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About the Support Phase

Skills and encouragement support change.

Change can be exciting yet hard; it can feel uncomfortable and make us question ourselves. Two essential ingredients that facilitate change are skills and encouragement. These are the focus of the Support phase. When we not only know what we want to do but also feel capable and supported in trying it, we can start to turn our hopes of change into reality. When those around us—family, friends, partners, colleagues or neighbors—encourage our change, it makes attempting and sustaining that change possible.

The aim of this phase is to:

**Build skills and encourage community members to join power with others to prevent violence against women.**

At the end of this phase:

**Community members KNOW…**
- Skills for creating healthy relationships.
- Violence is a choice, and men can choose non-violence.
- How to effectively support women experiencing violence.

**Community members FEEL…**
- Balancing power leads to safe, happy and healthy relationships.
- It’s their responsibility to reach out to and support those trying to prevent violence in the community.
- It’s everyone’s responsibility to hold men who use violence against women accountable.

**Community members DO…**
- Experiment with ways to make positive changes in their own relationships.
- Hold men who use violence against women accountable.
- Offer effective support to couples trying to change.

At the institutional level:

*SASA! Together* aims to ensure all revised (or new) protocols and guidelines are fully accepted and well implemented.
Support Phase Fundamentals

What is *power with*?

*Power with* is the power felt when two or more people join together to do something they may not have done alone. *Power with* includes supporting those in need, those trying to change and those speaking out. It means joining *power with* others for positive change and creating a sense of support and possibility in the community. *Power with* also includes asking for help and support when needed and holding men who use violence accountable.

What stage of change is *SASA! Together* supporting in this phase?

The Support phase moves a community through the **preparation for action** stage of change, in which community members begin to consider alternatives to violence and to support each other through change.

What’s happening in this phase?

The Support phase is a turning point for activists, leaders and allies. At this point in *SASA! Together*, they are now confidently leading activities and joining their *power with* that of other community members to balance power and prevent violence against women. With their strengthened voice, they connect more strategically with the community by fostering relationships with existing groups in the community—both formal and informal—as well as other community structures and civil society members.
In the **Support Phase**...

**Encourage leadership.**

With considerably more experience and confidence in their ability, activists, leaders and allies now can be encouraged to take even more responsibility and leadership in *SASA! Together*. This will further strengthen their activism and the sustainability of violence prevention efforts.

**Expand activism.**

Building critical mass takes time and by now, many community members will be familiar with *SASA! Together*. Brainstorm practical strategies with activists, leaders and allies to encourage, mentor and support other community members, leaders and colleagues to become more involved, facilitate activities themselves and expand to even more people and places.

**Remain focused on prevention.**

In this phase, keep the focus on promoting healthy relationships and supporting change. Sometimes during the Support phase, it can be tempting to shift the focus from prevention to response. Response services for women who have experienced violence are critical; so too is changing the conditions and norms that allow violence to happen in the first place. This is *SASA! Together’s* strength and will mean that far fewer women will need response services in the future.
What is the **SASA! Together transition?**

The **SASA! Together** transition is the process of preparing and supporting communities to gradually take on full leadership of violence prevention efforts. Transition is complete when an organization, at the end of the Action phase, transitions out of their full involvement in **SASA! Together**, which the activists, leaders and allies then sustain.

What does that mean for the **Support phase?**

By this point in the **SASA! Together** process, transition is already on the horizon and something that needs to be informing the actions of **SASA! Together** staff. The goal is to begin laying the foundation now for activism to continue after formal programming has come to an end.

This could include, for example:

- Arranging meetings and establishing links across the community, which will help activists, leaders and allies collaborate productively and broaden their base in efforts to reach the critical mass necessary to spark positive change.
- Expanding the scope of responsibilities for activists, leaders and allies—such as co-facilitation of ongoing support meetings, planning events, initiating meetings and other activities—which will help them learn from their practice and gain self-assurance in their abilities and skills.

How else can **SASA! Together** staff prepare?

**Build institutional links** by arranging formal meetings with government institutions, police, healthcare workers, religious leaders, local government officials, business owners and other civil society members not yet involved in **SASA! Together**. This can be done as a joint effort by groups of activists, leaders and allies or by each group deciding to reach out to a few different types of entities.

**Strengthen community structures** by identifying existing community groups such as men’s drinking clubs, women’s income-generating groups, prayer groups or youth clubs. These groups can expand the reach of **SASA! Together** by engaging their members. Remember, avoid creating new groups; integrate **SASA! Together** into those already active. This increases sustainability.

**Gradually encourage leadership and the organization of various activities** by activists, leaders and allies. Encourage them to plan a public event and co-facilitate ongoing support meetings and training sessions. Also consider creating a more detailed mentoring plan to develop the leadership skills of a few outstanding activists, leaders and allies.

**Prepare for transition** by setting up at least one meeting to discuss it. Frame transition as a celebratory milestone, commend the hard work done by activists, leaders and allies, and begin drafting a transition plan alongside your Support and Action phase implementation timeline. For more information on a **SASA! Together** transition, see [Creating a SASA! Transition Strategy](https://raisingvoices.org/resources).
Your Phase Preparations Work Plan

At the beginning of each phase, the first step is to create a phase preparations work plan. This will help you be organized and efficient. All of the necessary preparations are listed on the work plan template—adapt as needed for your organization’s capacity and context. Fill in helpful details so it is fully customized for you. The work plan will help you start strong!

Where to Find It

Find a sample on the following page and an editable version on the electronic version of SASA! Together.

Keep in Mind

Make sure that work plans are used, amended and updated as needed throughout each phase. Always photocopy and distribute the latest version. Also consult the “Planning Tips” in the Start Phase Book (page 6) as needed for additional suggestions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Suggested Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct end-of-phase L&amp;A activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Support Phase Book, page 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct Support Phase Training for SASA! Together staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Support Phase Book, page 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translate and adapt the Support Phase Book as needed</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Set-Up Guide, page 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribute updated referral list and refresh/strengthen skills for basic response and referrals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Set-Up Guide, page 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiate Support phase ongoing support for staff (staff check-ins, practice sessions and Staff Development Exercises)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Support Phase Book, page 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support staff in creating strategy</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Support Phase Book, pages 14, 68, 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize meeting(s) to discuss the transition (near the end of the phase)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Support Phase Book, page 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support staff in practicing activities using the learning and assessment tools</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Support staff in practicing activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze data and hold L&amp;A feedback sessions on a quarterly basis</td>
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<td>L&amp;A Guide, page 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize the phase Collaboration Meeting (near the end of the phase)</td>
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<td>Support Phase Book, page 128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support activists, leaders and allies in organizing the public event (near the end of phase)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Support Phase Book, page 129</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This suggested work plan is for SASA! Together staff planning for the Support Phase. Adapt as needed to align with your SASA! Together program and context.