



In Practice: Working with Men to Prevent Gender-based Violence



Prevention

- Primary – before the violence starts
 - Reduce risk factors, increase protective factors
 - Individual and social norm change
- Secondary – immediate response to violence
 - Emergency services, medical care
- Tertiary – longer-term approaches aimed to diminish effect of violence
 - Batterer intervention, services to reduce emotional trauma of survivor

A Focus on Fostering Social Change

- Address the root cause of GBV: power imbalance between women and men
- Influence social norms at every level: individual, relationship, community, societal levels
- Foster analysis of the injustice of women's subordination
- Inspire activism among communities



Primary Prevention: Social Norm Change Programming (Heise 2012)

Individual Approaches:

Peer Training/Workshops

- Stepping Stones, Strategies for Hope/Medical Research Council (South African version)
- Program H, Promundo
- Ethiopia Male Norms Initiative, Population Council

Relationship Approaches:

Awareness Raising

- One Man Can, Sonke Gender Justice
- We Can, Oxfam
- MenCARE, MenEngage

Community Approaches:

Behavior Change and Communication Strategies

- Soul City
- SASA!, Raising Voices

Problematic Program Approaches	Example	Implications
Men as the problem	Blame and shame, punitive approaches	Increased backlash, fear, suspicion, increased danger for women, drives problem underground
Men as the savior	Rescues, some role model approaches	Reinforced patriarchy, further burdens men, further marginalizes women
Men as the enemy	Some women's villages, some protection programs, danger spot campaigns, some communications campaigns	Breakdown of male/female relationships, stigma
Men as THE solution	Some role model approaches, male-only engagement	Women are passive victims, men maintain power, ignores women's role in maintaining norms
Men as the competitor	Some VAM/gender norm work	Perpetuates skewed analysis of GBV, creates organizational and community tensions
Men as the perpetrator (particularly in IPV work)	Arrest and charge, punitive approaches	Breadwinner taken away, family structures weakened

Promising Program Approaches	Example	Implications
Men as PART of the solution	Some community mobilization work, men as partners work	Men and women's strengths and importance recognized
Men as a role models	Personal narratives, small groups of men, communication campaigns	Rethinking of traditional gender norms, can marginalize 'modern' men
Men as allies	Peer group work	Increased accountability to women / women's movement

The field is very young – much more work and learning is needed!

Learning from Practice...

Accountability to Women

- **Accountability is . . .**
 - . . . a tool for addressing injustice based on the position that the best knowledge of an injustice comes from those who have experienced it.
- Implications
 - Recognize, respect, learn from decades of VAW work
 - Avoid siloed approaches
 - Actively and consistently learn about the multi-faceted dynamics of oppression and male privilege
 - Men take responsibility for their own education / politicization

Learning from Practice...

Content and Language is Critical

- Power

- Power within
- Power over
- Power with
- Power to

Implications

- Inclusive
- Transformative
- Avoids 'gender' and 'rights' language
- Provocative
- Brings men on board
- Addresses all types of 'power over' (avoids competition)
- Avoids marginalization where are women in 'engaging men'?

Learning from Practice...

Competition Hurts Everyone

- Current debates
 - Male-to-male violence
 - Female-to-male violence
- Implications
 - Sets up 'victim' competition (who has it worse)
 - Pits 'victims' against each other
 - Misunderstanding of roots and reach of patriarchy
 - Marginalizes trauma of victims (male or female)
 - Misrepresentation/confusion of prevalence

Challenges Emerging

- *“Engaging men has become the goal rather than the strategy”*
- Meaningful, in-depth content that is truly transformative – content is not optional!
- Win/lose dynamic between VAM and VAW
- Finding men able to lead the work
 - Men have multiple pressures, history of inequality need time to understand/confront their privilege
 - Is a process, can't be done in a training or two

Specific GBV in Emergencies Challenges

- Implications of temporary or transitional communities on social norm change
- Notions of masculinity intensely challenged in emergency settings
- Social norm change work on stranger rape/sexual violence in conflict
- Intense priorities/survival, relationship issues relegated to secondary concerns
- Impact of situational trauma on activism, personal agency



Things to Consider

- If you are working with men... what content are you using?
- Is your language inclusive: engaging men / engaging communities
- In your context what is the feasibility of social norm change work?
 - Will people be there for some time?
 - Is there a sense (or could be) of community?
 - Can you take the long view (i.e., people taking ideas with them).
- If program is focused on working with men how could it be more holistic?

Thank you!



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