

What will it take to prevent violence against women and children?



2012 – 2016 Strategy

www.raisingvoices.org

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Acronyms

CaCP	Coalition against Corporal Punishment	MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
CBO	Community-based Organization	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
CEDOVIP	Center for Domestic Violence Prevention	TA	Technical Assistance
GBV	Gender-based Violence	VAC	Violence against Children
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization	VAW	Violence against Women
LSHTM	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	WHO	World Health Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation		

Vision

We envision relationships, families and communities where women's and children's voices are heard, their rights respected, and they can live free of violence.

Mission

To prevent violence against women and children.

Goal

To reduce social acceptance of violence against women and children.

Executive Summary

There is now an international consensus that violence against women and children is a global problem. Credible and comprehensive studies have articulated the nature and the dimension of the problem. The *Multi-Country Study on Violence against Women* conducted by WHO concluded that urgent action is needed to address the pandemic (2005). Similarly the *UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children* has marshaled considerable experience and evidence to create a comprehensive case that violence against children requires sustained and strategic investment (2006). Both studies affirm the growing body of evidence that violence against women and children is an urgent problem that must be prevented.

Thus, the critical question is not why, but how to prevent violence against women and children? Globally, clear and demonstrable practical strategies for violence prevention are few. In part this is because the core drivers of the problem are deeply embedded in an overarching belief system about power: who has it; how it is used; and, how relationships and communities are shaped by those beliefs. As a result, there are no easy solutions or quick fixes for preventing interpersonal violence; it requires a fundamental shift in power dynamics at the individual, relationship, community and societal levels. Faced with such complexity, it is easy to slip into ad hoc or shallow programming because the alternative is complex and sustained. Cognizant of this context, Raising Voices has been working since 1999 to generate ideas, strategies, practical responses and evidence for sustainable and holistic prevention of violence against women and children.

The driving question behind our work at Raising Voices is: *What does it take to prevent violence against women and children?* This is what keeps us up at night, what inspires us to innovate, take risks and try again when we fall short. We know there is not one answer but many interconnected pathways. We now know the answer is not limited to community-based efforts but involves work at every level to influence ideas and leverage space and opportunities so that essential efforts in communities are possible. Raising Voices' work over the coming years is to explore the nature and mechanisms of these pathways through three integrated areas of work:

1) Practice: trying, day in and day out in communities, to do the work of preventing violence against women and children.

Over the last 12 years, practice has been the focus of our work and it will continue to be the source from which we construct our efforts to learn and influence. Raising Voices has developed, published and widely shared a variety of program tools, such as the *SASA! Activist Kit* and the *Good School Toolkit*. The community-based violence prevention approaches developed by Raising Voices are being used in more than 75 countries and more than 500 schools and have contributed substantially to the body of knowledge in the field of violence prevention. Raising Voices has established a wide range of partnerships, a respected Learning Center frequented by practitioners from all over the world, and a network of strategic relationships focused on quality violence prevention efforts. We will build on and further strengthen this foundation in the coming five years. Specifically, in this cycle of work, our practice will be organized in three broad areas: *local activism* (interpersonal level intervention), *institutional activism* (community level intervention) and *multimedia activism* (societal level intervention). We believe that the cumulative effect of the multilevel practice will create synergy and will amplify the overall impact of our activism.

2) Learning: embedding processes and discipline into our practice for interrogation, critique, analysis, assessment and making meaning.

Learning has always been important to our efforts and we believe Raising Voices is now well positioned to make it a major focus of the organization. In this new phase of our work, we will systematically invest in integrating a learning component in all our programs. Raising Voices will explore partnership and technologies that enable us to credibly ask in each of our major activities: What is working? What is not? Why? Specifically, the Learning Department will engage in three broad areas of work. First, we will embed monitoring and evaluation in every program. In addition to generating new tools for operations research, Raising Voices will also amplify our investment in rigorous research. For example, Raising Voices will conduct two randomized controlled trials as well as various smaller quantitative and qualitative studies that will focus on *generating evidence* for key hypotheses about what works in preventing violence against women and children. Second, this evidence and experience will feed back into *strengthening current and innovating new methodologies* to prevent violence against women and children. Third, we will invest in existing strategies and creating new avenues for *disseminating these ideas* as widely as possible. Cumulatively, the aim of the Learning Department is to formulate key questions that need deeper understanding, test ideas that address entrenched problems, rigorously learn in the process, and transform the learning into digestible analysis and positions that will strengthen practice and policy.

3) Influencing: deliberately and actively communicating experiences and lessons learned to grow the global body of knowledge on violence prevention and to affect decisions at multiple levels.

A central insight of the evaluation we conducted after ten years of our work was that Raising Voices should be playing a greater role in influencing the field. Far too often, our lessons learned feed directly back into improved internal programming but are not clearly articulated or shared beyond colleagues focused on practice. In this cycle of our work, Raising Voices will invest in developing a distinct program area which brings the discipline of communicating our work, brokering collective analysis and influencing how investments are made in the work of preventing violence against women and children.

Specifically, the work will be organized around three broad program areas. First, there will be an emphasis in engaging with and *informing policies* of development partners as well as national and local government within Uganda. Second, Raising Voices will develop *strategic collaborations and alliances* with a view to bringing the weight of the collective voice to bear on critical issues in the field. This will involve coordinating networks and coalitions and developing strategic collaborations with key partners that can enhance Raising Voices' ability to influence the dialogue on violence prevention. Third, we will strive to *create connections* between people and ideas by developing collective thinking and learning spaces. Cumulatively, through thought leadership, our aim is to generate momentum in the broader field that will ultimately lead to positive change in programming on prevention of violence against women and children.

Cumulatively, this is an ambitious undertaking. We believe that twelve years of practical experience, our highly skilled team of 25 staff, and an extensive network of colleagues and partners will enable us to credibly take on this challenge. We look forward to creating quality work based on values of activism and transparency and playing a stronger leadership role in the field of violence prevention.

This document is a broad description of the Raising Voices strategy for 2012 – 2016 including key components of our work. A separate document will describe in detail each of the program areas and specific activities within these programs.



Situation Analysis

What is the state of violence prevention?

A decade ago, interpersonal violence was rarely acknowledged as a serious human rights, health or development issue. Mostly the purview of activists; development partners and governments underestimated the problem and its consequences. However, as a result of accumulating evidence and consistent advocacy, the landscape has changed considerably. The *WHO Multi-country Study on Violence against Women* and the *UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children* are culminations of large scale activism for credible studies that map the issue. These and many other studies confirm what most activists have known: that the problem of violence against women and children is vast and its roots are deeply embedded in injustice and patriarchy.

Across Africa, women's lifetime rates of physical or sexual violence range from 35.9 percent in urban Namibia, 55.9 percent in rural Tanzania, 70.9 percent in rural Ethiopia,¹ and 70.4 percent in Uganda.² Globally, the dominant form of violence against women is intimate partner violence.³ According to the *UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children*, between 80 and 98 percent of children experience physical violence at home from individuals known and trusted by them. Less than three percent of the world's children are protected legislatively from physical violence in all settings. In more than 100 countries in the world, children face the threat of sanctioned physical violence at school, and in at least 30 countries, children can be whipped or caned as a form of punishment within the penal system.⁵

The mounting evidence for the nature and the scale of violence against women and children propelled the issue onto the international agenda. As a result, there has been a steady increase of funding for programming on violence against women and children over the past decade, particularly the last five years. A significant portion of the resources have been invested in legal reform, service delivery and protection yet there is also a growing interest in and commitment to prevention. Many agencies have developed programs that address sexual violence, early marriage, child labor, corporal punishment and other situation-specific formulations. They have begun to embed an analysis of justice and interpersonal violence in a diverse range of programs that address related issues such as land rights, vulnerability to HIV infection or access to education. This is indeed a welcome development as the international community endeavors to find conceptual vehicles and practical mechanisms through which the problem of violence against women and children can be addressed.

1 Garcia-Moreno C, Jansen H, Ellsberg M, Heise L, Watts C. *WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women: Initial results on prevalence, health outcomes and women's responses*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2005.

2 Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and Macro International Inc. *Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2006*. Calverton, Maryland, USA; 2007.

3 Garcia-Moreno C, Jansen H, Ellsberg M, Heise L, Watts C. *WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women: Initial results on prevalence, health outcomes and women's responses*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2005.

4 World Report on Violence Against Children: *UN Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children*. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro (2006)

5 Accessed from www.endcorporalpunishmentnow.org March 2nd 2012.

Yet the practice of preventing violence against women and children is still very much in an experimental and formative stage. Much of the urgency and the intention of the international rhetoric are lost in translation when applied to concrete actions at local level. Despite clear articulation in influential texts and international gatherings that a sea-change is needed at a multiple levels (i.e., individual, interpersonal, community, societal) to meaningfully impact rates of violence against women and children, this isn't yet visible on the ground. Uncoordinated individual-level responses abound and much of the work lacks a clear or nuanced conceptual framework.

Much of the violence prevention work is propelled by development partners and international NGOs that may have the resources, commitment and sophisticated analysis at the international level yet lack the ability to translate that to the context of the implementation in the global South. Incisive conceptual frameworks desiccate when they emerge in the inbox of staff at distant field-based offices who are grappling with variable skill sets and an urgency of practical programming. Such a flow of priorities and conception gives rise to at least three problems:

First, there is often a profound disconnect between those who conceptualize frameworks and policy and their investment in how to convert that rhetoric into practical, sustainable interventions within the context of the global South. Thus it is not unusual to find that with a perfunctory introduction to the issue, many field-staff are expected to develop violence prevention activities, programs and campaigns that bring about sustainable change on an entrenched, deeply rooted issue. It is not unusual to find one-off workshop-based interventions that implore individuals to stop using violence in their interpersonal relationships, considering this sufficient to solve the problem. Similarly, it is not uncommon for policy guidelines to forbid corporal punishment within schools, for example, without an analysis of why it happens, or what systemic interventions are needed to create lasting changes. Such interventions can cause more harm than good, waste critical resources and fuel the cynicism of local staff and distrust within communities.

A second problem that permeates much of the practice of violence prevention is the lack of a political analysis of power and patriarchy or an underlying allegiance to a broader vision of social justice. Our experience has been that most of the work is being undertaken by well-meaning implementers who do not base their programs on a politicized perspective, link their actions to a broader theory of change or even clearly articulated principles or philosophy. This results in a 'professionalized' NGO workforce that understands the language of indicators and can write reports but lacks the passion and commitment that true social change requires. The lack of political analysis often leads to disjointed, misguided interventions that are actually short term funding-driven projects rather than systematic attempts to realize a vision.

A third and endemic part of the problem is the truncated learning cycle that arises out of such short-term project-based implementation. Inevitably, a large agency is likely to position itself to win bids and implement work that is currently being funded. Such practice focuses on delivering outputs promised to donors rather than lasting outcomes and change in communities. It means the field is not learning from mistakes, isolating drivers or innovating based on practice. It leaves in its wake initiatives that were not sufficiently grounded, seen through to their conclusion or in worst cases, abandoned when funding ran out.

Over the last decade, our observation has been that the work on preventing violence against women and children has been littered with vivid examples of all three of these problems. This is not just unfortunate in theory but devastating at the most personal level in communities. As individuals, organizations and the broader field, we must get back to remembering the people with whom we are doing this work: women and children affected by violence. Thus it is critical that an investment is made in strengthening local vision-based agencies that are not intent on surviving but learning, and whose impetus is derived from an allegiance to a vision rather than a project.

The work of preventing violence against women and children requires such agencies. It requires curators of an overall vision that grapple with how communities will create new *social norms* that refuse to tolerate fundamental injustice in the lives of so many of its members. It involves developing a defensible and grounded theory of change and designing interventions based on the predictions of such a theory. It requires injecting an analysis of what justice means in an interpersonal relationship and animating such a discourse with creative ideas and interventions. It requires building local capacity and resources and requires organizations and individuals who are accountable to their communities. Changing the nature of the field of violence prevention is a long-term investment that requires discipline and forethought; there are no shortcuts. It is essential.

Raising Voices, with feet in both the global North and global South will aim to play an active and a meaningful role in centering and shaping the field. In the coming years we will invest in further strengthening local practice. We will also expand and influence thought and policy at an international level recognizing the deep connections and possibilities in meaningful synergy. We will pour our energies into interrogating at every level the question: what does it take to prevent violence against women and children? We will do this with the rigor and discipline essential to unearth our assumptions and refine our contribution with the humility that comes with knowledge and experience. As we embark on this work, we are armed with more than twelve years of rich and productive experience, a stable and skilled staff, and a deep conviction in the urgency of the issue and our ability as Raising Voices to meaningfully contribute to this work.



Theory of Change

What will it take to prevent violence?

In the context of the global South, the work of preventing violence against women and children requires a sustained commitment. It requires addressing the social norms that tolerate and perpetuate the violence and thus involves engaging with the community at multiple levels. More than a decade of grappling with the minutiae of designing strategies and experimenting with methodologies leads us to conclude that lasting change will require at least three distinct but inter-related areas of work:

- an astute and innovative **practice** that wrestles with the practicalities of making ideas actionable;
- a pragmatic emphasis on **learning** that focuses on identifying what works, what doesn't and why it is so; and,
- a concerted effort at collating and curating the experiences and insights emerging from practice and learning to **influence** the broader thinking and investments in the prevention of violence against women and children.

It will not be enough to have these areas of work occurring concurrently in silos. There must be a reciprocal and thoughtful **experimenting** that connects the activism to generation of evidence, and a measure of creativity that **animates** the evidence into change in policy and conceptual frameworks. Furthermore, that broader change in conception and policy must ultimately be **linked** for the development of better practice. Thus a virtuous cycle is generated and becomes the sustaining force for the long term work of preventing violence against women and children.

This forms the basis of Raising Voices' **theory of change**; our perspective on what needs to happen at various levels of the social ecology, the relationships between the various components and the nature of energy required to generate momentum for such work. On the following pages we elaborate on our understanding of each of these components and highlight how our work is constructed on this analysis.



Practice

A credible voice is one of experience and action; one that is actively engaged in the process of doing, of disentangling cause from effect and of experimenting with what works and what doesn't in relationships, families, communities and schools. Central to Raising Voices' theory of change is the commitment to practice; to trying and testing what works in real communities, with real people facing complex issues. Our experience has convinced us that we must nurture three key drivers for effective practice.

Local Activism Individuals, rooted within their community, are at the core of social norm change; they are the trusted voices at the center of this work. They have, or are open to, an alternative analysis of what constitutes social justice in their communities and as a result, have developed the will to challenge entrenched ways of thinking and behaving. This is a delicate calculation fraught with personal risk yet there are women, men and children in every community prepared to shift their perspectives, remain open to new ideas and push change from the inside. Raising Voices believes that social norm change can happen when we believe in people and invest in their own processes of transformation, trusting and supporting this to spark and sustain activism in communities. Thus the central preoccupation of our practice will be to continue developing strategies and interventions that enable these courageous individuals to be leaders of change in their own communities.

Institutional Activism Politicized individuals and their alternative visions often emerge, or are strengthened as a result of the catalyzing work of a dynamic agency within their immediate environment. Such agencies and organizations are repositories of inspiration and serve as local centers from which individuals gain skills, ideas and strategies for channeling their activism. Through our work, Raising Voices will invest in strengthening organizations, schools, associations and public institutions that serve such a role and inspire individual and communities to sustain the vision of violence-free relationships.

Multimedia Activism At scale, change is only possible when new ideas permeate public imagination. Thus, ideas that make intuitive sense for expanding behavioral options must enter the community with sufficient frequency, and through a credible analysis that makes a convincing case within a local context. The sustained flow of these ideas, augmented by community-based mechanisms for support and response create an environment conducive for alternative thoughts, skills and behaviors to gain legitimacy. Our programs will continue innovating communication strategies at scale and will invest in enhancing the capacities of others to amplify the ideas.

Learning

In an emerging field where perspectives are still evolving, credible work must be self-critical, experimental, and committed to generating knowledge. Practice without systematic and embedded learning remains ad hoc and reactionary. In order for meaningful change to happen, learning must be an integral part of organizational efforts. Thus Raising Voices will invest significantly in three core areas to learn from our practice and strengthen our influence.

Generating Evidence Experimenting and articulating what works and what doesn't, what is already known and what needs further exploration is essential to driving social norm change. Embedded into practice must be rigorous strategies for critical analysis that can then be fed back into program design for improved quality and effectiveness. This continuous cycle of implementing, learning and reworking is an essential part of an ethical practice. Likewise, when credible results are found, this evidence must then be fed outward into the broader field and used to leverage change in the policy environment.

Innovating Methodologies An enterprise as complex as the prevention of violence against women and children must have pioneers that assume the role of innovating. Such innovation can only happen when individuals and organizations are able to take risks, have sufficient independence of thought, and are willing to put new ideas into the public sphere that may or may not work. However, such work must maintain a firm commitment to documenting these new approaches in a careful and accessible manner and to sharing them freely so they can be tried and tested in various contexts. Furthermore, there must be investment in supporting other groups in pioneering the approaches in their communities. In order to drive change in the fields of violence prevention, Raising Voices will continue imagining and inventing practical strategies.

Disseminating Ideas Expanding the field of violence prevention requires an exchange of ideas, the sharing of struggles and successes, and the willingness to be open. Ideas generated but not laid open for use, scrutiny, analysis or exploration by others can only have a limited impact. Raising Voices will continue its tradition of sharing all methodologies, tools and ideas freely with organizations concerned with practice and we will develop new platforms, tactics and pathways for sharing with those working beyond the level of practice.

Influencing

The discipline of practice and the commitment to learning must be linked to the desire to influence violence prevention discourses and efforts beyond our immediate realm. Without systematic and focused efforts to contribute to the broader field of violence prevention, change remains limited in scope and reach. Despite best efforts at the level of practice, if those ideas and lessons learned are not circulated broadly to affect and shape the policy environment, the imperative of preventing violence against women and children cannot be realized. Central to Raising Voices' theory of change is the belief that practice and its learning must be used to affect policy decisions that shape programming and resource investments to create a virtuous cycle that generates sufficient momentum for the wide scale change required.

Informing Policy For the work to grow, the broader policy environment must be robust. For Raising Voices, this environment includes donors, development partners and agencies, decision making bodies at national and international levels and key activists. Effective policy can determine programming priorities, levels of investment, and even a legal framework. Once the work reaches a tipping point, resources begin to emerge and agendas are developed based on the strategic engagement and lobbying of articulate and connected advocates.

Strategic Alliances In its early stages of development, the field of violence prevention needs targeted efforts aimed at influencing the values underpinning the work and strategic directions. As experience emerges from deliberate practice and research, astute organizations and activists begin to recognize themes in their encounters with the issue and articulate priorities that require attention and investment. Thoughtful alliances with groups can bring necessary leverage to new ideas, strengthen skills and generate important synergy for change.

Creating Connections As theory, evidence, knowledge, and practice accumulate on the issue of interpersonal violence prevention, leaders naturally begin to assemble a distinct field of work. Thought leaders develop practical strategies through trial and error and invest in synthesizing the state of practice. These leaders need to be connected, to engage and challenge each other, to exchange ideas and wrestle with the big questions in order to move the field forward. Raising Voices will contribute to this process through a deliberate effort to create synergy between thought leaders, ideas and strategy.

A problem as widespread and entrenched as violence against women and children requires a delicate interplay of forces described in the Theory of Change for sustainable solutions to emerge. Such outcomes do not emerge effortlessly but must be envisioned, argued for and nurtured. Change requires curators and catalysts, investors and protagonists and above all, passionate activists who are deeply committed to making it happen. It is our hope and ambition to play a meaningful role in creating such an outcome and in the following pages we describe practical strategies we will deploy to make our contribution.



Program Description

What role will Raising Voices play?

Overall Areas of Work

Raising Voices' work will be organized in three broad thematic areas: Practice, Learning and Influencing.

Practice: Raising Voices will implement, inspire and strengthen community activism to prevent violence against women and children.

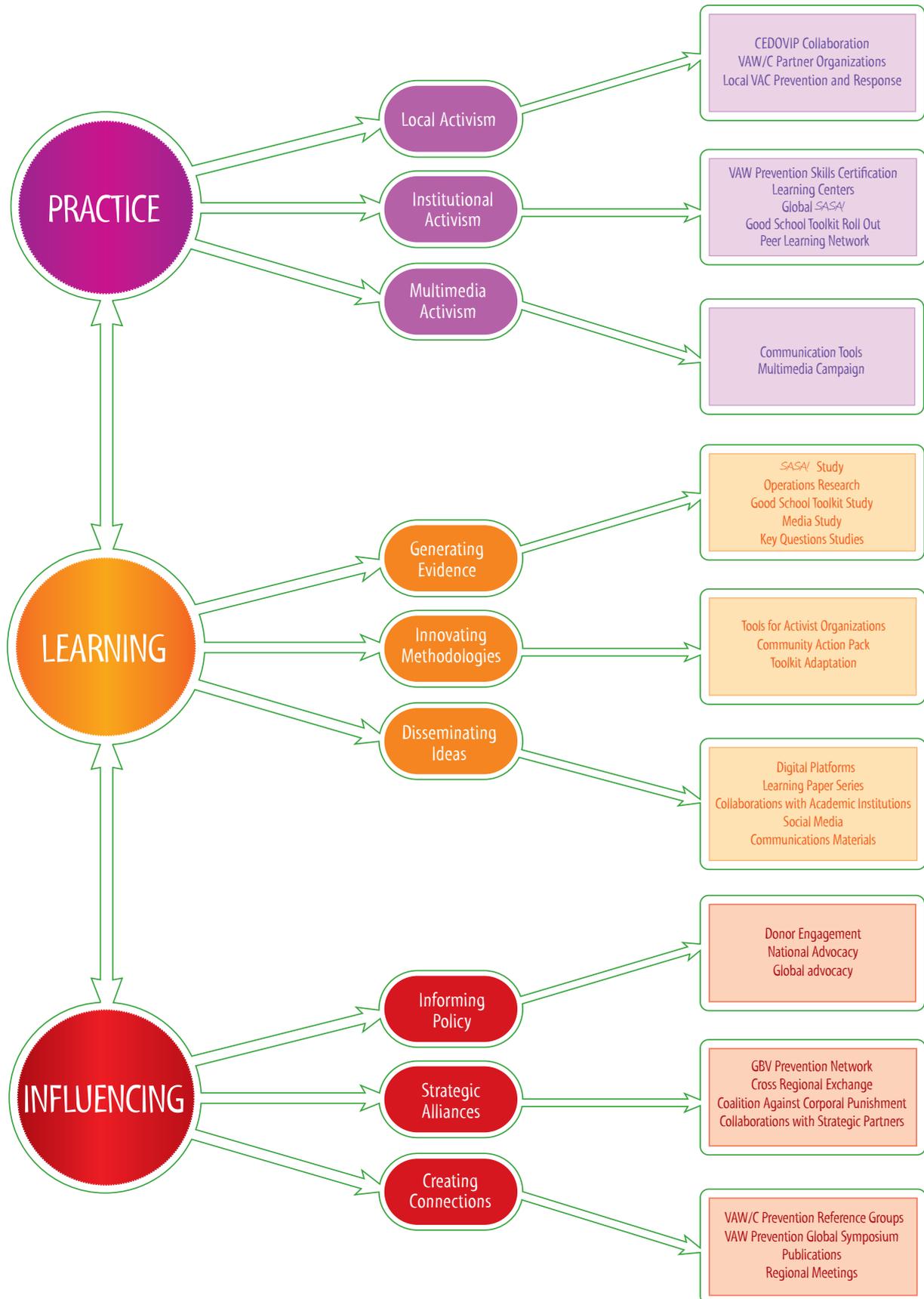
Learning: Raising Voices will contribute ideas and evidence which strengthen the body of knowledge on prevention of violence against women and children.

Influencing: Raising Voices will strengthen analysis and action in the fields of preventing violence against women and children.

Areas of Work

Strategies

Programs



1. Practice

Practice:
the exercise
or pursuit of
an activity to
achieve mastery

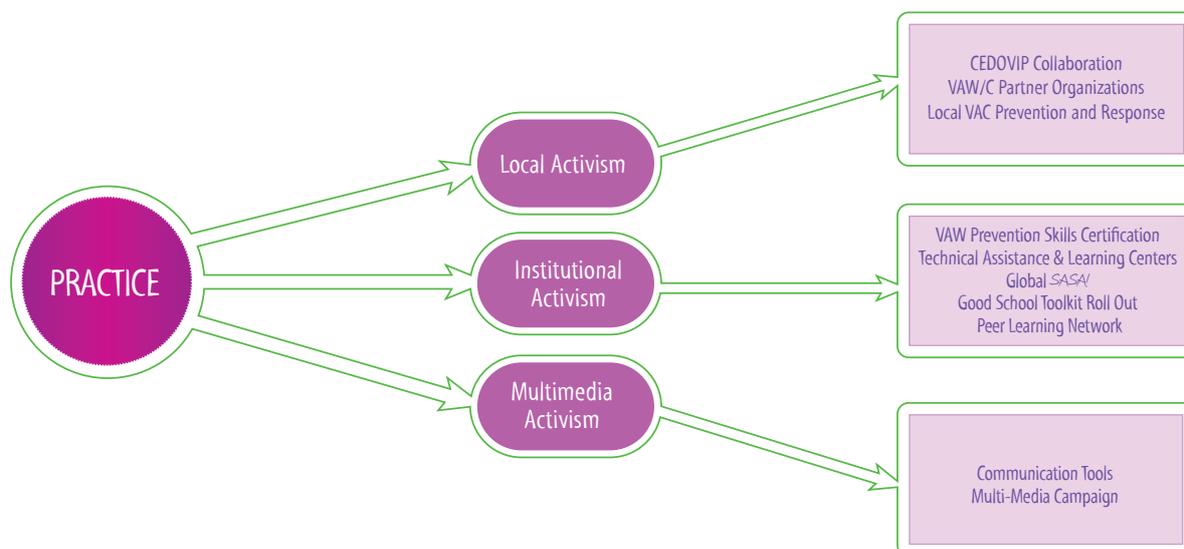
Objective: To implement, inspire and strengthen community activism to prevent violence against women and children.

Raising Voices' on the ground work is our life-blood. It informs our thinking, enables us to remain rooted in reality and orients our activism to the practicality of what works and what does not. Our practice over the past decade has led to the publication of innovative methodologies that are being used in more than 75 countries worldwide. Our practice is also what we are most known for and what has garnered Raising Voices credibility and respect.

Raising Voices' practice is rooted in theory and shaped by practical experience. The foundation of much of our practice is the *ecological model* that recognizes that individual behavior is influenced by interpersonal, community and societal level norms. By crafting **activism** that influences the norms prevalent in each of these spheres, we believe it is possible to influence social change. From this relatively simple idea, Raising Voices has created a practice that has influenced diverse groups and communities to create and navigate change. The hallmarks of Raising Voices' practice are its theoretical foundations, holistic design, comprehensive nature and testing in real-life. At its core, our work is about inspiring communities to reevaluate norms and in the process, create more just interpersonal relationships.

Central to this work is the belief that sustainable approaches have to be systemic in conception and practical in application. Their execution must be led by people who have most at stake: community members themselves. Thus, the *SASA* approach to preventing violence against women and HIV offers a practical process for organizations and community activists. It is designed to strengthen activists' skills and invests in helping them to become the drivers of change in their own communities. Similarly, the *Good School* approach creates a process within schools that offers students, teachers and the administration an opportunity to rethink the 'business' of school and how it is accomplished. It creates a practical and school-wide processes within which all members of the school participate to emerge with a new conception of school and their roles within it. At the heart of Raising Voices' practice is the simple idea that transformation is possible when those most affected are spearheading the change.

As we move forward in the coming years, our practice will build on the principles, achievements and activities Raising Voices has realized to date. Our practice will be organized into three broad areas: **local activism** (interpersonal level intervention), **institutional activism** (community level intervention), and **multimedia activism** (societal level intervention). We believe that the cumulative effect of the multilevel practice will create synergy that will amplify the overall impact of our activism.



1.1 Local Activism

*Ultimately, the most effective influence on behavior comes from personal encounters with credible protagonists of the ideas. This means working with individuals and agencies in communities to inspire and enable them to lead the change. Raising Voices will work with partner agencies to **roll-out SASA, the Good School Toolkit and other methodologies** in Uganda and within the Horn, East and Southern Africa to prevent VAW/C. We will also work with community-based partners in Uganda to develop **local prevention mechanisms** to violence against children.*

Strategic objective: to inspire community-based activism for preventing violence against women and children in Uganda and the region independently and in partnership with others.

Changing Social Norms to Prevent Violence against Women

The **Center for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP)** emerged from Raising Voices' first prevention project in Uganda. With Raising Voices' support, it became an independent organization in 2003. Since then, Raising Voices and CEDOVIP have shared an exceptionally productive and mutually beneficial partnership. Raising Voices relies on community-based experiences and programming through CEDOVIP. It is through this mechanism that we develop methodologies and experiment with innovations toward preventing VAW. CEDOVIP bases their VAW prevention efforts on Raising Voices methodologies and accesses extensive technical support from us to implement their programs. Over the coming years, Raising Voices and CEDOVIP will continue to work together as we discover, create and evaluate what it takes to prevent violence against women.

Beyond CEDOVIP, Raising Voices will partner with at least **25 VAW prevention organizations** per year across the region to implement the *SASA!* approach and other new ideas in violence prevention being developed at Raising Voices. Partners will range from small CBOs to national NGOs, INGOs, UN agencies and faith-based institutions. Partnership will include technical assistance, mentoring, training, and learning together on what it takes to prevent violence against women.

Results

- Quality programming on VAW prevention in communities where CEDOVIP and Raising Voices collaborate through December 2016.
- Quality implementation of *SASA!* and other new methodologies by at least 25 partner organizations per year across Horn, East and Southern Africa.
- *SASA!* roll out lessons learned publication published by July 2014.

Community-based Prevention and Response to Violence against Children

To generate local action to prevent VAC, we will invest in two broad types of interventions. First, we will work with up to **ten VAC partner organizations** in Uganda to strengthen their capacity to act as resource and referral centers for children experiencing violence and activists who would like to get involved in taking action. They will co-host community events with Raising Voices and implement jointly agreed activities to prevent VAC.

Second, **a travelling team of activists** will work across Uganda to provoke community-based dialogue, reflection and response to VAC. The team of highly skilled activists will work with local community-based partner organizations to create processes that address violence against children. The team will work across sectors including police, education, health, local government as well as civil society members to ensure local ownership of the work and ideas for preventing VAC.

Results

- 10 local organizations serving as resource and referral centers for children experiencing violence by December 2013.
- 25 towns engaged in a process of reflection to develop strategies to prevent VAC by December 2015.
- 250,000 community members engaged in a discussion, reflection and strategizing around creating awareness and response to VAC prevention by December 2016.

1.2 Institutional Activism

Ideas can take root if they are nurtured and believed in by respected groups within the community. Raising Voices will invest in strengthening the activism within organizations and institutions with a community-based presence using our methodologies and extensive on the ground experience. From CBOs, NGOs, INGOs to faith-based groups, schools and government ministries, Raising Voices will develop collaborations infused with respect, focus, clarity and support to strengthen the quality of violence prevention efforts in Uganda and across the region.

Strategic objective: to strengthen the knowledge, skills and practices of organizations and institutions to prevent violence against women and children.

Technical Assistance and Learning Centers for VAW Prevention

The quality of VAW prevention in the region remains variable. A clear set of standards for quality violence prevention programming does not yet exist and this is undermining the quality of the work in the region. The consequences of a growing field that lacks standards to guide programming and assess staff and organizations include poor quality of activities and projects, unintended negative results and even unethical programming. Over the coming 5 years, Raising Voices will seek to fill this gap by developing common standards of quality for VAW prevention programming and establishing systems for assessing them. Raising Voices, with strategic partners, will develop core sets of competencies and institute methods for **certifying professionals on the skills** necessary for effective and ethical VAW prevention. Participants and partners accessing our technical assistance services will then be able to progress through competency levels from beginner to expert on a range of VAW prevention skills. With an upsurge in interest in VAW prevention in the region, this effort will introduce a system where organizations and individuals can use a common standard to assess their capacities to do quality VAW prevention programming and work systematically to improve in essential areas. We envision that this clarity and commonality of standards will significantly strengthen the current landscape of VAW prevention in the region.

Raising Voices will also provide quality **technical assistance** to organizations using *SASA!* and striving to improve their VAW prevention efforts. We will work through a variety of arrangements (e.g., institutional collaborations, certified TA providers, etc) to expand our outreach capacity for TA provision.

The **Learning Center in Kampala** run by Raising Voices and CEDOVIP will use the newly developed system of assessing and certifying skills based on core competencies. Taking the lead in building consensus on quality standards for the field of VAW prevention in the region, Raising Voices will then facilitate a set of courses on key competencies for organizations interested in developing their practical skills in key areas of VAW prevention. In addition, from the pool of existing partners, Raising Voices will work with an organization that emerges as a natural leader to establish a **second learning center**, ideally in Southern Africa. Raising Voices will strengthen their capacity to host colleagues from around the region at their site.

Raising Voices enjoys partnerships with many organizations around the globe. Some of these groups are using the *SASA!* approach. Over the coming years, rather than having two way communication between Raising Voices and partner organizations, we seek to facilitate exchange and learning between active groups using our approaches. For example, in Haiti, West Africa and Asia, we are supporting and witnessing interesting adaptations of *SASA!* These groups share implementation learning, challenges, contextual dynamics and unique problem solving. If partners shared more directly with others using the approach, programming would improve and we would be learning more actively what it takes to prevent violence against women in different contexts. Therefore, over the coming years, Raising Voices will host face-to-face meetings with **global *SASA!* partners**, group skype calls, exchange visits and documentation of lessons learned in various contexts. Connecting colleagues will allow for deeper understanding of the implications and possibilities of using the *SASA!* approach in diverse contexts.

Results

- Common standards developed for quality VAW prevention and multi-level certification process for individuals and organizations by December 2013.
- Quality technical support provided to at least 15 organizations each year.
- Establishment of and support to a VAW Prevention Learning Center with one of Raising Voices partner organizations in Southern Africa by December 2014.
- Host at least 60 organizations at the Eastern and Southern Africa VAW Prevention Learning Centers in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- Host, document and share learning from a global *SASA!* meeting by December 2014.

Good School Toolkit Roll-Out

Raising Voices will work with schools in diverse parts of Uganda and East Africa to promote the creation of quality schools based on the *Good School Toolkit*. This will involve making ideas and materials accessible to schools, providing technical support to selected schools and establishing a **peer learning network** that supports the development of these ideas. It will involve developing a pool of resource persons who can support implementation of these ideas in schools and working with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and partner organizations to integrate the approach in their ongoing work in schools.

Adoption of new ideas at a school requires endorsement, encouragement and involvement of various stakeholders who are influential in shaping how schools operate. Raising Voices will create interventions in at least 40 communities with an aim of generating interest and involvement in the running of the school in their community. There will also be a concerted engagement of various departments of the **Ministry of Education and Sports** to ensure that the ideas embodied in the *Good School Toolkit* are part of teachers' training and school ethos encouraged by the MoES.

Raising Voices will also work with more than **1000 schools in Uganda** and some of the surrounding communities to ensure that the work of preventing VAC at schools takes root within the education sector. This will involve working with a wide range of partners, including teacher training colleges, to influence the manner and the content of their school based interventions. Raising Voices will create model schools and a peer learning network that act as resources and a repository for ideas and experiences for learning about what a quality school looks like in the Ugandan context.

Results

- At least 1000 schools and 10,000 teachers exploring the ideas embodied in the *Good School Toolkit* through a systematic process by December 2016.
- At least 200 schools will have implemented all six steps of the *Toolkit* by October 2015.
- The MoES endorses the ideas in the *Toolkit* through five distinct mechanisms by September 2016.
- At least five credible agencies influential in determining practice in Ugandan schools endorse the approach embodied in the *Toolkit* by September 2016.

1.3 Multimedia Activism

At a societal level, new ideas must enter through multiple sources in a persuasive manner. The ideas have to be presented in a context specific manner and must be credible enough for individuals to consider changing their perspectives or behavior. The nonprofit sector in the region is still in its infancy regarding how to create positive media, communications and campaigns that present a persuasive case for change. Raising Voices will continue to innovate in this area through the nationwide multimedia campaign on VAC, the development and dissemination of various communication tools and provision of technical support in developing quality violence prevention communications.

Strategic objective: to develop ideas and infrastructure that shift public perceptions and behaviors about violence against women and children.

Multimedia Campaign

In Uganda, Raising Voices initiated a national dialogue on the issue of VAC in 2008. An independent assessment by Synovate, a reputable research organization, has given credence to the estimate that approximately two million Ugandans are regularly following our multimedia campaign and much has already been achieved in moving the discourse forward. Over the coming years, Raising Voices will build on the strength of this award-winning work to double the monthly audience in Uganda. The campaign will be coordinated in at least 7 languages and will continue communicating through radio, TV, newspapers as well as other **social and traditional media**.

The hallmark of this campaign has been its exploration of **new ways** of communicating and experimentation with **new ideas** within familiar channels of communications. For example, the newspaper cartoon strip that articulates complex and controversial ideas has become a familiar favorite to the newspaper reading public and our animated info-spots on TV have generated much interest. In the same vein, as more Ugandans gain access to internet and mobile telephony, the campaign will continue to push the frontiers in the digital arena through social media and by brokering **creative partnerships with the communications sector** in Uganda. Raising Voices will also invest in exploring non-traditional media such as video-halls, mobile cinema, street theater and narrative-based communication.

Beyond the content of the multimedia campaign, Raising Voices will also innovate and invest in the delivery partnerships. We will develop relationships with key **journalists** and influence their analysis of the issue of VAC in the public media. Raising Voices will reach out to leading **media houses** and engage them in partnerships with a view to influencing the quality and the quantity of the reporting on VAC.

Communication Tools Development and Dissemination

Raising Voices is an established leader in the development of creative and effective program tools for communicating about violence against women and children. Our materials have been translated in more than 35 languages and have been widely adopted as program tools for organizations that may lack the capacity or resources to create their own. In the coming years, we will continue to build on this success by creating **new tools** for free use and adaptation in the region.

Results

- Development, production and dissemination of at least 10 films and at least 40 video clips/podcasts on VAW and VAC by December 2016.
- 2 million communication materials on VAC disseminated in Uganda by December 2016.
- At least 4 million communication contacts in Uganda per month through the VAC multimedia campaign by December 2016.
- At least 20 critical stories that analyze occurrence of VAC per year published in Ugandan media.
- At least 5000 activists receiving monthly communications about VAC by December 2015.

2. Learning

Learning: gaining knowledge or skill through analysis, study or experience

Objective: To contribute ideas and evidence which strengthen the body of knowledge on the prevention of violence against women and children.

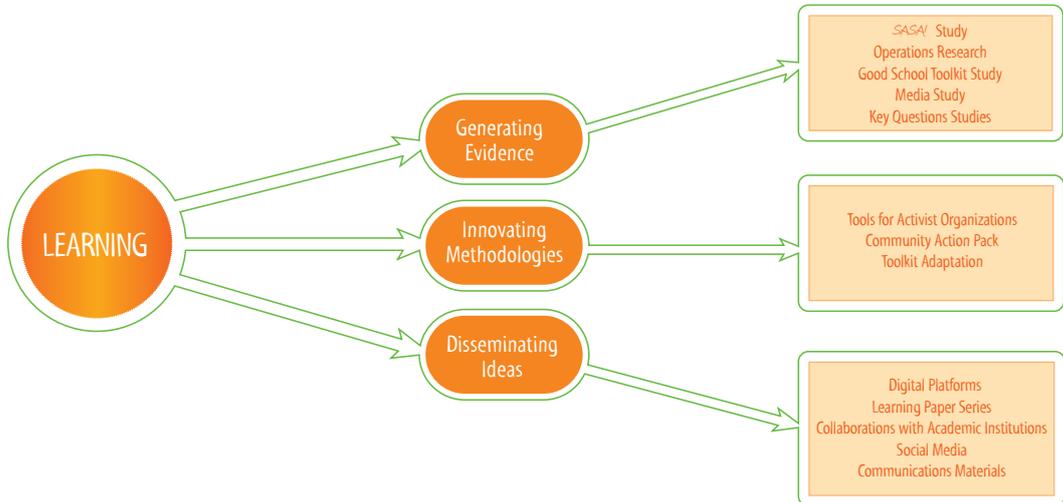
For far too long, learning from practice has been relegated to an afterthought. On one hand, monitoring can be so steeped in detail and technical jargon that organizations miss the bigger picture and conceptual learnings for the field. On the other hand, monitoring and evaluation exercises are tucked into plans as a ‘required section’ in donor reports or are deemed important but lost amid the myriad of other activities rather than being a critical concern of the organization as it grows. Central to this operational paradigm is the belief that *doing good is good enough* and as a result, the dialogue around learning from one’s work becomes about lessons learned from

implementing certain activities rather than the bigger enterprise of robustly interrogating outcomes and isolating drivers that bring about such an outcome.

At Raising Voices, we have striven to create a culture of reflecting critically on what we are doing. We frequently create spaces where we ask: why are we doing this and are we really making a difference? If so, what is it that makes the difference? However, our efforts have largely been on an activity-by-activity basis and we have not been as rigorous as is necessary or possible. Therefore, in this new cycle, Raising Voices is making learning a strategic objective and elevating it to a distinct area of work. Our aim is to create a novel and deliberate focus on learning what it takes to prevent violence against women and children. This emphasis will infuse Raising Voices’ work with critical inquiry, credible assessments and the discipline of creative dissemination of findings and lessons learned.

While we recognize that not all organizations will choose to invest so deeply in the learning process, we believe that Raising Voices is ideally suited to take a leadership role in this work. We have been experimenting with ideas over the past twelve years and gathered considerable experience of what works at a practical level. Raising Voices has published methodologies used in more than 75 countries and our practice has been documented as promising work in various international publications. We have painstakingly earned a reputation of being able to broker a dialogue between those who are on the frontlines of preventing interpersonal violence and policy makers and researchers who develop conceptual frameworks and influence resource investments. Raising Voices will now take on this role more systematically with planned activities and articulated targets for what we will achieve.

As we move forward with this objective, our *Learning* will engage in three broad areas of programs. First, we will invest in two randomized controlled trials as well as various smaller quantitative and qualitative studies that will focus on **generating evidence** for key hypotheses about what works in preventing violence. Second, this evidence and experience will feed back into **strengthening current and innovating new methodologies**. Third, we will invest in existing strategies and creating new avenues for **disseminating these ideas** as widely as possible. Cumulatively, the aim of this area of work is to formulate key questions that need deeper understanding, test ideas that address entrenched problems, rigorously learn in the process, and transform learning into digestible analysis and positions that will build the global body of knowledge. Grounded in practice, the learning work will then be used to influence policy and programming decisions on VAW and VAC prevention.



2.1 Generating Evidence

Raising Voices will embed more rigorous strategies and processes for learning from our experiences. Two major studies conducted in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Gender Violence and Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine will be published in the coming years. Both studies have already garnered considerable interest and are highly anticipated. In addition, several additional qualitative studies and studies conducted through mobile telephony platforms will be launched with a view to tap into the emerging and evolving perspectives within the communities where we work. This learning process will be augmented with commissioned studies and qualitative studies exploring emerging questions as Raising Voices invests in the practice of violence prevention.

Strategic objective: to conduct operations research and commission rigorous studies that explore, analyze and understand the implications of programmatic approaches to prevent violence against women and children.

Impact of VAW Prevention Efforts

Raising Voices, CEDOVIP, Makerere University and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) are collaborating to learn the implications and **impact of the SASA! approach**. Implemented by CEDOVIP with monitoring and technical support provided by Raising Voices, *SASA!* in Kampala is being rigorously evaluated to further understand implications of this approach. The work includes: extensive **program monitoring** using newly developed tools developed by Raising Voices; a **randomized controlled trial**; and, extensive **qualitative research**.

In addition, Raising Voices is supporting the **operations research** of 5 regional and 7 national partners involved in the *SASA!* roll out and other VAW prevention efforts. In 2012 and 2013 Raising Voices will support partners to conduct **rapid assessment surveys** designed to measure the impact of 3 years of *SASA!* programming in their communities. With selected partners who have the organizational capacity, we will conduct more rigorous studies involving control communities and qualitative data. This data, generated primarily by activist organizations will inform our understanding of the implications of using *SASA!* in different communities. In addition, a substantive **external evaluation** will be conducted to assess the impact of Raising Voices' technical assistance and partnerships. Finally, ongoing support to partners collecting **program monitoring** data will continue to further assess community impact and the potentials of the monitoring tools and methodologies for activist organizations.

Results

- Publication and dissemination of multiple peer-reviewed journal articles, policy briefs and papers on the *SASA!* study results (1 in 2012; 4 in 2013; 2 in 2014; 2 in 2015; 1 in 2016).
- Assessment reports on *SASA!* impact within 12 national and regional partner communities by July 2013.
- External evaluation of *SASA!* roll out by March 2013.
- At least 5 essays, articles and policy briefs designed to influence policy and program design around VAW prevention by December 2016.

Impact of VAC Prevention Efforts

Two studies are planned during the cycle of work described in this strategy document.

First, what does it take to prevent violence against children in school? One hypothesis is that the interventions have to be systemic and led by the schools themselves. Students have to play a meaningful role and the administration and the surrounding community must invest in making it happen. To that end we have developed a methodology that is currently being used in approximately 500 schools. As the *Good School Toolkit* gathers more interest and attention from MoES as well as key practitioners in the field, the need to generate evidence regarding its efficacy becomes critical. A **randomized controlled trial** will be used to study the impact of the *Toolkit* in Ugandan schools. The aim is to generate sufficient evidence to position the methodology as a credible tool for promoting the quality of school at scale within East Africa.

The study will also ask additional questions that will help us isolate key drivers of change including: how do teachers invest in changing their schools? What does it take to promote children's participation and does this participation have an impact on learning outcomes? Does prevention of VAC at school influence children's experience of violence at home? How can an efficient link be formed between VAC at school and at home?

Second, as the public dialogue on VAC continues in Uganda through the multimedia campaign, Raising Voices will continue to track the impact of the campaign and the evolution of the discourse with a view to learning and documenting lessons. This study will document the **impact of the multimedia campaign** and how it has affected the adult-child relationship in Uganda. It will consist of rapid assessment surveys (qualitative and quantitative) conducted at key junctures of the work to track the effect on and the evolution of the public discourse on VAC in response to the multimedia campaign.

Both these studies will be consolidated with on-going monitoring through a variety of means (focus group discussions, mobile telephony based surveys, response/engagement analysis as well as key informant interviews and sentinel site surveys) to track impact and generate credible data on an annual basis.

Results

- Publication and dissemination of peer-reviewed journal articles, on the *Good School Toolkit* study (2 in 2013; 2 in 2015; 1 in 2016).
- At least 6 essays, articles and policy briefs designed to influence policy and program design around VAC prevention by September 2016.

2.2 Innovating Methodologies

Well-known for creating theoretically grounded, practical and accessible program approaches, Raising Voices will continue to build on this strength. The learning area of work will refine existing tools, translate them in multiple languages and generate new tools based on evidence generated from the work outlined above as well as emerging trends and lessons learned in the field. Our central aim in this area of work will be to make complex ideas actionable within the context of the communities where Raising Voices works. Meticulous attention will be devoted to accessibility, relevance and utility of the methodologies disseminated.

Strategic objective: to develop and publish practical program approaches for preventing violence against women and children.

VAW Prevention Methodologies for Activist Organizations

Raising Voices will continue to develop relevant methodologies that can be used to create meaningful social norm change by strengthening VAW prevention programming. As we learn more about the priorities of organizations through our networks, Raising Voices will **develop new tools** to meet the critical needs of the field. Areas of focus will include developing effective communication materials, program monitoring for activist organizations, as well as other important topics which may emerge from the experiences in the region. We will also experiment with how existing methodologies can be presented in new media such as *SASA!* on CD.

In addition, depending on the results from the *SASA!* study and demand in the field, a **second edition of *SASA!*** may be developed and published. *SASA!* is being used by more than 50 organizations around the region and beyond. We are learning valuable lessons about its accessibility, content, framing and monitoring and evaluation by being in close touch with partners using the approach. These lessons are being documented and we are learning how *SASA!* could be revised and further developed to be stronger.

Results

- *SASA!* on CD published by March 2013.
- A comprehensive course for activist organizations to build skills on developing effective communication materials for VAW prevention published by March 2013.
- VAW prevention program monitoring tools published by December 2013.
- One additional program tool developed and published by September 2016.

VAC Prevention Methodologies

Over the years Raising Voices has developed various VAC communication materials in 7 languages. A **Community Action Pack** will bring together selected communication materials and will be accompanied by a brief guide on how to use the tools to create local prevention and response on the issue of VAC. The aim of the methodology is to provide a structured support to community-based organizations wishing to develop their response to VAC.

As more schools use the *Good School Toolkit*, Raising Voices will continue to gather lessons from the collective experience to **revise and update the Toolkit**. Furthermore, the *Toolkit* may be adapted in Kiswahili in 2013 depending on the outcomes of current pilot activities.

Results

- 1000 Community Action Packs published and disseminated by July 2015.
- 50 community-based organizations using them as a guide for preventing VAC in their communities by July 2016.
- 3rd edition of *Good School Toolkit* published by December 2015.

2.3 Disseminating Ideas

Raising Voices will strive to create new avenues and opportunities to share experiences. Our learning will inspire staff and collaborators to stretch beyond merely reporting on their activities to unpacking implications of the work and making their experiences accessible to a wider audience. Raising Voices will build in time in our work plans that allows and requires staff to step outside of 'doing' to reflect on the meaning of their work. We will challenge ourselves to move outside our comfort zone, take creative risks and collaborate with others to synthesize collective ideas and experiences into usable knowledge that grows the body of expertise on VAW and VAC prevention.

Strategic objective: to widely and strategically share key ideas, analysis and approaches for preventing violence against women and children on diverse platforms.

Publishing

As our work grows, we will invest in developing creative ways of sharing Raising Voices' products, experiences and insights. We will tap into specialized skills of digital communicators to ensure that we maximize the potential of the medium including skilled use of **social media**, networks and **digital platforms** that currently exist. We will produce films, digital clips and other communication vehicles with a view to engaging the programmers, decision makers, donors and the wider development community online.

Raising Voices will contribute to the global body of knowledge on VAW and VAC prevention by writing and disseminating programmatic learning. A **Learning Paper series**, organized thematically, will interrogate critical issues, describe lessons learned from practice, and explore breakthrough ideas and potential strategies for advancing the field and improving practice.

In addition, Raising Voices will create relationships with select **academic institutions** to further our efforts in generating evidence and documentation. While Raising Voices has generated considerable data, often, staff lack the more technical skills to analyze and write accessibly for audiences outside our core constituencies. Collaborations will include joint research and documentation projects and may be formulated as internships, partnership or fellowships.

Results

- At least 2 Learning Papers written, published and disseminated each year.
- At least 3 formal collaborations with academic institutions to enhance Raising Voices' Generating Evidence Program Area by July 2016.
- At least 4 documentation/evidence pieces developed and published in collaboration with academic institutions from 2013 to 2016.
- New interactive website creatively exhibiting VAW/VAC prevention efforts at Raising Voices by March 2013.
- Credible presence on at least three digital platforms (e.g., website, Facebook, films, mobile telephony, TV, radio, etc.) by July 2014.

3. Influencing

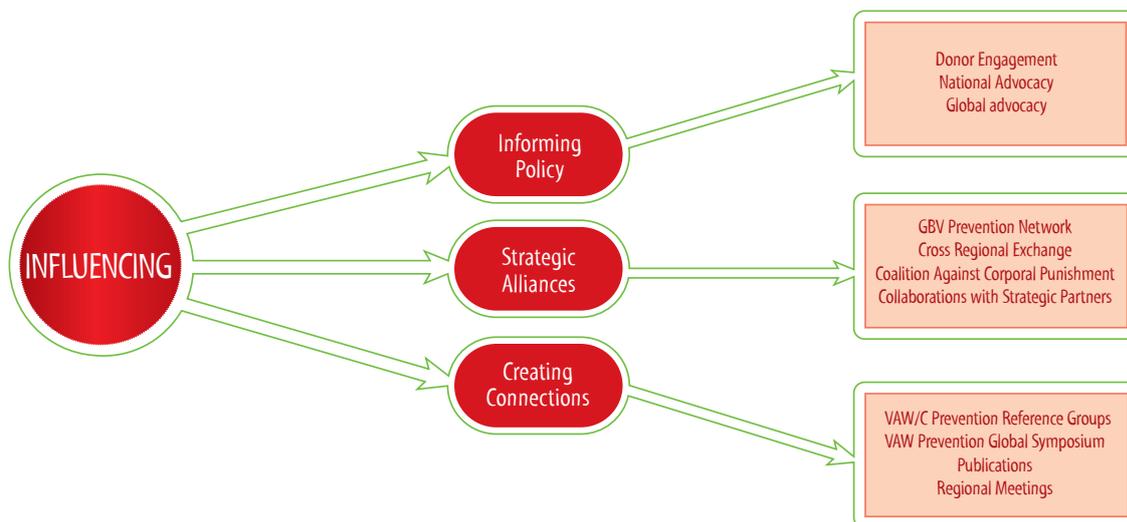
Influencing: the capacity or power of persons or things to be a compelling force on the thoughts, opinions or actions of others

Objective: To strengthen analysis and action in the fields of preventing violence against women and children.

One of the key reflections that emerged from the 2011 evaluation process is that while Raising Voices is known for its work on preventing violence against women and children, we have not capitalized sufficiently on this recognition to influence thinking, processes and resource allocation for broader outcomes. We are determined to address this deficit by developing specific objectives in this area of our work. Over the coming years, Raising Voices will devote time and resources to ensure that we play a meaningful thought leadership role within national, regional and international debates on violence against women and children.

In a field that is growing fast, there are considerable opportunities to influence analysis and action. Therefore, this collection of activities will invest in co-creating a robust infrastructure for influencing practice. Through this avenue we will seek to contribute tested ideas and experiences that inform decisions of donors, development and humanitarian agencies, and government officials. We will collaborate with activists and practitioners who are on the cutting edge of research and programming on violence prevention to foster collective thinking, theorizing, and action.

As we move forward in the coming years, the work will be organized around three broad clusters of activities. First there will be an emphasis in engaging with and **informing policies** of donor partners, development agencies as well as national and local government within Uganda. Second, Raising Voices will develop **strategic alliances** and collaborations with a view to bringing the weight of the collective voice to bear on critical issues in the field. This will involve coordinating networks, assembling coalitions and developing strategic collaborations with key partners that can enhance our ability to influence the dialogue on violence prevention. Third, we will strive to **create connections** between people and ideas by fostering and hosting collective thinking and learning spaces. Cumulatively, through thought leadership, our aim is to generate momentum to address prevention of violence against women and children through social norm change efforts.



3.1 Informing Policy

With over a decade of learning what works in practice, Raising Voices is poised and ready to tackle the new challenge of using the lessons learned to shape policy. The results of our evaluation and consultation with leaders in the field strongly encourage us to strive toward more advocacy efforts in Uganda and beyond. As Raising Voices stretches to expand beyond practice to widening our influence, we will choose processes and policies to invest our energies in which can impact the thought and practice of violence prevention.

Strategic objective: to influence donors, development agencies and the Government of Uganda to develop policies that prioritize the prevention of violence against women and children.

Advocacy

Raising Voices has built relationships of trust and mutual respect with a range of development partners and agencies addressing violence against women and children in Africa. We will continue to foster these relationships as well as forge new linkages. While Raising Voices has engaged in some **global advocacy** over the years, with this new strategic plan, we will invest focused energy in influencing funding agendas as well as policy and programming priorities of development partners and agencies. We will advocate for increased focus on primary prevention efforts at the community level, promote strategic allocation of funding to promote quality programming, and emphasize the principles and values underpinning ethical VAW/C prevention efforts.

With this new strategic plan, Raising Voices will hone in on how and where to meaningfully contribute to **national advocacy** processes. As a member of the civil society in Uganda, Raising Voices will contribute to shaping of the discourse, policies and legal framework that protects human rights, particularly those of women and children. Raising Voices will develop a clear strategy for national advocacy in Uganda and implement that strategy over the coming years which may include work through the coalitions that we are currently a member of (PEP Coalition, Domestic Violence Act Coalition, Human Rights and Constitutional Law Coalition, Coalition against Corporal Punishment) as well as new opportunities and avenues for shaping the policy, legal and social environment in Uganda.

One specific area of work in Uganda will include sustained engagement with the Ministry of Education and Sports. With MoES, Raising Voices will promote the *Good School Toolkit* with a view to it becoming integrated in the **national strategy for preventing VAC** at Ugandan schools. This is a four-year engagement that will involve sharing information, experience and evidence of the efficacy of the Toolkit. It will also involve creating on ongoing relationships throughout the Ministry.

Results

- Develop a clear national advocacy strategy by December 2012 and global strategy by July 2013.
- At least one concrete, substantial contribution to national and global advocacy efforts per year.
- Development of allies within the MoES who endorse and champion the ideas embodied in the *Toolkit* by December 2013.
- Dissemination of the approach embodied in the *Toolkit* to at least 5000 schools by December 2016.

3.2 Strategic Alliances

The flow of ideas does not happen by chance. Even good ideas have to be facilitated. They need advocates who articulate them with passion, infrastructure to nurture their value, and models of success that can serve as inspiration to others. In a sense, these ideas have to be deliberately cultivated and their application encouraged before they gain enough traction for wide-scale assent. Through strategic engagements, we will invest in ensuring the flow of ideas that promote the primary prevention of violence against women and children.

Strategic objective: to develop relationships with key institutions to foster collective analysis and mechanisms for actions for preventing violence against women and children.

Regional and Cross-Regional Alliances

Raising Voices founded and has coordinated the **GBV Prevention Network** since 2003. Under our leadership, the Network has grown from 30 members to over 450 in 21 countries across the Horn, East and Southern Africa. An active forum for learning, skills building, movement building and campaigning, the GBV Prevention Network is a vibrant space to connect activists and to shape the practice of VAW prevention in the region. The Network is an extensive program area that includes management of www.preventgbvafrica.org, the Get Moving! movement building initiative, thematic working groups, creation of regional campaigns and more. Raising Voices will continue to coordinate the Network, using this platform to bring together activists, ideas and practice to strengthen the quality of VAW prevention programming in the region. The detailed strategy of the GBV Prevention Network is available upon request.

Recognizing that considerable work on VAW prevention is happening throughout the world, Raising Voices has been **cultivating relationships with other regional networks** beyond Africa such as Partners for Prevention in Asia and Intercambios in Latin America. The GBV Prevention Network and Raising Voices, will engage with these Networks and others through face-to-face connections and processes with network members, skills exchanges, development of think-pieces on critical VAW prevention issues, and the adaptation of promising practices between regions. In these spaces, Raising Voices and the GBV Prevention Network will seek to influence and be open to being influenced in order to deliberately and proactively grow the field of VAW prevention.

Results

- Active online presence for the GBV Prevention Network to share materials and literature, highlight member organizations and foster solidarity.
- Production of annual, regional 16 Days Action and Advocacy Kits for at least 50 members each year.
- At least 50 Network member organizations actively engaged in the movement building processes by December 2014.
- One cross-regional collaboration each year.

Strategic VAC Partnerships

Raising Voices is one of the founding members and the current chair of **Coalition against Corporal Punishment**. Through this mechanism and in partnership with other members, Raising Voices will work to ensure that the issue of prohibiting corporal punishment remains a national priority in Uganda and that efforts to respond to the issue are shared and coordinated. The coalition will be the platform through which various advocacy efforts will be channeled to policy makers.

Raising Voices will also work with **collaborative partners** who can amplify the effect of our work either by enhancing reach or due to contribution of a specific skill. We will develop these partnerships with a wide range of partners including INGOs, NGOs, CBOs and local government.

Results

- Clear strategy is developed as a group on how to respond to the issue of corporal punishment at home.
- At least 10 collaborative partnerships established by December 2015.

3.3 Creating Connections

Ultimately it is a committed group of people who shape what happens in a given field and what perspectives and priorities emerge as critical. In a burgeoning field, such as the prevention of violence against women and children, seminal thinking is often done by disparate individuals working in different locations who usually do not find the time or the opportunity to connect with others. Part of Raising Voices' work in generating momentum around key ideas will be to foster connections between diverse individuals to deliberately invest in creating synergy in the field.

Strategic objective: to develop and host collective learning spaces for thought leaders working on preventing violence against women and children.

VAW and VAC Prevention Reference Groups

The field of violence prevention is still small. Natural leaders have and continue to emerge; individuals who have contributed substantially to the shape of the discourse and practice of violence prevention. These leaders rarely have the opportunity to meet or focus together on shaping key debates and controversies in the field. Yet this is essential, particularly as the field grows. Raising Voices will lead the development of a small, **select group of thought leaders** to meet annually to discuss critical issues and collectively and practically influence the core concepts, practice and policy in the violence prevention field.

VAW Prevention Global Symposium

As the field of violence prevention grows, so too does the need for gatherings and space for exchange, learning, relationship building and accountability. In the existing major forums on violence against women, the practice of prevention typically plays a minor role. To fill this gap, every other year beginning in 2014, Raising Voices will host a **global symposium on VAW prevention**. This gathering will focus on the practice of prevention and include activists, practitioners, donors, policymakers and researchers. Guided by an international advisory committee of leading experts, the symposium will include diverse participation, rigorous review of abstracts, thematically grouped presentations and mini-workshops for specific skill building as well as space for movement building activities. The symposium will become a vital space for advancing the field.

Results

- Create reference groups of renowned VAW and VAC prevention experts by May 2013.
- Host and document at least 3 processes of the Reference groups by July 2016.
- At least three tangible think-pieces from each Reference Group by December 2016.
- Hosting at least 150 colleagues for a global VAW prevention symposium in 2014 and 2016.



Implementation Strategy

How will we turn words into action?

A credible implementation of ideas articulated in this strategy document will require considerable internal work, visioning and planning, particularly for the new program areas of learning and influencing. 2012 will be a critical year where Raising Voices leadership and staff plan and prepare for launching major new areas of work. In order to accomplish this we will align multiple components including:

- a) **Developing a clear vision.** To that end, we created an extensive learning process in 2011. More than 200 carefully selected practitioners, donors and friends of Raising Voices were approached with specific questions about what they saw as our strengths, our weaknesses, and the gaps and opportunities in the field. We asked colleagues how they felt Raising Voices needed to grow and how we could leverage our experience and skills to further the field of violence prevention. That exercise culminated in a staff retreat with the specific aim of sifting the ideas that emerged from the process and developing a broad outline of the five year plan. A team of 15 senior staff reflected on the feedback and ultimately developed the broad vision that a smaller team was tasked to refine and write into a strategic document. The current document is the outcome of that process.

Key Outcome: A five year Strategic Overview by April 2012.

- b) **Assembling a credible team.** The leadership of Raising Voices has been focused on thinking through the practicalities of actualizing the ideas outlined in the Strategy Overview. Central to this is assembling a credible team able to move this work forward. This includes new staff members, a new management structure, and a shift for the Co-Directors to playing a more strategic role. These efforts are currently underway and will be completed by mid to end of 2012. Ninety percent of the team is already in place and the remaining positions will be recruited as soon as the resources are secured. Numerous trainings and team building processes have been instituted to continue to foster an organizational culture that is based on values and a political analysis.

Key outcome: All key positions within the team assembled by the end of 2012.

- c) **Developing detailed strategy papers.** Each of the three areas of work will have a detailed strategy developed that will involve articulating a clear rationale, time-bound and specific objectives and outcome indicators. These detailed documents will be developed and available by end of 2012.

Key outcome: Detailed strategy paper for each of the three areas of work available by the end of 2012.

- d) **Creating detailed work plans.** For each area of work, detailed work plan will be developed at the beginning of **each** year that outlines key activities linked to the strategic objectives, the persons responsible, timeframe for the program activities and expected results that link to the outcome indicators.

Key outcome: The practice area of work will be in full implementation by the second quarter of 2012. Major activities for the other two areas will be initiated in the later part of 2012 or early 2013 depending upon resource mobilization.

By mid-2013, all three areas of work will be fully operational.



Monitoring and Evaluation

How will Raising Voices remain accountable?

The new *Learning* area of work at Raising Voices as described above will be dedicated to embedding documentation, monitoring and assessment within *each* program area. The staff from this area of work, with support from the management team, will take a leadership role in ensuring that we plan, track progress, share our experiences and learn from the work. The following mechanisms will be instituted to systematize the monitoring and evaluation efforts.

Key Monitoring Processes	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Weekly departmental meetings												
Bi-monthly all staff meetings												
Quarterly reviews and planning												
Staff retreat												
Annual work planning												
Key Outputs	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Annual work plan												
Annual operational budget												
Monthly financial reports												
Quarterly financial reports												
Quarterly work plan updates												
Annual financial reports												
Annual narrative report												
Annual auditor's report												



Organizational Capacity

How is Raising Voices positioned to accomplish this?

Values and Principles

At Raising Voices, we believe that our organizational capacity stems directly from the set of values and principles by which we live in our day-to-day work. What makes us uniquely capable as an organization is not defined merely by what we do, but by how and why we do it. Raising Voices undertakes all aspects of our work in a manner which embodies our core beliefs in feminism, human rights, accountability, respect and dignity of all people as well as the imperative of staying grounded in sound practice and relevant theory. We are politicized and independent in our approach to violence prevention which means that we can address the core drivers of violence against women and children without hiding behind faded rhetoric or watered down jargon. Raising Voices strives to remain people-centered at all times, even when it means taking a slower or more difficult path. We strive to create a positive, nurturing, creative and effective work environment.

At the organizational level, Raising Voices upholds principles, stemming from these values, with key operational values of quality, innovation, rigor, and learning. We draw our strength from living these values and principles, which allows us to carry out our mission in a way which is distinctly Raising Voices. We are discerning in our programming, carefully analyzing opportunities and new ideas to ensure we are staying true to our core vision and mission. Our deliberate decision to remain relatively small allows us to maintain flexibility and quality while remaining truly responsive to emerging issues and new ideas.

Staff

Within this foundation, Raising Voices staff are the organization's greatest asset. In order to achieve quality, creative programming, we foster an environment that puts people at the center. Raising Voices invests significantly in staff capacity development, well-being and cohesion. This means devoting substantial time to internal processes which foster meaningful growth in staff knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors and allotting them the same importance as the work we do outside of our office walls. Our violence prevention work thus becomes more robust by capturing activism at all levels, recognizing that our work begins with us and is not something we simply turn "on" and "off" between our professional and personal lives. This dedication to staff development has also resulted in significantly low staff turnover rates, which means greater continuity, depth, relevance and relationship-building in our programs in a way which is rare in this region. The quality of our work reflects the energy and commitment we maintain to looking both inward and out.

Structure

Our work is overseen by a Board of Directors comprising of an international group of skilled and experienced practitioners. Various programmatic activities are also overseen by Advisory Committees assembled for specific programs. On a day-to-day basis, the decision making authority is delegated to the two Co-directors who manage a team of 25 staff members. The Co-directors discharge their duties through a senior management team comprising of the two Co-directors and the three senior level coordinators (VAW, VAC and Operations).

Raising Voices also works with various resource persons that have been engaging with our work over a period of time. Collectively, the senior management, staff and resource persons create a dynamic team that is well placed to fulfill the core functions of the organization. We anticipate further but limited growth in size over the coming years to reflect the evolution of the field of violence prevention, the role that Raising Voices plays in the field, and the objectives set forth in this Strategic Overview.

Experience and Credibility

Over the past 12 years, Raising Voices has built a wealth of experience, evidence and credibility which have made unique contributions to the field of violence prevention. We have produced methodologies unlike any created before, based on sound theory and practice and which are now being utilized throughout Uganda, the Horn, East and Southern Africa, and globally. We have emphasized positive, benefits-based programming in ways that have helped organizations engage communities and institutions more effectively and sustainably around the issues of VAW and VAC. We have brought together hundreds of activist individuals and organizations across the regions to connect and share ideas, while laying the foundation for building a “movement” of practitioners sharing the same values for rights-based prevention work.

Raising Voices has devoted extensive human and financial resources to rigorous monitoring and evaluation of both our programming approaches and our organizational practices, to learn systematically about the impact of the work we are doing, the effectiveness of our methods, and areas for improvement or greater attention. We share results, experiences, and resources widely and freely within our networks to promote learning between actors, putting common goals ahead of organizational interests.

Raising Voices has meticulously built a name which is known for high quality, grounded approaches, thinking outside the box, embedded learning, collaboration and support, maintaining values and being genuine in our beliefs. The experience that we bring with us prepares and equips us with the solid understanding and credibility needed to take our work to the next level.

Final Word

Our journey began more than a decade ago, but our destination, as articulated in our vision statement, is still far from sight. Far too many women and children live under the shadow of fear and truncated potential and are immersed in a culture that accepts violence as a way of relating. Although this will not end in the next five years, we are determined to invest our energy and resources in challenging the status quo and committing our creativity, passions and intelligence to creating pathways that will ultimately lead to our destination.



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