



The *Nabilan* Prevention Toolkit

FACT SHEET 3. COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Updated October 2016

Key Definitions

What is a community?

“A community is a group of people with many different characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in joint [activities] in geographical locations or settings” (McQueen 2001).

What is community-led?

The community-led approach believes that ‘a community’ (as defined above) can address its own social issues and challenges. Community-led approaches enable informed community participation and ensure that projects are contextually and culturally relevant (Andersson 2011).

The importance of community-led approaches for violence prevention

As explained in Fact Sheet 1, one of the characteristics of effective approaches to ending violence against women and children is that these approaches are community-led.

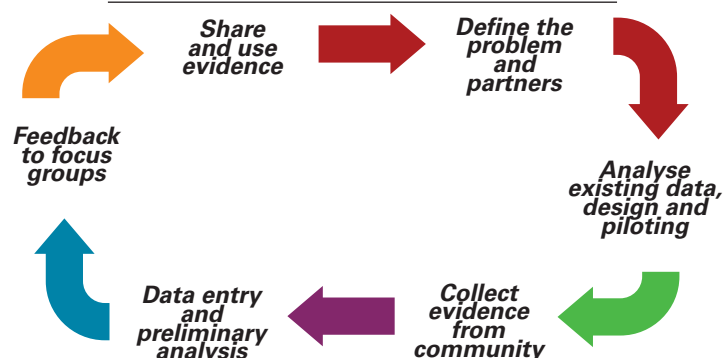
A complex web of social norms exists across all societies, specifically around gender, the acceptance of violence, and family privacy (Heise, 2011). It is, therefore, vital to use community-led processes to identify communities’ specific web and for communities themselves to develop approaches to end and replace these norms.

Step-by-step process for community-led approaches

This section provides step-by-step guidance on how to begin and support a community-led approach (CIET Model 2011 for steps 4&5). These steps apply to organisations conducting different types of community-led approaches, not only those focused on violence prevention.

- 1 Community identifies that a social issue is a problem and wants to do something about it.
- 2 Bring together members of the community that are interested in driving social change on the issue. It is important to gather representatives from all parts of the community, across the Ecological Model.
- 3 Create an enabling and safe environment for the group so it can lay its foundations in community strengths and develop a vision for a community ‘free’ of the social issue.
- 4 Conduct community-led participatory research that collects local community data on the social issue, such as surveys and focus groups.
- 5 Report back local evidence from community research through discussion groups. Use collective processes to assist with the design of local interventions.

Figure 1: Process for community-led approaches



- 6 Bring trusted local services together to assist with the interventions. Build these prevention interventions into mainstream local service delivery approaches.
- 7 Run small trials of interventions to test their success. Embed monitoring and evaluation tools and processes to understand and learn from what worked and what didn't.
- 8 Expand successful interventions across the community. Use monitoring and evaluation tools and processes to understand and learn from what worked and what didn't and to monitor change.
- 9 Use evidence to advocate for structural change for sustained success.

**Be aware of the impact of gender and power differences on people's ability to fully participate e.g. mothers may not be able to attend all activities because of their husbands' expectations that they will look after the children, or young unmarried men may not be able to openly share their ideas in a forum with male village elders, etc. Be conscious of these groups and ensure that they are able to participate and have access to services (Andersson 2011).*

Community-led approaches checklist

Community-led approaches are:

- Fostering collective power
- Sustained engagement with the community
- Systematic
- Multi-faceted
- A process
- A struggle for social justice
- About fostering activism
- Requiring a range of people, groups and institutions
- Going beyond individuals to influence groups
- Building social networks
- Fostering alternative values
- Stimulating critical thinking
- Holistic and inclusive
- Based on principles of human rights
- Positive and supportive
- Democratic
- Changing norms
- Collective: everyone must work together for change
- Focused on benefits of change
- Focuses on root cause of violence (power imbalance)

Community-led approaches are not:

- Using power over others
- One-off activities
- Short-term or done without a plan
- Done with one strategy only
- A project
- A technical quick-fix
- About implementing activities
- Possible with few individuals or groups
- Focused only on individuals
- Dividing individuals or groups
- Providing only information and facts
- Telling people what to think
- Limited to specific individuals or groups
- Based on benevolence or protectionism
- Blaming and shaming
- Hierarchical
- Changing specific behaviours
- Possible with individuals acting in isolation
- Focused on negative outcomes and punishment
- Focused on manifestations of violence

(Raising Voices. 2008. The SASA! Activist Kit for Preventing Violence against Women and HIV: Introduction. Raising Voices: Kampala. (Inspired by www.transformingcommunities.org))

For more information on the Prevention Toolkit, please contact:

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