

With warmest appreciation to ...

All the women and children, schools and communities, we seek to serve.

All of our partner organizations (too many to name here!)

Our Board of Directors

Our funding partners:

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United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women



















In 2017, we saw conversations changing, thinking evolving, and optimism growing as individuals and organizations are getting involved to make change happen. Communities across the world are *using SASA!*; schools across Uganda are using the *Good School Toolkit*; organizations within the Horn, East and Southern Africa are talking about feminism in Re-think and Re-energize processes; and individuals across Uganda and the region are engaging in critical discussions about power, injustice and activism on our social media platforms. Although the public and political discourse in 2017 often looked bleak, we only had to look toward our partners in communities, schools and organizations around the world to know that momentum for activism is gathering. In 2017, we saw conversations changing, thinking evolving, and optimism growing as individuals and organizations got involved in making change happen. No longer waiting for 'bigger powers' to lead the way, we saw change happening in small and big ways; in grand gestures and subtle choices. This encouraged and enlivened us and we felt proud to be one of the catalysts helping generate this momentum.

In 2017, Raising Voices saw both changes and challenges. There were some difficult moments where we all stood a little less firmly; unsettled by the ever-growing demand for work; by engagement at levels where we are less practiced; or by new systems and policies that seemed to disrupt our equanimity. Yet rather than maintain business as usual, or change directions

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drastically, we paused. We talked. We strategized. We reflected on where we came from and who we are as an organization. We debated what directions to take. What new paths to blaze and what opportunities to decline. We looked again at our values – the glue that holds us together and affirms our commitments. We envisioned a new strategy. We gathered the strength to embark in new directions.

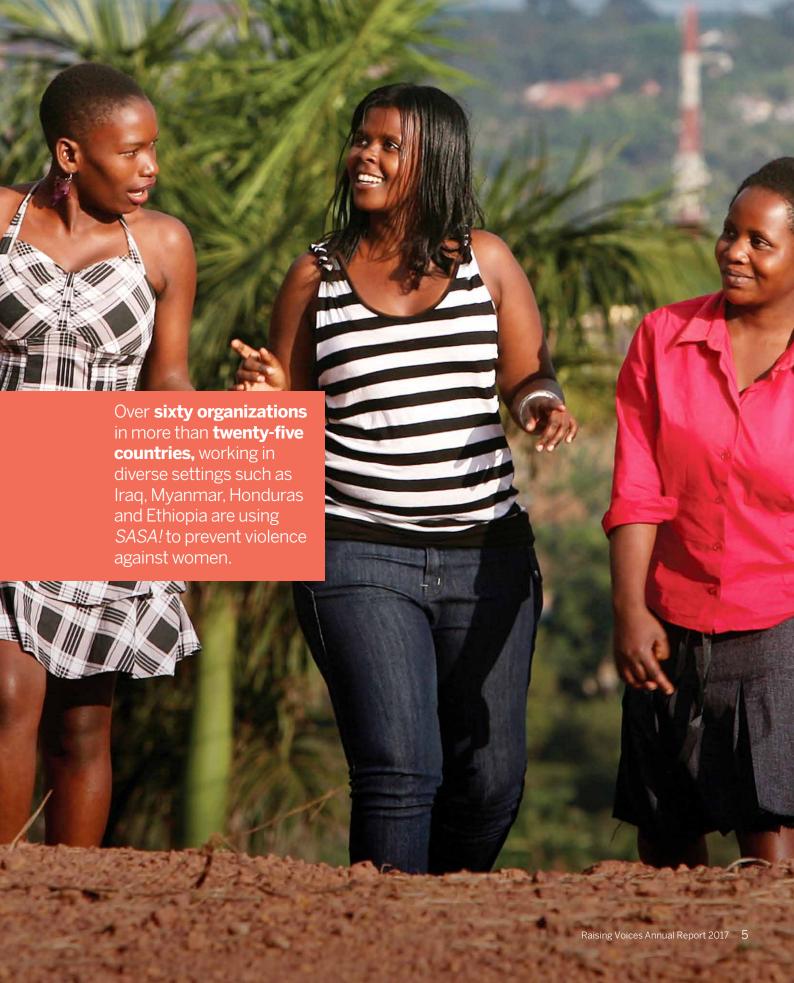
2017 saw tremendous growth across all three of our program areas: Practice, Learning, Influencing.

- Our Practice team is going farther afield, moving deeper into the methodologies, and grappling with new questions of scale and adaptation. From our partnerships with over 60 organizations in 25 countries and 750 schools in Uganda, we are changing the way organizations and schools conceptualize and implement violence prevention programming.
- Our Learning team lead research that grows out of our practice and allows us to remain innovators. From understanding the intersections of violence against women and children within a feminist frame, to in-depth learning about what it takes to adapt our methodologies across diverse contexts, this work is helping us see our choices with more depth and nuance, and is shaping how key issues in the field are understood.
- Our Influencing team shifted from a more reactive stance to leading and co-leading key initiatives with other colleagues in Uganda and globally. Joining our voice with others amplifies our ideas, introduces them to new audiences and allows us to make new connections that can shape funding, policy and practice.

We invite you to learn more about our work in the following pages and on our website at raisingvoices.org



The Practice area of our work strives to inspire and strengthen communities and organizations to prevent violence against women and children. This year, the Practice team at Raising Voices collaborated with a wide range of partners to strengthen their ability to undertake effective violence prevention work. We made significant strides towards larger scale implementation of both SASA! and the Good School Toolkit. We worked with partners to adapt the methodologies for varying contexts, and supported organizations from Uganda and across the globe to implement the ideas. We created peer support mechanisms to enhance sharing of experiences and resources among partners that implement SASA! and the Good School Toolkit. We saw significant growth in demand as well as context specific innovations, adaptations and impact.



KEY MILESTONES IN 2017

Strengthening institutions to prevent violence

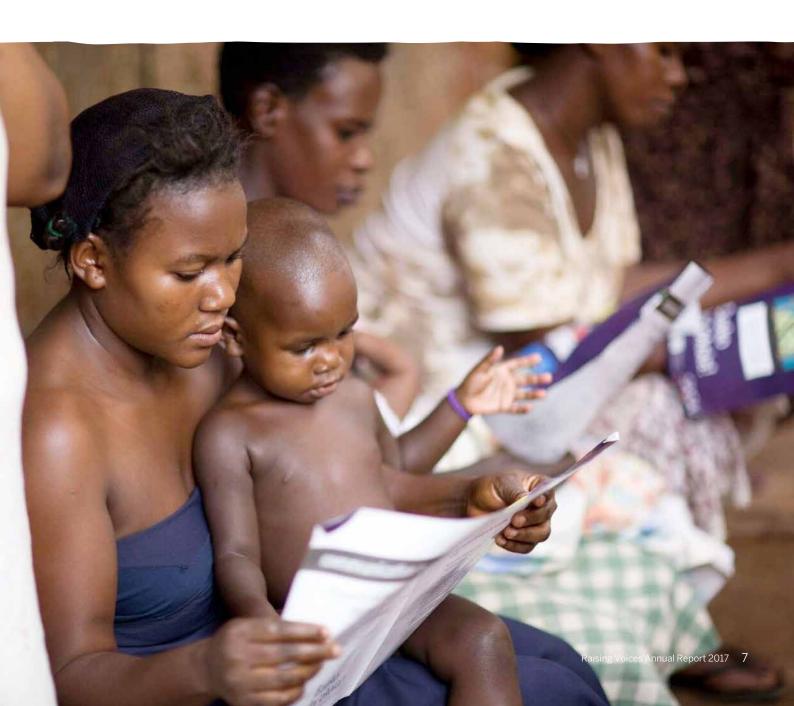
- Over sixty organizations in more than twenty-five countries, working in diverse settings such
 as Iraq, Myanmar, Honduras and Ethiopia are using SASA! to prevent violence against
 women. We continue to support these partners with tools, technical assistance, capacity
 building and peer support.
- Three years ago, we established a cohort of 11 partners, each working in a widely differing context, and designed a process to strengthen their ability to implement SASA! in their community. This technical assistance involved formal training courses, onsite visits, developing strategies and systematically implementing SASA! in their communities. Seven of the 11 partners within this cohort successfully completed the final course in October 2017 and the remaining 4 are making a steady progress. We are encouraged and humbled by the remarkable changes that this work has had in the personal and professional lives of partners, in their organizations, and the communities in which they work.

Through SASA! I have learned a lot about gender perspectives. SASA! has made me an activist and feminist... After attending the training last year it made me understand my power and have a passion to save my community. It feels good to see the changes in the community, CAs appreciate your work, your community appreciates your work, and it feels good. ~ SASA! partner, Tanzania

- This year, in collaboration with partners, we created two SASA! Communities of Practice, in Ethiopia and Tanzania. This innovation aims to create peer support between organizations that share a common context such as culture, language or geography. We created opportunity and mechanisms through which they could come together to share experiences, resources and address their common challenges. This experiment proved effective at enhancing the quality of programs and cost-effectiveness for capacity building activities and SASA! implementation.
- We continued supporting five community based VAC Prevention Centers (VACPCs), which act as a resource, first-responders, advocates, and activists within their communities to prevent and respond to VAC. We invested in their systems and staff capacity and provided oversight for their activities in the community. VACPCs supported a total of 300 schools, in three districts across Uganda, to implement the *Good School Toolkit*. They also responded to 1273 cases of violence reported to them and conducted community outreach activities such as drama shows, dialogues, discussion groups, and sponsored video shows.
- We continued investing in partners through courses and onsite capacity building. Forty-five organizations participated in this activity through our Violence Prevention Learning Center (VPLC) and some of them in the context of extended partnerships. For example, approximately 15 staff and partners of Save the Children Uganda and Child Fund International participated in courses that lead to their field offices implementing the Good School Toolkit in the schools where they work, and we also trained 60 staff of two Primary Teacher's Colleges.

There is a child I used to hate in my class, because he was a slow learner. I had actually written him off. One time when I was reading about relationships between teachers and learners in Raising Voices' good teacher booklet, I reflected on my relationship with that learner, and promised myself to change. I started talking to him, and made an effort to help him improve his learning. From that day, that learner started improving his performance ... He even greets me every morning.

~ Teacher, Uganda

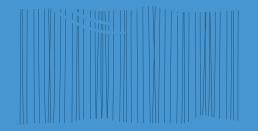


Engaging partners for wide scale implementation

- We aim to transform the operational culture of all schools in Uganda with the ideas articulated in the *Good School Toolkit*. In 2017, we aimed to do this through multiple pathways including lobbying Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) to adopt GST as a core program, working with civil society organizations that are working in schools, collaborating with Teacher's Training Colleges and working with local government to influence the nature of 'in -service' support teachers get. Key to this strategy is supporting quality implementation and continuous relationship building with a diverse range of partners.
- Interest in scaling up SASA! continues to grow, primarily through bilateral funders and large INGOs. We are supporting a major adaptation of SASA! into French by the Global Fund for AIDS, Malaria and TB as they plan to roll out SASA! in the Democratic Republic of Congo and five other countries across sub Saharan Africa. SASA! is being included in major funding calls by UN agencies, financial institutions and bilateral funders. Engaging with these new types of partners around scale up of SASA! has begun and is a priority area for 2018. In 2017 we launched a new series "Programming for Prevention" and published two briefs (Ethical implementation of SASA! and Fidelity to the SASA! approach) aimed to influence scale up of SASA!.



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Adaptation of our Methodologies

- In an effort to make SASA! available and accessible widely, we continued to support major global adaptations. Currently SASA! translations and adaptations are underway in Honduras (Spanish), Democratic Republic of Congo (French), Pakistan (Urdu) and in Iraq (Arabic). There are also major cultural/contextual SASA! adaptations in Myanmar (Trocaire), and Papua New Guinea (PSI/UN-Women). These engagements have deepened our understanding on what it takes to support global adaptation. In response to the demand and our limited staff time, we developed a pool of external SASA! experts who have the language skills, the capacity, proximity and familiarity with the divergent cultures we are working with, and can be dispatched at a short notice, to deliver expert support. This program will be further formalized in 2018 through our SASA! Technical Assistance Accreditation process.
- This year we continued exploring if the GST (designed for primary schools) could also be effective for secondary schools. We did a literature review and engaged in immersive learning with schools to understand how violence manifests in secondary school. We found that much as there were similarities between primary and secondary schools, because of the age differences of the students, and the differing operational culture in secondary schools, there were also crucial differences. Therefore, the GST for secondary schools includes a stronger focus on peer violence, sexual violence and gender inequalities as well as stronger emphasis on student led activities.
- Informed by the learning described above, in 2017, the VAC prevention team collaborated with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine to adapt the GST for secondary schools (GST-S) by developing additional sessions and piloting the draft product for relevance, acceptability, and appropriateness for the context of older children. This year, the team made a concerted effort to finalize the adaptation, which is now ready to be rolled out and rigorously tested in a few secondary schools in early 2018. Beginning in 2018, a small scale randomized controlled trial will be conducted to assess feasibility and acceptability of this adapted version (see *Learning* section below).

Strategic directions for 2018

Focus on addressing sexual harassment and sexual violence within VAC prevention
As we continue to refine our practical expertise, in 2017 we learned that many teachers who self-identify as violence prevention activists, continued to discount experiences of sexual harassment of adolescent girls. Ongoing research in Luwero revealed that in some schools, even though ideas around positive discipline had taken hold in the school's operational culture, sexual harassment of adolescent girls from teachers was still common. There seemed to be a reluctance in recognizing the harm caused by sexual harassment, even though the violence caused by physical punishment or bullying was acknowledged. This realization, compounded with feedback from foundational research in secondary schools, lead to deepening the emphasis on sexual violence, particularly toward adolescent girls in all our interventions.

Intersections between VAW and VAC

VAW and VAC are connected (http://bit.ly/2ryol1]) and there is growing attention directed at the intersections between the two in the violence prevention field. Secondary analysis of the SASA! study data indicated that SASA! reduced children's exposure to intimate partner violence against women in the home by 64%. Data from GST study indicated that there are crucial gendered differences in the experience of violence at school as well perceptions of male and female teachers around acceptability and utility of violent forms of punishment. Our ongoing work with partners has convinced us that there is a need to design interventions at the intersection of the two. Therefore in 2017, we immersed ourselves in an internal process of trying to analyze and understand the VAW/C intersection within a feminist framework. We plan to experiment with program ideas in 2018.

Diversified scale

In 2017, we started thinking in detail about how to take *SASA!* and the GST to scale and what role Raising Voices should play in this process. For example, for the GST, how can we make sure as many schools as possible benefit from GST ideas while maintaining quality implementation? Should the roll-out be done solely through the MoES, or should we explore multiple channels through which we roll out the ideas? As a result of this reflection, a diversified strategy was developed that involved working with MoES, other civil society actors, local governments, community based organizations and Teacher's Training Colleges (detailed strategy document available on request). This strategy will see us roll out the *Toolkit* in a phased manner over the coming five years. Similar questions emerge with *SASA!* including the viability and effectiveness of a cascade model, engaging with bilateral agencies prior to large funding calls, and real questions about fidelity to the approach and safety for women.

Revision of the SASA! Activist Kit

The SASA! Activist Kit was published in 2008 and its reach and the level of interest and use has gone beyond any expectation. With almost a decade of experience behind us, our practice has grown – we know more about what works in the approach, what is missing, how to guide organizations and communities for effective implementation. In 2018 we will undertake a major revision of SASA!, one that incorporates the learning over the past 10 years, integrates many new tools and revisions already made with key new sections on adaptations and scale. Given the ever-growing demand for SASA! we feel it is essential to ensure that the latest thinking is available to groups using the approach.





on-site technical support visits conducted to VAC Prevention Centers

2085 teachers and children participated in peer learning activities organized by Raising Voices

45 organizations

from 13 countries participated in the SASA! and SASA! Faith Learning Center

215 technical assistance engagements with SASA! and SASA! Faith partners globally



YAC
Prevention
Learning Center
trainings

major adaptations of SASA! underway

1273 VAC cases handled at the VAC Prevention Centers

urgent action cases handled to support women and children expriencing violence



At Raising Voices, we understand learning as a multi-dimensional, and an evolving process that facilitates the flow of ideas, helps identify practical solutions, and nurtures collective discoveries. As such, our aim is to promote and sustain a learning culture, which we pursue via two complementary streams: (1) reflective processes to distil and synthesize ideas as well as grow new skills and perspectives; and (2) formal research to assess impact, investigate our programming in progress, and address key knowledge gaps in the prevention field. Ultimately all our organizational learnings endeavor to provide a wellspring from which more responsive, agile and impactful practice and influencing can emerge.



KEY MILESTONES IN 2017

Evolving our research priorities and partnerships

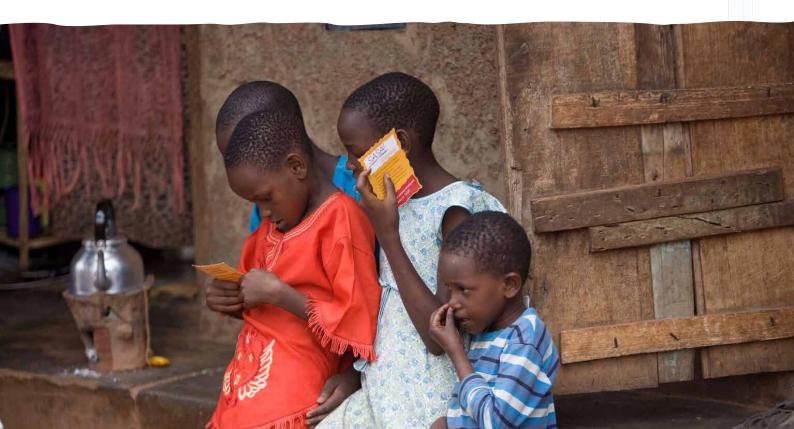
In previous years, our research engagements have prioritized rigorous impact evaluations of SASA! and the Good School Toolkit. With the conclusion of two successful and visible randomized controlled trials, in 2017 we were poised to consider and actively pursue the next evolution of our research questions. While we have maintained a focus on accountability through program evaluation, over the next few years we are venturing into new terrain—exploring questions around adaptation and scale, as well as the linkages between different forms of violence and related issues (e.g., mental health). We are excited to announce 3 new research projects, which will provide ample opportunity to take this work forward in collaboration with several talented researchers, deepening Raising Voices expertise in areas emerging as critical within the field.

- The Contexts of Violence in Adolescence Cohort Study (CoVAC) study: In collaboration with London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), University College London, MRC-Uganda, and Makerere University, this five year study will follow a cohort of over 3.500 children, to better understand how the Good School Toolkit and safer school environments may shape trajectories into later adolescence, particularly with regards to gender attitudes, intimate relationships, and future perpetration/victimization of IPV. In many ways this ambitious study is the first of its kind, and will allow a rigorous investigation of the links between violence against children and intimate partner violence, as well as in-depth explorations of how some children emerge more resilient than others after experiencing violence and other trauma.
- Pilot RCT of the Good School Toolkit, adapted for Secondary schools (GST-S): This 'pilot' (or small-scale) randomized-controlled study, will be carried out over three years with LSHTM. Following on nearly two years of iterative work to adapt GST for the secondary school environment (stay tuned for a forthcoming paper in 2018 articulating the adaptation process), we are prepared to 'go live' and learn more about how GST-S resonates for students, staff, and caregivers. The specific focus of the pilot RCT will be to systematically assess program acceptability (including understandability and coherence of GST content) and feasibility (including fidelity and ability to foster inclusive participation), as well as to lay the groundwork for a future, large-scale impact evaluation. We are excited that the design allows for real-time feedback and refinement of program content simultaneous to the study, thus reflecting our organizational focus on integration and learning uptake.
- Good School Mental Health Research: In partnership with University of Alabama, this four-year grant is to develop program activities to promote mental health among children participating in Good Schools. The initial phase of this work (beginning early 2018) is for qualitative research that we hope will address a notable gap in the existing knowledge base: the current beliefs, language and practices related to children's mental health challenges. Building on this nuanced contextual understanding, we will develop and test activities to better support students' emotional and psychological wellbeing as well as schools' ability to safely respond to any mental health challenges that emerge.

Drawing on **implementation** science to systematically explore *SASA!* in new contexts

Implementation science is often described as understanding the 'real-world' implementation of programs, outside the highly scrutinized and controlled environment of an experimental study. This is precisely our aim in the Learning from SASA! Adaptations project, where we are collaborating with University of California, San Diego and three SASA! partners to compare SASA!'s adaptation and implementation in diverse contexts: Dadaab, Kenya (International Rescue Committee); Jacmel, Haiti (Beyond Borders); and Kigoma, Tanzania (Women's Promotion Centre). 2017 was an extremely busy year for the partnership, with the completion of all primary data collection as well as sharing emerging findings to a packed audience at the SVRI Forum in Brazil.

My biggest surprise engaging with SASA! was the realization of how the issue of power can connect with everything. ...Before [SASA!] I knew about being vulnerable, but I never got it like that. Now we know the root cause of GBV is power—and that connects to everything. We start talking about negative cultural practices, religious practices, ignorance, poverty—even culture has power ... That realization made a big difference, because people only embrace something when you remind them of the power they have. ~ SASA! partner, Kenya



Experimenting with diverse approaches to knowledge synthesis and uptake

This year we continued to explore various avenues for synthesizing our practice-based learning and generating visually compelling, digestible outputs to influence perspectives and practices in the field.

- We undertook 5 Program Learning Initiatives (PLIs) to delve more deeply into programrelated questions, exploring areas such as the sustainability of GST structures and the experiences of various partners in the inaugural year of the SASA! Faith rollout. While the PLI approach is not new at Raising Voices, in 2017 we took deliberate measures to strengthen integration. For example, we created a structured template to capture follow-up actions emerging from the PLI discussions to help teams clarify this link between learning and practice and, at the same time, boost accountability to strategic decision-making.
- We advanced our aim of elevating the value of practice-based learning by developing 2 new series to share practical guidance on prevention programming and help inspire others to engage in feminist-activism: Creating Change (4 papers) and Programming for Prevention (2 papers). All together Raising Voices staff lead or co-authored 16 distinct learning pieces in 2017 (see Learn More page 38), and also experimented with more focused dissemination strategies through social media and other outlets.

[Raising Voices workshop] has changed my perception towards L&E and, actually, the shift in language from monitoring to learning is very important. We actually learn from what we do ...that makes a lot of sense. We have lots of data in the office - we are now going back to enter it and analyze to learn from our work ... We are really excited. I will even be able to support teams

~ SASA! partner, Tanzania

Strategic directions for 2018

On the cusp of a new organizational strategy, 2017 provided several spaces to pause and engage in a critical stocktaking; our learning work. These moments enabled us to reframe 'failures' as valuable opportunities from which to pivot and grow and refine approaches that yielded promise. The following challenges have inspired new creative directions for 2018.

Bolstering our approach to Learning & Evaluation (L&E) technical assistance As a learning organization, we believe in the value of systemic monitoring and carving out dedicated space to discuss—and act on—the data that emerge. While this intention is firm, the translation to practice is often challenging. There are many reasons for this, such as time constraints, or simply the impetus to focus on forward progress rather than the past. Another barrier that often comes into play is the *mis* perception that monitoring is best conducted by 'M&E experts' as a parallel (and often isolated) activity. Through our technical assistance and other learning outputs, we are aspiring to challenge this narrative, emphasizing, instead, that L&E is an essential ingredient for achieving safe, quality, agile programming, and that wellfunctioning systems require the active participation of every team member.

Coming on board to this perspective often requires that organizations gain sufficient comfort reviewing and critically scrutinizing data, admitting to errors or design flaws of intervention strategy. Such humility creates space for program implications to emerge. Over the past several years we have tried many ways to build this critical skill set—including preparing guidance notes, hosting Webinars, offering one-on-one support, and facilitating sessions within VPLC courses and other training—and at times this approach has sparked meaningful change and action (as illustrated in the quote below).

To address this persistent gap, in addition to continuing with our existing TA modalities in 2018, we will offer a Violence Prevention Learning Center course focused exclusively on L&E, emphasizing the perspective articulated above. We are also intensifying our L&E specific engagement with the VAC PC partners, and challenging ourselves to deepen our own perspectives through an exchange visit with other like-minded organizations.

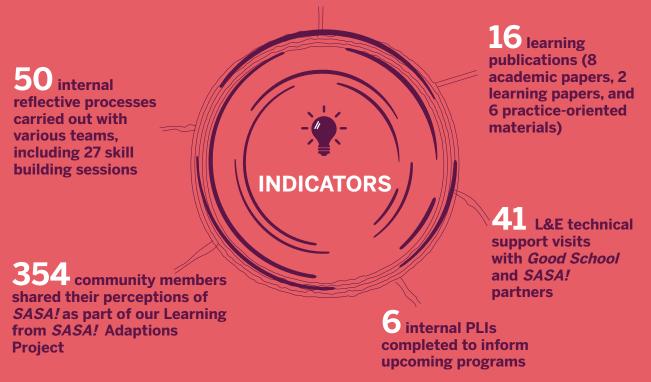
Balancing our research investments and agenda

Over the previous strategic period, Raising Voices made substantive investments in research. We also led our own research and first-authored academic publications, entering new spaces and opportunities for influencing. While these efforts yielded dividends, we also experienced costs in terms of organizational time and focus. Subsequently we have grown more discerning in weighing the value of proposed research collaborations, and at times have turned down requests from potential partners. We are also cognizant that our current research pipeline leans towards studies around violence against children.

In the coming year we will proactively seek opportunities for VAW-focused studies aligned with our research priority around adaptation and prevention at scale. We are also exploring a structural solution to better balance learning investments—allocating a set percentage of the VAW and VAC programming budget to core learning activities. Our hope is that this will instill greater discipline in terms of budgeting for L&E up front, and help achieve proportional investments across the organization.



Inew large-scale research partnerships developed with University of Alabama and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine





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The Influencing area of our work is focused on shaping analysis and action in the fields of preventing violence against women and children. In 2017, we made a deliberate effort to be more proactive in this area of our work. For many years our stance has been more reactive where we engage with partners and colleagues primarily on their request for involvement in advisory committees, participation in conferences, co-authoring materials or reviewing publications or strategies. We continued to be responsive to requests but also played more of a leadership role. We co-convened groups, participated in the leadership of new initiatives, and spearheaded panels and events. This stretched us, challenged us, and infused the team with energy and confidence to go deeper in 2018 in this leadership role.



KEY MILESTONES IN 2017

GBV Prevention Network launched several new initiatives

• Member Re-think and Re-energize Meetings (R&Rs). Seven in-person, two-day meetings with 52 members in Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia, were designed to foster a feminist analysis among members, increase connection among members, and introduce the idea of self-care to sustain the momentum for VAW activism. The unique space allowed members to refresh, energize and rethink their VAW analysis. The turnout and retention was excellent and there is high demand for follow on R&Rs.

[Since the R&R] I have been enlightened as a person. I have more knowledge about GBV. I would like to be a better person in my work and this will improve on my engagements with my family, friends, and work colleagues. I loved the practical exercise as they are clear and helped me view GBV from a different dimension.

- ~ R&R participant, Zambia
- **Get Moving!**, the Network's home-grown movement building process, was implemented with 3 member organizations: Coalition on Violence against Women (COVAW) Kenya, Women in Law and Development Tanzania (WiLDAF), and MUSASA Project Zimbabwe to enhance their VAW work with a feminist analysis. Going through a week's process of **Get Moving!** organizational staff explored concepts of power, politicization, violence against women, values, and activism. As a result of the introspective processes, the organizations have reflected on and taken steps to enhance a positive organizational culture and deepen their growth as activists. The Network also published critical reflections from the experience of the thirty-two civil society organizations across thirteen countries that have participated in the **Get Moving!** process. These reflections were published in the Learning from Practice Series No.6: **Get Moving!** transforming individuals and organizations
- The GBV Prevention Network's social media presence and campaigning grew in 2017 with 801 new followers on Twitter and 662 new connections on Facebook. These dynamic platforms allow us to reach members in personal and provocative ways at low cost throughout the year. Our campaigns, being picked up across the region and the world, are recognized as creative and thought-provoking with Feminist Media Studies publishing our article "Hashtag Activism: popularizing feminist analysis of violence against women in the Horn, East and Southern Africa." Watch this space in 2018!

Advocating for VAC prevention policy and programming in Uganda

The VAC Prevention team is focused on influencing the experience of school and home for children in Uganda. We are working through multiple avenues toward this goal.

- Engaging the Ministry of Education and Sports. Previously, individual components of the GST have been endorsed by MoES as well as the National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC). This year, we presented the roll-out plan for the entire Good School Toolkit to the Basic Education and M&E Working Groups within MoES; as well as sharing our new report titled Is Violence Against Children Preventable? which consolidates all findings around the GST to date. Both groups signaled support for the GST pending sufficient funding. Our dissemination plan through MoES structures involves roll-out in four phases over a period of five years and the target is to reach all 19,718 primary schools in Uganda.
- Global Action Week for Education Raising Voices joined other education actors across the world to commemorate the Global Action Week for Education (GAWE). Raising Voices organized activities under the theme 'Accountability for SDG 4 and Citizen Participation' by hosting an open dialogue, which brought together about 200 stakeholders with extensive coverage by four TV stations and two newspapers. In addition, during GAWE, Raising Voices implemented a one-week social media campaign, engaging people on the theme, on Facebook and Twitter.
- Children interface with Uganda Parliament Raising Voices participated in efforts of CSOs and the Uganda Parliamentary Forum for Children (UPFC) to encourage the Parliament to prioritize ending VAC in Uganda. We supported a delegation of 80 students from five primary schools to a breakfast meeting with the Speaker and Members of Parliament of Uganda. The children and others shared their stories of violence and its negative consequences on their lives. After this meeting, further discussions between CSOs and UPFC resulted in Parliament dedicating the session of Tuesday 18th July 2017 to deliberation on issues of violence against children in the country. Four motions were moved, debated and passed on that day. These were: Motion for a resolution of Parliament urging Government to: a) expedite the implementation of all policies and legislations relating to children; b) promote and protect the rights of children against violence; c) develop stringent enforcement measures to protect women and girls against escalating acts of sexual violence in the country; and, d) introduce a Private Member's Bill (The Prevention and Prohibition of Human Sacrifice and Harmful Practices Bill, 2017). Civil society organizations, including Raising Voices, supported the UPFC and the movers of the motions with background information, 'talking points' and statistics.

It is great to see that the Good School Toolkit is a school-wide intervention led by teachers, students and community members. Violence against children in school needs to be addressed holistically.

~ Education Officer, Uganda

Coordinating and SupportingCollective Action for VAW Prevention

This year, with the intention of playing a more visible and proactive role in influencing the direction of the VAW prevention field, Raising Voices collaborated with allies to launch three new collectives that will advance influencing issues central to Raising Voices. All three initiatives directly support Raising Voices' focus advocacy issues of: principles for VAW prevention, ethical scale up and feminist activism.

- COFEM (Coalition of Feminists for Social Change) is a collection of individuals and
 organizations, concerned with the de-centering of women and girls in VAW response and
 prevention efforts, in development and humanitarian settings. Raising Voices is a member of
 the Governance Committee and is providing practical and thought leadership in this group.
 COFEM was launched at SVRI with a series of five papers on critical issues in global VAW
 work. Raising Voices co-authored the first paper on male accountability in VAW prevention
 efforts and played a key role in producing and promoting the paper series.
- **CUSP** (Community for Understanding Scale Up) is co-led by Raising Voices and Salamander Trust and involves a carefully curated group of individuals and organizations who have created methodologies that are now being taken to scale by other groups (including Puntos de Encentro, Tostan, Oxfam's We Can Campaign, CEDOVIP, the GREAT Project/Institute for Reproductive Health, Sonke Gender Justice and IMAGE). CUSP advocates for values-driven social norm change efforts during scale up initiatives. CUSP launched a brief at_SVRI, and has plans for further presentations and meetings with key influencers for 2018.
- The **Prevention <u>Collaborative</u>** is (currently) a small group of individuals working to create a new global platform for VAW prevention with the leadership of Lori Heise (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health). Raising Voices brings a unique practice-based perspective to this group that focuses on building a knowledge platform, technical accompaniment and advocacy. Raising Voices is on the Stewardship Committee of the Collaborative.

It is so exciting to see Raising Voices at the forefront of so many key initiatives in the [violence prevention] field. And it's easy to see your footprint – not only in the 'what' but in the 'how'. One of the trademarks of Raising Voices is the way you do things, with generosity, respect and optimism. Relationship by relationship, you guys are changing the field.

~ INGO staff. United States

4. Influencing Thought and Practice

- As mentioned above, the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) forum in Brazil was an
 important platform for Raising Voices to share work and ideas from CUSP, COFEM and the
 Prevention Collaborative. In addition, Raising Voices formally shared our VAWC Intersections
 research, the SASA! Adaptations research, Good School adaptation for secondary schools,
 our analysis of resilience and violence among children, and our community mobilization
 approach to VAW prevention. Raising Voices was highly visible and our work recognized as
 shaping the analysis and practice of VAW/C prevention.
- Raising Voices work is regularly cited and highlighted as good practice in a variety of
 publications and reports (such as The Know Violence in Childhood Global Report, Inspire
 Strategies), program tools (by International Rescue Committee, CARE), popular platforms
 (such as apolitical.co, Fiji Times Newspaper,) and the award-winning book AIDS and
 Masculinity in the African City. Raising Voices' ideas of VAWC prevention, community
 mobilization and whole school approaches are well recognized in the field and shaping policy
 and practice.
- Processes and conferences where ideas are shared and key controversies debated are an important space for engaging in the broader discussions in the field. Raising Voices presented and participated in a variety of events from WHO's 8th Global Milestone Meeting in Ottawa, the Global Partnership to End School-related Gender-based Violence in Dakar, DFID's Roundtable on Social Norms and Scale, the Pathways to Resilience Conference in Durban, and more.
- In partnership with Without Violence and Wellspring Advisors, Raising Voices hosted an expert group of academics and practitioners to explore a new strategic direction for framing the work on VAC. The meeting, hosted in Boston, explored the concepts of Resilience, what is known about it and how it could be integrated in practical interventions aimed at preventing VAC.
- VAC Prevention Alliance, Raising Voices participated in the Annual VAC Prevention Alliance meeting in Canada, that brought together practitioners from diverse parts of the world and where our central focus was making a case for preventing VAC at schools.

Strategic directions for 2018

Scale and all its complications

In 2017, we deepened our engagement with the issue of scale. The first thing we realized is that many of the processes were beyond our control. For example, at least two donors announced substantial investments in preventing VAW where a recommended strategy was SASA! without our knowledge or input. While this is gratifying, we have concerns about the quality of implementation, the level of expertise and potential consequences downstream if the intervention fails to deliver the desired outcome. Similarly, at least two governments aim to take SASA! to scale; this raises various practical and strategic questions that we will engage with more fully in 2018.

Secondly, through a slightly different route, the Good School Toolkit is also grappling with a similar decision. A conservative costing exercise yielded a figure of \$8 million dollars to take the *Toolkit* to every school in Uganda over several years. Given the potential for corruption and complexity of managing such funds in retail transactions, how should we advocate for this investment? As a small organization, should it be our role to seek and manage such funding? Both of these (and related issues of models of scaling, what we are scaling) are active issues that we aim to engage with at a deeper level in 2018, and develop strategic positions on.

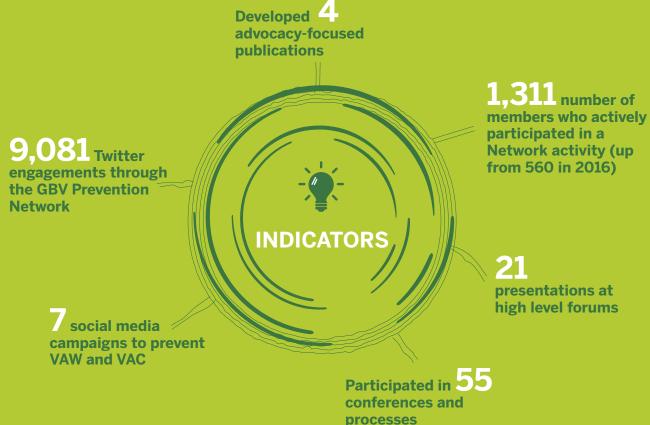
Methodologies to principles

As we grapple more with the challenges of developing capacity and supporting partners working in diverse contexts, we are increasingly realizing that we may need to distill principles from our approach, and apply a significant portion of our advocacy muscle in promoting these principles rather than the methodologies. In 2018, as an organization, we aim to invest in exploratory exercises and partnerships that are based on this approach with a view to learning if this is a more viable strategy for galvanizing more quality programming on VAWC.

Coordination and participation in collectives

Working with colleagues in a collective way gives us the opportunity to widen our reach and amplify our voice on important issues. It also comes with challenges. The groups take a significant amount of time to coordinate effectively and participate in meaningfully. It can also mean making compromises in order to align priorities. In 2018 we will continue to participate in collectives and seek to ensure that where significant time is dedicated, visibility and impact for Raising Voices remains.





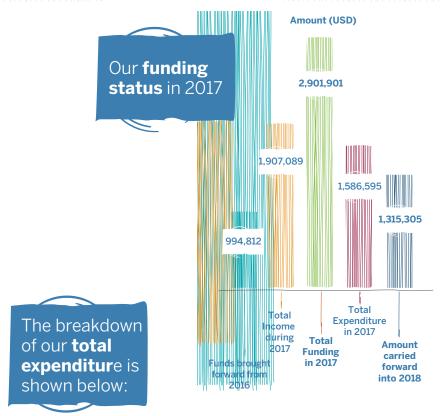


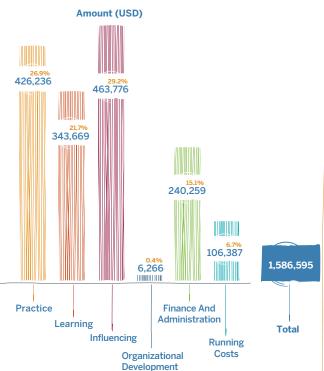
In 2017, we continued on the path of strengthening the Finance and Administration systems and functions of Raising Voices in order to improve our efficiency, as well as ensuring timely accountability to all our stakeholders.



The major achievements in 2017 were as follows.

- Strengthening Operational Support. In 2017 we invested substantially in strengthening the operational support at Raising Voices. Senior, experienced staff were recruited, while other functions, such as internal auditing and IT support were outsourced to skilled groups.
- 2) New Accounting Software. As we continued to grow, it became clear that our existing software was no longer meeting our evolving and increasingly complex finance management and reporting requirements. In 2017, a decision was made to procure a more versatile accounting software that would allow us to generate reports, and track expenditure with more granularity. To this end, Microsoft NAV and the required hardware were procured, set up and initial training was conducted in the last quarter of the year. The system will be fully operational by February 2018.
- 3) Office 365. For long, Raising Voices has been using standalone installations of older Microsoft Windows and Office. A decision was made to migrate into Office 365 in order to benefit from its more advanced features, as well as to ease the IT maintenance requirements. Office 365 was procured in the second quarter of 2017 and it was deployed in the third quarter. Staff continue to be trained in order to harness all the features of this platform.
- 4) **Policy Development.** During 2017, we developed three additional policy documents to guide operations, including the Accounting Manual, Board Manual and Human Resource Manual. These policies were reviewed and approved by the Board.
- 5) The other significant milestones in the course of 2017 were:
 - Tax Health Check. A special review was commissioned to assess our compliance with the existing tax code of Uganda. Having determined that we were fully compliant, the reviewers gave us a clean bill of health.
 - Infrastructure improvements. We changed our internet access technology to a more reliable and dedicated leased line. This more stable internet access improved our online conference/meeting experience through Skype and other platforms.





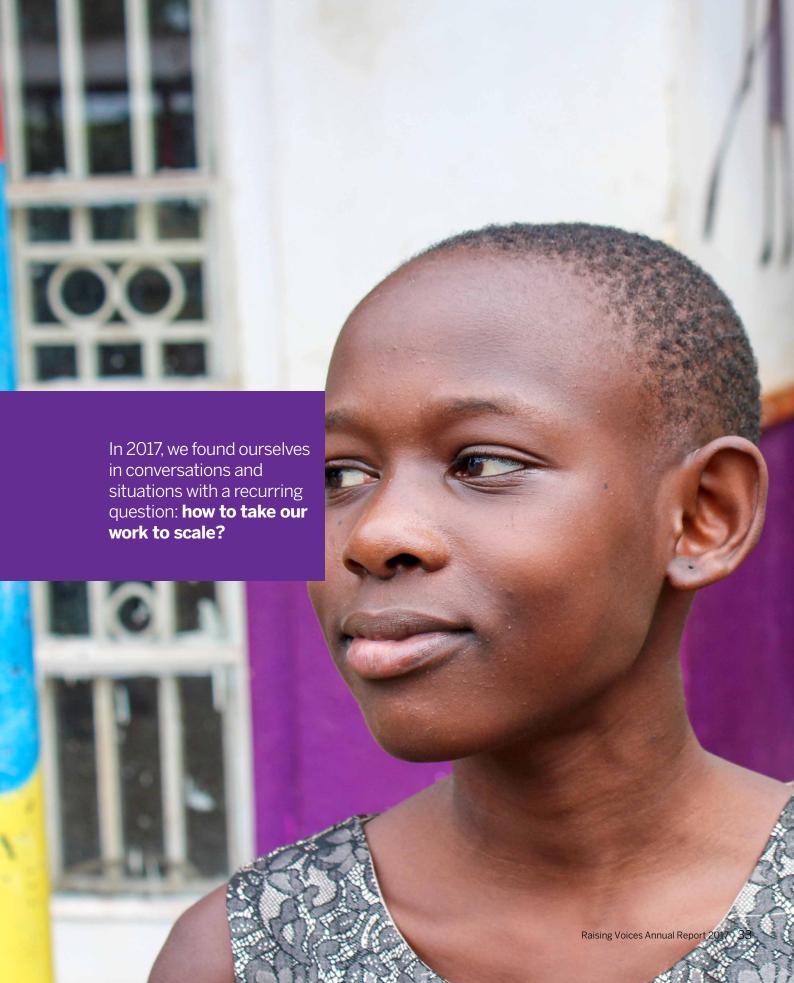
The above expenditure figures are tentative; the 2017 audited accounts (that are currently being processed by the external auditor) contain the definitive financial figures.

The 2018 priorities for the Finance and Admin team are:

- Fully operationalize the new accounting software (Microsoft NAV) in order to improve the financial management and reporting functions.
- Train all staff in the new technologies in order to improve their utilization.
- Further streamline program planning and execution of activities so as to improve effectiveness and efficiency.
- Update the security infrastructure in order to minimize the risk of loss of organizational property and data.



Reflecting on our work, learning from it and applying the insights is the hallmark of how we operate. In 2017, we engaged in more than 50 internal activities: from one-on-one debriefing to group engagements about how we did something and what we learned from it.



In 2017, as our ideas garnered greater attention and with two evidence-based methodologies at hand, we found ourselves in conversations and situations with a recurring question: how to take our work to scale? In some conversations, the discussion was utilitarian: the bigger the numbers, better the work; while in others, we explored our experience of programming depth, relationship building and activism. We appreciated intellectually that fully engaging in going to scale would require major adjustments, but perhaps underappreciated the psychological demands such engagement would require. As we began navigating the terrain, we encountered our fair share of speed-bumps, including the following.

The first major question that arose is that work at scale had significantly expanded our operational budget, and this in turn, would necessitate a relationship with different type of donors, and the conditionalities that come with such funding. It required us to focus on implementation rather than innovation, which is where our strength lies. The flow of money stretched our systems, and we worried about what it was doing to the character of Raising Voices. The procurement process took weeks, instead of days due to the lengthy, but necessary, procedures. The carefully assembled relationships with the vendors who knew our exacting standards, the 'small-shops' that had been our suppliers since the inception of our work, at times, had to be replaced with larger, more formalized providers, to comply with the requirements of new procedures.

The second major question we grappled with was whether expanding in such a way was changing our identity, and the sense of belonging that staff once felt within the organization. As we got busy establishing systems and the management infrastructure to cope with the volume, we found ourselves in a paradox. On one hand, we worried we were losing some of the intimacy, and versatility, that has been the hallmark of Raising Voices; while on the other, we felt as if we became even more attached to our identity, as we found ourselves among organizations with a more technocratic approach. As software managed the logistics, and communal digital spaces seemed to minimize the need for individual communication, we had to stop ourselves from compartmentalizing and reinvigorate our connections. As we implored staff to learn new software, and as new policies landed in people's organizational lives, there were moments of struggle when we wondered if we were leaning more toward becoming employees rather than activists. Ultimately we held proudly to our feminist, values driven, foundation but the process raised profound questions about what kind of organization we aspired to be.

Third, and perhaps the most important consideration from our perspective, is that our work became much more about solving logistical implementation challenges, rather than one of creating innovative responses. At times, we found ourselves managing rather than inspiring. It was in these moments that we reprized our organizational values, beautifully painted on our office wall, and ensured that they would remain visible in the busy work of getting things done.

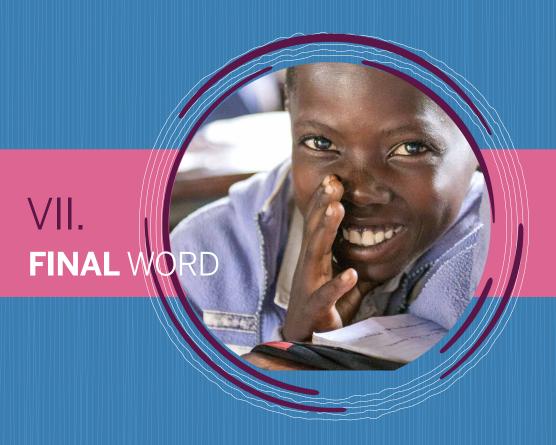
As these experiences unfolded in the first half of the year, in July we chose to step back, articulate important questions, and carve out a breathing space to make deliberate choices. We assembled a team of senior staff members to make strategic decisions and choices. We instigated an internal reflection process on what scale meant for our work, undertook an organization-wide values clarification process (see Box below), and affirmed the decision from 2016 to bring some types of funding relationships to a halt, and suspend pursuing similar funding, until we had more clarity. This meant we declined to respond to calls for proposals, where we stood a good chance of winning. We also embarked on an all staff review of our strategy and boldly imagined, team by team as well as collectively, how to meet the new challenges of scale, implementation, and innovation. We reaffirmed our core purpose and devised new programs, initiatives and partnerships that will allow us to both remain grounded in our principles and seek new ways of preventing VAWC, learning and influencing the broader field. We hold fast to the belief that although a small organization, Raising Voices is uniquely placed to impact the lives of women and children with our homegrown blend of politics, practice and purpose.

These strategic choices and new directions helped realign us with our core values and spirit of Raising Voices. We came to terms with some of the consequences of our decisions. Our budget, for example, and therefore, our expenditure went down by a third. Yet rather than cutting programs, we got creative. For example, we were able to identify a third-party donor who funded our VAC prevention community based partners directly rather than through us (freeing us from the fiduciary oversight), and we agreed to provide technical support at no cost, to sweeten the deal. However, these decisions did mean that all staff, across the board, received a standard inflation pegged rather than the merit based pay rise they deserved. We made frugal choices and managed to deliver on our major commitments without significantly trimming our programmatic ambition.

A central reflection from the year is that we needed to hit a 'pause' button to clarify our perspective and strategic choices, and we now see a new way forward. We have a more clarified position, though not a conclusive stance on what scale will mean for us, and this position may have divergence, depending on the program and specific considerations. For example, expansion of the Good School Toolkit may follow a different trajectory compared to that of SASA! We have settled on the size of the organization (in staff and budget) that we do not want to exceed, and in 2018, will make important choices around the nature of partnerships and the models of partnerships we pursue. We look forward to sharing this evolving reflection with all our key partners.

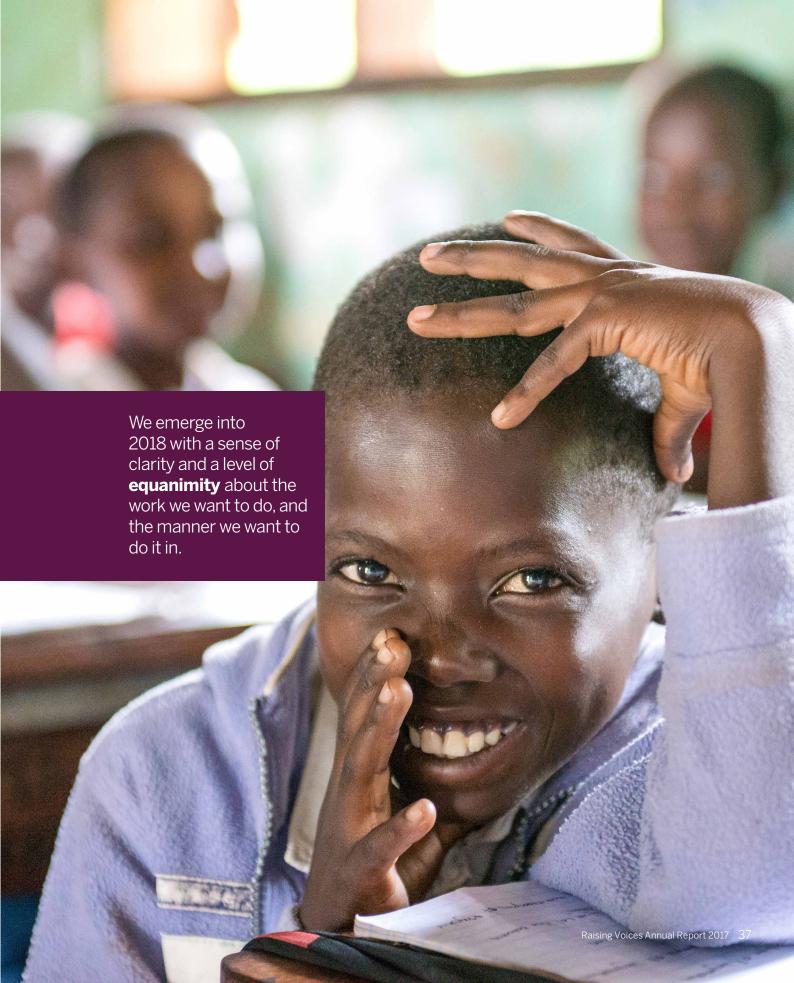
Throughout this process, we feel our greatest asset has been our organizational culture based on values. We have assembled a strong management team and activist staff that has helped Raising Voices maintain our unique sense of identity. We have invested in looking inward and have emerged into 2018 with a renewed sense of clarity.





2017 was a year of contrasts. Programmatically we achieved much. We built firmly on the foundation we had laid in the previous years. Our work is gaining strength in Uganda and around the world. We continued to honor our commitments and expanded our work substantially at national, regional and global level. At the same time, we introduced significant pivots, made high risk choices, and ultimately reaffirmed our vision and values, while still keeping all our staff and even adding new skill to our team.

We emerge into 2018 with a sense of clarity and a level of equanimity about the work we want to do, and the manner we want to do it in. We can see several major changes around the corner, and there are still challenges of funding our work in the manner we would like to. We see opportunities coming our way as we see the momentum gathering for investment in preventing violence against women and children. We feel poised at an opportune location in the unfolding reality of 2018.



LEARN MORE

We are happy to share the full list of 2017 materials published or co-authored by Raising Voices.

Learning from Practice Papers

- Get Moving! Transforming individuals and organizations. Learning Paper No 6 http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/LP6.pdf
- Potential Pathways to Prevention: Understanding the Intersections of Violence against Women and Children in the Family. Learning Paper No 7 http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/LP7.PotentialPathwaystoPrevention. FINAL_May2017.pdf

Programming for Prevention Series

- Critical issues in ethical SASA! implementation, Programming for Prevention Series, Brief No. 1. http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ProgramBrief1.EthicalSASA.RaisingVoices.may2017.pdf
- Fidelity to the SASA! Activist Kit, Programming for Prevention Series, Brief No. 2. http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ProgramBrief2.FidelitytoSASA.RaisingVoices.may2017.pdf

Creating Change Series

- Activism grows in Kibera, Kenya, Creating Change Series, No. 1 http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/CreatingChangeSeriesNo.1.RaisingVoicesCREAW.june2017.pdf
- Creative Partnership: A case study of Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP). Creating Change Series, No. 2 http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/CreatingChangeSeries-No.2.RaisingVoicesCSSP-june2017.pdf
- We're in this together: A case study of Kivulini, Creating Change Series, No. 3. http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ CreatingChangeSeriesNo.3.RaisingVoicesKivulini.june2017.pdf
- Reaching Far and Wide: A case study of Zambia Centre for Communications Programmes
 (ZCCP), Creating Change Series, No. 4 http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/
 CreatingC-hangeSeriesNo.4.RaisingVoicesZCCP.june2017.pdf

Advocacy Pieces

- Hashtag activism: popularizing feminist analysis of violence against women in the Horn, East and Southern Africa (Feminist Media Studies) http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/ abs/10.1080/14680777.2017.1350526?src=recsys&journalCode=rfms20
- Is Violence Against Children Preventable? Findings from the Good Schools Study summarized for general audiences. http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/VAC-Popular-Report-Final-web.pdf
- On the CUSP of Change: Effective scaling of social norms programming for gender equality, Community for Understanding Scale Up http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ Paper-1-COFEM.final_.sept2017.pdf
- How a lack of accountability undermines work to address violence against women and girls http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Paper-1-COFEM.final_.sept2017.pdf

Academic Publications*

- Gender, Violence & Resilience among Ugandan Adolescents (Child Abuse & Neglect) http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0145213417302430
- Towards a feminist understanding of intersecting violence against women and children in the family (Social Science and Medicine) http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/ S0277953617302721
- Methods to increase reporting of childhood sexual abuse in surveys: the sensitivity and specificity of face-to-face interviews versus a sealed envelope method in Ugandan primary school children (BMC International Health and Human Rights) http://bmcinthealthhumrights.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12914-016-0110-2
- Does the Good Schools Toolkit reduce physical, sexual and emotional violence, and injuries, in girls and boys equally? A cluster-randomised controlled trial (Prevention Science) https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11121-017-0775-3
- How did the Good School Toolkit reduce the risk of past week physical violence from teachers to students? Qualitative findings on pathways of change in schools in Luwero, Uganda (Social Science & Medicine) https://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0277-9536(17)30147-8
- Effect of the good school toolkit on school staff mental health, sense of job satisfaction and perceptions of school climate: Secondary analysis of a cluster randomised trial (Prevention Medicine) http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0091743517301846
- Violence against children perpetrated by peers: A cross-sectional school-based survey in Uganda (Child Abuse & Neglect). http://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0145-2134(17)30142-4
- School staff perpetration of Physical violence against students in Uganda (BMJ) http://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/bmjopen/7/8/e015567.full.pdf

*Academic publications were written in collaboration with our research partners at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Makerere University, University of Alabama, and several long-time consultants. Please see hyperlink for authorship details.







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