

Selecting Realistic Intervention Areas- Process of Guidance

Objective:

- Select realistic areas of intervention that allow for effective engagement to achieve change, respecting the principles of community mobilization.

Introduction:

Many organizations come with existing intervention areas they want to work in, and want to use *SASA!* in all of these communities. While *SASA!* can be useful in all sizes and kinds of rural and urban communities, it is important to be strategic in figuring out how much your organization can take on and still be effective. Areas to consider include: 1. your own capacity (experience on VAW prevention, number of staff able to work on *SASA!*, etc) and funding as an organization, 2. the context of your communities, including the current knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors of the communities around VAW and HIV, 3. The degree to which you are already rooted and known in the communities where you are considering using *SASA!*

Instructions:

- Fill out the following questionnaire about your particular situation, add up your score, and look at the guidance you fall within. Note: It is important that the questionnaire be filled out honestly—low scores do not reflect badly on your organization or community, they simply mean that the context may be challenging and your organization may need to plan intensive engagement in a smaller number/scope of locations to recruit more staff, or plan to work in the communities for more time to be successful.
- Discuss as a team whether you think the guidance is appropriate for you. Every situation is different! If it does not seem to fit for you, and you have clear rationale for taking on more or less intervention areas than the questionnaire recommended, that is ok.
- Write up a small concept note that summarizes key information about the areas you are considering to work. This can include:
 - Name of the communities under consideration
 - Type of communities (densely populated, urban, rural, post-conflict, etc)
 - Estimated population in each community
 - Estimated geographic area of each community
 - A rationale for using *SASA!* in these communities
 - A statement about your the organizational capacity to undertake *SASA!* including:

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- ,Number of staff and their level of experience working on VAW prevention
- Degree of existing connections and experiencing working in suggested communities
- Existing funding available for implementation.

If desired, share with Raising Voices at info@raisingvoices.org

Questionnaire:

Capacity and Funding of Organization

1. How many staff members would be dedicated full-time to SASA! implementation?
 - 0-1 (0 pts)
 - 2-3 (2 pts)
 - 4+ (3 pts)

2. What is the level of experience of those staff in doing VAW work?
 - New to VAW work (0 pts)
 - Staff have a good grasp of the dynamics, cause, types and consequences of VAW, but little to no practical experience working with the issue (1 pt)
 - Staff have a good grasp of the above VAW concepts, and at least 1 staff has practical experience working with the issue (2 pts)
 - All staff have a good grasp of VAW concepts, and extensive practical experience working with the issue. (3 pts)

3. What is the level of experience of those staff in doing community mobilization?
 - New to community mobilization work (0 pts)
 - Staff have a good theoretical grasp of the approach of community mobilization, the stages of change, and other key concepts—but little or no practical experience with this (1 pt)
 - Staff have a good grasp of the above principles of community mobilization, and at least 1 staff has practical experience working with a community mobilization approach (2 pts)
 - All staff have a good grasp of the principles of community mobilization, and extensive practical experience working with a community based social change approach. (3 pts)

4. How much logistical and administrative support exists for this project? (e.g. transport relative to the distance from the proposed intervention area, someone to help with background administrative issues arising because of any staff increases, etc.)
- There is no new logistics or administrative support for this project, apart from what the organization already had (0 pts)
 - There is a bit more logistics and administrative support for the project, but the budget is tight so not as much as we think we will need (1 pt)
 - There is a bit more logistics and administrative support for the project, and our staff is skilled at creating interventions that need a minimum of support (e.g. using public transport options or walking, organizing the support of activists to assist in preparations for events, etc). We think we will be okay as long as we plan our intervention areas carefully. (2 pts)
 - There is additional logistical and administrative support being added to this project, relative to the amount assessed to be necessary after careful consideration (3 pts)
5. How much funding do we have going to this project, and for how long?
- We have very little funding for the project, and it goes for less than 2 years (0 points)
 - We have enough funding for this project for this year, and are committed to fundraising for at least the next 3 years (2 points)
 - We have enough funding for at least 3 years for this project (3 points)

Community Context

6. How easy is it for staff to access the communities you are considering serving?
- Spread apart villages or towns, difficult to access from where staff office is, many political/ natural disaster/ security disturbances (0 pts)
 - Somewhat easy to access communities relatively near office, in an overall secure environment (2 pts)
 - Easy to access/ close to office/ secure environment with few political, natural disaster or security disturbances (3 pts)
7. How connected is your organization currently to the community leadership and community members?
- These are all new communities to our organization—we are starting there for the first time OR We have worked in these communities, but the project has not been perceived positively by the community. (0 pts)
 - We have some basic connections in some of the communities (2 pts)

- We have worked in these communities for some time—they know us, are our allies, and more than 1 key leader and the general community sentiment sees our organization’s work as useful (3 pts)
8. How would you rank the current knowledge and attitudes of community members on VAW and HIV?
- We have no assessment results about current community member knowledge and attitudes and do not know our proposed intervention area very well yet (Note: If a formal assessment has not been done, but the OR The community does not want to discuss the topics of VAW and HIV, and does not feel it is a worthwhile conversation to have. (0 pts)
 - The community has very little knowledge about VAW, its cause, types, consequences, the benefits of nonviolence, or the connection between VAW and HIV, and attitudes blame women primarily for the violence, but is very willing to discuss the topics. (2 pts)
 - The community seems to have a diversity of knowledge and attitudes about VAW and HIV topics mentioned above—while there are some negative attitudes and some people with low knowledge, there seem to be a few voices who think differently (3 pts)
9. How would you rank the current skills and behaviors of community members on VAW and HIV?
- We have no assessment results about current community member skills and behaviors and do not know our intervention areas very well yet OR The community does not want to discuss their current support networks (or does not have any), their skills with dealing with VAW and HIV, or their behaviors about the issues. (0 pts)
 - The community seems to have very few skills in supporting change, or support mechanisms for survivors of violence. (1 pt)
 - The community seems to have minimal skills in supporting change and minimal existing support mechanisms for survivors of violence. (2 pts)
 - The community seems to have some existing support and intervention mechanisms related to VAW, and with some people reporting taking action to stop acts of violence. (3 pts)

What this questionnaire means for you:

Look through the items you checked, and look at the number of points (pts) allocated to each of the items. Look through the #'s of 0's, 1's, 2's and 3's you marked for yourself, and read the corresponding guidance below. If you had a mix, for example, of 2's and 3's, read both pieces of guidance and think of the middle ground between them.

If you ranked mostly with 0's and 1's . . .

We suggest that you stick with 1 discrete rural community or cluster of villages nearest to where you work, or if you are in an urban area, that you select 1 discrete sub-section of that community to work within. A realistic assessment of your capacity and the community

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context suggest that the social change process might be particularly slow where you intend to work, so ensuring you have adequate staff levels, reserve intensive time for your staff to build capacity, do not over-stretch your resources and funding, and provide intensive support to the community you do decide to work in, will be essential.

If you ranked mostly with 2's . . .

We suggest that you stick with 1-2 discrete rural communities or clusters of villages, or if you are in an urban area, that you select 1-2 or so discrete divisions or sub-sections to work within. A realistic assessment of your capacity and the community suggests that you have some important foundational pieces but that the social change process may take a lot of intensive support in the areas you decide to work, and you do not want to over-tax your existing resources.

If you ranked mostly with 3's . . .

You are quite well-prepared to take on social change work on VAW and HIV. While it is always necessary to engage intensely in every community you engage, you have a context favorable to social change work and also some internal resources that will help you to do so effectively. Still, social change is a slow process that takes continuous engagement in a community. Once you are successful in the places you work, you can use it as a model for other places to learn from, who may want to take up your approach.

Reflection and Write Up:

Discuss these guidance notes among your team, and reflect on them. A questionnaire like this has its limits, and is only developed to guide your conversation and inform your decision making process . With the right support, commitment and with realistic goal setting and planning meaningful work can be done, but SASA! (or VAW prevention generally) is not right for every organization.

Ask for support from other organizations or from Raising Voices if you would like assistance in your decision-making process. Share your write up and discuss this questionnaire together.

Remember, preventing VAW and HIV is challenging work that brings much responsibility – most importantly to the women in the community experiencing violence. It is better to not do SASA! (or other VAW prevention) in the community if you do not feel your organization has the capacity to do it well.