

# Motivation and Activism

(1 hour 45 minutes)



Local Activism Series  
Staff Skill Building Library  
Raising Voices



This module is part of a *Staff Skill Building Library* developed by Raising Voices. The *Library* consists of competency based training modules designed to strengthen skills of staff implementing or supporting community-based violence against women (VAW) prevention programs. The *Library* is designed for organizations using *SASA! An Activist Kit for Preventing Violence against Women and HIV* but can be used by anyone working to mobilize their community to prevent VAW. If you are not using *SASA!*, simply replace the word *SASA!* wherever you see it in the text with the name of your methodology.

This module is part of the *Local Activism* series in the *Staff Skill Building Library*.

All materials in the *Library* can be downloaded at [www.raisingvoices.org/staffskills.php](http://www.raisingvoices.org/staffskills.php) or requested at [info@raisingvoices.org](mailto:info@raisingvoices.org). The *SASA! Activist Kit* can be downloaded at [www.raisingvoices.org](http://www.raisingvoices.org).



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# Motivation and Activism

## (1 hour 45 minutes)



### Objective

- © Discuss importance of keeping community activists internally motivated to continue with their activism.

### Competencies

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Explain what it means to be an 'activist'.
- List at least 3 things to do *besides* providing financial or material support to inspire the motivation of community activists.

### Preparations

- Photocopy Handouts: *An Activist...* and *Inspiring Community Activist Motivation: Tip Sheet*.
- Pre-prepare flip chart with group numbers and assignments for Step No. 16 Group Work. Use main category headings from *Inspiring Community Activist Motivation: Tip Sheet*. (e.g. Group 1: Accurately explain benefits of participation and raise awareness about the issues, Group 2: Create realistic structure and expectations of Community Activist, etc).





## Steps

1. Ask: *SASA* talks a lot about activism—what is “activism”?

2. Write responses on flip chart.

3. Distribute Handout *An Activist ...* and compare with participant responses.

4. Ask: *Is activism the same or different from being a volunteer?*



5. Solicit responses, including:

- An activist works out of their own belief system and inner feeling about an issue—with or without material reward.
- In some contexts, a volunteer sometimes expects some material appreciation, and is sometimes motivated not because of inner belief systems, but because of those material rewards (stipends/allowances, bikes, gum boots, etc).

6. Ask: *What words seem to fit locally to explain the concept of an ‘activist’?* (Note: *It is ok if this is not a single word in local language—as long as participants practice how to explain this concept in a way that will make sense locally.*)

7. Help group decide on terminology as a group (Note: *may simply use the word “activism” if it fits with local context.*)

8. Explain: *The Community Activists (CA’s) work hard to prevent violence against women and HIV in their communities. Some have worked with other NGOs and have gotten ‘sitting fees’ / allowances for coming to trainings, stipends / allowances for their work or material benefits like school fees or bicycles. Yet, if we want to create change, we want to use a different model of community ownership and change.*

9. Ask: *Think of a time when you saw someone spend their own time to do something for someone else. (Pause) What motivated them to do it? (Pause.)*



10. Ask participants to share short stories as examples (e.g. themselves working later than expected, a community leader helping someone beyond what is considered their role, people doing work for the church, a very committed activist on a human rights issue speaking out on issues even though others disagree with her/him, etc). Be sure the person sharing the story discusses what they think motivates that person to continue.
11. Tell a story from your own experience about someone doing VAW work being motivated internally to do something—or simply tell the story of the CEDOVIP community activist in Kawempe Division of Kampala, told with her permission below in her own words:

“This program is very important to me. This work has earned me a lot of respect from the community and local leaders. I also share the respect and give it to everyone in the community. I have also become famous in the neighborhood; everyone knows that I am here to help improve their relationships. Both men and women know that I am neutral and working to see to it that there is fairness in relationships for both men and women. Many appreciate my work and the LC [Local Government official] respects me and refers cases of domestic violence to me.”

- Nalongo Lutakome



12. Ask: *Thinking of these examples, what motivates people besides money?*  
(e.g. connection with an issue, frustration with injustice, being recognized and respected, feeling connected with others in the group, related personal experience, being seen as a role model, access to new ideas and training, spiritual beliefs, status, etc).
13. Explain: *Thinking about these, we are going to split into groups and think about how we can put these principles to use with our CAs, to spark their internal motivation to continue their SASA! activism.*
14. Ask participants to count off 1-5, to form 5 groups.
15. Distribute Handout: **Inspiring Community Activist Motivation - Tips Sheet.**



16. Explain:

- Each group will look at their section of the Handout: [Inspiring Community Activist Motivation: Tip Sheet](#) (Note: show pre-prepared flip chart).
- Think about the practical ideas for increasing activism that are in that section of the list, and add any ideas you wish onto the handout, to make a more complete list.
- Create a 5 minute drama demonstrating some of these practical things you feel you could do in your communities, within your category, to increase the internal motivation and desire for activism among the CAs.
- Your group has only 15 minutes to do this.

17. Circulate between groups to ensure they understand their topics. After 15 minutes, call “stop!”

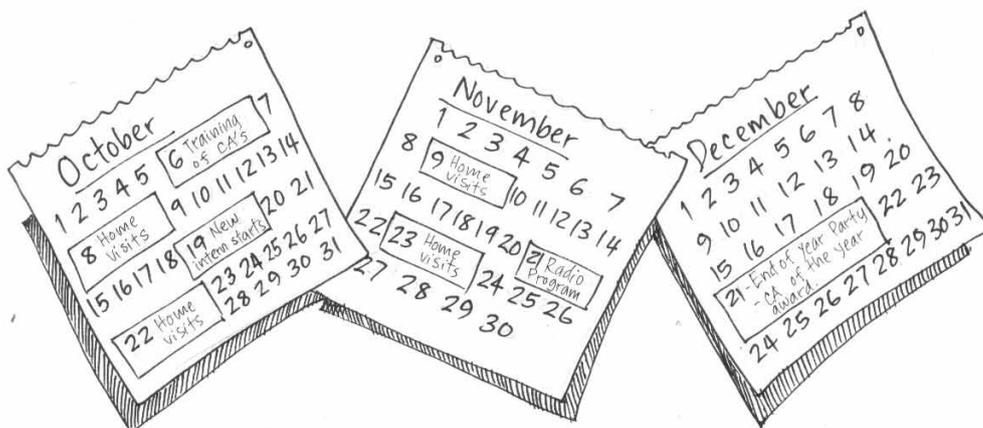
18. Ask groups to present their short dramas.

19. Debrief after each role play. Invite other groups to comment, supplement ideas, and discuss whether the ideas presented could be useful in their contexts.

20. Ask each organization (or each participant, if training all for 1 organization) to list a few of the ideas that were presented that they feel they could try in the next month.

21. Encourage each organization to post the full list of ideas somewhere they can see it in the office so new ideas can be incorporated each month, or as needed.

22. Conclude: *The most important thing to realize is that CAs are our peers and, and our partners in creating social change. Their ideas, feedback, problems and feelings are important if we are all going to increase activism for change. Have fun with them! Get to know them as people! Respect their ideas as leaders and activists!*





# Validation Options

Validation is another way to say “assessment” or “pre/post-test”. It is used to determine whether the participants in a training learned what the facilitator intended for them to learn. Instructions for how to use each validation method can be found in *Training Validation Methods: A how-to guide for assessing participant learning* downloadable at [www.raisingvoices.org/staffskills.php](http://www.raisingvoices.org/staffskills.php)

### Select validation methods for each competency using the table below:

1. Choose whether the competency (specific skill) needs to be validated at a group or individual level.
2. Looking at the validation methods listed in that category (group or individual), select only **one** of the validation methods marked with and ‘X’ for each competency.
3. Plan a time in the training agenda to use the validation method you’ve chosen to test each competency.

| Competency<br>(Specific skill)  | Suggested Validation Methods  |           |           |               |               |   |                           |                      |              |  |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|---------------|---------------|---|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------|--|
|   | Group Validation<br><i>Use if it is sufficient for the group, as a whole, to demonstrate the competency</i> |           |           |               |               | Individual Validation<br><i>Use if essential for each participant to demonstrate the competency her/himself</i> |                           |                      |              |  |
|   | Activity in Training*   | Game Show | Card Game | Answers Bingo | Pick and Play | Activity in Training*   | Exit Interview/ Role Play | Game Show (All Play) | Written Quiz |  |
| Explain what it means to be an ‘activist’ **  |   | X         | X         | X             | X             |   |                           |                      |              |  |
| What are 3 things you can do if you notice the motivation of the community activists is low? ** |   | X         | X         | X             | X             |   | X                         | X                    | X            |  |

\*Activity in Training includes many possibilities, depending on the module, including brainstorming, group practices, debates, agree/disagree/not sure exercise, and others. The *Teach Back* series can also be considered as an Activity in Training.

\*\* See Validation Questions for this competency, to be used in Game Show, Card Game, Answers Bingo or Pick and Play methods, on next page.



# Validation Questions

Imagine you are trying to explain what you are looking for in a community activist to someone in the community. How would you explain what an 'activist' is?



What are 3 things you can do if you notice the motivation of the community activists is low?



Answers Bingo



Facilitator's Note: Find out what the participants really learned! These cards can be cut out and used with Game Show, Card Game, Answers Bingo or Pick and Play validation methods.

Full descriptions of how to use each of these validation methods are available in the *Staff Skill Building Library*. Download at: [www.raisingvoices.org/staffskills.php](http://www.raisingvoices.org/staffskills.php) and go to *Training Validation Methods: A how-to guide for assessing participant learning*.



## Handout: An Activist ...<sup>1</sup>

...Is someone who feels deeply connected to an issue—who understands it, analyzes it and feels compelled to do something about it.

...Is a person who is “active,” someone who is out and about to create change.

...Sees the work of preventing violence against women and HIV not as a nine-to-five job, but as a personal mission.

...Sees the big picture. They know they will have to work for a long time to witness the ultimate change they seek.

...Recognizes that they cannot do it alone, so they connect with other activists and activist organizations.

Together activists create a movement. Together they feel part of something larger than themselves, each taking small steps toward a broader shared goal.

### Who is really an activist?



<sup>1</sup>Adapted from: *SASA Activist Kit for Preventing Violence against Women and HIV* (2009) Kampala: Raising Voices. *Introduction*, p. 10.





# Handout: Inspiring Community Activist (CA) Motivation- Tips Sheet

## 1. Accurately Explain Benefits of Participation and Raise Awareness About the Issues

- Focus accurately on the many benefits of participation in *SASA!*—including increased confidence, skills, leadership, new friends and a healthier family and community, etc. Talk about the bigger purpose behind their actions, and convince them of the importance of achieving that purpose.
- If CAs see the impact of violence against women and HIV on the community and their family, and really see the benefits of nonviolence—nothing will stop them!

## 2. Create realistic structure and expectations of CA

- Keep CA obligations to 1-2 hours/ week (apart from training times). Emphasize that activism can be integrated into their regular lives.
- Maintain realistic expectations of CA time, and continue to listen to/ communicate feedback about what times work for activities, meetings and trainings.
- Be careful NOT to make false promises to increase expectations of material reward.



### 3. Increase Recognition and Status

- Involve CAs in public events and recognize them in public gatherings.
- Give CA of the year award to the best performing CA in each area.
- Give certificates for trainings, achievements, and time spent (e.g. 1 year as CA).
- Mention CAs by name on radio or invite them to participate in radio program.
- Recognize CAs as role models in their communities/peer groups.
- Offer enough communication materials that CAs can also give out to other activists and community members they are engaging.
- Encourage others to take the lead in public events and activities – CAs spearheading activities will be a powerful motivator for them as well as other community members.
- Thank, recognize the efforts, time and energy of CAs often and publicly!

### 4. Develop Confidence, Skills and Leadership

- Help CAs build their sense of confidence in their own abilities, through offering detailed feedback and encouraging their growth and leadership development. This increases their enjoyment of their activism, which increases activism! It also helps them in other areas of life.
- Identify what motivates individual CAs and what they would like to learn, and help them to build those skills (e.g. public speaking, ability to frame issues, advocacy, report writing, time management etc can be useful in many areas of life).
- Help CAs develop leadership skills, through mentoring them and offering them new opportunities that fit with their goals. Give them enough space to grow and develop their leadership skills and ability, and enough support that you can help them grow.
- See mistakes as teachable moments, and celebrate successes.



#### 4. Develop Confidence, Skills and Leadership (Continued)

- Never criticize a CA publicly during an activity, help steer things right if possible but never humiliate or reprimand a CA. Give constructive feedback when activity is finished.
- Believe in the CAs and their abilities to conduct activities – tell them you believe in them.
- Take a smaller role whenever possible and appropriate and allow the CA to take the lead.
- Emphasize when in the community at CA activities that you and the CA are peers -- avoid being seen as 'the boss', etc.
- When appropriate, invite a committed CA to intern at the office.

#### 5. Develop CA Group Cohesion and Identity

- Build relationships with CAs (get involved with them and their lives, know where they live, visit them, understand their motivations, aspirations, etc).
- Watch group dynamics. Step in, speak out and take action if you see negative dynamics within or between members of the group.
- Pairing staff with certain CAs for mentoring can be a good way to foster these relationships.
- Build in opportunities to help CAs get to know, like and trust each other (sports events, time in meetings to bond with each other, encourage team building in projects, etc).
- Encourage self-reflection in meetings and trainings about the work and its impact on CAs own lives and neighbors' lives.
- Hold gathering / party quarterly or bi-annually.

