SASA! in Humanitarian Context: Promising Adaptation & Guidance for Preventing Violence Against Women
What is SASA!?

- A community mobilization approach to shift social norms that perpetuate VAW.
- Developed by Raising Voices
- Rigorously evaluated through RCT in partnership with CEDOVIP, LSHTM & Makerere University was piloted in Kampala and proven to be effective.
- Currently being used in more than 25 countries by 60 organizations in diverse contexts.
The Study

Despite global uptake; limited understanding on how to adapt SASA! effectively

2016 - 2019

UN Trust Fund, Raising Voices, UCSD, IRC, Beyond Border and WPC

Multi- country including Dadaab Refugee camp, Kenya
Method – Qualitative Research

• 2 waves of qualitative data collection (Mar & Nov 2017)
• 180 people engaged through IDIs & FGDs
• Participants: IRC staff, CAs, community members, community & religious leaders

Iterative Analysis: Excel matrix, in person discussions, calls and webinars, Validation workshop with partners
Method – Humanitarian Convening

• Two days meeting February 2018
• 12 humanitarian programing experts (in person) 2 online
• Experience in Africa, Middle East and Asia
• Unpacked distinct challenges & opportunities
• Building common threads
• Recommending possible solution
Findings: Adaptation

Type of adaptation: Implementation innovation

Limited formal translation & contextualization of artwork initially (at later stage efforts were put in place)

Other changes shaped by challenges of a humanitarian setting (e.g., refugee community workers)
Findings: Implementation

Strengths
- Strong team commitment, detailed workplans and frequent meetings
- Comprehensive mobilization & reach
- Resonance of SASA! ideas
- Systematic phase-specific work

Challenges
- High turnover *
- Significant resistance initially (“foreign program”; “breaking up families”)
- Influx of refugees, persistent insecurity & camp closure disrupts program ‘flow’*
Finding: Shifts in the community

Outcomes ~ promising signs point to:

++ less tolerance for VAW
++ more support for survivors
++ men’s increased contributions in the home
++ decreased violence

-- Some stigma and victim-blaming attitudes remain.

“SASA! gives you the ability to understand your individual power and strength ... it has untapped our greatness!” (female community leader)
SASA! *IS* adaptable to humanitarian settings, with the potential to provoke personal reflection, shift harmful attitudes, and prevent violence.

**Practical considerations:**

- Assess the stage of emergency response and decide when to begin SASA! programming;
- Balancing “incentive culture” and promotion of community leadership and sustainability,
- Harmonizing content and language across different program components
- Regular reflection to reducing or doing No Harm
- Adjusting for disrupted pace/stalled momentum?
Implementing SASA! in Humanitarian Settings: Tips and Tools

Background

SASA! is a community mobilization approach to prevent violence against women (VAW) and HIV, developed by Raising Voices in Uganda (www.raisingvoices.org). A randomized controlled trial conducted with the Center for Domestic Violence Prevention, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Makerere University, demonstrated SASA!’s community-level impacts on preventing intimate partner violence against women and reducing social acceptability of violence.  

The Resonance of SASA! in Humanitarian Settings

SASA!’s focus on power and non-violence can resonate strongly in crisis settings, where personal safety is...
Comments? Questions?

Thank you!
Special thanks to residents of Dadaab refugee camp
www.raisingvoices.org