

local activism

public event

action

A March

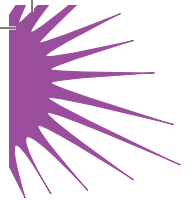
A public event for taking action

A march is a large public demonstration, a gathering of people who share the same belief about an issue and want to express it publicly. Organizing a march in the Action phase of *SASA!* is a way of bringing together all the diverse individuals and groups involved in preventing violence against women and HIV and demonstrating their solidarity and shared values. A march can energize those directly involved and inspire others to take part.

Who?


A march requires many community participants or it loses its dramatic effect. It is essential to mobilize large numbers of individuals and groups to create the desired impact. Invite and encourage everyone to participate! You could:

- Make banners and hang them around the venue or at busy locations.
- Ask community leaders to announce the march in their regular events and meetings.
- Invite all community activists and ask them each to bring 10 people.
- Invite all community action groups and ask them each to bring 10 people.
- Invite all the community leaders, service providers and professionals who have been involved in preventing violence against women and HIV.
- Announce the march on the radio or public address systems in the community.

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- Invite journalists to cover the march. Send them a press release and a map of the route before the event so they can plan a good vantage point for filming or photos.
 - Ask people to spread the news—word of mouth can carry news fast and far!

Where?

Start and end the march at a prominent, central location where there will be many bystanders, and ensure the route moves through streets and neighborhoods where you will get the most exposure. Here are some tips:

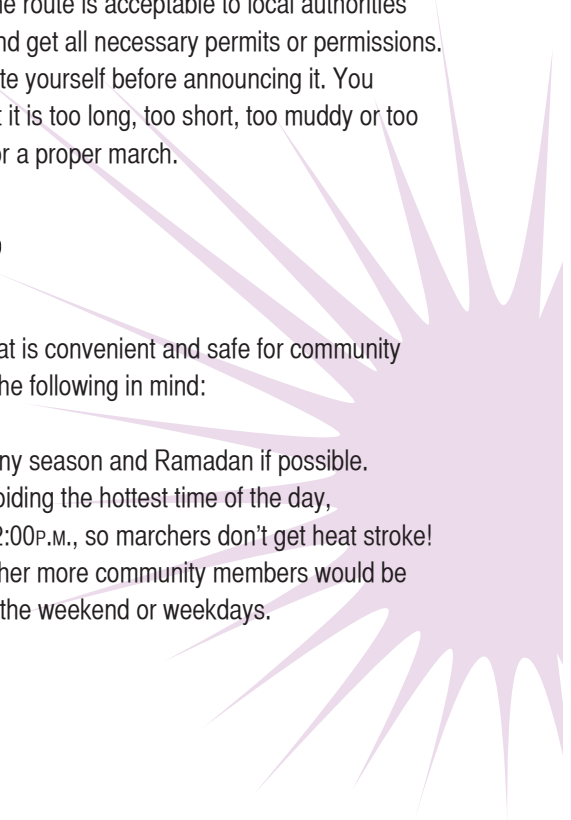
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- Make the route pass through the busiest parts of your town or village.
 - Make sure that the road or path is passable and that people will not have difficulty navigating through.
 - Avoid making the route too long.
 - Have the meeting place where the march starts be very well known and easy to find.
 - End the march in a community square, or end in front of a specified location (e.g., local government offices,

police or parliament) if you want to deliver a specific message to the people working at that location.

- Make sure the route is acceptable to local authorities and police and get all necessary permits or permissions.
- Walk the route yourself before announcing it. You may find that it is too long, too short, too muddy or too congested for a proper march.

When?

Choose a time that is convenient and safe for community members. Keep the following in mind:

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- Avoid the rainy season and Ramadan if possible.
 - Consider avoiding the hottest time of the day, 11:00A.M. – 2:00P.M., so marchers don't get heat stroke!
 - Decide whether more community members would be available on the weekend or weekdays.

What?

Decide together what your march will look like. Here are some tips:

- Choose a theme and, if appropriate, choose a direct action that you would like taken by a specific group as a result of the march.
- Ask a leader or local official to kick off the march with a short speech.
- End the march in a large public space where you could hold a music event, speeches, a fair or a vigil.
- Ask community members to make signs and banners about the theme.
- Have music accompany your march, such as a brass band, a traditional music group or different noisemakers brought by marchers.
- Encourage marchers to make a visual impact by all wearing one color or a traditional cloth.
- Create a variety of slogans and statements. Have community activists lead the crowd in shouting these statements.

- Have a bicycle march—ask everyone to come on their bicycles.
- Stop the march in key places for two to three minutes and hold a mini drama or performance.
- Hand out communication materials to bystanders watching the march—better yet, invite them to join you!

How?

Marches require coordination. The more people you can organize to participate in the march the more impact it will have. Sit together to decide how you will accomplish this. As with other public events, you may choose to have an organizing committee with different members responsible for each of the main aspects of the march. Have a powerful event!

www.raisingvoices.org/sasa.php