

We're in this together

A case study of Kivulini

Preventing violence against women since 1999, Kivulini works in 3 Tanzanian regions, and has used the *SASA!* methodology since 2010.

Grace Mussa and Eunice Mayengela, Program Officers, and Mathias Shimo, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer explain how — even as they implement the second of four *SASA!* phases — Kivulini's work is creating community change. "Community members are able to understand that power imbalance is really what causes violence," says Grace Mussa. "*SASA!* has helped the community identify the unacceptability of violence. Before, if you asked a woman if it was right that she was beaten, even a woman would say, 'yes, I was late to come home', or give some other reason she deserved it. Now that has changed. Women now recognize this as a violation of their rights."

Because *SASA!* encourages involvement of local leaders from the beginning, Kivulini says they have not had a problem with community acceptance of their work overall. "In general, community resistance hasn't been much there. There is a good network between the community activists (CAs), community members, and local leaders. The local leaders help the CAs to feel like they are not working alone. They make the CAs feel welcome, they help them, and give feedback to CAs and the [Kivulini] office."

However, some community members embrace Kivulini's work more than others. Sometimes CAs do get resistance from some of the men in the community, who are reluctant to listen, or accuse CAs of coming to 'spoil' women. "This might be 2 out of 10 or 15 men, but they are there." In order to respond to this, Kivulini has found the types and timing of *SASA!* activities make a difference in gathering support from both women and men. "For example, we have video sessions at night and it is mostly men there. We always include dialogue, and discuss power — many men like contributing to such kinds of activities. Sometimes the men who were trying to challenge us, through this method, talk with us on the side afterwards, and seem appreciative and want us to return so they can learn more."

Kivulini finds well-trained community activists to be essential to *SASA!*. "CAs can do a lot. CAs can be there, with their neighbors, relatives, and connect with people more easily. It also helps you to bring benefits to the community in the long term, because you have the seeds you have planted — the CAs — who will keep working, even if you are not there." Consequently, one of the biggest challenges to *SASA!* so far for Kivulini is when CAs, government leaders, or others critical to *SASA!* move or change posts. They recommend constant leadership development and training, until a critical mass can be reached.



SASA! in action!

One man in the community regularly abandoned his family, disappearing for one week at a time or more, and not doing anything to support his wife and four children while he was away. With no other source of income, the woman was suffering, trying to figure out what to do. Having attended SASA! activities, she called her husband and started to explain the issue of power. He chased her away, but after a few days she tried again. The CA came and talked with him, and he got interested and invited the CA to come another day. The next day, the CA came again. The man started to reflect about his family and his decisions, and the CA continued to go and talk with them and give them posters, over time. The wife says the husband has started to change. He started to go to church, stayed home for a month without abandoning them, and is paying school fees for the children. Both of them now participate in SASA! activities and the woman has asked to become a CA, because she is so hopeful of the changes she sees in her husband.



The *Creating Change Series* are simple case studies of quality programming happening around the world to prevent violence against women and children.

Suggested citation: Raising Voices and Kivulini (2017). "We're in this together," *Creating Change Series No. 3*: Kampala, Uganda: Raising Voices.