



Learning from Practice:

Get Moving!

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1. Why *Get Moving!*?



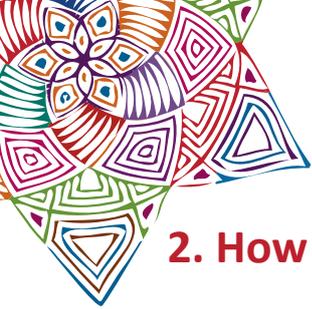
The GBV Prevention Network (www.preventgbvafrica.org) came to life in 2003 to create space for organizations in the Horn, East and Southern Africa to share ideas, learn from each other, and strengthen the movement for a just and violence free world. Initially comprised of 30 activist organizations, over the past 10 years we have grown tremendously and are now over 500 members strong, representing 21 different countries. Across the region we have witnessed an explosion of groups working to address violence against women (VAW) – an exciting transformation of our civil society that reflects several decades of sustained advocacy by feminist activists across the globe. The Network is coordinated by Raising Voices (www.raisingvoices.org) based in Kampala, Uganda.

While the increase in public dialogue, programming, and investment around VAW is promising, the greater attention may come with certain drawbacks. Our experience suggests that the *nature* and *tone* of civil society is significantly different compared to ten years ago when the GBV Prevention Network was born – essentially shifting from a social justice orientation to a ‘development framework.’ What this means is that the work of preventing and responding to VAW has become increasingly technical rather than political. For example, the emphasis on quick fix interventions that must demonstrate impact to donors within short timeframes often comes at the expense of deeper efforts to transform communities. Similarly we have observed more and more organizations approaching their work as a series of ‘one-off’ projects rather than a sustained effort for social change, with little attention to—or awareness of—the core principles of VAW: power, justice, and gender equality.

Recognizing these trends, we saw an opportunity and a need to engage others working on VAW (prevention, advocacy, and response) to develop a shared understanding of core VAW concepts and connect to a more politicized perspective (see Box 1). So we developed *Get Moving!* to do just that!

Box 1 ~ What does it mean to have a politicized perspective on VAW?

A politicized (or feminist) perspective recognizes that VAW is not about any woman’s individual experience, but is fundamentally a systemic issue about power. Stated simply, the core driver of VAW is unequal power between women and men in our societies as well as systems and norms that uphold this power imbalance. As such, addressing VAW is political work that requires transforming power structures at multiple levels (e.g., individual, relational, community, and societal).



2. How to *Get Moving!*?



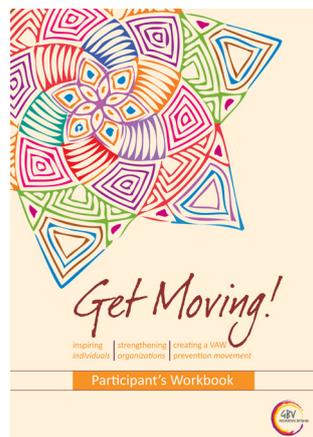
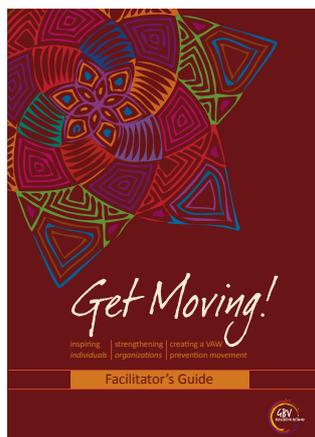
Get Moving! is a methodology designed to take organizations through a powerful process of intensive reflection, both at the personal and organizational levels. The *Get Moving!* journey moves through ten provocative topics (see Box 2), using a range of creative activities, such as group brainstorms, private journaling, structured exercises, role play, and supplemental reading. The three overarching objectives are:

- To inspire *individuals* to critically reflect on personal values and identities and connect more deeply with key VAW concepts;
- To strengthen *organizations* by identifying opportunities to enhance organisational culture and integrity by engaging in values-driven work; and
- To create a cohesive *movement* to end violence against women by fostering a shared analysis of the core drivers of VAW and acknowledging the positive power of working in solidarity.

Box 2 ~ The Ten *Get Moving!* Topics

1. <i>What is Get Moving!?</i>	6. <i>Leading with Values</i>
2. <i>The Journey</i>	7. <i>Exploring Activism</i>
3. <i>Knowing Ourselves</i>	8. <i>Championing Women's Strength</i>
4. <i>Learning from Our Own Relationships</i>	9. <i>Building Movements in Solidarity</i>
5. <i>Acknowledging Power Imbalances</i>	10. <i>Moving Beyond Get Moving!</i>

Any organization can *Get Moving!* with the help of a committed staff member to facilitate the process (using the Facilitator's Guide and Participant's Workbook). The process intentionally seeks to involve *all* staff as equal participants, from the support team to senior management. *Get Moving!* is also adaptable to the specific needs of each participating organization and the structure of the sessions is flexible; for example, some participants elect to cover the ten topics over one or more immersive workshops, while others prefer shorter sessions implemented over the course of several months. The GBV Prevention Network, coordinated by Raising Voices, offers technical assistance and support to help organizations initiate the process and navigate any challenges along the way.





3. What have we learned from *Get Moving!*?



Since 2010, twenty organizations across nine countries have participated in *Get Moving!*. In addition, a new cohort of eight organizations has recently embarked on the process. We feel that after four years, two versions of the methodology, and plans to expand to additional GBV Prevention Network members, now is the time to take stock of our experiences thus far: What successes can we register? What are the key ingredients that makes *Get Moving!* work? What are the challenges and limitations?

Below we offer reflections and learnings from numerous people that have been involved with *Get Moving!*, including participants, facilitators, executive directors, and technical support staff. The analysis is based on our own observations guiding numerous partners through the *Get Moving!* experience, as well as data collected through evaluation forms, interviews, and during workshops and trainings (see Box 3). While the findings below are not intended to provide scientific evidence of the impact, by synthesizing and sharing key observations from diverse perspectives we hope to provide valuable insight about the types of changes that can emerge from the process, as well as challenges to consider.

Box 3 ~ Our Data

- Five key informant interviews (KIs); three with facilitators and two with executive directors.
- Forty-two written evaluations completed by *Get Moving!* participants (after the final session)
- Eighteen written evaluations completed by *Get Moving!* facilitators after a 5-day training
- Remarks from a *Get Moving!* closing session
- Remarks from a workshop for 20 *Get Moving!* facilitators
- Our own insights and observations

a.

Successes

One exciting success emerges clearly from the many voices included in this reflection; overwhelmingly participants are enthusiastic about *Get Moving!* and describe it as a powerful process that contributes to the growth of individuals and organizations. In reviewing our data, we explored the various ways the process has changed both individuals and organizations. When participants are asked to reflect on their *personal* experience in going through *Get Moving!*, their responses consistently emphasize three themes:

- *Get Moving!* promotes self-discovery
- *Get Moving!* fosters a deeper analysis of VAW
- *Get Moving!* inspires personal activism

We also asked participants to reflect on what, if any, contributions *Get Moving!* has made to their organizations. We find two common changes at this level:

- *Get Moving!* creates a stronger connection to the organization's mission
- *Get Moving!* facilitates positive shifts in the organizational culture



1) Promoting self-discovery

You can't be in this process and remain the same. (remarks, closing session)

Consciousness-raising is the cornerstone of the *Get Moving!* approach and all ten topics include activities designed to spark critical reflection and introspection. As one facilitator explained, “the process is designed to raise three powerful questions: Who am I? What do I stand for? and How am I living my values through my work?” Our observations indicate that this core intention resonates with participant experiences. Out of the 42 evaluation forms we analyzed, the most frequent response to the question “In what way, if any, do you feel that *Get Moving!* has changed you on a personal level?” was increased self-awareness of one’s core values and the power within themselves (see Box 4). This opportunity to turn the focus inward and critically examine how one upholds—or at times falls short—of his or her personal values in everyday life is an eye-opening experience for some people. For example, one participant said, “I had never put it together before, but the way I treat house girls and neighbors is also about my values and what I believe in” (remarks, closing session). Similarly another individual shared that “It was eye opening... it’s so easy to do actions that are disempowering to others” (written evaluation).

Box 4 ~ Excerpts Describing How *Get Moving!* Promotes Self-Discovery

Q: In what way, if any, do you feel that *Get Moving!* has changes you on a personal level?

- *[Get Moving!] helped me know, learn, and identify with my values.*
- *[Get Moving!] helped me understand who I really am.*
- *[Get Moving!] helped me become aware of my values and also nurtured my power within.*
- *I am now more self-aware. I am more politicized. I’m now a feminist by conviction.*

*Note: all excerpts above are from the written evaluations

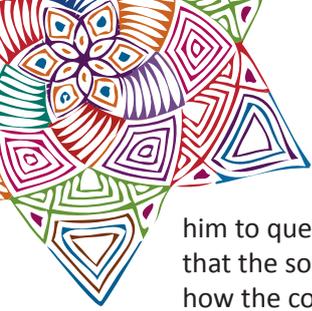
Our data also suggest that the nature of self-discovery varies across participants. For some, *Get Moving!* reaffirms existing values and reinvigorates a commitment to work in the field of VAW. For others—perhaps those starting from a less politicized perspective—the journey is transformational, prompting shifts in identity, as described by one interviewee:

We have a guy who came in as IT. He would not talk, he did not know why he was here. Now he has blossomed. We call him the ‘Get Moving! guru!’ He has been impacted—he is really passionate, he is really politicized. For example he will always talk about relationships, about how he relates with his girlfriend... It has been an eye opener for him, around things you do at home and the role it plays in perpetuating VAW (KII, facilitator).

2) Fostering a critical analysis of violence:

Get Moving! introduced an in-depth analysis of feminist ideas that go beyond just viewing VAW as an act, to knowing the underlying triggers. (written evaluation)

Another common theme is that *Get Moving!* helps to deepen an analysis of the core drivers of violence, resulting in stronger conviction and confidence articulating VAW related concepts. Several participants shared that they gained a stronger grasp of key concepts including power, feminism, activism, and social justice. Importantly, the participatory activities utilized throughout *Get Moving!* can help individuals understand and relate to difficult concepts on a personal level. For example, one staff member shared how the “New Planet” exercise—a creative way to demonstrate the unjust use of power over others—led



him to question what is happening to women, children, and marginalized men in society, and conclude that the solution “all starts with me” (remarks, closing session). Similarly a female participant expressed how the concept of activism became more clear and personal through the process, saying: “It helped me in understanding what activism is all about and to recognize that it is a power that rises within me and inspires me to take positive action to prevent injustices” (written evaluation).

Our theory of change is that gaining a deeper, more personalized connection to VAW concepts enhances the quality of VAW-related work, and we found promising indications that many participants have experienced such a change. For example, as one facilitator shared: “I can facilitate better now because I *feel* the issues and connect to them *personally*.... It’s not that I didn’t know before, but I hadn’t really wrapped my head around ideas of equality between men and women and power balance, and a lot of other contextual issues... so sometimes when I facilitated I would just leave these ideas hanging. Right now I can articulate the issues with conviction and this helps participants really connect with these concepts” (KII, facilitator).

3) Inspiring individual action:

Get Moving! is a basic need for any feminist or activist organization. It helps staff to connect with issues of injustice and rights and to activate that activism spirit. (KII, executive director)

Staff experiences indicate that in addition to shifts in awareness and beliefs, *Get Moving!* can inspire action and help to “activate that activism spirit.” For example, one participant wrote that the most important thing she was taking away from *Get Moving!* is “to be courageous and bold and to stand for myself and others, even if I am alone in doing so” (written evaluation). As noted above, the methodology encourages intense scrutiny over potential contradictions between *believing* in values and *living* them in everyday life. Emerging from this awareness, some participants made intentional changes in how they relate to their families, colleagues, and others. For example, people shared accounts of how *Get Moving!* has helped them to question—and ultimately shift—the way they discipline their children, interact with domestic workers, their partners, etc.

We also find that prior to *Get Moving!* participants frequently have a narrow understanding of activism and leadership, for example that ‘activist’ is a term reserved for protestors in the streets and that only executive directors are expected to be leaders. By fostering a more inclusive definition of ‘everyday activism’ and ‘values-driven leadership,’ however, *Get Moving!* helps people to identify with these concepts that are critical for effectively addressing VAW (see Box 5).

Box 5 ~ Excerpts Describing How *Get Moving!* Inspires Action

- *I thought activism was moving around with a placard and shouting. Now I know I can do activism in many small ways – how I treat others, for example, how I treat my domestic helper or my children (remarks, closing session).*
- *[Get Moving!] has changed my way of looking at things in the community and in the workplace. I used to feel I will be intruding if I challenged injustice and inequality, but now I am politicized. (KII, facilitator).*
- *[Through Get Moving!] we came to realize that everyone, not only senior staff, can do something to become an activist. Everyone has power to do something (remarks, workshop).*
- *Get Moving! has politicized me and I am going to continue to confront injustices I see being done to others (written evaluation).*



4) Creating a stronger connection to the organization's mission

People were really shocked that the work on violence was actually about power. Staff didn't really know that... even though we have been doing this work for a long time. This was a big moment with us. (remarks, workshop)

Organizations often make the assumption that their staff share a similar perspective, given the nature of their mission and work; however, our experience suggests that this is not always the case. For example some staff may understand human rights and gender equality as 'work' issues, divorced from their personal values and actions in other spaces. *Get Moving!* can help to bridge this gap as the individual shifts triggered by *Get Moving!* generate a ripple effect across the organization. For example, as more individual staff members gain a deeper grounding in core VAW concepts, the team's foundation for engaging in quality, politicized VAW work grows stronger. In addition, by creating a space to *collectively* discuss, question, and reflect on sensitive topics, *Get Moving!* enables team members to learn from one another and come to a place of common understanding and analysis.

Our data suggests that when well implemented, *Get Moving!* helps staff feel more personally connected in their organization's mission: "Since [*Get Moving!*] staff are more open to controversial issues, for example about human rights and marriage... I think they used to feel that over here is my work, and over there are my religious values... but *Get Moving!* created the boldness to slash across these categories, which to me is very powerful" (KII, executive director). Similarly several evaluation respondents describe becoming more committed and passionate about their organization since *Get Moving!*: "Staff have transformed from just coming to work, to coming to serve. People have gained more love and passion for what they do" (KII, facilitator).

5) Facilitates positive shifts in organizational culture

People have changed, we are a different organization. We are now trying much more to walk the talk. We didn't even ever think about it before, now we are really trying to live our beliefs. (remarks, workshop)

Beyond strengthening commitment to an organization's mission, we find that *Get Moving!* can transform aspects of organizational culture. Most notably, our data illustrate that *Get Moving!* can improve communication, promote solidary and teamwork, and contribute to a sense of collective responsibility and accountability.

Improving Communication: Throughout the *Get Moving!* process, facilitators lead their teams in reflecting on how their organization is living its values, particularly with regards to how power is utilized in decision-making and other staff processes. While at times challenging, we find that these conversations have helped organizations identify latent issues and take action to address underlying tensions. As one staff remarked: "I think the session [on power] really made people realize that all along we are talking about power out there, but what about *our* power? That was a real eye opener—how can we talk about this issue and yet internally certain things are still going on" (KII, facilitator)? Concrete examples of how *Get Moving!* can open communication channels include: empowering staff to speak out about gender roles in the office (e.g., designating cleaning responsibilities to female staff), fostering more direct styles of communication when giving feedback and resolving disputes, and strengthening overall communication between staff and management as everyone becomes more aware—and transparent—about sensitive issues related to power (see Box 6).



Box 6 ~ Excerpts Describing How *Get Moving!* Improves Communication

- *We used to consider ourselves open before, but there were certain critiques that people wouldn't dare to raise in group processes—that they would only whisper them in the corridors. I feel [since *Get Moving!*] there is now more openness – and people can now hold you to account, whether senior staff or not (KII, Facilitator).*
- *Get Moving! has created a safer space for employees to air out ideas, views and suggestions. This area has been strengthened (written evaluation).*

Promoting solidarity: Our data further reveal that the open yet structured discussions that take place during the *Get Moving!* exercises can have long-term effects on team dynamics and promote bonding among individuals that do not typically work together. For example, one staff member described a profound shift where rather than working in silos and competing with one another, her teams recognized “that integration makes us stronger – and everything we deliver is one” (KII, executive director). In addition, we find that the emphasis on involving *all* people in *Get Moving!*—including junior, senior, program, and administrative staff—frequently encourages more cohesion and team building as staff get to know one another in new ways. Moreover, the collective participation of all staff enables teams to “undress titles” and break down existing power hierarchies (see Box 7).

Box 7 ~ Excerpts Describing How *Get Moving!* Promotes Solidarity

- *I have observed from my own point of view that there is much solidarity and sense of belonging amongst staff members. Team spirit has really ignited in the organization (written evaluation).*
- *We are more of a team, since we finished the process... It is not just about us coming to work. We support each other more, there is more of a family culture and we feel safer around each other. (KII, Facilitator).*

Contributes to collective responsibility: As staff become more passionate about their work and feel a stronger sense of solidarity within their teams, organizations frequently experience stronger leadership at all levels, as well as increased accountability to both *how* the work is done and its *impact*. For example, several individuals shared that they no longer need to “chase people” as they did before *Get Moving!* and that they are more mindful of how they are using their own power in the workplace, knowing they will be held accountable. The following excerpt illustrates the potential of *Get Moving!* in this regard:

The process helped many staff to understand that everyone has a leadership role to play in their work and their relationship with others. In the past they would wait for me [executive director] – but now people are realizing their power and their contributions are important, no matter what the title... Staff have become more accountable to the organization and to women's rights—which is the most important (KII, executive director).



b.

Key Ingredients

In reviewing our data to try and isolate how and why the successes described above came to fruition, several ‘key ingredients’ stand out. Unequivocally the most transformative aspect of *Get Moving!* is the ability to cultivate critical reflection, both individually and collectively. Beyond that our data reveals several additional key ingredients, summarized in Box 8.

Box 8 ~ Key Ingredients of *Get Moving!*

- Breaking down core VAW concepts repeatedly and through a range of formats—including readings, exercises, group work, and private reflections and journaling—helps staff *internalize* meaning and better understand how abstract ideas translate into real life.
- The importance of strong facilitation by a staff member who is skilled, respected, and perceived as fair cannot be overstated. For example, the facilitator’s ability to create a safe space where divergent views can be freely expressed provides the foundation for the entire process.
- Prioritizing action items and recognizing the many strengths an organization already has can help ensure that staff do not feel overwhelmed by numerous ‘self-improvement’ projects, as *Get Moving!* sessions frequently suggest follow-up activities.
- Positive participation by senior leadership (e.g., handling feedback in a professional manner and expressing a willingness to learn from the group—even when it involves hearing discontent) can serve to model positive behaviors and communicates that the organization values the *Get Moving!* process.
- Active encouragement of participation during the early stages is often necessary, as our experience suggests that momentum for *Get Moving!* often builds over time. We have found that adopting a long term view and remaining patient can go a long way towards consistent implementation.

c.

Challenges

While the overall response to *Get Moving!* has been incredibly positive, we recognize that not all organizations have benefited to the same extent. In fact, some partners were unable to sustain the momentum and failed to complete all ten topics. Our learnings around these experiences highlight potential challenges, limitations, and unresolved challenges. In particular, we observe four common sticking points that warrant further consideration: finding adequate time and resources, completing the private reflections, anxiety about change and open communication, and measuring impact.

Finding adequate time and resources: The most common challenge is allocating sufficient time and resources to *Get Moving!*, as well as sustaining these throughout the process. As a result, some organizations have experienced large gaps between sessions or abandoned the process all together. The reality is that the work of an activist organization frequently involves busy workplans and frequent travel, and subsequently finding time when everyone is available to participate can pose a significant challenge. Similarly deadlines can interfere with the process, especially if staff perceive *Get Moving!* as distinct from their ‘real work.’ Our partners have experimented with different implementation strategies



(e.g., intensive, multi-day workshops, as well as short sessions that extend over several months) and we are still exploring the most effective method of implementation (which likely differs by organization). A related challenge is that it can be difficult to orient new staff joining midway through, as well as individuals who miss sessions for any number of reasons.

Completing the private reflections: While the Participant Workbook includes a number of written exercises, journaling can be a new concept and we have found that staff commonly overlook the private reflections. However, this introspection—and the act of writing as a way to deepen the process and concretize learning—is integral to the *Get Moving!* methodology. When staff do use the *Get Moving!* Participant’s Journal it is typically a powerful experience, yet we have not yet found the ‘key ingredient’ to motivating and supporting staff in this process.

Anxieties about change and open discussions: Staff, particularly senior leadership, have at times expressed concerns about breeding cynicism through *Get Moving!* activities. For example, an executive director wrote that her biggest fear is that “it will grant the poisonous apples in my organization more power to be critical of me” (written evaluation). While the majority of participants value the open communication that emerges through *Get Moving!*, in certain instances the sessions can reveal areas of discontent. In our experience, skilled facilitation and follow-up action between sessions helps to resolve issues that surface through *Get Moving!*; however, it is important to be aware that the process has the potential to ‘rock the boat’ on latent tensions. While *Get Moving!* is designed to help organizations move safely through these difficult moments on occasion we have found organizations who abandon the process when sensitive issues are raised.

Measuring impact: Finally because many of the changes inspired by *Get Moving!* may be deeply personal and nuanced, we have found that it is difficult to identify impact, particularly related to concrete changes in programming and contributions toward the larger movement to end VAW. We are currently experimenting with methodologies that may be able to better detect such outcomes.

4. Moving Forward!



When we reflect [on the *Get Moving!* process], it helped us change. There are some things in organizations that are not good - that hurt us as individuals. And if we have weak organizations then how can we really have a movement? (remarks, workshop)

A key takeaway from this reflection is that after four years of programming, *Get Moving!* has registered notable successes at both personal and organizational levels. These shifts are likely to have ripple effects as individual *Get Moving!* participants and organizations who have undergone the process interact with growing VAW networks —role modeling new ways of thinking and working. We set out on this journey to engage individuals in becoming more politicized and committed to the core concepts of VAW, believing that such a shift would create stronger organizations and a more cohesive movement grounded in a clear vision of social change. While we are left with some unresolved questions, we feel that the positive changes experienced by several of our partners have clear implications for the quality of staff engagement and, ultimately, program effectiveness. We look forward to expanding the reach of *Get Moving!* and further nurturing its transformative potential.

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• Center for Domestic Violence Prevention, Uganda	• People Opposing Women’s Abuse, South Africa	• Women’s Empowerment Link, Kenya
• Center for Research and International Cooperation, Rwanda	• Musasa Project, Zimbabwe	• Women’s Legal Resources Centre, Malawi
• Centre for Rights Education & Awareness, Kenya	• Mutawinat co LTD, Sudan	• Women of Uganda Network
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• Friendly Haven, Namibia	• Rozario Memorial Center, Zimbabwe	
• Gender Violence Recovery Center, Kenya	• Rwanda Men’s Resource Center	

*If you would like to embark on *Get Moving!* please write to us at info@preventgbvafrica.org or call +256 41 4531186*



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