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Community-Based Approaches to Intimate Partner Violence

A REVIEW OF EVIDENCE AND ESSENTIAL STEPS TO ADAPTATION

MAY 24, 2016

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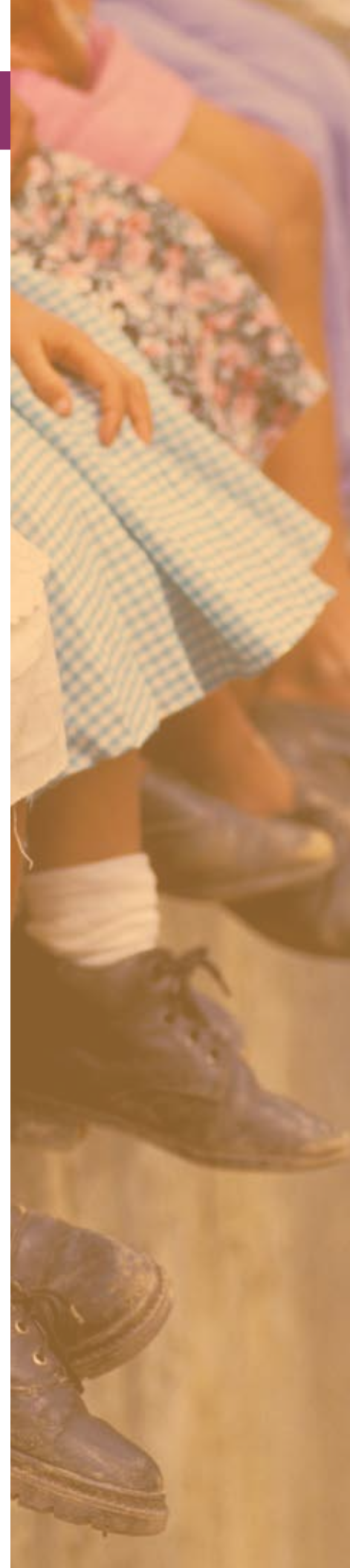
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Annex 1

Six Essential Steps to Adapting Community-Based Programs to Prevent Intimate Partner Violence

A REVIEW OF EVIDENCE AND ESSENTIAL
STEPS TO ADAPTATION

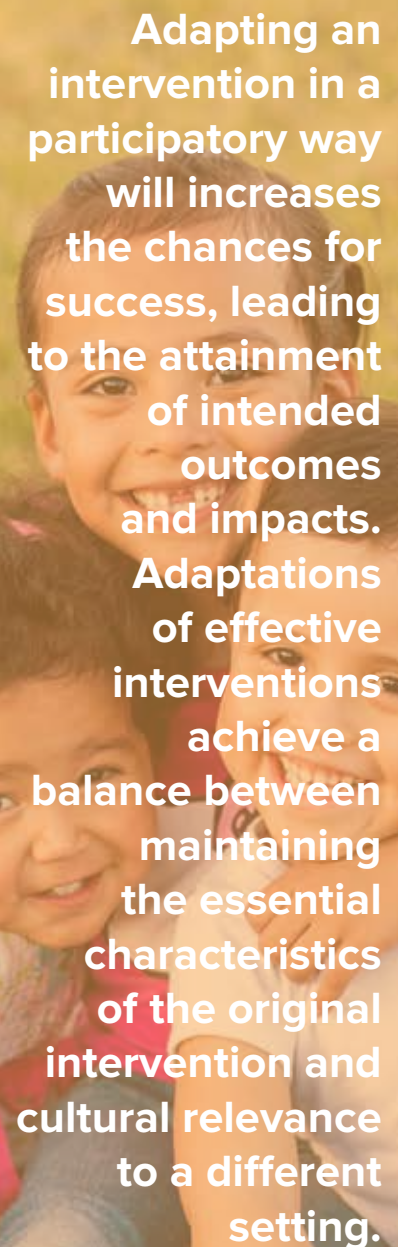
INTRODUCTION

This methodological annex complements the review of evidence on community mobilization interventions to prevent Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The document aims to support individuals and organizations that are implementing or investing in projects involving violence prevention by providing recommendations that can be integrated at different times throughout the project design and adaptation phases. It highlights the root causes and prevalence of IPV, prevention methodology—including basic components essential to the prevention planning phase—and the logistics that must be considered when adapting a program to a new setting, including program cycles and budget framework. Rigorous documentation of the process by those implementing interventions will help to build evidence on improving, adapting, and scaling up an intervention for future programs.

The most effective IPV prevention programs are those involving community mobilization.^{3-5,7,8} As detailed in the above review of evidence, programs including *SASA!*, *Somos Diferentes*, *Somos Iguales*, *Engaging Men in GBV Prevention*, *Stepping Stones*, *Program H*, *SHARE*, and *IMAGE* vary in methods but encompass key principles of effective programs, providing individuals with the tools they need to feel empowered to choose more gender-equitable behaviors.

Effective interventions are based on common principles that can be adapted to individual settings and cultures. Evidence shows that community-based interventions to prevent IPV are successful at reducing violence because they permeate multiple levels of society, engaging key stakeholders and fostering collective action to challenge gender norms within entire communities. Community-based, multi-sectoral and culturally-adapted interventions increase ownership of outcomes, thereby securing longer-term involvement of differing levels of stakeholders in adaptation. Long-term investment in intervention programs allows for more sustained capacity building and the creation of networks that are critical for reducing IPV.

An increasing number of practitioners, including stakeholders, donors and policymakers, seek to replicate effective community-based interventions in new settings such as *SASA!*, a community mobilization program designed



Adapting an intervention in a participatory way will increase the chances for success, leading to the attainment of intended outcomes and impacts. Adaptations of effective interventions achieve a balance between maintaining the essential characteristics of the original intervention and cultural relevance to a different setting.

and implemented by Raising Voices in Uganda that work at all levels of the ecological framework originally developed by Uri Bronfenbrenner¹³ and adapted for violence against women and girls (VAWG) by Lori Heise.¹⁴ This framework conceptualizes how IPV should be addressed at the individual, partner, community, and societal levels.

To plan effectively for the costs and logistics required in program implementation, program designers, donors and decision makers must have a nuanced understanding of the implications involved in adapting a model in different settings. Organizations working to implement community-based interventions require long-term and sustainable funding that prioritizes prevention efforts targeting social norms and concepts of gender equality while engaging women, men, and key community members in the planning and implementing processes.

SIX STEPS TO ADAPTING COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS TO PREVENT IPV

To guide practitioners in effectively implementing IPV prevention programs, this note presents six essential steps to successfully adapt a community-based program to prevent intimate partner violence. They include: (1) understanding violence in the program setting, violence prevention approaches, and selecting the particular methodology and model to adopt; (2) selecting program locations thoughtfully; (3) developing a network of local partners; (4) formalizing a locally appropriate program and evaluation design; (5) preparing the program materials; and (6) finalizing the outreach and dissemination plan as early as possible. These steps may or may not occur chronologically; in many cases, the six steps occur concurrently.

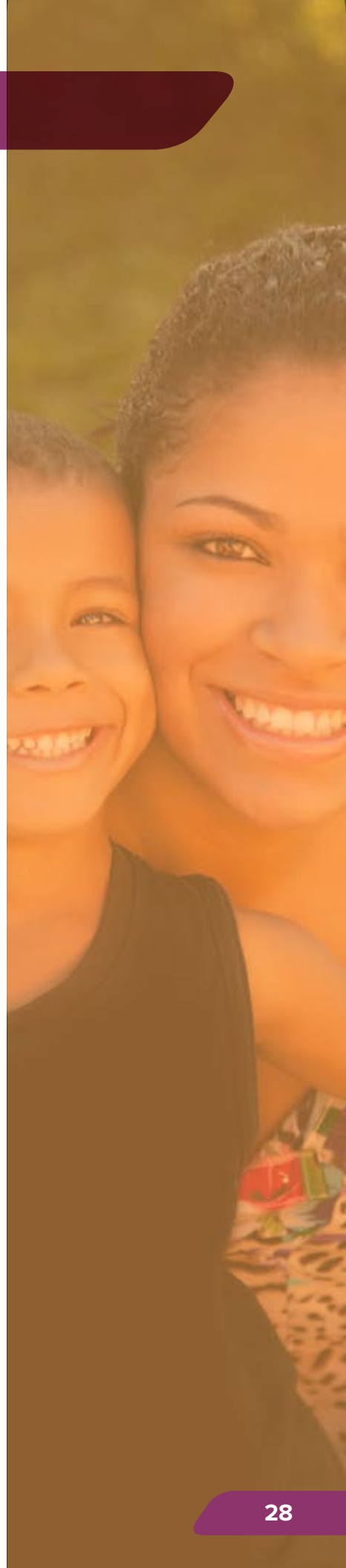


Step One: Understanding violence in the program setting, violence prevention approaches, and selecting the particular methodology and model to adopt

While intimate partner violence is a pervasive global crisis, the dynamics of violence look different in every setting. The first step to adapting an IPV prevention program is conducting formative research using a mixed methods approach and a desk review of applicable literature to understand the nature, prevalence^{v)}, and dynamics of IPV in an individual setting. Formative research should aim to answer the following questions:

1. What types of violence occur in a study site? Who are most often the perpetrators and victims? How does violence affect men, women, boys, and girls differently? What are the most common forms of violence? In what kind of circumstances does this violence occur? Where? When?
2. How do families and communities respond to survivors of IPV?
3. What types of resources, such as health, legal, security, safety, religious, cultural institutions, are available to survivors of IPV? Which entities provide these services? How are they accessed, if at all? What reasons are cited for accessing or not accessing available resources? Do the services refer survivors to other appropriate service providers?
4. What are the political and legal frameworks for addressing IPV at the national and local levels? What are the main achievements and challenges of policies targeting women's rights and IPV?
5. What other organizations are working on IPV prevention in a specific context? What do these programs entail? How are these programs described by different participant groups?

v) Accurate prevalence data can be found in Demographic and Health Surveys that implement the DHS Domestic Violence Module or that have implemented stand-alone surveys estimating the prevalence of violence against women like the those found in the WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women



UNDERSTANDING PREVENTION

Primary prevention refers to programs that work to reduce violence at a community, rather than an individual level. For example, the SASA! community-based mobilization program builds capacity among a group of community advocates to discuss issues related to gender equality and power dynamics. By addressing the underlying risk factors of intimate partner violence, SASA! advocates are able to change harmful attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate violence, thereby reducing overall levels of violence in the community.

Secondary prevention refers to programs that address the immediate needs of the survivor after the violent incident has occurred in order to reduce rates of re-victimization. For example, IPV screening (when done appropriately) in health care settings, such as antenatal care, provides women with a confidential and safe space to disclose violence. The health care provider can then treat any immediate injuries and refer women to a counselor for psychosocial support and/or a domestic violence advocate who can liaise with the justice and legal sectors, as well as assist in finding temporary or transitional housing. The aim of these interventions is to minimize any harm caused by the incident and provide the survivor with the necessary services to prevent it from happening again.

Tertiary prevention refers to programs that help minimize the long-term consequences faced by survivors of violence. This includes programs that focus on rehabilitation and reintegration.

Formative research greatly benefits from a thorough review the latest literature on violence prevention interventions, including available program evaluation reports and scholarly articles. Particular attention should be given to program components that have proven effective, as well as lessons learned during the implementation process. Practitioners may find it useful to interview national and global organizations, experts and programmers experienced in IPV prevention.

Program designers can use this information to construct an informed list of program models, elements, and lessons that will inform the selection of which program model or combination of model to adopt in their particular setting. If the programmers' funding mechanism requires a program design proposal prior to conducting formative research, the programmers should negotiate for the ability to shift, adjust, and revise the proposed program based on the results of the formative research.



Step Two: Select program locations thoughtfully

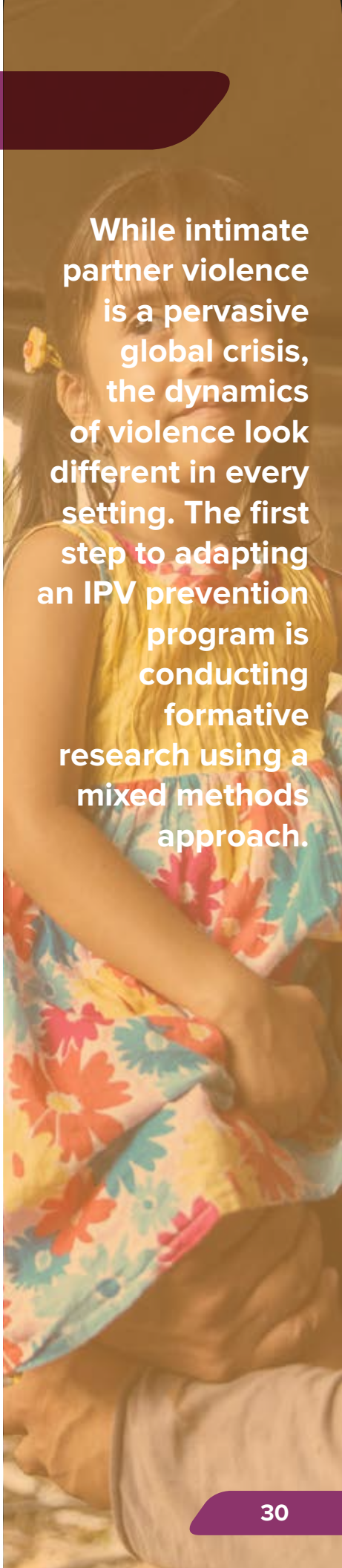
Community-based violence prevention initiatives may not be viable in every municipality or neighborhood. It is essential to identify suitable, high-priority locations by considering community need and readiness, such as the presence of certain basic services and support structures without which the program will struggle.

The process of vetting municipalities or specific neighborhoods should occur in conjunction with the formative research. Appendix A, below, contains a comprehensive checklist of criteria for identifying suitable municipalities and neighborhoods. In general, the most suitable municipalities will be those where:

- Leaders are eager to be part of the initiative;
- A history of collaboration across sectors to address intimate partner violence exists;
- Statistics on the prevalence of violence are available;
- And locally respected actors, including NGOs or other agencies, are working on the issue of intimate partner violence.

The most suitable neighborhoods or “communities” for such interventions will be those where:

- Public spaces are accessible and comparably safe for program staff;
- A sense of history and connection among most residents exists;
- A well-functioning network of neighborhood leaders already exists; and
- Some amount of services for survivors of violence are available.



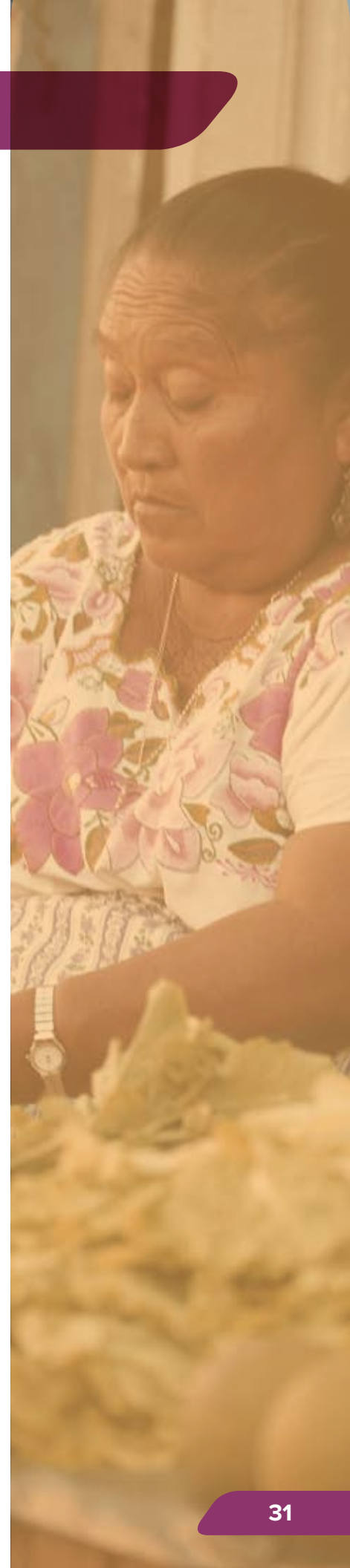
While intimate partner violence is a pervasive global crisis, the dynamics of violence look different in every setting. The first step to adapting an IPV prevention program is conducting formative research using a mixed methods approach.

Step Three: Develop a network of local partners

After identifying the leading activists, nonprofits, service providers, government agencies, and other stakeholders involved in violence prevention and response in a selected setting, program designers must garner the support of key local stakeholders. Most importantly, programmers must establish a formal relationship with a lead implementation partner to oversee the day to day work of the community-based initiative. The precise nature of a local partner or partners will vary depending on program location. A variety of partners should be engaged early in the program process to improve the likelihood of program success. For example:

- Local political authorities can lend credibility to the project, or create obstacles if they are not included in program design.
- Local community and religious leaders may extend program reach, and lend legitimacy to a program.
- Local women's groups can also help with outreach while specifically addressing women's rights.
- Local donors or charities may be interested in affiliating with and complementing a well-designed new prevention program.

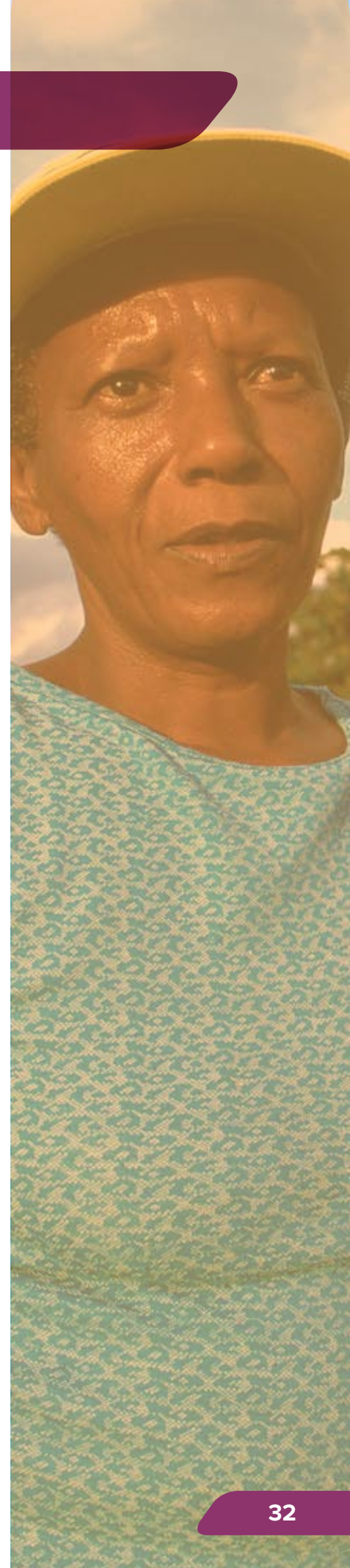
A program's most important partner is the local implementing organization. Unless the implementing organization has sufficient local presence, legitimacy, and capacity, it will need to collaborate closely with a local organization that can oversee the day-to-day program functioning. A local implementing partner should meet the following criteria: (a) violence prevention work is central to the organization's mission; (b) the organization has necessary legal status and has functioned successfully for a number of years; (c) organizational leadership commits to regular, sustained attendance by the same staff members at all trainings, workshops, and technical advisory sessions held by program implementers ; (d) the organization practices sound, transparent management of funds and resources.



CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGIES

- Forming research advisory groups
- Developing and using multimedia tools to provide interactive workshops
- Facilitating residential workshops with local researchers, practitioners, and activists
- Making research methodologies widely available and freely accessible
- Providing mentorship and peer-to-peer learning initiatives
- Making evidence-based interventions to address IPV widely available and accessible
- Providing support on how to adapt community-mobilization interventions
- Forming technical advisory groups to support program development and maintain rigorous ethical and safety standards
- Including key stakeholders in national and international meetings on VAWG research

A local partner organization should also demonstrate a strong legal and financial status; conceptual understanding of the issue of violence (where a more thorough understanding of gender, power, and prevention is beneficial); implementation capacity (where a more professional, better trained staff of program managers with skills in writing, training, data collection, and outreach is beneficial); and leadership (where a solid commitment from the organization to prioritize the program is beneficial). Appendix B contains a list of mandatory and desirable characteristics for an implementation partner that was developed specifically for adapting the aforementioned *SASA!* methodology to Central America.



Step Four: Formalize a locally appropriate program and evaluation design

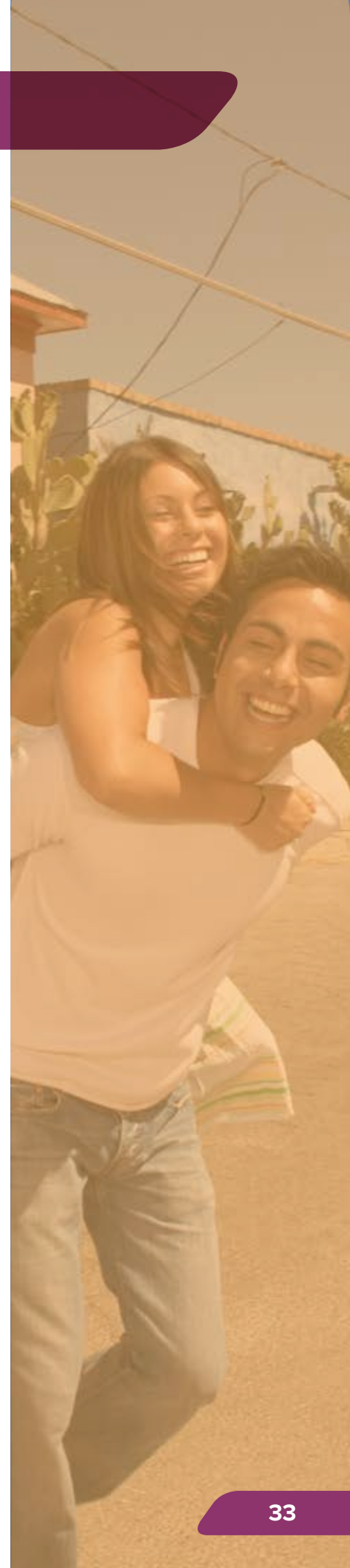
Step four involves formalizing the details of the program design and evaluation, including the approach, strategies, intended participants and beneficiaries, evaluation design, budget and timeline.

Formalize the approach

Community mobilization programs to address intimate partner violence work almost always transform existing social gender norms by aiming to allow women, girls, and all community members to live free of violence, which is their right. To do so, these programs rely on the leadership and creativity of community members themselves, as opposed to an external authority. Therefore, the design of community mobilization programs to address intimate partner violence entails (1) a gender analysis component, (2) a human rights component, and (3) a participatory component.

A gender analysis approach to program design holds as a basic principle that men's and women's roles in society are socially rather than biologically determined. As such, these roles can be changed. This approach observes that women's socially-determined position in society has historically been disadvantaged as compared to men's, and that this imbalance in power at all levels of society is a root cause of intimate partner violence as well as other abuses of women's rights. A community mobilization program that does not emerge from this philosophy will not be effective in fundamentally altering the root causes of violence.

A human rights approach to community mobilization work operates from the basic principle that all people have the right to live free of violence, as is established in international law and human rights conventions. According to Lori Michau, this framework "creates a legitimate channel for discussing women's needs and priorities and holds the community accountable for treating women as valuable and equal human beings."¹⁵ A community mobilization program that does not use this approach is comparably toothless, since, again, it does not address the root causes of violence, instead relying on participants to change their perspectives and actions purely out of their own good will.



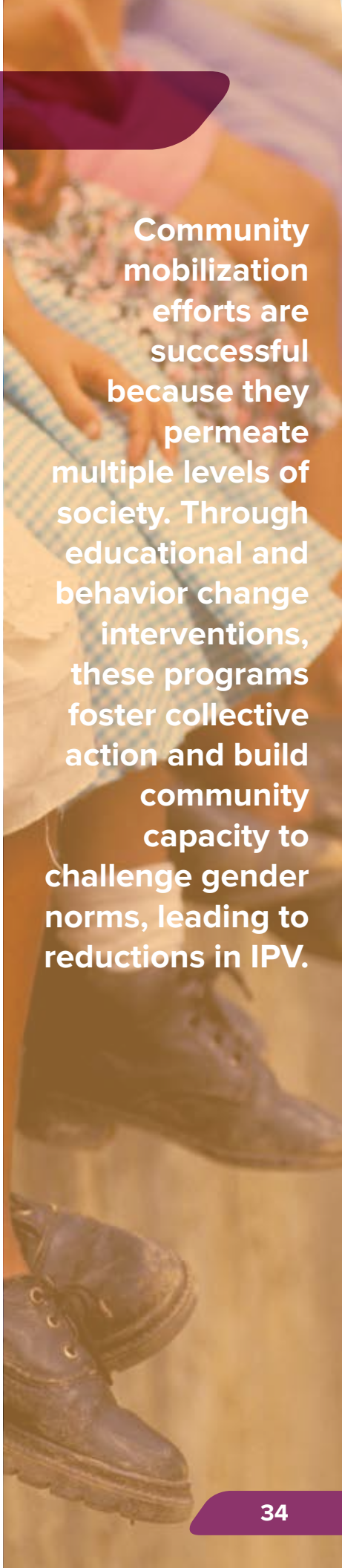
A participatory approach to community mobilization requires community members to lead the effort. Experience indicates that community members' commitment, creativity, and capacity in program execution produces transformative changes that may be impossible for external actors to achieve on their own. A program cannot accurately be labeled "community mobilization" if it does not place community members' own leadership and creativity at its core.

Step four involves embodying these three approaches into program design documents.

Formalize the strategies

After finalizing program design, programmers must formalize specific strategies to be used in program execution. To this end, programmers should be aware that community mobilization is not itself a strategy, but the desired outcome of several strategies aimed at social change. Common strategies of community mobilization programs include:

- Local activism, including grassroots initiatives that engage family, friends and neighbors. Examples include: drama, quick chats, door-to-door discussions, community conversations and public events.
- Media dissemination, using traditional and new media to target public perceptions on gender roles. Examples include: soap operas, films, newspaper articles and comics, radio programs, and television.
- Advocacy to influence local, national or international leaders. Examples include: one-on-one meetings, petitions, policy analysis and lobbying.
- Engagement with stakeholders, particularly with community members who promote gender equality at local levels.
- Communicative art dissemination to illustrate ideas. Examples include: artistic graphics, posters, comics, games, murals, flyers and picture cards.
- Interactive training to explore issues in depth. Examples include: workshops, seminars, teach-ins and mentoring.¹⁰



Community mobilization efforts are successful because they permeate multiple levels of society. Through educational and behavior change interventions, these programs foster collective action and build community capacity to challenge gender norms, leading to reductions in IPV.

Leading scholars and practitioners involved in community mobilization understand that change in communities' approach to partner violence occurs in stages. Experience suggests that certain strategies are better suited for implementation at certain points within these stages. Table 1, below, draws upon the Stages of Change theory as applied to community mobilization work by Lori Michau and Dipak Naker, to illustrate the kinds of strategies associated with phases of community mobilization and stages of change.¹⁶

Table 1: Strategies and Stages of Change Associated with Community Mobilization

	“Stages of Change”	Phases of Community Mobilization	Potential Strategies
1	Pre-contemplation	Community Assessment: a time to gather information on community attitudes and beliefs about intimate partner violence and to start building relationships with community members and professional sectors.	Advocacy, Training
2	Contemplation	Raising Awareness: a time to increase awareness about intimate partner violence, such as why it happens and its negative consequences for women, men, families, and the community.	Local activism, Media, Advocacy, Communications materials
3	Preparation for Action	Building Networks: a time for encouraging and supporting general community members and various professional sectors to consider taking action to uphold women's right to safety. Community members can come together to strengthen individual and group efforts to prevent domestic violence.	Advocacy, Training
4	Action	Integrating Action: a time to take action against intimate partner violence part of everyday life in the community and within institutions' policies and practices.	Local activism, Advocacy, Training, Communications materials
5	Maintenance	Consolidating Efforts: a time to strengthen actions and activities for the prevention of intimate partner violence to ensure the sustainability, continued growth, and progress of prevention program.	Local activism



Whether or not programmers apply the Stages of Change theory, they must formalize the precise rationale for chosen strategies and intended outcomes. The theory of change will become a core component of program evaluation design as well, and can take many forms. Regardless of whether programmers use a logical framework, results-based framework, or a kind of visual presentation of the theory of change, the core program team must clearly and convincingly articulate how and why the program will bring about change. Theories of change emphasizing transformations in power relationships and other structural drivers of intimate partner violence will be particularly convincing if evidence-based.

Formalize the intended participants and beneficiaries

The selection of program location involves the identification of its intended participants and beneficiaries. However, it is also important to identify program participants holistically in terms of the individual, relationship, community and society, and to consider the social norms that apply to each level. Figure 3 of the literature review contained in this document shows how the transformation of power across the ecological model can prevent VAW, it identifies the social norms—and strategies for shifting them—that apply to these four levels of the ecological model.

Formalize the evaluation design

A community-based program to address intimate partner violence should produce reliable evaluation results to benefit both the programming team and the broader field of violence prevention work. Teams may select different criteria for program evaluation, with some favoring real-time insights of nimbler designs, while others prefer experimental or other rigorous designs that produce more scientifically reliable evidence. In either case, program teams must invest the energy and resources to formalize an impact evaluation design. Multiple resources are available to help guide this effort, including evaluation design and specific guidelines on data collection instruments and processes¹⁷⁻²⁰, with particular attention paid to protection of participants' safety. Any type of program evaluation should clearly define the program's intended outcomes (both short- and long-term) and goals.



Formalize the budget and timeline

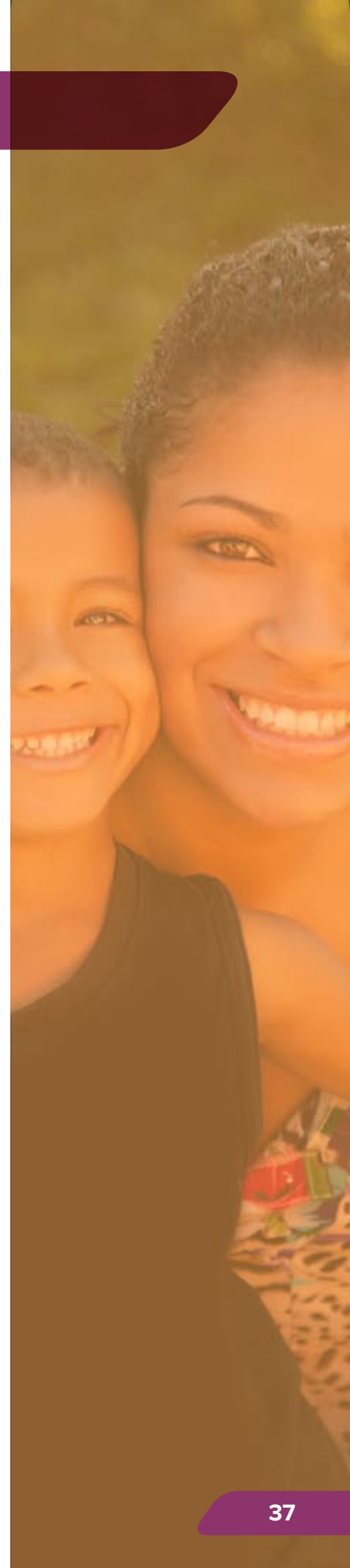
Budget and timeline considerations will have enormous influence over all the decisions in Step 4, and must be articulated clearly. Programmers should allow adequate time for all the stages of program adaptation and implementation. It is unrealistic to expect any participant community where violence against women has occurred at significant levels for generations to move through stages of transformative change in a matter of months. A budget and timeline should allow for at least three, but ideally five, years of total program implementation for a successful community mobilization initiative.

Step Five: Prepare the program materials

When adapting materials from an existing IPV prevention program, such as manuals, posters, radio scripts, graphics, or short films, programmers must undertake a thorough process of contextual adaptation of these materials. Adopting materials used in other prevention programs can be helpful and time efficient, but only if they are adapted to the local context to instill a sense of authentic leadership and momentum.

To this end, programmers should translate the existing materials into the language of their program site (if necessary), then work through the materials to make necessary adjustments to details, storylines, references, names, and other details in a careful process of cultural adaptation. It may be necessary to hire illustrators or other artists to adjust the graphics included in these materials. The people, buildings, communities, natural surroundings and other details of the graphics must look like “our community” to people involved in the program.

Programmers should pilot a first draft of the adapted program materials before fully implementing the program. For example, programmers may ask a sample of program participants to use the materials for a short time, then survey participants to assess the utility and appropriateness of the adapted text, discussion prompts, graphics, storylines, etc. Programmers should then revise materials as necessary before formally launching the program.

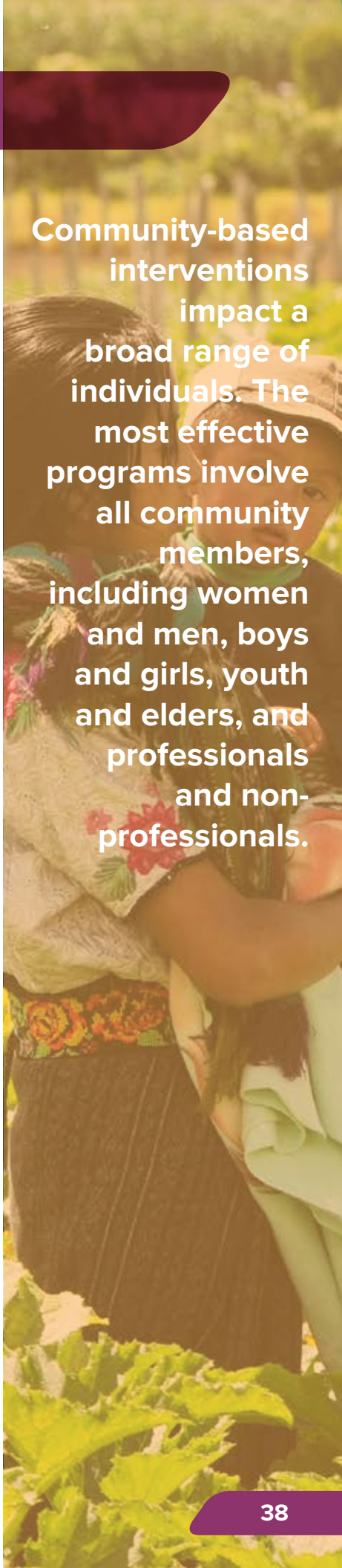


Step Six: Finalize the outreach and dissemination plan as early as possible

Programmers should plan to disseminate the results of their interventions at local, national and international levels. The earlier in the process programmers define key audiences and dissemination channels, the easier it will be to take necessary steps throughout the program implementation process to produce the most compelling, useful final products.

A common dissemination plan involves initial reports of formative research and baseline results, as well as regular intermediate reports throughout program implementation. Once the program is completed, programmers can consider producing a wide array of products, such as articles in peer-reviewed journals, policy notes, working papers, and other documents. Any products should be prepared both in print and electronic form. Participants and stakeholders involved in the program must also be included in the results dissemination plan. Program teams should also create materials and presentations for dissemination to the program participants and stakeholders.

At the very least, programmers should produce a final report presenting the most relevant findings and the viability of adapting the program approach to other settings. Programmers may also consider giving presentations (workshops, conferences, seminars, etc.) at the national and international levels. These may include presentations at the Commission on the Status of Women, appropriate global seminars and international events on prevention, community safety, women's rights, children's rights, and urban planning, governance and safety, as well as through regional events organized by local networks working in IPV and public safety.



Community-based interventions impact a broad range of individuals. The most effective programs involve all community members, including women and men, boys and girls, youth and elders, and professionals and non-professionals.

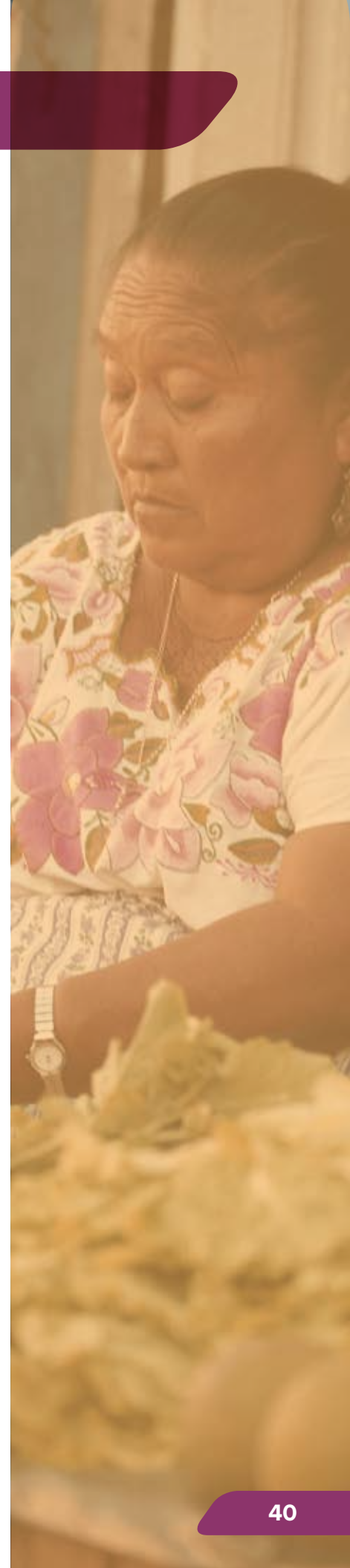
CONCLUSION

This methodological annex outlines the steps involved in adapting to new settings a community-based intervention to prevent intimate partner violence. While the precise nature of these steps will vary depending on the setting in which they are applied, the core ethical and effectiveness considerations here should remain true regardless of location. The authors hope that this note will help programmers worldwide to successfully transform community norms and prevent intimate partner violence. We thank you for your much-needed efforts.

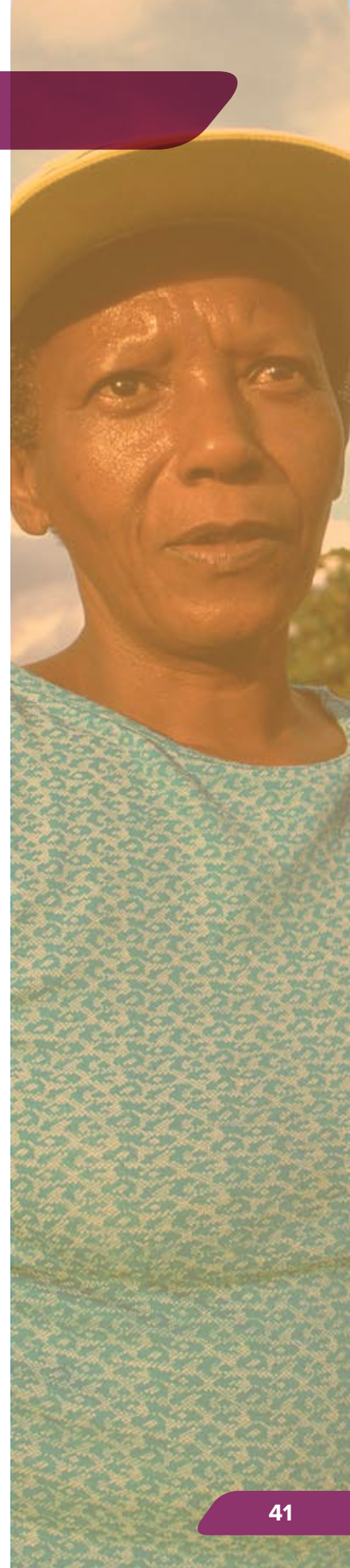


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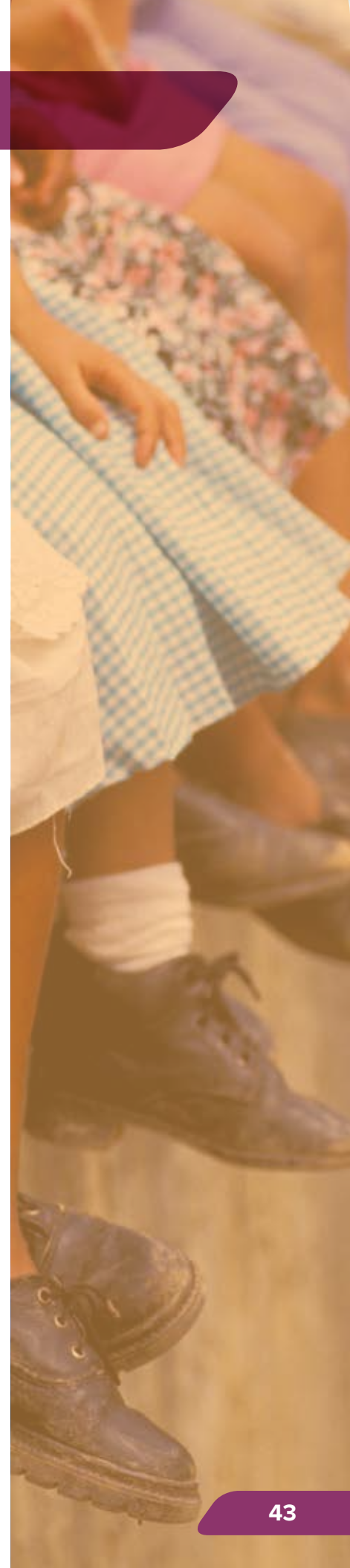
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Appendix A: Criteria for Selecting Intervention Municipalities and Communities

Municipalities

- Municipality wants to be part of the initiative
- Municipality has a history of supporting work and collaborating in other sectors
- Multiple sectors within a municipality currently demonstrate responsiveness to intimate partner violence, for example, by providing protection services, access to legal system, mental health services, etc.
- The municipality is capable of providing safety during the development and implementation of program activities
- Statistics on violence (or other important indicators) are available
- The program supports the municipality's short- and long-term social, political, and economic processes and goals
- Municipality employs stakeholders who are working on issues related to intimate partner violence or other types of violence
- Program leaders are well-respected and trusted in the community, increasing the likelihood that they will be supported throughout the implementation of the program

Communities

- There is an evidence base that can help inform the program design and implementation
- The community is geographically accessible
- There is safe access to the community
- There is a strong understanding of community dynamics that will help contribute to the design of this program
- There is a presence of community leaders, activists, and other networks to support the program
- Community leaders have experience in coordinating programs
- There is evidence of prior community mobilization, increasing the



Organizations working to implement community-based interventions require longer-term and sustainable funding. Investment should prioritize prevention efforts that address social norms and concepts of gender equality while engaging women, men, and key community members.

likelihood of participation

- Violence is addressed using a gender lens and with a good understanding of power dynamics
- There are sufficient services for women and adolescents who have experienced intimate partner violence
- It is feasible to implement the program within a timeline of at least three years

Appendix B: SASA! Criteria for Selecting Intervention Partners in Central America

Choosing a local implementing organization is the most important factor to a program's success. Below are criteria to use when selecting intervention partners.

Operational Capacity

- Prevention of IPV and SASA! fit within the implementing partner's strategic plan, programs, and objectives of the organization
- Implementing partner's management and administrative teams are prepared to support the capacity building of the organization, for example via conference calls and other electronic communication
- Implementing partner agrees to provide at least two senior staff to help train other team members on the Prevention Model for IPV/SASA!
- Implementing partner leaders and other staff agree to send the same staff to participate in training and follow-up visits
- Implementing partner has a legal status
- Implementing partner has been operating for at least two years
- Implementing partner has sufficient staff dedicated to the project to help ensure implementation of SASA!

Financial and Legal Status

- Implementing partner is transparent and can show accountability in executing programs over the last two years
- Implementing partner has a sufficient budget allocated to prevention programs



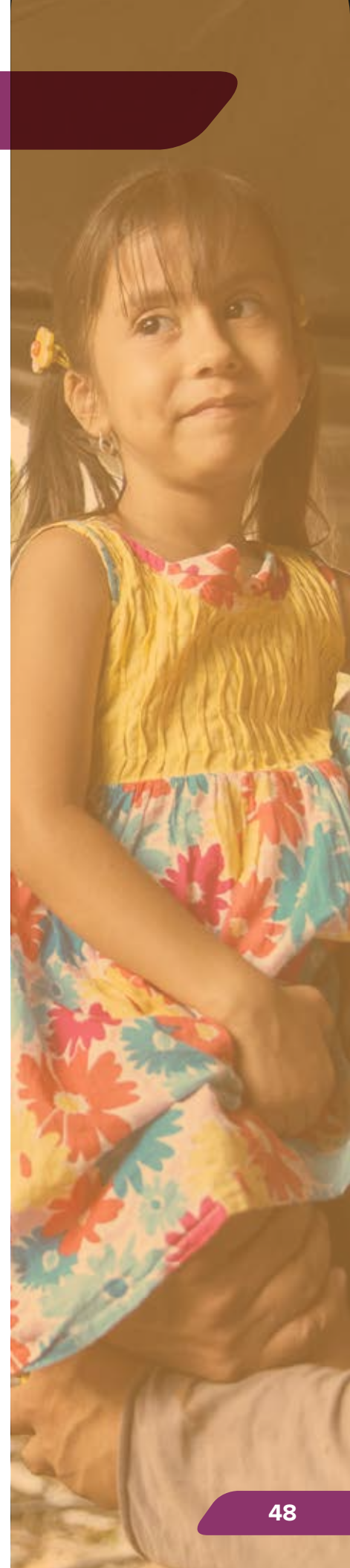
- Implementing partner has transparent financial and operating policies

Conceptual Understanding and Implementation Capacity

- Implementing partner staff analyze IPV using a gender and human rights framework
- Implementing partner understand what SASA! is and what is needed for successful adaptation and implementation of the program
- Implementing partner has experience designing and implementing prevention programs to address IPV or other forms of violence using a gender and human rights framework
- Implementing partner is capable of producing high-quality narrative reports
- Implementing partner staff working on implementing programs has experience working with IPV prevention programs
- Implementing partner has established respectful relationships within the target community and has activists or advocates to ensure a successful implementation
- Implementing partner has experience with advocacy at the political and community level

Leadership and Team Capacity

- The implementing partner has the human and financial resources to sustainably support the implementation of IPV prevention activities
- The presence of strong institutional support at various levels of the organization to support the adaptation of SASA!
- Implementing partner has established networks with other civil society organizations and government institutions
- Implementing partner has experience understanding community dynamics, including safety and security issues



"Community mobilization efforts are successful because they permeate multiple levels of society. Through educational and behavior change interventions, these programs foster collective action and build community capacity to challenge gender norms, leading to reductions in Intimate Partner Violence."