

# PREVENTION IN ACTION

*Lessons Learned and a Model for  
Social Mobilization to Address  
Violence Against Women in South Africa*



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**Changing Social Norms: Integrating Theory and Practice**  
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# Emerging program design



- PIA was funded to address VAW by USAID/PEPFAR in South Africa over a four-year period
- Program led by PCI and two networks on VAW
- The initial focus on addressing ‘social norms’
- A survey found people rejected attitudinal statements supporting VAW, but the problem continued
- Program reoriented to transform inaction into action



# Crafting the PIA concept



- Psychological and clinical support services, rights-based legislation, and prosecution of perpetrators assist women post-violence
- But it was unclear as to how VAW could be prevented...
- A series *Action Media* workshops were conducted
- A vision, symbol and slogan were developed and ideas for action shared





# Emerging program design



- The new logo and slogan provided a new vision to act in response to VAW
- Agreements established with sector partners
- *Community Engagers* (CEs) trained in VAW prevention
- CEs identified opinion leaders (CIs)
- *Community Influencers* (CIs) trained and supported with a toolkit
- CIs established *Prevention in Action Groups* (PAGs)



# Sharing 'actions'

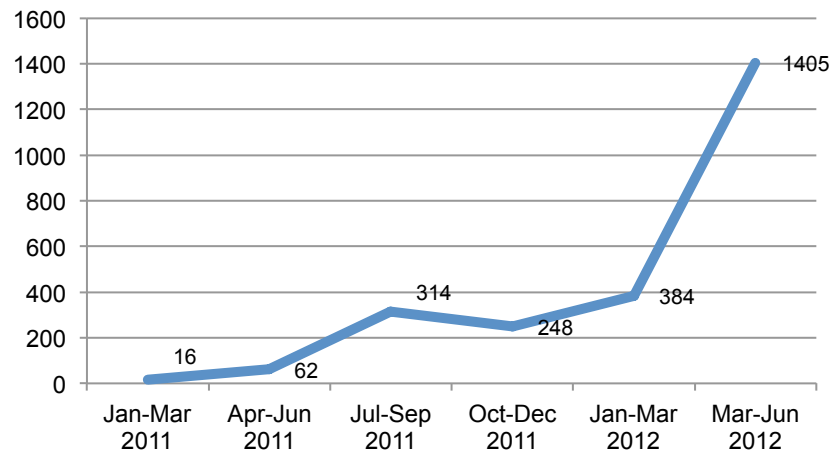
- Actions were not prescriptive – the aim was for 'organic' and contextually relevant actions
- Action meetings and story-sharing days identified responses
- Cellphone messaging was used to document actions
- Actions were 'amplified' through various media
- Ideas and experiences shared on FaceBook:  
<http://www.facebook.com/PreventionInAction>





# A growing number of actions

- A growing sense that action to prevent VAW was possible
- PIA members gained confidence in taking action
- 2,500 actions by late 2012

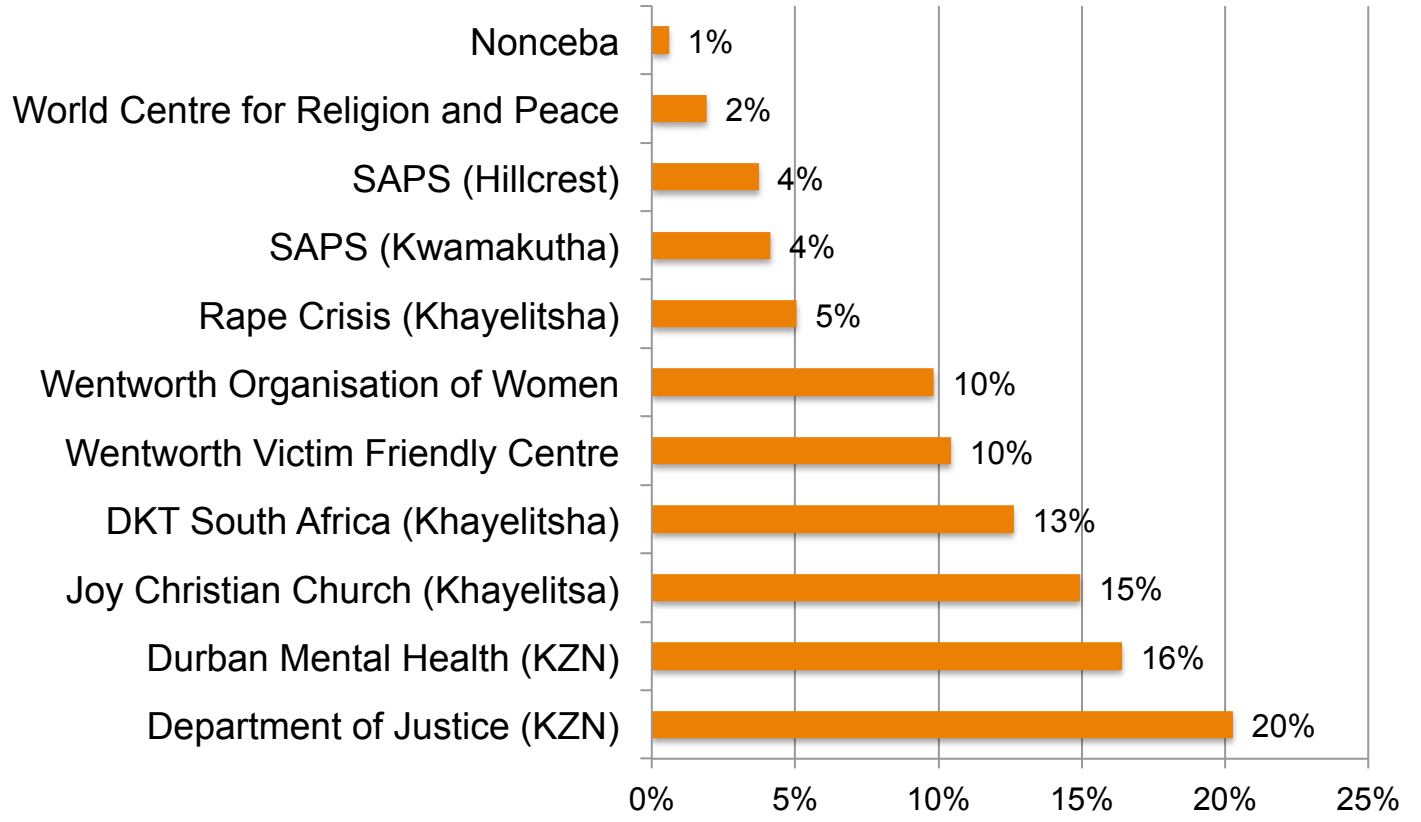


Action reports by quarter





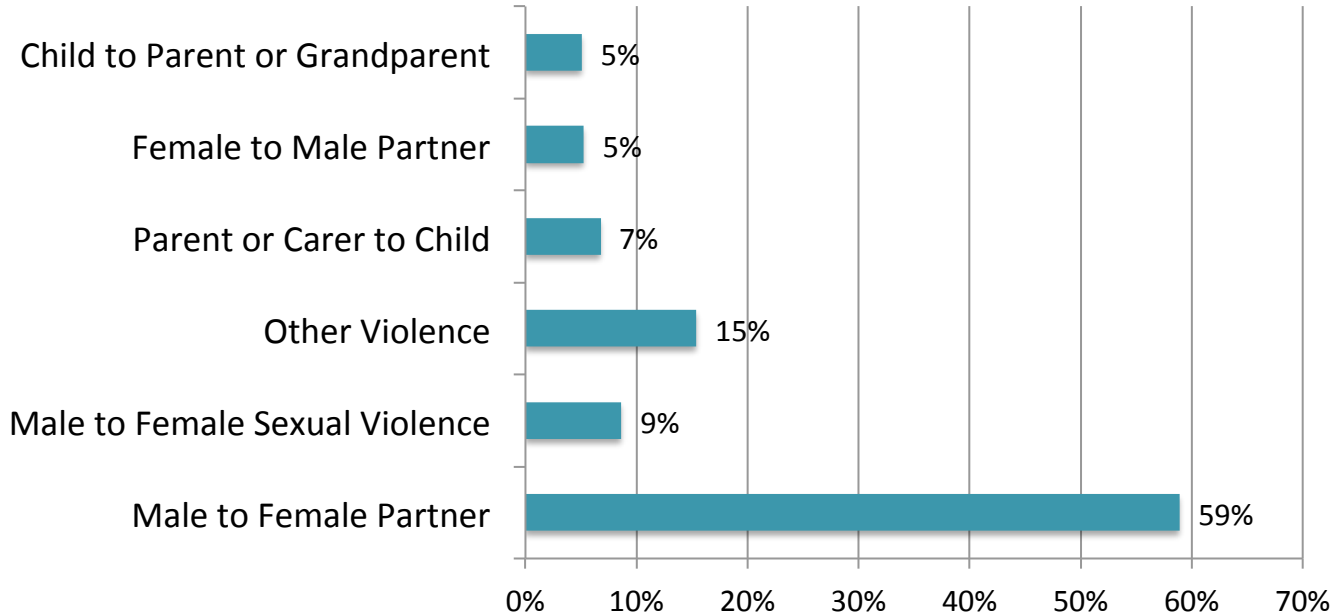
# Actions by sector partner



- *Numbers reported vary as a product of number of trained CEs & CIs*



# Forms of violence addressed

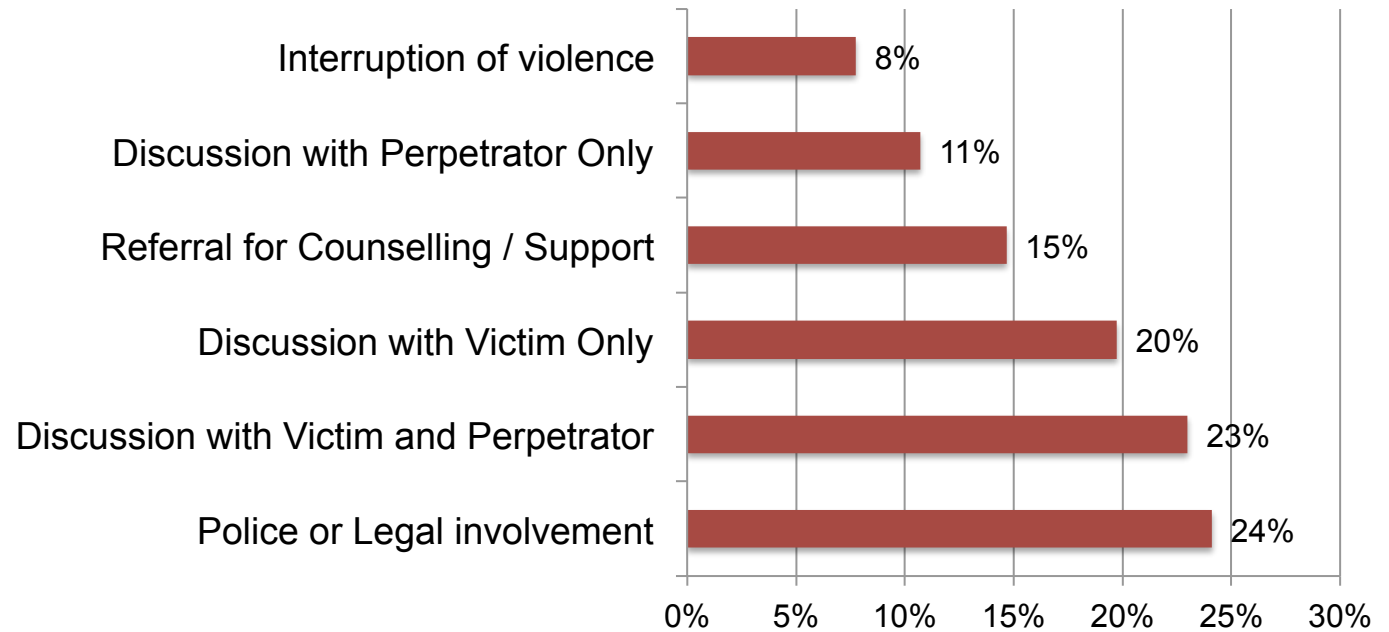


*“The CI helped a girl in her area who was being beaten by her boyfriend. She phoned the police who responded and arrested the man. He was released the following day. The group felt that his actions still need to be condemned. They introduced themselves as PIA members and their role as a PIA Group in the community. They told the man that his actions towards his partner will not be tolerated and next time he beat his wife, they would make sure he stays behind bars. The embarrassed man apologized and promised not to ever lay a hand on his partner again, and he hasn’t.” (PIA Member, Khayelitsha).*





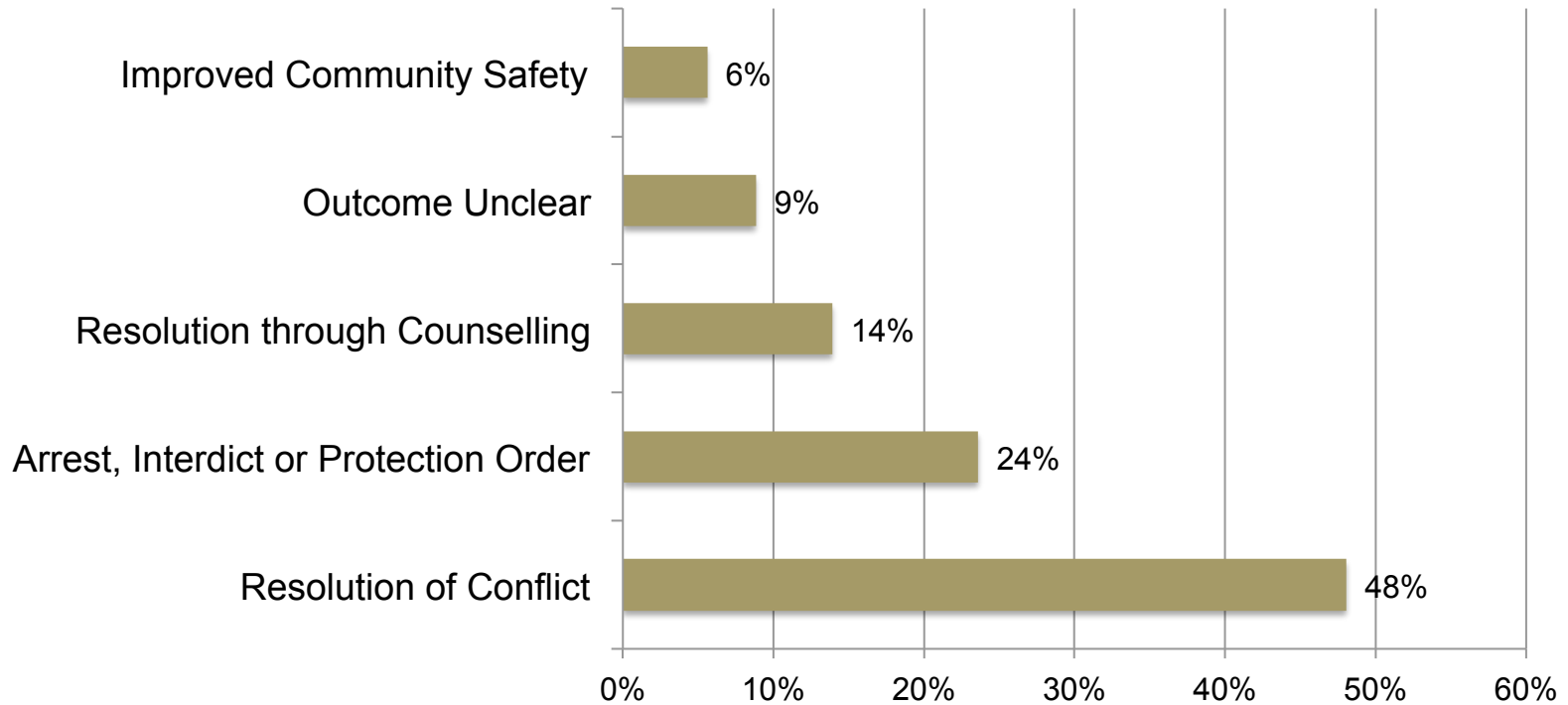
# Approaches to prevention



*This man always beats his wife and sometimes locks her outside at night. After this had happened for a while the CI organized her PAG members to come and talk to this man about his conduct. He welcomed the group and listened to what they were saying as well as being informed about PIA. He confessed that abuse is his problem. The CI then arranged that he sees counselors at FAMSA, which he did and their situation is much better than before (PIA Member, eThekweni District)*



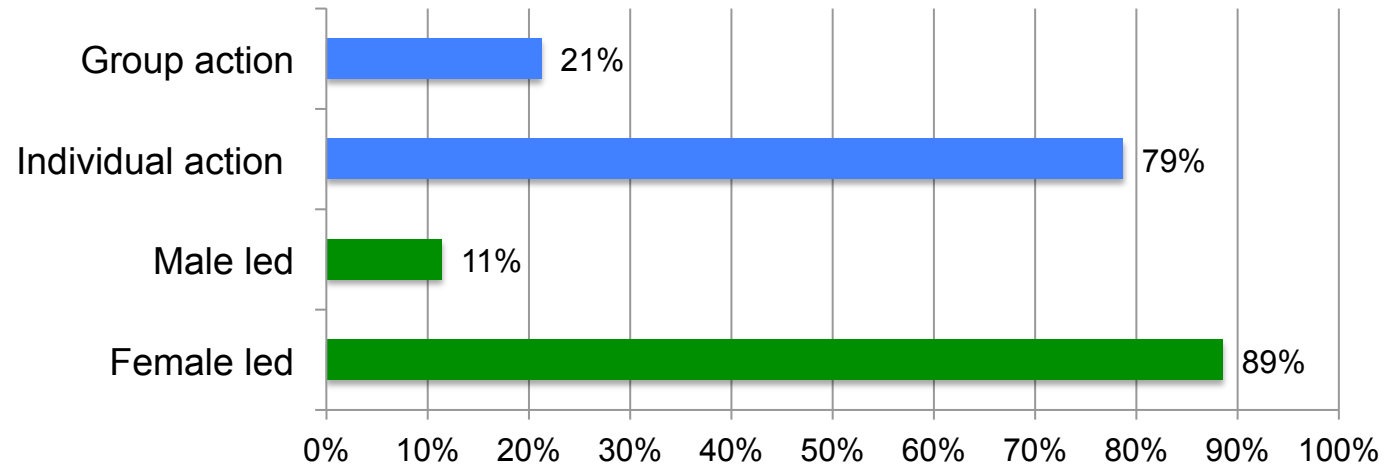
# Outcomes of actions



- *Most actions lead to resolution of conflict*
- *About a quarter of responses involve police involvement or legal processes*



# Action leaders



- *Most actions are led by individuals, but one in five involve group responses*
- *Most actions are led by women, but one in nine are led by men*





# PIA Committees

- PIA committees established to improve collaboration





# Violence Free Zones

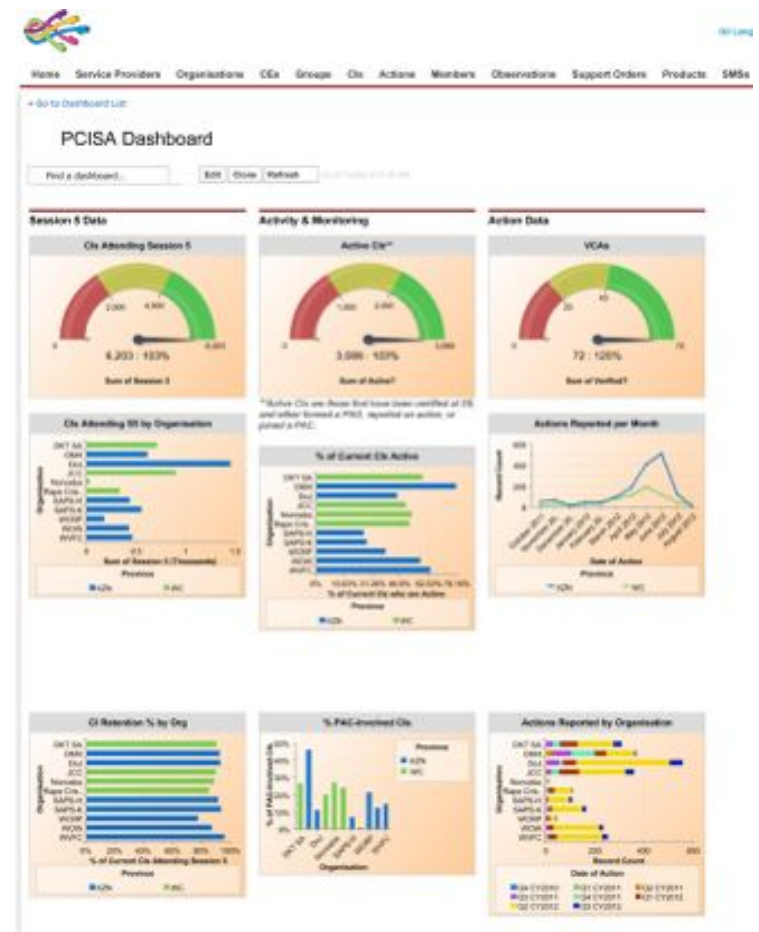
- Idea emerged for Violence Free Zones in sub-areas within communities
- Supported with a toolkit, demarcation of areas with signs, symbols and colors
- Through household visits, residents commit to ending violence
- Stickers on doors symbolize violence free homes





# Research and M&E

- Research, monitoring and evaluation guided the program
- Multiple methods supported understanding
- Monitoring through *SalesForce* allowed for real-time tracking of progress
- Evaluation included developing models for replication





# Participant perspectives

- *“Prevention in Action has taught us that we have a responsibility to ourselves and to our communities to do something even before the damage is done. We now have the means of intervening in situations such as domestic violence. Now that there are more people who have joined the campaign and people are alerting each other when there is a need to take action”.*  
(CE, Khayelitsha, Western Cape)
- *“People are aware of what’s going on ... People want to help all the time... I hear them say ‘do you know about violence free’ and all that? I hear them talk like that. So it’s changed people’s mindset”.*  
(PAG member, Wentworth, KwaZulu-Natal)





# A new language for VAW prevention

- Colors and a symbol and slogan articulate PIA concept
- Words of struggle such as ‘Amandla’ and ‘Viva’ are used to mobilize response
- PIA members are referred to as *‘social workers’*, *‘counsellors’*
- Xhosa words: PIA means *‘life’* and *‘prevent it before it happens’*
- *‘Violence Free Zone’* is called out to dissipate violence





# PIA Intervention Model

**IMPLEMENTATION TEAM • PCI / KZN & WC NETWORKS**

**SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS**

- Community Engagers (CEs)
- Community Influencers (CIs) identified by CEs
- Prevention in Action Groups (PAGs)

**TRAINING & CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

- Multi-session training of CEs
- CEs train CIs
- CIs share concepts and strategies with PAGs
- Capacity support to partners

**COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES / RESOURCES**

- Logo, slogan, core materials
- Branded items for PIA members
- Amplification of actions through booklets, events, news media and social media

**RESEARCH, MONITORING & EVALUATION**

- Baseline and formative research
- Participatory research
- Monitoring
- Evaluation

**PREVENTION IN ACTION COMMITTEES (PACs)  
VIOLENCE FREE ZONES**



# Empowerment & social change



## COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION FOR VAW PREVENTION

### CONCEPTUAL RESONANCE

I understand the PIA concept

### SITUATIONAL RESONANCE

The PIA concept is relevant to my situation

### INTERNALIZED MEANING

I can act to prevent VAW

### SOCIAL RESONANCE

The PIA concept is relevant to my community

### ACTIONS & COMMITMENTS

I am committed to taking action to prevent VAW  
I have taken action to prevent VAW

### NEW LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL PRACTICES TO PREVENT VAW

Change concepts made visible and sustained through symbols, language and actions

EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE



# Conclusions and implications



- Multi-phase adaptive and experimental approach led to a model for community mobilization for VAW prevention
- Understanding lived experiences and leadership perspectives strengthened model development
- Partnerships supported opportunities to address VAW and reshaped community values
- Approach has potential for replication in other communities facing similar challenges

