

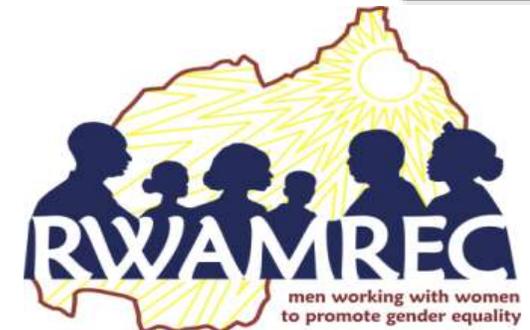
Community Activism in Practice: Lessons Learned from the Indashyikirwa IPV Prevention Programme in Rwanda

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What is Indashyikirwa?

- ▶ IPV Prevention Program Implemented Aug 2014-2018 in 7 districts of rural Rwanda:
- ▶ (1) Participatory training with couples (**couples curriculum**)
- ▶ (2) Community-based **activism** with set of trained couples adapted from SASA!
- ▶ (3) Support to survivors of IPV through **women's safe spaces**
- ▶ (4) Training & engagement of **opinion leaders**



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Community Activism to Address IPV

- ▶ Community activism critical strategy to shift inequitable gender norms & ensure enabling environment to prevent & respond to IPV
- ▶ Ensure diffusion & wider reach of change
- ▶ Study evaluated processes and impact of Indashyikirwa activism component



586,962 people reached (344,725 women and 241,995 men) by activism

5504 people (4,323 women and 1,181 men) by women's spaces dialogues

Methods: Quantitative

- ▶ Community randomized control trial (cRCT) assessed whether diffusion of Indashyikirwa activism to communities
- ▶ **Among residents who were NOT direct beneficiaries, does *Indashyikirwa***
 - ▶ Reduce intimate partner violence?
 - ▶ Improve community norms around violence?
 - ▶ Increase help seeking among & support for women experiencing IPV?



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Methods: Qualitative

- ▶ Across 1 site per province:
 - ▶ 3 rounds of interviews with 9 opinion leaders
 - ▶ 3 rounds of interviews and observations with 6 WS attendees
 - ▶ 3 rounds of interviews with 3 women's safe space facilitators
 - ▶ 3 rounds of interviews with 15 couples
 - ▶ 2 rounds of interviews and observations with 12 activists
- ▶ Across all sites:
 - ▶ 2 Rounds of IDIS with 9 RWAMREC staff and 6 RWN staff
- ▶ Interviews conducted in Kinyarwanda, transcribed & translated into English
- ▶ Data analyzed thematically



Quantitative Findings:

NO significant difference in prevalence of IPV between communities that received activism and response activities and those that did not, whether reported by women or by men



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Qualitative Insights: Insufficient Time for Activism

- ▶ Took time to adapt SASA! materials to Rwandan context
- ▶ Need to brief all village leaders to gain support delayed roll out
- ▶ 4 SASA! phases informed activism but Support and Action behavior change materials introduced a few months before end of programme b/c of limited time
- ▶ CAs and WSFs reaching stride as programme ended



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Formalized Spaces for Activism

- SASA! Fidelity brief suggests activism occur in informal settings
- In Rwanda, activism in formal spaces with larger/ repeated groups
- Critical for trust, access, safety & sustainability
- May have limited diffusion/opportunities for interpersonal communication
- Evolved to more informal activism including safe spaces and home visits but took time

“Rwandans are not used to discuss their issues in public. You need to choose a safer place to help people gain their trust. On the side of the road or at a market it is hard.” (RWAMREC Field Supervisor)



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Strengths of Activism

- ▶ **Couples curriculum** platform for activism esp in rural areas where difficult for staff to be regularly present
 - ▶ Generated motivation among activists
 - ▶ Could facilitate activism with spouses
 - ▶ Built support networks among activists
- ▶ **Women's safe spaces** for referral, empowering responses to IPV survivors
- ▶ Trained **opinion leaders** enablers for activism and value of quarterly meetings btw activists, safe space facilitators and leaders



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Lessons Learned

- ▶ Qualitative research suggests + trajectory; greater awareness & ownership to address IPV, more support of IPV survivors, more equitable gender norms
- ▶ Strength of innovations: women's spaces, couples curriculum before activism
- ▶ Careful adaptation to Rwandan context valued (1 year inception phase critical) yet would have benefited from additional time
- ▶ Activism needs sufficient time (3-5 years) for diffusion and key principles i.e. participatory approaches & interpersonal communication
- ▶ Value of mixed methods to capture more comprehensive processes of change



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Thank You!



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