaign capture the hearts and minds of approximately two million Ugandans per month—including a travelling team of activists that by the end of 2013 had engaged over 16,000 community members in personal dialogue. To deepen the campaign’s impact, we had invested in substantial new content, drawing on humor, drama and realism to create new radio dramas, magazine shows, spot advertisements and more. Our challenge in this work was creating a personal, Ugandan message while maintaining high production quality. It was difficult to find service providers who could deliver this balance and on schedule. Ultimately, we created the content ourselves, launching the campaign later than planned, yet successfully in all major media outlets of the country. We also created four new 20-minute films that were formally launched during the Manya Film Festival and will be aired on all major television stations in Uganda in 2014.



A NEW ONLINE VOICE

In 2013, we launched our long-awaited new website. It boldly asserts our new tripartite strategy and embodies the values and vision that we try to live by every day. In a time when so much of what we believe and how we work is judged through our website, we now have something we can proudly stand behind. However, creating a website was a provocative process. It launched us on a journey of clarifying how to share our work through more accessible language, through social media, and in ways that get people thinking, linking and “liking” what we have to say.

INFLUENCE

media and communications / informing programs and policy / networks and alliances / global dialogue



EXPANDING VAC NETWORKS

The Peer Learning Network now boasts 1500 members, bringing together schools, organizations and individuals that have been exposed to the ideas of the Good School Toolkit. Members regularly exchange ideas through short phone messages, social media, exchange visits and periodic publications including quarterly newsletters. Forty-four exchange visits were organized this year, allowing teachers and students to learn from other schools using the Toolkit. Also, the Voices for Children Database has grown to over 3,239 people interested in preventing violence against children in Uganda. The database is now user-friendly and searchable by telephone number, name, profession and location. One idea is to engage this audience in a future SMS campaign.



THE GBV PREVENTION NETWORK STEPS UP

The GBV Prevention Network is buzzing more than ever before. After establishing a presence on Twitter and doubling the “likes” on its Facebook page, there was a noticeable increase in response to activities from members. Beneath this buzz exists a new four year strategy designed to guide the Network toward an openly feminist identity. This year, the 2013 Action and Advocacy Kits for the 16 Days of Activism were distributed to 125 GBV Prevention Network members from 19 countries for the largest regional campaign to date. For the first time, we translated posters into 12 local languages spoken throughout the region and produced two versions to suit the Horn of Africa context. Today, the GBV Prevention Network totals over 700 members, with over 170 new members this year alone.

INFLUENCE

media and communications / informing programs and policy / networks and alliances / global dialogue



INFLUENCING PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Our influence on emerging VAW primary prevention tools rose markedly this year. Our voice is respected and our on-the-ground experience has proven highly valuable in shaping methodologies and tools that will be used widely in the field of violence prevention. In most of the reviews, our perspectives substantially influenced the tone, substance or design of the resource in question. This has important implications for community-based programming for years to come. In our VAC prevention work, we strategically sought to diversify our programmatic influence—from joining the steering committee meetings of Forum for Education NGOs in Uganda, to working with 10 NGOs to enhance their work in schools, to being on the advisory board of influential groups like Twaweza, to participating in a high-profile intervention in Somalia and Ethiopia developed by UNICEF.



INFLUENCING POLICY DEVELOPMENT

More and more we recognize how our experience in the field can add weight to advocacy efforts and policy development. Among many initiatives this year, we participated in the Domestic Violence Act & PEP Coalitions in Uganda and the Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law (about the anti-homosexuality bill). We also acted as an integral member of the Child Protection Working Group hosted by the Ministry of Gender as well as several other advisory groups for agencies and institutions working on violence prevention. In addition to lending our insights to these initiatives, we also contributed to research tools informing policy, such as the National Study of Prevalence of Violence Against Children. While our efforts in this domain are expanding, there is an opportunity now to develop a more robust advocacy strategy.

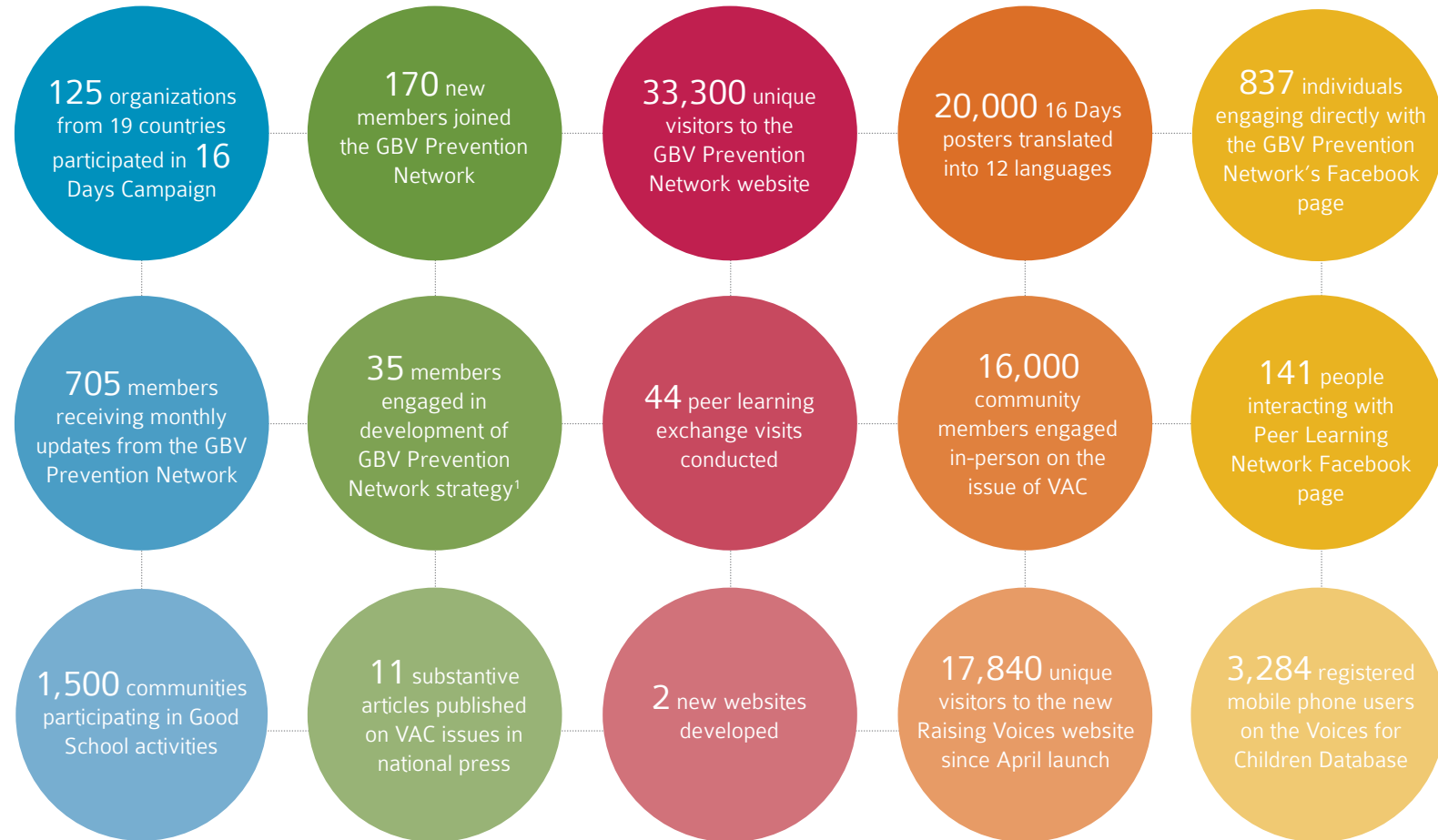


A GROWING ROLE IN GLOBAL DIALOGUE

We are seeking more and more opportunities to contribute our voice and influence to global dialogues. In 2013, we contributed to several forums to influence the post-2015 agenda’s inclusion of violence against women and children. We also joined the planning group for the Global Initiative to Prevent Violence Against Children—a global process to promote the issue of preventing violence against children on the agenda of key policymakers. However, in truth, our greatest influence has been through opportunistic, smaller scale, one-on-one and small group processes in the form of reviews, conversations, presentations and the hosting of meetings about the VAW and VAC issues of the day.

INFLUENCE

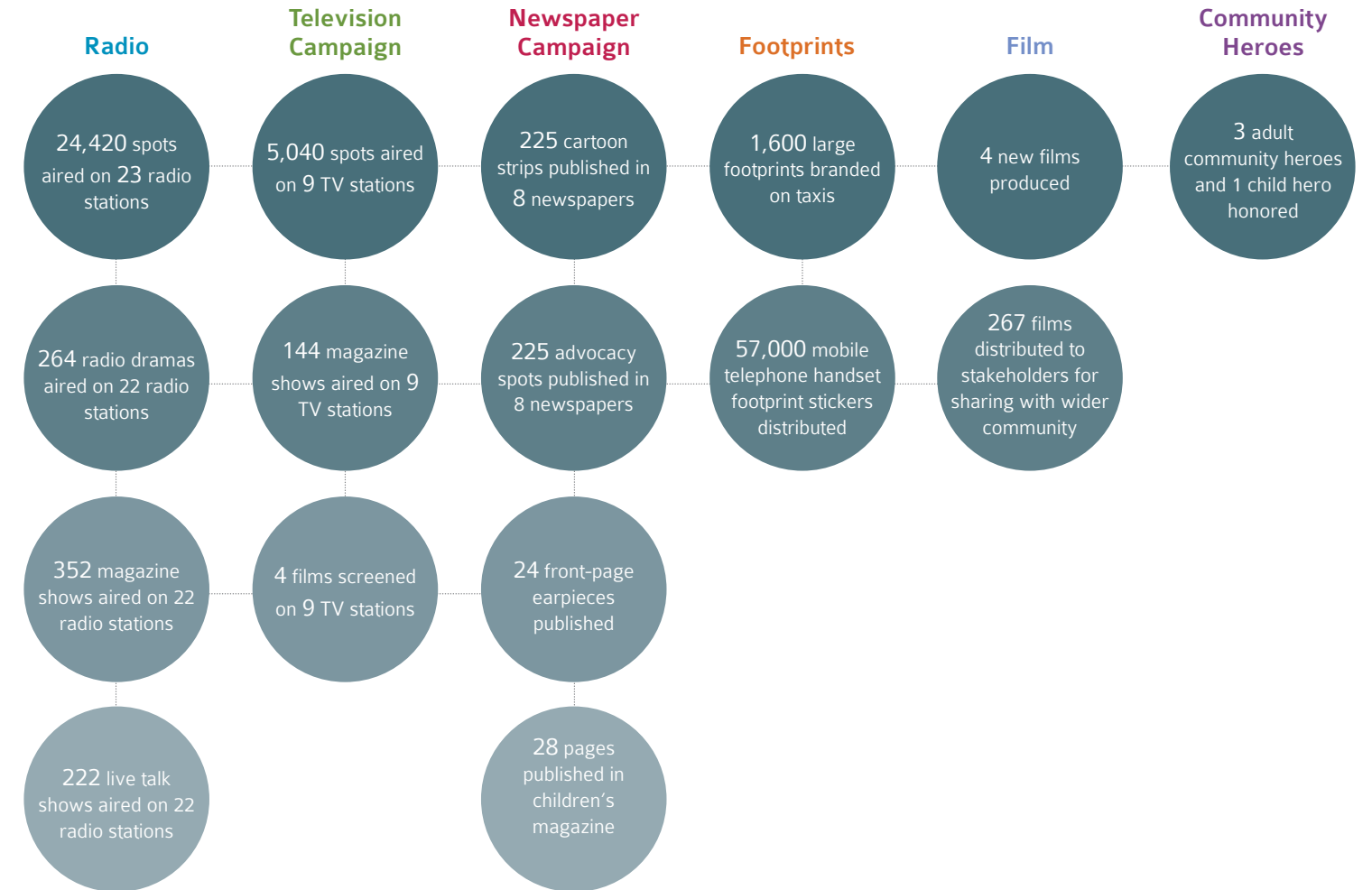
by numbers



¹ This includes the 5 Advisory Committee members that had input and members consulted in the site visits.

INFLUENCE

by numbers



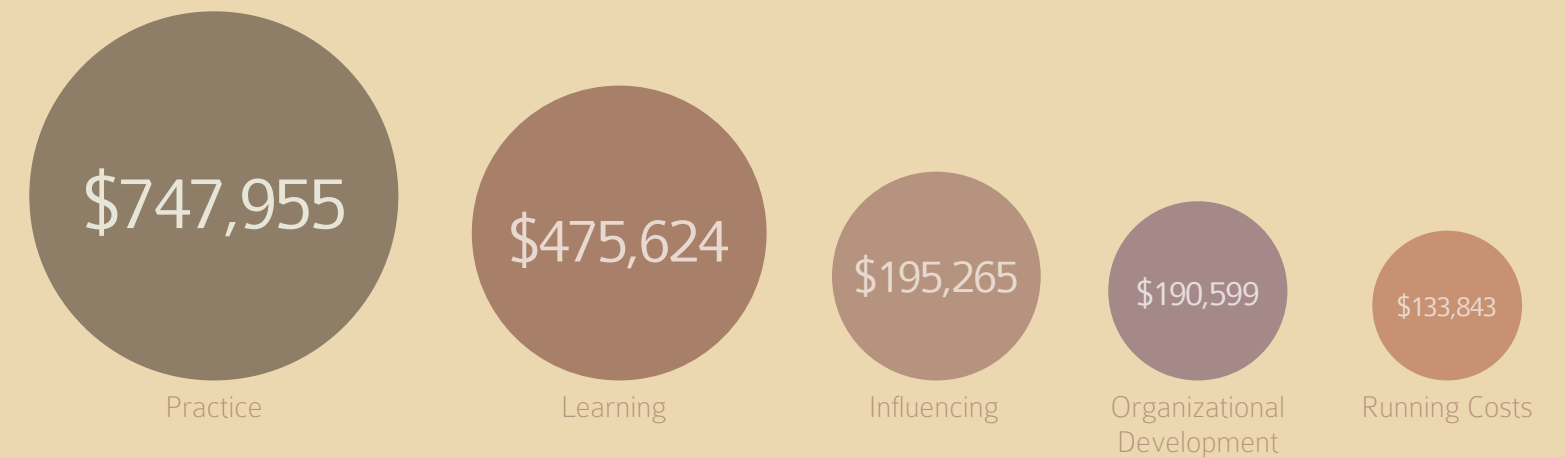
ORGANIZATIONAL & FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

As an organization, 2013 felt like a race to evolve operationally at a pace that supported expansion of our activities. We recruited four new senior staff and acquired additional office space. We also passed the rigorous assessment undertaken by Price Waterhouse Cooper of our management and finance systems, two new donors invested in our work, and four long-term donors made three year commitments.

However, there is still a layer of human resources that is missing at Raising Voices—a layer of professional managers who will engage with the vision while following through on quarterly plans, reviewing of indicators, and scrutinizing the minutiae to extract operational wisdom. This layer of staff would allow everyone to do their job better and with greater joy, and finding the right new team members will be an important goal of 2014.

In 2013, total funds received and available for all activities amounted to **\$2,575,911**. Two grants were received in the last quarter of the year and a third grant disbursement was delayed till the first quarter of 2014. As a result, we expended **\$1,743,286** and made programmatic commitments for a further **\$500,000** approximately.

EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN BY PROGRAM:



For a more detailed breakdown, see the 2013 Financial Report.

REFLECTIONS

CREATIVITY, RIGOR AND DISCIPLINE CAN COEXIST

This was the first year that we accepted funding from a bilateral donor (DFID) and grappled with the reality of what such an enterprise involves. While the funding was substantial, the demands and investment related to this collaboration challenged us in new ways. It introduced a layer of precision to project management, and it called for reporting that contrasted our inclination to minimize paperwork and bureaucracy. At the same time, working with a bilateral donor has taught us new skills that we believe will ultimately strengthen our work. This experience has shown us that, while creative work requires flexibility and risk, it also requires discipline and upfront rigor.

THE NEED TO INFLUENCE A BROADER CONSTITUENCY

Since the inception of our tripartite strategy, our progress has been uneven in the three domains. This is partially due to the fact that the two new areas (learning and influence) are not our core competencies. While, as an organization, we have highly developed instincts and are good at identifying what works and what doesn't, the meticulous effort of systematically accumulating evidence and presenting it in a manner that has the highest uptake are competencies we need to develop. We have become better at developing relationships with researchers; and therefore, the learning part of our work is now progressing, albeit slower than we would like. However, in 2014, we will need to pay specific attention to the work of communicating to and influencing a broader audience.

AN EXPLORATION INTO THE MEANING OF SCALE

Over the past years, we have made a responsible and carefully managed transition from being an innovator of ideas to then doing the next layer of work for taking those ideas to scale. We have been able to acquire and marshal resources to make that transition, identify staff and relationships that can drive the process, and develop learning processes that enable us to extract lessons for the work of violence prevention. Yet this process has sometimes shaken our foundation and returned us to a deeper reflection on our values, vision and mission. In our usual style, we are asking the difficult questions: Is scale always the desired end? Is deepening our work equal to expanding our reach? How do we measure impact at scale? How do we ensure the meaning and sustainability of the work is retained, and even strengthened? If something can't go to scale in the traditional sense, is it less valuable?

UGANDA IS UNDERGOING A POLITICAL "CLIMATE CHANGE"

In the past few years, the space for civil society has been undergoing a "shape-shift." On the one hand, the operational and political climate has arguably become constricted, while on the other hand, technocrats and civil servants within some parts of the government have become acutely focused on solving problems. Thus, an organization like Raising Voices is faced with delicate challenges: when to speak out and when to nurture behind-the-scenes relationships, and how to earn trust and credibility with allies while not remaining silent when there is an imperative to raise our voice. These dilemmas have exercised our conscience and strategic muscle considerably over the past couple of years. We are beginning to develop mechanisms, advisors and principles that help us to navigate this terrain, but we will require particular discipline over the coming year.

WHAT MAKES US PROUD? WHAT GIVES US HOPE?

WORDS FROM THE RAISING VOICES TEAM

"An important space exists between responding and changing: people may respond to a survey, attend an event and give you all the right answers, but is change happening as a result? At Raising Voices, I feel like we are discovering opportunities for interrogating that space—to better inform how we strengthen practice, learning and influence."

"With the SASA Study, it would have been easy for Raising Voices to sit back and say, 'We've done it. We've figured it out.' Instead, we asked critical questions about what this learning means for the field of violence prevention and what we should change going forward."

"Winning larger grants has felt like an act of trust—like we have been recognized as a leader in the field and taken seriously at that level. This has provided new inspiration to do the hard work of growing into our full potential."

"Raising Voices creates the opportunity to shape the kind of Uganda and world we want, through influencing the way people look at children and women and also how these two groups look at themselves."

"It is clear how deeply each and every person at Raising Voices is committed to the work of preventing VAW and VAC and what an exciting time it is and has been for everyone."

"Just when I think I understand, I realize that there are deeper questions to be asked. That's what is so good about Raising Voices: we keep asking questions."

"We have grown gracefully. As we do things at a larger scale, we haven't let go of quality. That is what brings partners to us rather than us running to find partners. It makes me feel good."

IT'S BEEN A GREAT YEAR. WHAT WILL WE DO TOGETHER IN 2014?

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