

Overview:

Series on Preventing Violence against Women During the COVID-19 Pandemic

This Guidance Note focuses on how organizations can prepare to best support staff, communities, and women at increased risk of violence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic presents a global crisis that is exacerbating violence against women (VAW). As in past pandemics, women will bear the brunt of emergent risks to public health, safety and human rights. For example, as more and more governments implement lockdown policies, women are being trapped with abusive partners, isolated from their support networks and may be unable to access essential services. Activist organizations have an essential role to play during this tumultuous time. Sustained VAW prevention work remains vital—as does addressing the immediate risks to women posed by the pandemic. It is essential to do so safely, ethically, and in adherence with national directives and COVID-19 containment strategies.

Recognizing the need for creativity and flexibility during COVID-19, Raising Voices has developed a series of practical Guidance Notes to support activist organizations in adapting and sustaining their VAW prevention activities. These suggestions are intended for use by organizations with existing expertise in preventing VAW who are currently exploring possibilities for safely continuing their work given COVID-19 specific dynamics. While some aspects may be relevant for service providers, organizations primarily focused on VAW response services have distinct roles and considerations not specifically discussed.* The Guidance Notes address the topics listed below. These are “living documents” that may be revised, and new content added, as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves.

- Overview:** Preventing Violence Against Women During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Note 1:** How are women affected?
- Note 2:** How can activist organizations adapt?
- Note 3:** How can we amplify self- and collective care?
- Note 4:** How can VAW prevention programmes adapt?
- Note 5:** How can *SASA!* / *SASA! Faith* / *SASA! Together* adapt?

Guidance Note 5 is most relevant for organizations implementing SASA! programming (the other notes are applicable to all VAW prevention programs).

Raising Voices stands together in solidarity with all of you and with the communities where you work. We hope that you are keeping safe and managing the inevitable disruptions and stress. Please reach out to us at info@raisingvoices.org to share your strategies for mitigating and preventing VAW during COVID-19. During this time, it is the relationships we have with each other that matter— the kindness we can share, the help we can give others, the deep listening we can do, the gentleness with which we can treat ourselves and one another. We believe these can be the defining characteristics of this difficult moment, what gets us through and keeps us strong. We will get through this together.

* For recommendations directed at VAW response organizations, see new resources from the GBV Helpdesk: [GBV Case Management and the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), [Securing the Safety and Wellbeing of Women Frontline Healthcare Workers](#) and the WHO: [COVID-19, Violence against Women: What the Health Sector/System Can Do](#)