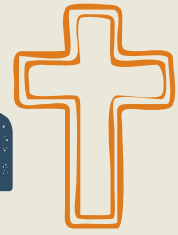


# SASA!

Faith



**Putting faith into action**



**to prevent violence against women and HIV**





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**Photos:** © Heidi Jo Brady and Raising Voices, with the exception of pages 3, 6 and 13 © Trócaire. Page 3: Ugandan Priests and Catechists with Pastoral Coordinator, Martyrs Parish, Mbarara Diocese, Uganda. Page 6: Ugandan Catholic Bishops, St Augustine Institute Nsambya, launch of the National Domestic Violence Campaign 2010. Page 6: Joel Onyango 50 and Betty Alum 48 with their grandson Coxson, 3 and son Daniel, 9 in Barlonyo, Lira, Uganda. Photo Jeannie O'Brien, July 2011.



# What is SASA!

Faith

وقال تعالى : وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً  
(ورحمة إن في ذلك لآياتٍ لقوم يتفكرون ( سورة الروم : ٢١

“And among His signs is this: that He created for you mates from among yourselves so that you may dwell in tranquility with them. He has put love and mercy between your hearts; in that are signs for those who reflect.”

– Holy Quran, Surah 30: Ar-Rum: 21

“In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself.”

–Ephesians 5:28



**SASA! Faith** is an initiative in which leaders, members and allies of a religious community come together to prevent violence against women and HIV. It involves a process of community mobilization—an approach and corresponding activities that engage everyone in living the faith-based values of justice, peace and dignity.

**SASA! Faith** is an adaptation of *SASA! An Activist Kit for Preventing Violence against Women and HIV*,<sup>1</sup> which has been proven to prevent violence against women.<sup>2</sup> *SASA! Faith* takes the structure, process and content of the original *SASA!* and adapts it for use by religious communities. It focuses on the Christian and Muslim faiths, because it originated in Africa where these are the two major religions. However, it was created with a global focus and can be easily adapted to any faith in any country.



"SASA! Faith gives an opportunity to challenge misinterpreted scripture."

**Lena Nadunga,**  
Muslim Centre for Justice and  
Law, Uganda

"SASA! Faith helps us enhance peaceful family relations leading to growth of the family as a domestic church, with the benefits trickling out to the community church."

**Doreen Ayebare**  
Gender Program Officer,  
Trócaire Uganda

"[SASA! Faith] helps us to reflect on scripture and how this informs our actions in real life."

**Mathias Maganda,**  
Head Catechist, Jinja Diocese,  
Uganda

# How We Know *SASA!* Works

From 2008 to 2012, a randomized controlled trial of the original *SASA! Activist Kit* was conducted. In four communities of Kampala, Uganda, community members and leaders used *SASA!* to mobilize their neighbors, friends, relatives and family members. In another four communities, life went on as usual—there was no *SASA!* in these communities.

What happened?

**After three years, women's risk of physical violence from a partner was 52% lower in *SASA!* communities than in the other communities.**

The study proved that violence is preventable and that *SASA!* works.<sup>3</sup>

**"Sasa" means  
"NOW"  
in Kiswahili.**

Now is the time to  
prevent violence  
against women  
and HIV!

## Violence Against Women + HIV

### Violence Against Women

Violence against women profoundly affects women throughout the world—across every faith, age, socio-economic background, ethnicity and ability. One in three women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, most at the hands of an intimate partner.<sup>4</sup>

### HIV

Women account for 58% of people living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>5</sup> Young women aged 15–24 account for 4 in 10 new infections in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>6</sup>

### The Violence Against Women and HIV Connection

For many women, the violence they experience leads to HIV infection. For others, their HIV positive status brings violence, which can speed up the onset of AIDS. In many places, women who disclose their HIV status are at an increased risk for violence against them.

### Consequences of Violence Against Women and HIV on the Faith Community

Violence against women and HIV hurt faith communities. They hurt the women—causing injuries, depression and even death. They hurt the families—causing lost income, poor role modeling for children, and family breakages/separation. They hurt the strength of the faith community itself—due to the absence of women from mosque/church, the burden on religious leaders handling disputes, and more.

# The Power of Prevention

**SASA! Faith** helps faith communities change the attitudes and behaviors that allow violence to happen—stopping the problem before it starts and breaking its connection to HIV. This is the power of prevention. *SASA! Faith* follows the core principles of effective violence against women prevention,<sup>7</sup> making use of the proven *SASA!* approach and other evidence in the field of violence against women prevention.

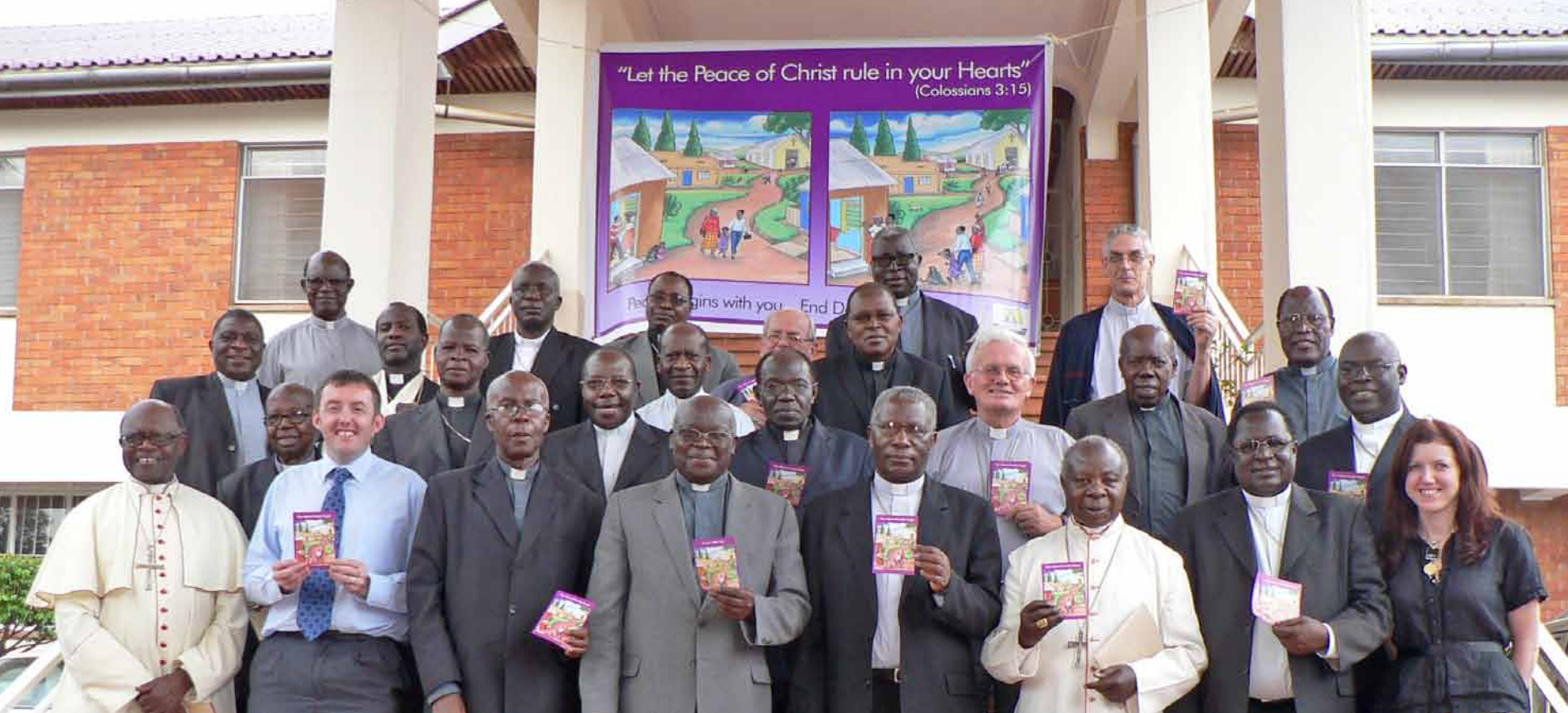
## The Power of Faith Communities

- Many women experiencing violence and men using violence look to their religion and religious community for support.
- A purpose of faith is to work for justice and help those in need.
- Religious leaders have the trust of a large and committed body of believers who are eager to live their lives based on their guidance.
- Religious institutions often have well-organized networks of people in both urban and rural areas, as well as allies at all levels interested in supporting their efforts.

## What is a “faith community”?

“Faith community” means everyone who practices and supports a particular religion within a defined area. It includes religious leaders, religious program leaders, members of the church/mosque, faith-based media and services, local organizations who run faith-based programs, and more. ***SASA! Faith* is implemented by and for the entire faith community.**





## How *SASA! Faith Began*<sup>8</sup>

Many people worldwide have long known the importance of faith communities in preventing violence against women and HIV. However, many have struggled to turn that knowledge into action. Such was the case for all of us at the women's rights NGO Raising Voices and the Irish, church-based NGO Trócaire. Therefore, in 2008, we decided to collaborate with the Catholic Church of Uganda to implement a National Domestic Violence Prevention Campaign and to bring Raising Voices' *SASA!* methodology to faith-based communities.

For the next three years, this collective effort used existing faith infrastructure to break long-held silences about violence against women. It gained the support of faith community members, archbishops and beyond, and led to the engagement of the Muslim Centre for Justice and Law (MCJL) and 30 mosques.

### **The result was an urgent call for more.**

It was this unforgettable collaboration that inspired Raising Voices and Trócaire to create *SASA! Faith*.

"We were meeting with all the bishops, presenting the program, when one bishop asked about the difference between this and the work of any well-known NGO. Before I could say anything, another bishop answered, 'the difference is that it's ours.'"

**Seán Farrell,**  
Trócaire<sup>9</sup>



# For Justice, Peace and Dignity

The values of justice, peace and dignity carry great significance within Muslim and Christian communities and are deeply interconnected. *SASA! Faith* embodies all three in the following ways:

| JUSTICE   | PEACE   | DIGNITY   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>Our faith</b> calls on us to act justly with others, and to work for justice in our religious community.</p> <p><b>In <i>SASA! Faith</i></b>, the value of justice is seen in the belief that all people have equal worth and value, no matter who they are—Christian or Muslim, rich or poor, educated or not, female or male, all ethnicities, etc.</p> | <p><b>Our faith</b> calls on us to live in peace with one another.</p> <p><b>In <i>SASA! Faith</i></b>, the value of peace is seen in the belief that all people should live in safety and free of fear. Living with violence or the threat of violence robs a person of peace.</p> | <p><b>Our faith</b> calls on us to recognize each person's inherent dignity. Each person is born with "fitrah" in Islam, or as a "Child of God" in Christianity; therefore, we are each called to treat each other in a way that recognizes each person's innate dignity.</p> <p><b><i>SASA! Faith</i></b> shares this value, and recognizes that, when violence is present, people cannot live with dignity. Balancing power between women and men helps us to restore each person's honor, respect and dignity.</p> |



“And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together in one body. Always be thankful.”

**Colossians 3:15**

## How to Create Lasting Change

وقال تعالى : يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلّٰهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ  
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللّٰهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَن تَعْدِلُوا وَإِن تَلَوْا أَوْ  
(تعرضوا فَإِن اللّٰهُ كَانَ بما تعملون خبيراً ) سورة النساء : ١٣٥

“Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both. . .”

— Holy Quran, Surah 4: An -Nisaa': 135

# Changing Norms through Community Mobilization

**SASA! Faith** explores how people can work together to make nonviolence the new normal in their faith communities. What a community considers “normal” is called its “community norms.” Random or sporadic awareness-raising activities do not change community norms.

**Changing community norms requires engaging people in a strategic way, over time—a process known as community mobilization.**

**Changing community norms through community mobilization requires doing the following four things:**

1. **Focusing on the root of the problem.**
2. **Following a natural process of change.**
3. **Engaging enough people at all levels.**
4. **Highlighting the benefits for all.**

## 1. Focusing on the root of the problem.

Change will only last if we address the root of the problem. At the root of violence against women and HIV is the issue of power. *SASA! Faith* examines how we, as human beings, use our power—both positively and sometimes negatively. It shows how violence against women happens when men use their power negatively over women. It also shows how everyone is happier when women and men learn to balance their power.

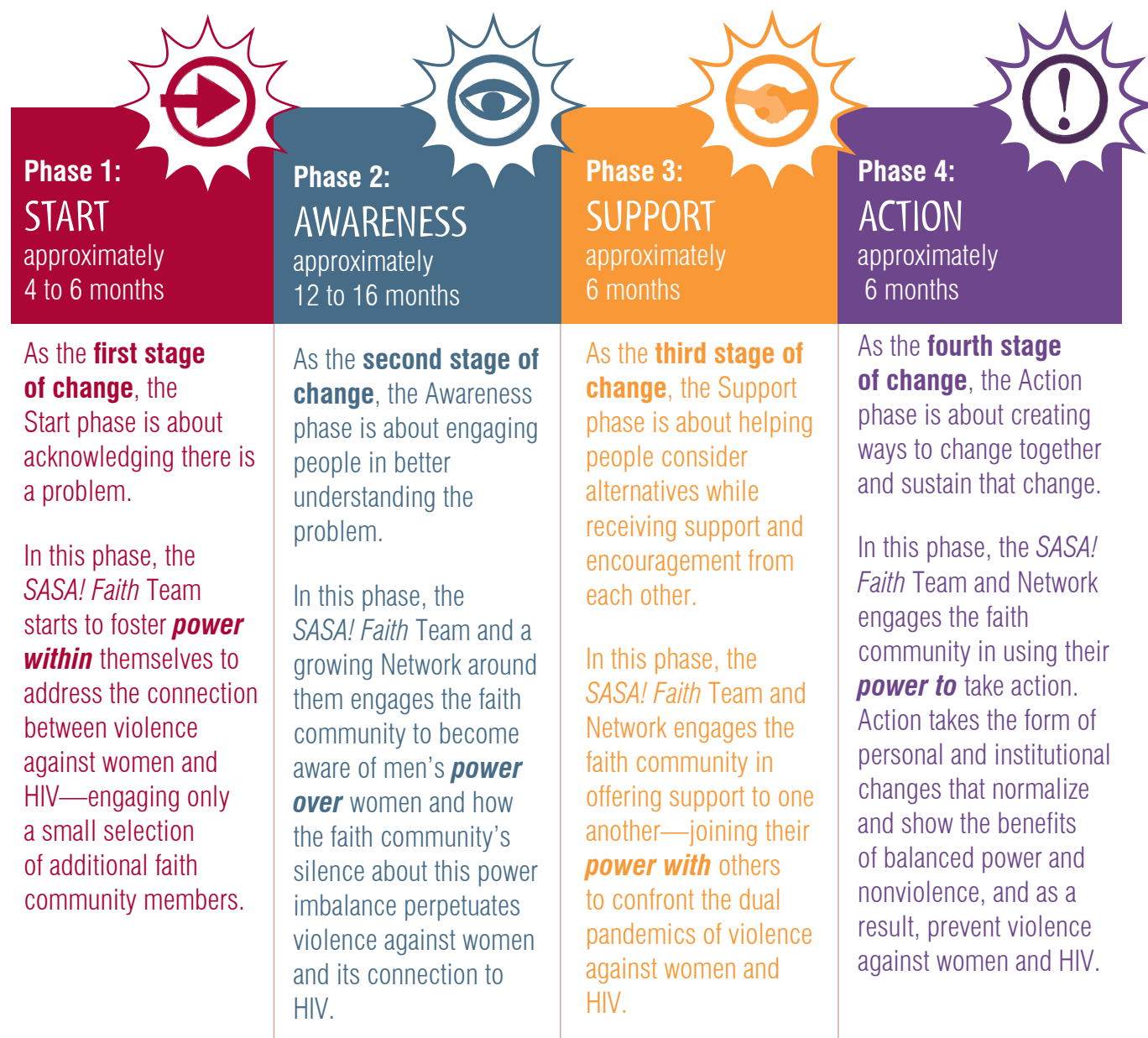
*SASA! Faith* explores four kinds of power:

- The **power within** each of us to make a positive change.
- How some men use their **power over** women.
- How we can support each other by joining our **power with** one another.
- How we all have the **power to** take action.

## 2. Following a natural process of change.

*SASA! Faith* is divided into four phases of community mobilization, with "SASA" as their acronym: Start, Awareness, Support, Action.

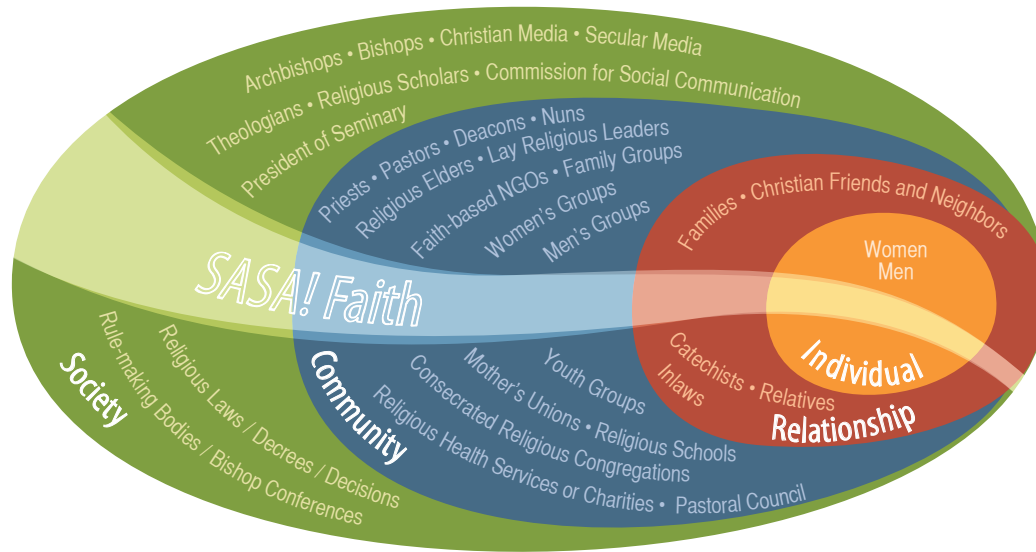
The phases of *SASA! Faith* are based on theoretical understandings of how people change<sup>10</sup> and must be implemented in sequence to be effective. The length of each phase can vary a lot depending on the size, needs and capacity of a faith community; however, most communities need two to three years to complete all four phases.



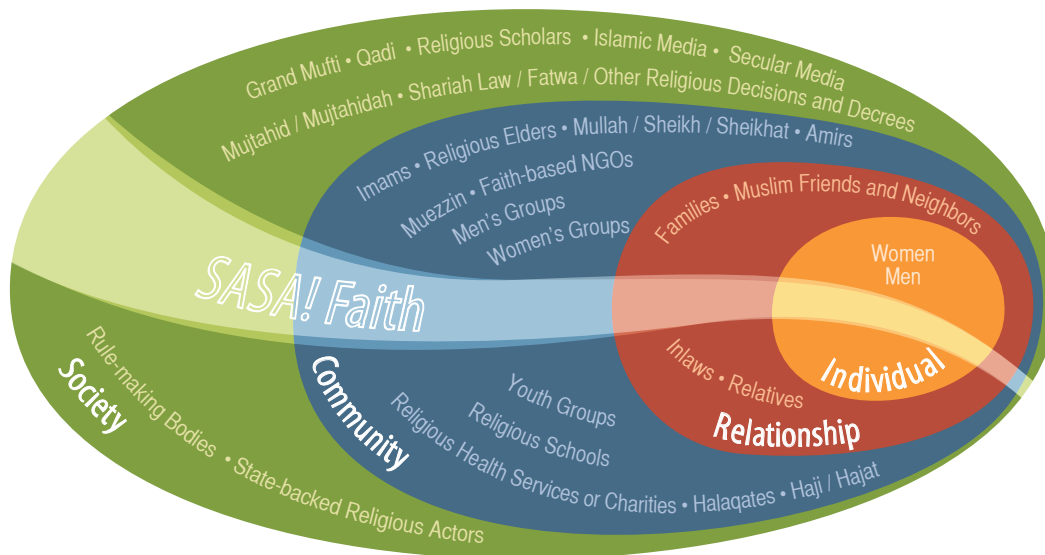
### 3. Engaging enough people at all levels.

SASA! Faith talks about a faith community in terms of its circles of influence—the layers of community life that influence our actions and experiences.<sup>11</sup> By engaging people from every circle of influence, SASA! Faith helps build what is called a **critical mass**—the amount of people needed to change **community norms**.

#### ✝ Christian Circles of Influence



#### ☾ Muslim Circles of Influence



## 4. Highlighting the benefits for all.

Change happens when people see the benefits of that change. *SASA! Faith* avoids blaming and shaming men who are using violence or women who are living with violence, HIV or AIDS. Instead, *SASA! Faith* actively engages both women and men and emphasizes the positive benefits of change for both:

- model relationships as described in the Holy Quran / Holy Bible
- united families
- improved academic performance in children
- preservation and accumulation of family property
- and more

## *SASA! Faith* Activities

**Changing community norms** is *not* simply about doing lots of things with lots of people. Each phase of *SASA! Faith* offers a strategic selection of activities that ensures two things for changing community norms: (1) that *SASA! Faith* reaches all circles of influence, and (2) that people encounter *SASA! Faith* through multiple influences in their lives.



Examples of *SASA! Faith* activities:

- **Religious Leaders Seminar, Quarterly Meeting Notes and Sermon Notes**  
Enabling busy religious leaders to stay engaged and use their voices.
- **Christian and Muslim Discussion Guides**  
Enabling faith programs and social groups to explore the ideas of *SASA! Faith* through interpretations of holy texts.
- **Dramas, Posters and Conversation Guides**  
Enabling conversations to come alive in small groups, before events, and between friends and neighbors.
- **Radio and Story Ideas**  
Enabling faith-based media to bring the ideas of *SASA! Faith* to the airways and more.

Many materials are faith-specific (i.e., with a Muslim and Christian version, using their respective holy books) while others are suitable for both religions.

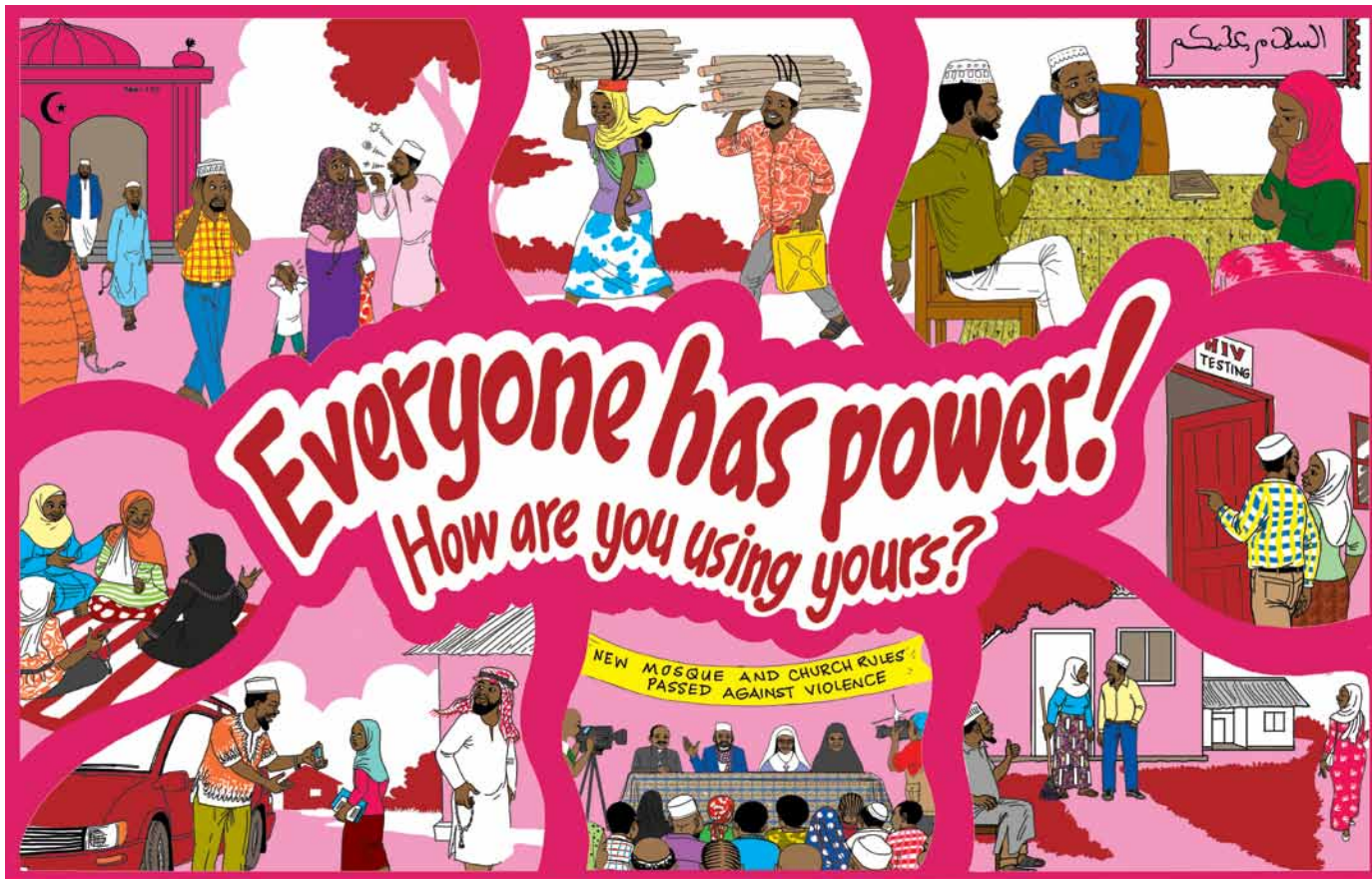
## From a *SASA! Faith* Christian discussion guide:

What do these Holy Bible verses tell us about violence, and the importance of gentleness and kindness to one another?

"Do not envy the man of violence, never model your conduct on his." **Proverbs 3:31**

"Be generous to one another, sympathetic, forgiving each other as readily as God forgave you in Christ." **Ephesians 4:32**

## A Muslim poster from *SASA! Faith* used to create dialogue:



## From a *SASA! Faith* drama script:

"Mariam goes to disclose her HIV status and ask for advice from her religious leader and her friend in the faith community. Mariam explains that she has tested positive for HIV, but that if she tells her husband, Noah, her results, she is afraid he might beat her, or leave her and the children, or kick them out of the house. The religious leader says he is sorry to hear how difficult things are in their home, and is glad she is there . . ."

# Achieving Outcomes Phase by Phase

Changing community norms takes four types of outcomes.

## **Knowledge:**

Enabling people to learn new facts about violence against women and HIV

## **Attitudes:**

Enabling people to change their feelings and beliefs about violence against women by using the values of their faith.

## **Skills:**

Enhancing what people know how to do.

## **Behaviors:**

Influencing how people choose to act.

The activities in one phase of *SASA! Faith* help achieve the outcomes needed for the next phase.

## **Planning:**

There are templates for planning the combination of activities that will achieve the outcomes for each phase.

## **Monitoring:**

There are forms, tracking tools and meeting guidelines for monitoring progress throughout each phase.

## **Assessment:**

There is a baseline, end-of-phase and follow-up assessment questionnaire to establish progress at key milestones in the *SASA! Faith* process.

This takes planning, monitoring and assessment, and *SASA! Faith* includes the tools for all three.

The planning, monitoring and assessment tools of *SASA!* are based on the research practices used in the larger study that enabled the original *SASA!* to prove that violence is preventable.





قال الله تعالى : وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ( سورة )  
العنكبوت : ٦٩

## *SASA! Faith in Action*

"... Allah is with those who are of service to others."  
**Holy Quran, Surah 29: al-'Ankabut 69**

"So you have faith and I have good deeds?  
Show me this faith of yours without deeds, then! It is by  
my deeds that I will show you my faith."

**Holy Bible, James 2:18**

## Everyone Plays a Role

You can be part of positive change in your faith community!

**Anyone** can initiate *SASA! Faith*.

- a passionate faith community member
- a religious leader
- a religious program group
- a non-governmental organization

**The *SASA! Faith* Team** oversees implementation.

The *SASA! Faith* Team =

- one or more dedicated staff with training in addressing violence against women
- one or more religious leaders volunteering as advisors
- a few representatives of the *SASA! Faith* Network (see below)

**The *SASA! Faith* Network** brings *SASA! Faith* to life in the community.

The *SASA! Faith* Network =

- **Community Activists (CAs):** Regular women and men who facilitate activities throughout the community and become the heart of *SASA! Faith*.
- **Community Action Groups (CAGs):** Institutions and groups (e.g., faith-based schools, media and social welfare services) who integrate *SASA! Faith* into their existing work.
- **Community Collaborators (CCs):** People who offer their unique skills/resources as needed.

## Options for Implementation

### Full Implementation

Full implementation of *SASA! Faith* is highly recommended, as it has the most potential for bringing about sustained, positive change. It requires time, commitment and resources (especially human!), including the following:

- two to three years of implementation
- a commitment to completing all four phases
- a team of determined *SASA! Faith* champions
- dedicated financial resources (many activities can be integrated into existing programming, but others may benefit from additional funding)

### Starting with Selective Use

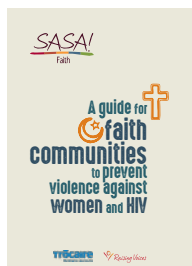
Using a random mix of activities from *SASA! Faith* is not likely to change long-term behaviors and community norms enabling violence, and could introduce new ideas without adequate support. However, here are some circumstances where selective use may be helpful and appropriate:

- in anticipation of future full implementation
- in combination with the original *SASA!*
- in support of existing prevention programming

## Resources and Support

There are many forms of support available for implementing *SASA! Faith*.

### **SASA! Faith includes**



**A guide for faith communities to prevent violence against women and HIV** provides the key materials and guidance you need for every step of the *SASA! Faith* process.



**A training manual for preparing everyone involved in SASA! Faith** complements the guide and includes easy, step-by-step instructions for conducting the lively and informative training sessions central to each phase of *SASA! Faith*.



**A CD of print-ready materials** includes resources such as posters that can be printed full-size for use in the faith community.

### **Organizations & Institutions**

- Online resources and technical support courses are available through Raising Voices ([www.raisingvoices.org](http://www.raisingvoices.org)) and Trócaire ([www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org)), the creators of *SASA! Faith*.
- Advice or resources may also be available from other groups implementing *SASA! Faith* or the original *SASA! Activist Kit*, as well as from local institutions (e.g., police, health care centers).

## Taking the First Steps

If you are interested in further exploring *SASA! Faith*, here is what you can do next:

1. Download a copy of the *SASA! Faith* **guide** and **training manual** at [www.raisingvoices.org/sasa](http://www.raisingvoices.org/sasa) or [www.trocaire.org/sasafaith](http://www.trocaire.org/sasafaith)
2. Read the first section of the *SASA! Faith* **guide**, called “*SASA! Faith* Essentials.”
3. Read the Start phase and begin following the step-by-step process.
4. Contact Raising Voices or Trócaire for support as needed.

## Together We Can Be Part of Change

*SASA! Faith* is designed to significantly and meaningfully change the way people in a faith community relate to one another. Working to change the social norms perpetuating violence against women and HIV is not easy or quick. However, faith communities are making it happen! If we put our faith into action, we can break the silence and bring greater justice, peace and dignity to our lives.

# Endnotes

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