Supporting Community Leaders

Four Ways That SASA! Together Staff Support Community Leaders

1. Monthly Meetings
   - SHARE successes and challenges.
   - PRACTICE new activities, activism skills and challenging scenarios arising in the community.
   - PLAN with community leaders their upcoming activities and collect reports on past activities.
   - CELEBRATE success and socialize!

2. Electronic Check-Ins
   - Reach out electronically to individual leaders.
   - Encourage sharing of questions and challenges within the private electronic group created in the Start phase.

3. In-Person Support Visits and Drop-Ins
   - Visit community leaders at their office or at their activities and events.

4. Supplementary Training
   - Organize additional training sessions to keep community leaders equipped and motivated.

For a refresher on supporting community leaders, see the Start Phase Book (page 75).
When Supporting Community Leaders in the
Support Phase...

For ANY Kind of Support
Here are some things you can do during monthly meetings, electronic check-ins, in-person support visits and drop-ins, or otherwise.

Guide community leaders in supporting each other.

➔ Take time to talk about how community leaders can not only support the community but also support each another. If there has been little collaboration between leaders until now, take extra time to organize some collaborations for this phase.

➔ In the Support phase, there will likely be more demand for community leaders to support women and men and liaising with other services and institutions. This may feel time-consuming for leaders. Brainstorm with them all of the small acts, not just large initiatives, that can make a big difference.

Talk about being a role model.

In the Support phase, community leaders are putting their words into action by providing greater support to prevent and respond to violence against women. At home and at work, their support becomes more proactive rather than reactive, and now comes with a sense of responsibility rather than what might have been resentment. This is a big shift in how they are using their time as leaders and standing behind violence against women prevention. Encouragement and a listening ear are key.

Here are examples of questions you could ask:

➔ In your position, what do you see happening in the community? Do you notice people responding differently to you and your support for peaceful communities?

➔ You are doing great work supporting women and men on issues related to violence. What does it feel like being a role model for others?

➔ What is challenging in inspiring community members to follow your lead? What works? How can I support you?
Create opportunities to discuss challenges and solutions:

→ Every few weeks, post on the electronic group a simple scenario that is similar to what leaders might be experiencing in the community (e.g., a man beating his wife in the middle of the night or a woman seeking help because her husband abandoned her and her children). Ask leaders to provide ideas for how they might respond safely.

→ Encourage the community leaders to courageously share moments when they joined their power with others or saw community members joining power, including how it made them feel and others around them feel.

Conduct at least two of these supplementary training sessions:

→ Alternatives to Violence (page 163)
→ Skills for Couples (page 172)
→ Activists Unite (page 180)