

Standing together against Sorcery Accusation-Related Violence

It begins with a question: What if every community chose not to accuse and attack their vulnerable members?

The challenge

Ending sorcery accusation-related violence requires communities to **question harmful explanations, act protectively and publicly stand together**. Our work engages trusted local leaders through repeated small-group conversations to create protective networks within churches and communities, working to prevent violence before it begins.

Key Elements: Trusted local Facilitators · the Good Garden metaphor · Seven Sessions · Shared food · Faith · the Law · Links with neighbouring groups



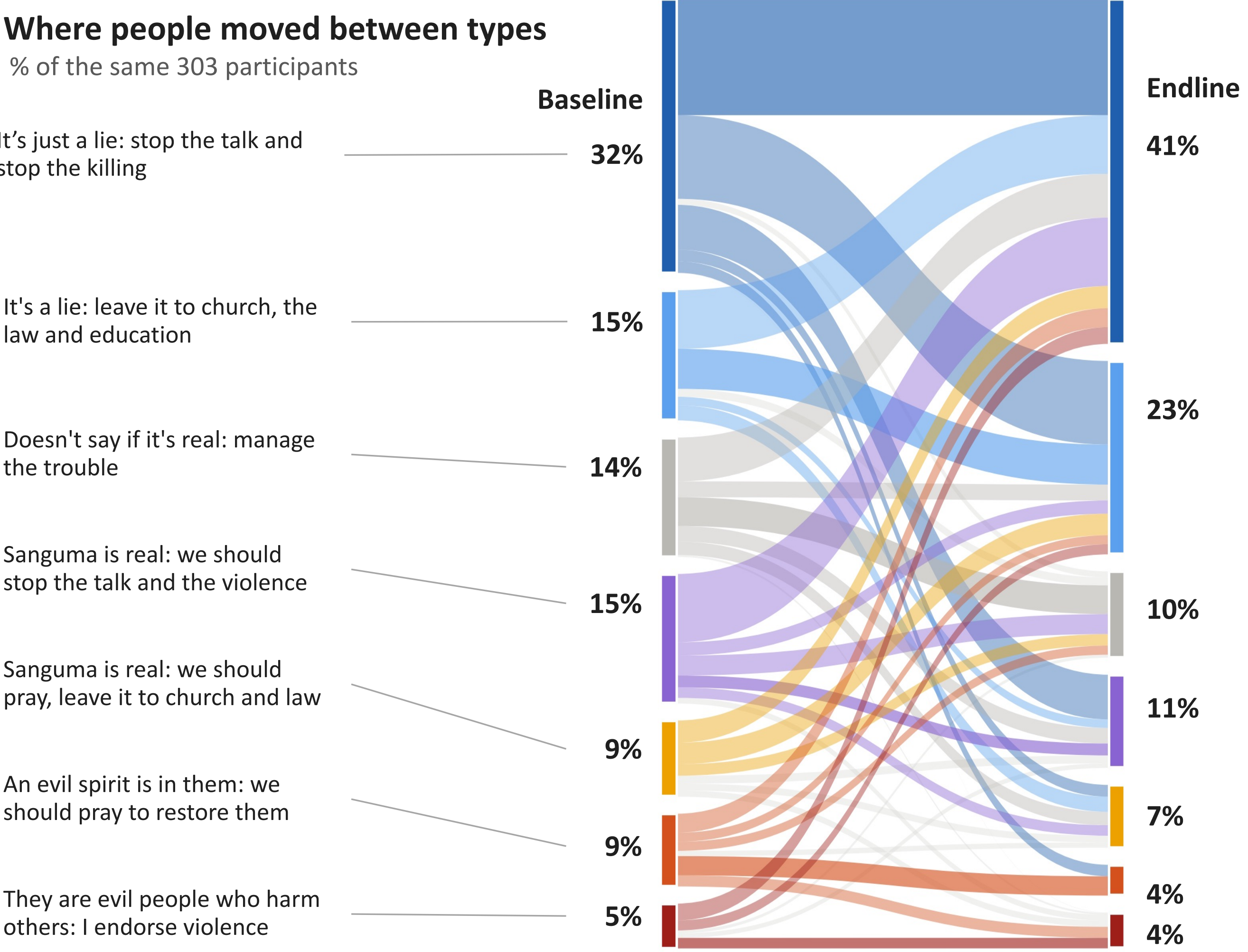
Noreen Thomas, Tigiri, Southern Highlands Province

“I must be a role model now; I must make use of my training.”

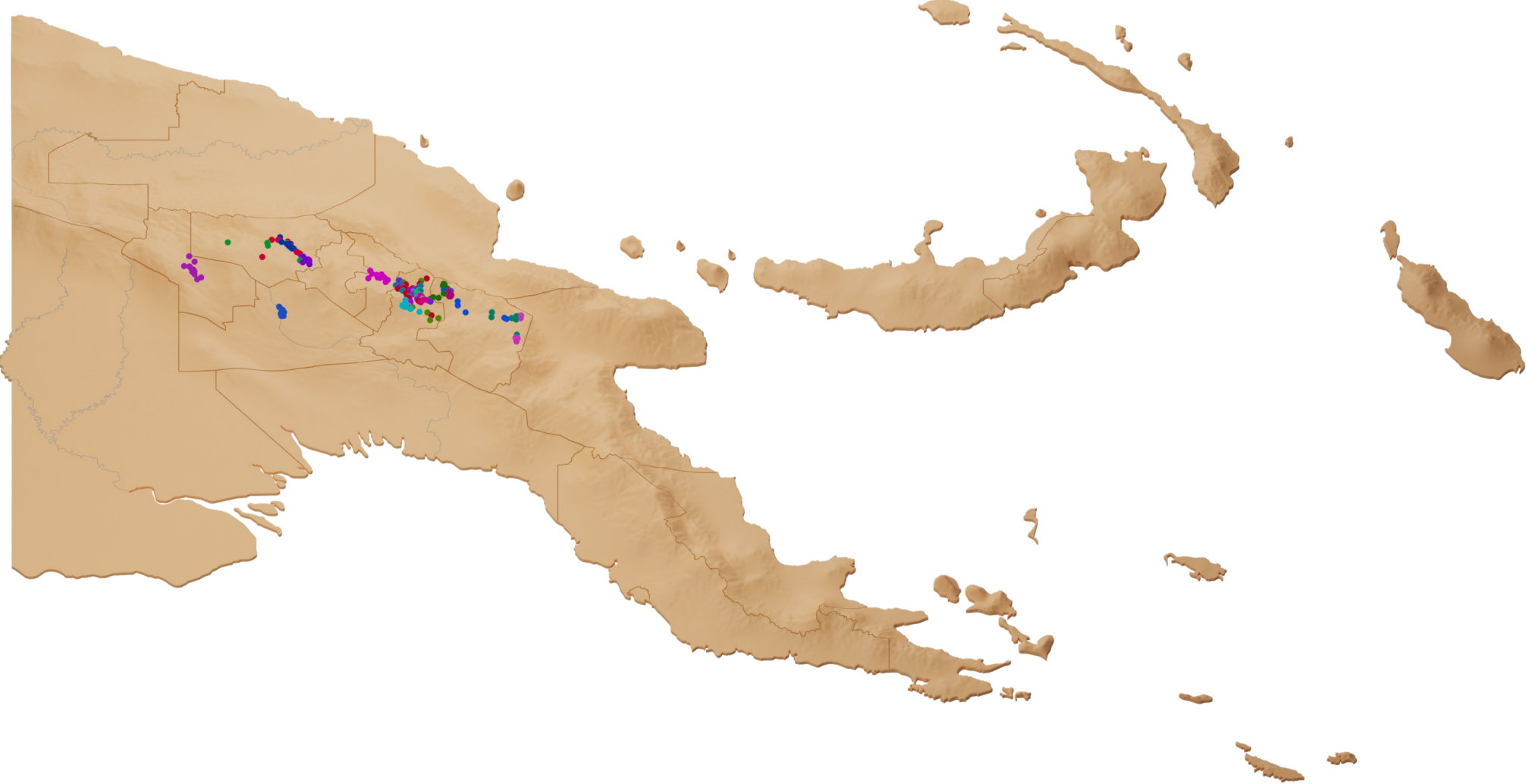
Noreen Thomas, a community leader and Community Curriculum participant, describes refusing an accusation after her daughter’s death, when others wanted to blame someone.

Where people moved between types

% of the same 303 participants



Method: Preliminary findings from matched baseline and endline responses of 303 participants in four cohorts. Full dataset: 4000 baseline and endline survey forms from 11 cohorts. These are changes in written responses, not measured incidents of violence. **Sanguma:** a person believed to cause harm supernaturally.



Reach

- 4,100+** community change agents
- 500+** pastors and teachers
- 144** churches and communities
- 6** provinces
- 7** denominations
- 12** cohorts of 18 master facilitators
- 1** Consortium, **1** Approach, **1** Purpose to prevent, de-escalate, and save lives.

Why this matters

Our aim is lasting protection: communities that question accusations, protect their neighbours and pass these commitments to the next generation.

Explore or adapt the approach at endsarv.net/svri.

Edith Akiror and Anton Lutz · UNFPA Papua New Guinea
Contact: akiror@unfpa.org, alutz@unfpa.org



endsarv.net/svri



“We are protecting the generations to come.”
- Community Curriculum Facilitator, Margaret Lord, 2026

How the programme works

Question harmful explanations

- Reject violence** while examining the beliefs that justify it
- Explore** where accusations come from, how stories spread, and alternative explanations for illness and death

Act protectively

- Step in:** take personal responsibility to intervene and seek help
- Know the law** and work together to follow it
- Faith as foundation:** unity, care and love

Stand together

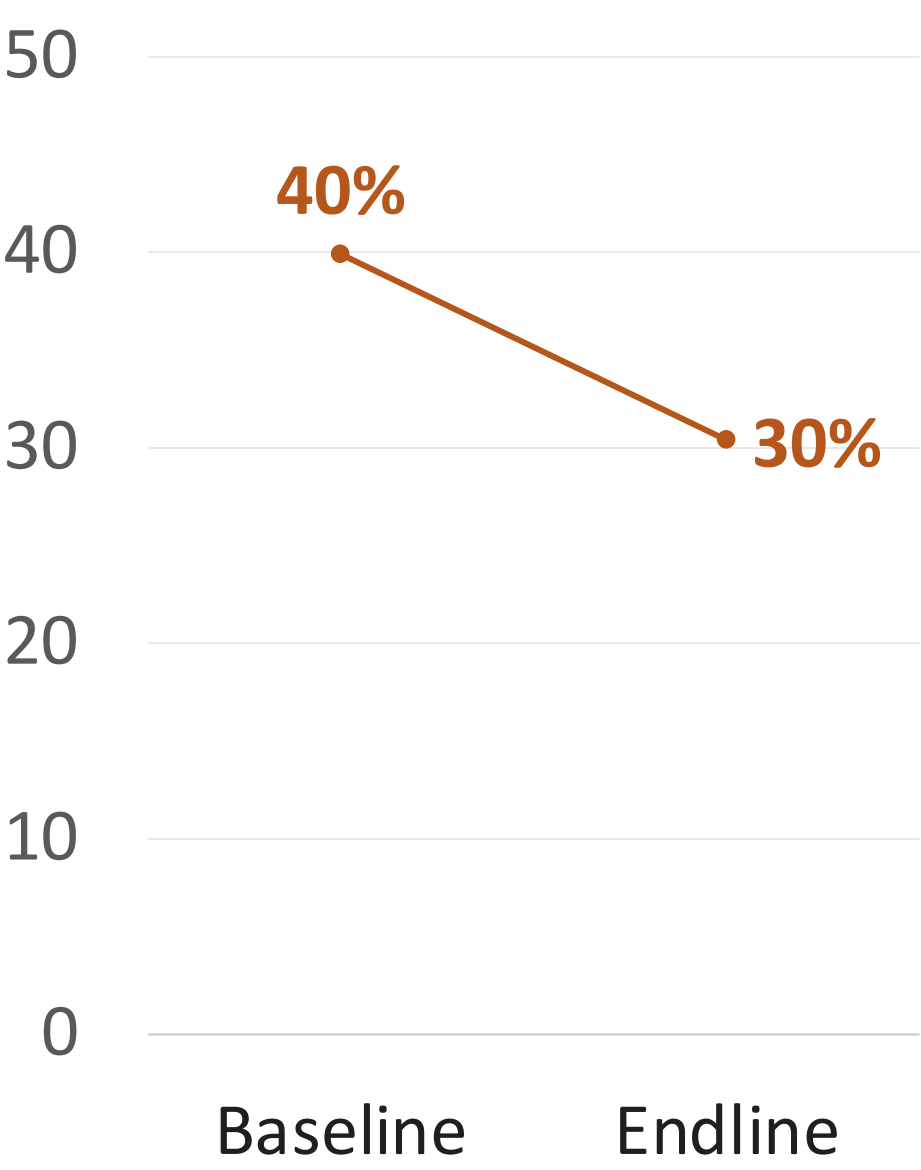
- Enlist local leaders** for trust, local knowledge and legitimacy
- Grow a network** of churches and communities that reject stigma and fear
- Public support** from setup to graduation and beyond

What we are learning

Among 303 participants with matched responses, smaller proportions described accused people as dangerous or proposed violence at endline.

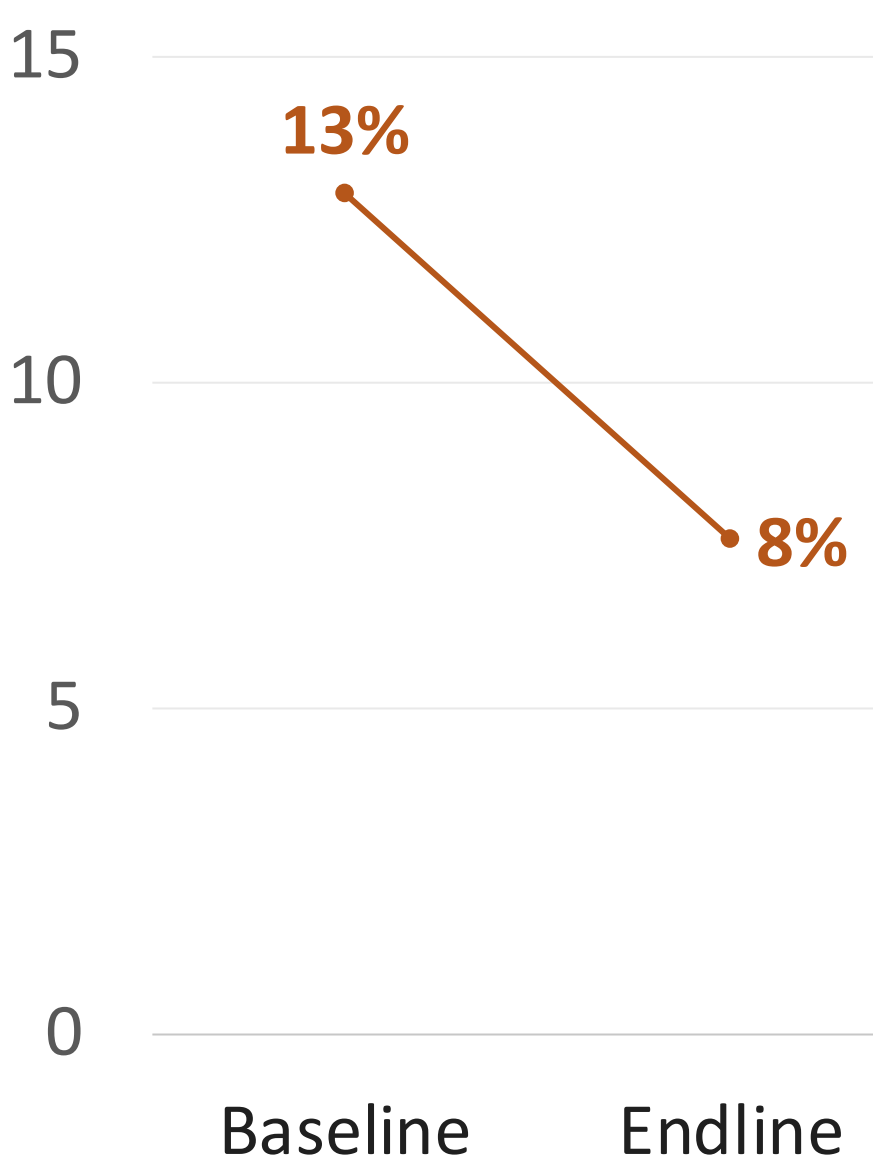
Says sanguma is real

% of participants



Sees accused as dangerous

% of participants



Proposes violence

% of participants

