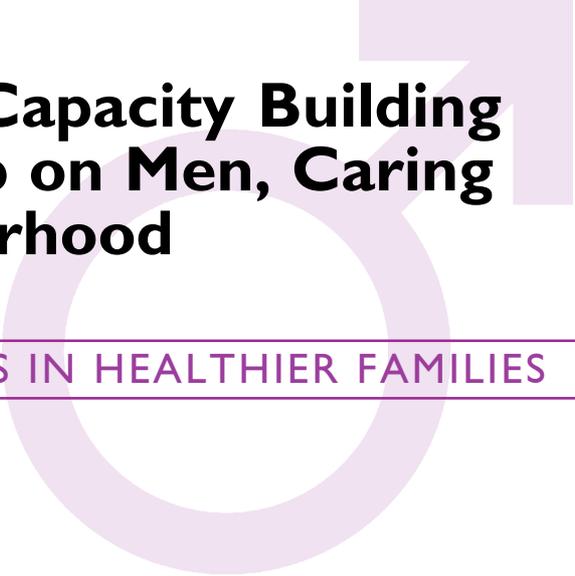




# Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Men, Caring and Fatherhood

ENGAGING MEN AS PARTNERS IN HEALTHIER FAMILIES





# **Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Men, Caring and Fatherhood**

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ENGAGING MEN AS PARTNERS IN HEALTHIER FAMILIES

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*17-19 October 2005  
Kathmandu, Nepal*

*Organised by*

Save the Children Sweden  
Regional Office for South and Central Asia

UNIFEM  
Regional Office for South Asia

Instituto PROMUNDO  
Brazil

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We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

Save the Children works for:

- a world which respects and values each child
- a world which listens to children and learns
- a world where all children have hope and opportunity

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# LIST OF CONTENTS

<b>PREFACE</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS</b> .....	<b>x</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>xi</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background and Rationale .....	1
1.2 Work on masculinity at various levels .....	3
1.3 Personal reflections on fatherhood .....	4
1.4 Expectations and Objectives .....	5
<b>2. WHY WORK WITH MEN AND BOYS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
2.1 International perspectives on engaging boys and men .....	6
2.2 Growing understanding on the socialisation of boys and men .....	7
2.3 Recognising needs and roles of boys and men .....	8
2.4 Recognition of boys' and men's role in HIV/AIDS .....	8
2.5 Growing attention to men as fathers and men in the family .....	8
2.6 Engaging boys and men on gender-based violence .....	9
2.7 Conceptual Framework .....	9
2.8 A Lifecycle Approach .....	10
2.9 Applying an ecological perspective to changing gender norms .....	10
2.10 Fatherhood and men in the family, in different settings .....	11
<b>3. CONCEPTS OF FATHERHOOD</b> .....	<b>16</b>
3.1 Fatherhood in international perspective .....	16
3.2 Emerging terms and concepts in fatherhood .....	17
3.3 Focusing on fatherhood .....	18
3.4 Factors involved in father's participation .....	18
3.5 Fathers/men and child development .....	19
<b>4. PROGRAMME AND POLICY EXPERIENCES TO PROMOTE FATHER'S INVOLVEMENT</b> <b>21</b>	
4.1 Policy experiences and learnings from Sweden .....	21
4.2 The Dialogue Project .....	25
4.3 The Program H Alliance .....	26
4.4 Rozan .....	29

<b>5. PROMOTING INVOLVEMENT OF FATHERS IN FULFILLING NEEDS OF CHILDREN .....</b>	<b>31</b>
5.1 A Child's Development Needs .....	31
5.2 Perspectives from Children's Rights .....	37
<b>6. APPLYING THE MASCULINITIES APPROACH .....</b>	<b>40</b>
6.1 Promoting change in individual men .....	40
6.2 Involving fathers in securing child rights .....	41
6.3 Seven themes for action .....	42
6.4 Country action plans .....	43
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>49</b>
Annexure 1: Bangladesh Network for Working with Men & Boys .....	50
Annexure 2: Regional Strategy of Working with Men and Boys to end Violence against Children and Promote Gender Equality (Draft) .....	52
Annexure 3: List of Participants .....	55
Annexure 4: List of Resources .....	59

## PREFACE

Gender inequality is a pervasive phenomenon in the world that has adverse implications and consequences in the lives of girls, boys, women and men. It is embedded in the system of patriarchy where male dominance and male superiority is an accepted norm and value. Most South Asian countries are patriarchal, where girls and women are subordinated and in an inferior position, be it in the family, community or at the state level. Such situation reaps inequalities and injustice in society. It is important to understand that boys and men, girls and women are all part of society and their lives are affected by the values, beliefs and norms of the system they live in. Boys and men are every bit as affected and shaped by the gender order as girls and women are. Therefore, without partnering with boys and men, it is simply not possible to reach the goal of creating a gender-equitable and just society. Since both the dominant groups and the subordinate groups are embedded in the social system, there has to be efforts from both ends, to deconstruct the rigid system of hierarchy and power relations to end discrimination and subordination of the weak and powerless.

Violence against girls, boys and women is a long prevailing social occurrence all over the world. This grossly violates children's and women's human rights, adds to the vulnerability of girls, boys and women, further exposing them to situations of exploitation and discrimination. There is a realisation that violence is a by-product of unequal power relations between the privileged and the deprived class. In fact, violence between men and against men by other men is a major form of violence, and sometimes a factor of men's violence against women and children. It is an understood fact that most of the violence that is perpetuated against children and women are primarily carried out by boys and men. Our social structure makes children and women dependent on a male, be it their father, brother, husband. Thus, our intention is to help men and boys be human beings, in order to have a gender-equitable society, free of violence. The thrust is to establish gender equality at all levels - at home, the community and the state, which is largely dominated by males at the policy level. Our success in bringing about gender sensitive policies and practices is dependant on how successful we are in sensitising men at all levels.

UNIFEM and Save the Children Sweden are committed to working on violence against women and violence against children respectively. Our experiences in the field have shown that the types and forms of violence against women and children are becoming more complex and difficult. Both agencies realise that it is essential to bring boys and men on board if these issues are to be addressed in an effective manner. With ever increasing changes in the roles, responsibilities and notions of sexuality of girls, boys, women and men in the present context of globalisation, urbanisation, situations of conflict and displacement, migration etc. it is all the more necessary to work with boys and men to redefine and reconstruct notions of masculinities, manhood and fatherhood. It is equally important to create linkages and identify how this issue interplays with

other thematic areas like violence against women and children, HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, etc. The *Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Men, Caring and Fatherhood: Engaging Men as Partners in Healthier Families*, is a step towards this. This workshop is a part of the follow up process of the meeting Regional Strategies and Tools for Working with Men and Boys to end Violence against Girls, Boys, Women and other Men - held in December 2004 - a partnership between UNIFEM and Save the Children Sweden.

It is a matter of satisfaction for both organisations to have come together on this issue to work towards achieving a common goal. The process, which began two years ago, is now fructifying, gaining concrete dimensions with the help of our committed partners. We appreciate the work being undertaken by them and are committed to support them at every level.

**Lisa Lundgren**

Regional Representative  
Save the Children Sweden  
Regional Office for South and Central Asia

**Chandni Joshi**

Regional Programme Director  
UNIFEM  
South Asia Regional Office

# FOREWORD

Too much work with and discussion about men and boys has focused on the negative. Our research often compiles long lists of the consequences of the negative behaviours of men and boys: their use of violence, their 'lack' of responsibility, or their 'lack' of participation in the family. To be sure, we cannot ignore, nor should we, the extent of these negative behaviours. We know that men's violence against women, girls, boys and other men are human right violations and are prevalent in different forms, worldwide. We know that most criminal offences and acts of violence, in the public sphere, are committed by young men. We know that for too many young men, violent version of manhood are glorified, whether in media, or among their peers and adult men.

But we know that this violence is created, learnt and socialised; boys are not inherently or biologically determined to be violent. We know that from early childhood, boys are exposed to violence, are its victims, its witnesses and in the process often learn to become its perpetrators. There is an increasing recognition that men and boys have a role to play in questioning other men's and boys' use of violence. It has also been recognised that by involving men and boys in actions to address gender discrimination and violence, and by supporting and encouraging men to become progressively more involved in the care of their children, men and boys have much to gain themselves in the process.

Indeed, fatherhood and engaging men and boys in caring and supportive roles is a fantastic starting point. We have evidence, worldwide, that men's active and non-violent participation in the care of children is good for children (who show better health and developmental outcomes), for women (as men take on a more equitable share of household chores) and for men themselves. In some studies, men who report positive connections to their children have fewer mental health problems, and are less likely to use substances or be involved in criminal activity. For many men, close relationships with their children are among their most important relationships and sources of meaning in their lives.

In addition, we have strong, positive cultural messages on our side. Most societies value men's participation in the lives of their children. While this participation can sometimes be negative, most societal groups around the world value the participation of men as providers, playmates, companions, sources of advice and in many cases as caregivers.

There is still much to be done of course. Gender inequalities and gender discrimination in the care of children is pervasive. Men provide only about a third to a fourth of the time in caring for children that women do worldwide, and mothers on average devote a higher percentage of their earnings to their children than men do.

To be sure, legal and policy structures must be reconsidered. In some countries, child support and paternity legislation is inadequate and allows too many men to avoid responsibilities for the children they father. In some settings, there is little incentive in terms of paternity leave policies for men (let alone for women) for them to spend time with their newborn or young children. Divorce law also needs to be reviewed in many countries to provide for more equal burdens and more equal access and contact with children in cases of divorce and separation of parents. And we know that even in those countries with the most progressive laws to encourage more equal participation by men and women in care-giving, the nature of capitalist economies dictates realities. Too many men and women worldwide are forced to migrate for work, work long hours, commute long hours, or work extra jobs in detriment to time they might spend with their children.

It is easy to be pessimistic about the challenges before us. But there are reasons to be optimistic. Social service systems, education systems and NGOs in some parts of the world are paying more attention to how boys are socialised. There is a growing realisation that caring is a skill, which is learnt during the course of life, and that it can be taught to boys. Girls, for example are encouraged from an early age to be caring towards their siblings and other family members. Boys who play with dolls or involve themselves in domestic chores are often ridiculed. They are expected to be strong and take risks in life.

But we know, from a growing number of programmes worldwide, that if boys are encouraged to question traditional gender norms and roles and they interact with men and other boys who take responsibility in care giving situations, they are more likely to grow up to be more gender sensitive adults. We know too that children who grow up in households and settings where men take an active role in care-giving are themselves more likely to show flexible views about gender. In sum, we know something about how to encourage boys and men to participate in non-violent, caring ways in the family and in their relationships. We have promising and proven examples at the programme level and the policy level from Bangladesh to Sweden to Brazil to Canada of engaging boys and men in care-giving and achieving greater gender equality. The challenge before us is not a technical one. It is not a question of whether we know how to do it not. The challenge is a political and structural one. The challenge before us is this: Can societies, policymakers and employers be convinced that men's roles as caregivers are important?

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Instituto PROMUNDO

**Lena Karlsson**  
Chair  
Save the Children  
Global Task Group on Violence Against Children

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We would like to thank Gary Barker for taking the lead in facilitating the workshop, giving us an insight into the work being undertaken on fatherhood at all levels and equipping us with skills and know-how to initiate the work in this region. Our gratitude to Nicklas Kelemen for giving us an understanding of how the traditional notions of masculinities are deeply embedded in history and cultures all over the world.

Our deepest appreciation and congratulations to others in the organising team – Archana Tamang, Aruna Thapa, Lena Karlsson, Sangeeta Thapa, Satish Singh and Syed Sagir Bukhari – for an extremely well organised and successful workshop. A special mention for Anil Kumar Ray, Anju Pradhan, Ashok Thapa, Machhe Maharjan and Prajwol Malekoo for excellent logistics support.

Our gratitude to Neha Bhandari for documenting the proceedings of the entire workshop.

We also appreciate Bernard van Leer Foundation for providing participants with copies of *Supporting Fathers – Contributions from the International Fatherhood Summit (2003)*.

Finally a special mention for all the participants who have accepted the challenge to work on this extremely important and difficult issue.

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## ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>CORO</b>	Committee of Resource Organisations
<b>CRP</b>	Child Rights Programming
<b>ECD</b>	Early Childhood Development
<b>GEM</b>	Gender Empowerment Measure
<b>ICPD</b>	International Conference on Population and Development
<b>IDU</b>	Injection Drug Users
<b>MASVAW</b>	Men's Action for Stopping Violence Against Women
<b>PMTCT</b>	Preventing Mother-to-Child Transmission
<b>PRI</b>	Panchayati Raj Institutions
<b>SIDA</b>	Swedish International Development Agency
<b>UNCRC</b>	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

## SUMMARY

Save the Children Sweden, Regional Office for South and Central Asia and UNIFEM, South Asia Regional Office came together to capacitate twenty four development professionals from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sweden to equip men and boys to become more caring, attentive and gender sensitive fathers and husbands, in turn helping themselves, their families and the society at large.

The organisations represented at the workshop were:

**Bangladesh:** Acid Survivors Foundation, Agrogoti Sangstha, Association for Community Development (ACD), BITA (Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts), CARE Bangladesh, Concern Worldwide Bangladesh, Save the Children Sweden-Denmark

**India:** EKTA, GROUPE Developpement, MASVAW (Men's Action for Stopping Violence Against Women)

**Nepal:** Forum for Women, Law & Development (FWLD), Pro Public.

**Pakistan:** AMAL Human Development Network, LDM (Leadership Development Mechanism), PAVHNA, Rozan, World Education Inc.

**Region:** Save the Children Sweden, Regional Office for South and Central Asia, UNIFEM South Asia, Regional Office.

**Brazil:** Instituto PROMUNDO

**Sweden:** Save the Children Sweden, Head Office

Fatherhood needs to be addressed in conjunction with motherhood and in the wider context of the family. It cannot be addressed in isolation. It further relates to the larger issue of masculinity and manhood. Although initially fatherhood was treated as a biological factor, in the last few years, it is increasingly being recognised as a social construction. In order to change traditional notions of fatherhood, self-interest of men and boys in being better fathers needs to be emphasised.

Little research exists on how men perceive fatherhood and how children perceive parenting. Mothers and fathers who share a close relationship between themselves and with their child, foster child development and, therefore in turn, fulfilment of child rights. Addressing fatherhood gives us an entry point into other pivotal areas of gender equality and violence against women and children. When engaging men

and boys it is vital to highlight positive aspects of manhood, avoiding confrontations and find a common language to involve them in a long-term dialogue. Finding points of entry using the ecological model is essential to holistically approach the issue.

Globally some promising examples of programmes exist which have engaged boys and men to promoting gender equality. However, since there are few experiences in developing countries, agencies in South Asia have a pioneering role to play in this field.

Addressing fatherhood requires work at diverse levels including the government, civil society, community, family and individual. The government needs to implement the international instruments on child rights and fatherhood that they are signatory to. There needs to be advocacy for the enactment of legislations that encourage and enable the equal role of mothers and fathers in the children's lives. Issues dealing with masculinities and fatherhood need to be incorporated in the school and college curriculum. The private sector needs to be sensitised to promote men spending time with their children. This may require change in company policies of paternal leave and working hours. Further, the media needs to be responsible for the images that subtly reinforce stereotypes of a 'normal' family.

At the community, family and individual level, positive reinforcements of fatherhood are vital. Awareness campaigns and educational programmes need to be undertaken to sensitise all generations. 'Fathers Club' of likeminded fathers could be initiated at the community level. This could be a forum for fathers to share and discuss issues related to fatherhood. Training on parenting should be promoted which should involve participation of both parents. Simultaneously, we need to form networks of a larger constituency of like-minded organisations and individuals to work on this relatively new issue. Finally we need to encourage men and boys who are gender sensitive and take responsibility towards their children. Such men do exist, the challenge is to identify them as they often hide behind the façade of societal expectations. Indeed, most men want to support their children in multiple and meaningful ways and have the potential to do so. The challenge is to encourage them to see these as positive attributes and help them to act upon it.



This chapter emphasises and justifies the need to work with men and boys, especially in the sphere of fatherhood. It provides an outline of the work being undertaken on masculinity, regionally and globally, while providing an informal insight into attributes that make a stereotypical father.

### **1.1 Background and Rationale**

Worldwide, there is increased attention to men's responsibilities in sexual and reproductive health along with their roles in families and their participation as fathers in developing countries. This could be due to increasing rates of marital discord and dissolution, the growing participation of women in the workforce and their pre-occupation with the public sphere. Researchers and advocates of women's rights, from a traditional gender perspective, have often, with good reason, called attention to gender inequalities related to child-care and domestic tasks. Unfortunately, however, these analyses have often overlooked the role of boys and men in the family's health,

## **I. PROMOTING INVOLVEMENT OF FATHERS IN FULFILLING NEEDS OF CHILDREN**

development and well-being. Data suggests that world over, fathers contribute far less time to direct childcare. Although there is significant variation across countries and among men, they are, nonetheless, present in the lives of children.

One of the main reasons for men's limiting engagement with their children is the result of socialisation and the social construct of gender. Girls and boys frequently learn from a very young age their gender specific roles. Boys and men are protectors and providers, leaving reproductive work for girls and women. While some research argues that women are more biologically attuned to their children's needs, there is a growing consensus that child-care is an acquired skill. This skill is learnt at a very young age and girls are more likely to learn than boys. Further, research shows that, if given a chance, boys and men can demonstrate the same skills.

**Studies from diverse settings find that fathers contribute about one-third to one-fourth of the time that mothers do to direct children care.**

(Population Council, 2001)

Moreover working on fatherhood gives us an entry point to addressing other forms of gender inequalities in society and violence against children. In addition, fatherhood relates to the wider context of masculinities; where its hegemonic forms are often synonymous with aggression and violent behaviour. Boys and men are expected to earn a living and play multiple roles in the family. As a result of such expectations, boys and men often tend to feel pressurised and powerless in the outside world. Far less 'powerful' than as they are expected to feel. This contradiction results in men often resorting to aggression within their homes, replaying stereotypical roles in their families, in order to feel more 'masculine'. Integrating and addressing issues of masculinities in all ongoing activities of concerned stakeholders will be a significant value addition, to the ongoing efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, violence against women and children.

Furthermore, when we discuss men or fatherhood, and the socialisation of boys and girls, it is important that we recognise the plurality of men, and we avoid simplistic views that men or women automatically follow prevailing norms. We know that gender norms are diffused and that individual men and women bring their subjectivity to these norms. The individual's attitudes toward these norms change over time, in different contexts, during specific relationships and over the lifecycle. When we talk about tendencies in the socialisation of boys and girls, we must recognise that we are generalising and that there is remarkable complexity in individuals and cultural specific contexts.

Article 18 of UNCRC

**Both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing of the child. States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child rearing responsibilities and ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.**

To work holistically with these issues, it is imperative to address both the immediate and root causes of these problems. Patriarchal structures, power relations between girl and boy children, children and adults and men and women are some of the underlying causes that result in gender inequalities and violence against children and women. The realisation that the analysis of and programming around root and immediate causes of violence connect comprehensively both to UNIFEM and Save the Children Sweden's work. The organisational mandates have been instrumental for both the agencies in collectively working towards strengthening roles and engagement of boys and men in families.

To create a more gender-equitable society, we need to work with fathers at home and address the prevalent socialisation processes, which can make boys prepared for a more caring fatherhood. This intersects with child development as boys and girls gain high self-esteem from a secure family environment where both mothers and fathers are involved in child rearing. The UN Study on Violence against Children consultations and other consultations with children around the world, also reveal children's desire for more sensitive and caring families, which includes mothers and fathers. This gives us an area of work, as in most interventions, families as a setting often gets excluded.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) clearly states the importance of both mother and father sharing parental responsibility. Governments should help the parents by providing services to support them, especially if both parents are wage workers.

It is imperative to link the work on fatherhood with principles of Child Rights Programming (CRP) namely participation, non-discrimination and accountability. Following the rights based approach necessitates involving boys and girls actively in programmes on non-discrimination and violence against children and women. For instance, until recently the work on child sexual abuse focused only on the individual child. Not

much work was done with perpetrators who are mostly men and boys. Therefore, at the structural and the individual level, working with active participation of boys and men becomes a priority.

Working with a rights perspective means addressing the underlying causes of rights violations and not just targeting immediate causes. It means working beyond causes like poverty and strategising to deal with patriarchal structures, discrimination etc. However, a patriarchal structure doesn't mean that men and boys are always violent but that they are responsible for perpetuating most of the violence in society.

In addition to all of this, we must address accountability of all parties involved, including the government, private sector, community, families, children and us as well. Accountability structures, such as working with the government on setting up monitoring mechanisms for furthering child rights, creating gender sensitive policies at the country and corporate levels to support parents need to be strengthened. This includes our organisational policies as well.

## **1.2 Work on masculinity at various levels**

### ***Within the region***

In 1999, Save the Children and UNICEF came together to support the production of a video film, 'Let's Talk Men', a package of three documentaries and a short fiction film made by well-known short and documentary filmmakers from Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan.

The films were made to be used within existing programmes, to present young people with alternative male role models vis-à-vis existing dominant paradigms within South Asian cultures and societies, where violence against girls and women is almost legitimated. The primary target group was adolescents (in particular boys) aged between 13 to 20 years.

***When four friends meet, the film from India, discusses the pressure and power associated with men. The film from Pakistan, Yeh hui na mardonwali baat is a discussion with women on the definition of masculinity. "Listen to the Wind", film by Nepalese filmmakers revolves around a dying man and a boy, discussing forms of masculinity, which may not be the norm. The film from Bangladesh "Urban Expectations" runs a parallel story between a boy who doesn't have stereotypical characteristics and the supposed 'rough and tough' boys.***

***All the films come with a facilitator's guide/discussion manual.***

UNIFEM arranged a travelling seminar and screening of the films in India. However, the films have not been disseminated widely enough.

Apart from this initiative, agencies in the region are trying to engage boys and men on issues of reproductive health, responsible sexual behaviour, HIV/AIDS. However, issues of fatherhood remain elusive. In addition some agencies are working on gender-based violence, but they are focusing more on women and girls.

Many agencies in the region express a concern that they are not adequately equipped or trained to work with the family as a unit, or holistically, however, there is an interest to learn more about issues surrounding fatherhood. Save the Children took a conscious decision to adapt the already existing tools in the region in various contexts rather than develop any more tools. Consequently, Save the Children Sweden undertook an extensive mapping exercise in 2004. As part of the initiative to support work with men and boys in the region, UNIFEM and Save the Children Sweden invited Michael Kaufman from the White Ribbon Campaign, Canada to conduct a workshop on 'Strategies & Tools for Working with Men and Boys to end Violence against Girls, Boys, Women and other Men'. At the regional level, Save the

Children brought together agencies working with men and boys, to share approaches and develop a regional strategy, in March 2005. Save the Children Sweden collaborated with *Groupe Developpement* to support and organise a 'Training of Facilitators on Positive Discipline Tools and Techniques', in order to improve parenting skills in the region.

A life skills manual for adolescent boys titled - Choose a future! - by CEDPA is available in the region. This carries a module on preparing boys for fatherhood. MASVAW (Men's Action for Stopping Violence against Women), an organisation based in India is working with men and boys. Agencies in Bangladesh have demonstrated integration of this work with their ongoing programmes along with creating a network of NGOs to work in this area.<sup>1</sup>

### Outside the region

In Stockholm, Save the Children Sweden Head Office is supporting The Dialogue Project, a group actively working with men and boys. In Brazil, Instituto PROMUNDO began by looking at how to engage boys and young men to a greater extent in group educational and community reflections about sexuality, HIV/AIDS, fatherhood and violence. Baseline research carried out by PROMUNDO

identified a number of men who were actively participating in childcare, sexual and reproductive health issues, or actively questioned men's use of violence against women. These 'voices of resistance' to some of the prevailing norms which sometimes legitimate men's use of violence against women, and discourage men's participation in sexual health issues, provided tremendous insights on how to promote existing discourses and community norms that already included messages of gender equity. These insights allowed PROMUNDO and its colleague organisations to design a series of interventions to promote more gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours among men. Based on these reflections, the organisation began supporting a programme on masculinity concerns Program H. However, it was soon clear that working with men and boys cannot be a discrete project, but has to be a collective movement that engages groups of individual, INGOs and policy makers.<sup>2</sup>

## 1.3 Personal reflections on fatherhood

### Activity

As professionals working in social development, we know that our views about

### Some excerpts:

"Father is powerful and dominant, whether good and bad."

"Father is like a sun - it gives light to their family."

"Father is a loving, caring person."

"Father is a source of inspiration, he is respected."

"Father is the decision maker in a family."

A number of participants drew pictures of trees and sun, relating their qualities to that of a father. A tree provides shelter, similarly father provides protection and guidance. A tree also has many branches, similarly a father plays many roles - he is a caregiver, protector and provider. Father is like the sun, giving energy to everyone in the family. Fathers and children were depicted as grass and flowers respectively. Grass gives food to the flower while the flower gives something back to the grass like manure etc, thereby depicting fatherhood as a two way process. A participant depicted father as a stone - strong, resistant and stubborn, somebody who will not change his perceptions and values. Another showed father as a man carrying burdens and responsibility. A penguin was used as a metaphor for fatherhood as father and mother penguins take equal responsibility of the penguin family.

<sup>1</sup> For more details, refer to Annexure I

<sup>2</sup> For more information on Program H, refer to 'Mapping of tools for working with men and boys to end violence against girls, boys and women in South Asia', by Save the Children Sweden.

gender and fatherhood are shaped in part by our own subjective experiences and beliefs about these issues. Therefore, before exploring ways of engaging fathers as professionals, participants were asked to express their personal reflections on fatherhood by writing a phrase or drawing something from the natural environment. They shared their choice of metaphors with each other in pairs, while also introducing themselves and their backgrounds.

Over all, participants depicted positive aspects of fatherhood, most agreeing that fathers are the controlling force in families. The power they hold can be used for good or be abused, but in any case echoed a view - sometimes questioned and sometimes not - that men hold more power than women. It was interesting to note that although children perceive mothers with security and protection, the participants perceived these as fatherly attributes. These issues signalled our own needs as professionals - both men and women - to question the underlying power structures in the family, structures that are part of our upbringing.

These reflections on positive and negative images of fatherhood, give us areas to work with in our interventions towards gender equality.

#### **1.4 Expectations and Objectives**

Participants formed groups to brainstorm their expectations from the workshop. These were:

- To demystify and clarify the role of fathers in families. Addressing misconceptions and negative aspects about fatherhood and linking them to masculinity and gender issues.
- To understand the interventions and strategies to engage men as fathers and change their role from a power figure to that of a loving and caring parent.
- To learn from existing practical initiatives and integrate the issue in ongoing programmes.
- To learn how to address fatherhood in broken families, and in families where fathers are not staying in the same place as a result of migration or other factors.
- To prepare a strong follow up and action plan for implementation.

#### **The agenda and sessions matched the expectations of participants. In particular, the objectives of the workshop were:**

- To discuss and present current trends and policies in engaging boys and men in care giving, promoting children's rights and men's involvement with fatherhood;
- To present relevant national and international programmes and policy experiences promoting 'involved fatherhood';
- To develop concrete plans of action for, men and fathers, including boys in the ongoing work of the participating organisations.



## 2. WHY WORK WITH MEN AND BOYS

Men and boys are seen as the centre of violence and power struggles affecting girls and women. Yet there are positive elements that men and boys bring to their families. Moreover men and boys have needs that need to be addressed. Applying the ecological model while using the life cycle approach coupled with a holistic strategy can make men more involved, sensitive and gender responsive fathers.

### 2.1 International Perspectives on Engaging Boys and Men

Presently 130 nations have affirmed the need to engage boys and men by being signatory to various covenants, including the text below.

The question of government's accountability surfaces here. We need to assess what have been the outcomes of governments' pledge to such agendas. In fact, such international documents become an important base for our advocacy with the state.

In addition to ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development), held in Cairo, 1994, there is a growing international

**"Special efforts should be made to emphasise men's shared responsibility and promote their active involvement in responsible parenthood, sexual and reproductive behaviour, including family planning; maternal and child health; prevention of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV; ... share d control and contribution to family income, children's education, health and nutrition; and recognition .... of the equal value of children of both sexes. Male responsibilities in family life must be included in the education of children from the earliest ages. Special emphasis should be placed on the prevention of violence against women and children."**

International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action, 1994, Paragraph 4.27

consensus on involving boys and men in gender equity. This has emerged strongly in following international forums:

- Beijing Conference on Women - 1995
- UNAIDS - World AIDS Campaign on Men and AIDS - 2000-2001
- WHO Initiative on Boys' Health - 2001-2002
- USAID Conference on Men and Sexual Reproductive Health - 2003
- Expert Meeting on Involving Men and Boys in Achieving Gender Equality, Commission on the Status of Women/ UN - 2003
- International Fatherhood Summit in UK, 2003, where the developing countries were under-represented.

We urgently need to gauge the impact of such forums. For, though there is widespread attention to the issue, the following statistics suggest a long road ahead.

- There are nearly **600,000 maternity-related deaths each year** - these are preventable and require immediate engagement of men, as in most communities men consider reproductive health as a woman's concern. Moreover, women are often dependent on men for access to health related services.
- **74 per cent of contraceptives worldwide are female-methods** as a result, men, world over take noticeably less responsibility for contraception.
- **30 per cent - 50 per cent of women worldwide are victims of physical violence by their male partner** - we don't have empirical research to show if these figures have changed in the recent past.
- **Women spend three to four times, more time caring for children than men** - however, there are communities where men spend more or equal time looking after their children.
- There are **340 million new cases of sexually transmitted infections** between the age group of 15-49 years, excluding HIV. This can be controlled if men take responsibility for using condoms.

From the above data, we see boys and men at the centre of a variety of issues affecting girls and women. It is therefore vital that we view boys and men in a positive light and engage them in healthier families. Rather than perceiving them as 'obstacles', we need to see them as 'partners' in reproductive health and responsible sexual behaviour. Boys and men are not 'means to an end' but subjects of their own needs i.e. we need to take boys' and men's emotional, mental and physical needs into account as well. It is essential that they be viewed as potential caregivers rather than 'careless' as they are stereotypically known.

Boys and men are complex subjects and cannot be homogenised or generalised. We must recognise that a simple power analysis is insufficient to explain intimate relationships and gender dynamics. In patriarchal societies too, we see boys and men suffering from gender inequalities. The extent and scope of power held differs from one male to another. For instance, men from lower class and caste do not have the same power as men from higher caste and income groups. Within families too, we see many mothers-in-law as being able to exercise more power than boys and men. So we cannot simplistically assume that all men are powerful and equally powerful.

## 2.2 Growing understanding on the socialisation of boys and men

The concept of 'masculinities' emerges from sociology to capture the complexity of different competing models or versions of manhood - hegemonic and subordinate - some with more 'power' or 'salience' than others, and intersecting with class, cultural context, ethnicity and other factors. Within the concept of masculinities, or different versions of manhood, there are individual differences or subjectivities. Thus, versions of manhood vary, informed by cultural and historical contexts, class, etc., and the way individual men live out manhood. For instance, salient versions of manhood in India are different from those in Uganda, and within the salient categories of

manhood in India, there are remarkable individual and sub-group differences. Furthermore, a life cycle approach from the field of human development suggests that individual men do not represent static ideas about gender norms, or manhood, across their lifetime. Therefore 'masculinities' is a complex term that needs to be deconstructed and understood to reflect both structural issues - competing versions of manhood - and individual differences.

To understand the behaviour of boys and men as they are socially constructed, we need to see where these teachings and learning come from. Research suggests that our earliest experience of being moulded in gender specific ways come as early as 16th- 20th week in the womb. Today, when ultrasound can reveal the sex of the foetus, very often adults refer to male foetuses in a boisterous manner and using gentler terms for female foetuses. Such gendered behaviour by adults, impacts construction of children's lives. However, the 'nature versus nurture' debate frequently comes up while discussing socialisation of boys and girls. Is the behaviour of boys and men and girls and women, a result of biology or is it because how they are raised? Researchers agree that there are biological differences between males and females, but there is a growing consensus that it largely depends on how girls and boys are raised. In the human genome mapping process, researchers have not been able to find a chromosome that makes men drive vehicles faster than women or makes men more prone to using guns and so on. The aggressive tendencies that we see in men are the result of the social environment in which they are raised

### **2.3 Recognising needs and roles of boys and men**

While working with boys and men, it is important to recognise boys and men's multiple needs and challenges, including employment, education and health issues such as accidents, violence, prostate cancer, sexual disorders, infertility and mental health. All these needs come together just as women have their

needs. In most parts of the world, males are defined as providers and protectors but often men are unemployed and frequently migrate, spending time away from their families. When these men are spoken to, they want livelihood to be addressed as the topmost priority rather than issues of fatherhood. It is important to be aware of such issues that affect boys and men before venturing into areas of fathering.

### **2.4 Recognition of boys' and men's role in HIV/AIDS**

- There are 10 million HIV positive men in Africa, 7.5 million in the rest of world - Most of the HIV infected cases around the world are men.
- ¼ HIV infected people are young men under the age of 25.
- Specific groups of young men drive HIV epidemics: these include IDUs (Injection Drug Users), young men who migrate for work, soldiers, young men in conflict-settings, men having sex with men and women engaging men in PMTCT (Preventing Mother-to-Child Transmission).

In many cases we observe that men refuse to acknowledge HIV/AIDS as they do not want to be seen as weak. As a result they often stay away from appropriate and necessary treatment. Given the scenario, it becomes an imperative to reach boys early with messages on safe sex behaviours.

### **2.5 Growing attention to men as fathers and men in the family**

Studies show that fathers spend one-third to one-fourth of the time that mothers do in child-care. However it varies from family to family, social setting and country. Moreover, domestic work done by men and women is by no means equal. In Latin America, for instance, women do 85 per cent -90 per cent of the domestic work, in addition to wage work outside the house. Further, there are changes in family structures in most parts of the world. As a result of this, a number of

children have no contact with fathers or father figures. In fact, 10 per cent -50 per cent are female-headed households today.

It is necessary to recognise roles that fathers play in child development as well as maternal and child health. Our programmes rarely mention 'maternal and paternal child health' which clearly shows the lack of importance we give to fathering.

In order to work with men, it is essential that we tap their self-interest on being caring fathers. Very little work has been done in this area. When men agree that they want to play an important role in the lives of their children, the chances of resistance from them are minimal. It is also in the fathers' self-interest that having a close relationship with their children, will make the children perpetuate their ideals and values.

## 2.6 Engaging boys and men on the issue of gender-based violence

Studies indicate that there is a connection between violence and the sexual and reproductive health of women. It is often observed that women are so intimidated by their partners that they are unable to negotiate responsible sexual behaviour. In addition, it has been noticed that men who have been victims of violence or who have witnessed violence, tend to perpetrate violence as well. However, at the same time, there are groups of men who see and experience violence but are not themselves violent.

In South Asia, there is a gradual increase in the number of initiatives that engage men in reducing gender-based violence, such as

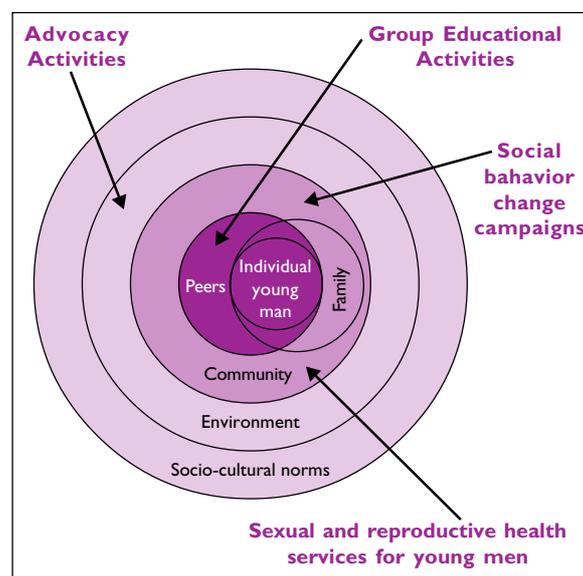
**Research suggests that 20 per cent - 50 per cent of women worldwide experience violence from men. In fact one in four women experience violence during pregnancy!**

initiatives carried out by MASVAW in India and Rozan in Pakistan.<sup>3</sup>

## 2.7 Conceptual Framework

The Ecological Model suggests that gender socialisation is an interactive process between the individual and his/her social context. Boys and men have multiple influences as evident from the ecological model. The individual young man is placed in the middle and is influenced by his peers, family and community. Besides these influences, he is shaped by policies in the country, sanctions by society and the wider socio-cultural norms. Understanding these differing levels of influence can help in planning interventions at various levels. A multi-level approach to enable men to be caring fathers is required. This may include advocacy, group educational activities, social behaviour change campaigns and sexual and reproductive services for young men. All this needs to be undertaken holistically to enable men to be partners in healthier families.

There is a need to be aware of the plurality and fluidity of masculinities and gender norms over a lifecycle. For instance, the grandfathers are observed to be caring and participating in lives of their grandchildren. We need to examine voices of resistance, i.e. discourses that are in disagreement to dominant traditional



<sup>3</sup> For more information, refer to 'Mapping of tools for working with men and boys to end violence against girls, boys and women in South Asia', by Save the Children Sweden

### Finding Points of Entry

**Even in settings where gender norms are rigid, there are men who question them. There are men who generally have inflexible attitudes to gender, but there may be some domain in which they are more gender-equitable. For instance, they may be gender-equitable concerning education of their daughters and concern for their children etc. We need to recognise those men and use them as entry points to our interventions.**

norms. In every society, even where strict gender norms exist, there are voices of men who are willing to take on concerns affecting women and children. The challenge is to find these voices as they can become our entry point in many cases.

Minimising and preventing stigmatisation of boys and men will help us partner with them with greater ease. Often men are criticised for things they do wrong, but there are many things that they do right as well. When these are recognised men will be interested to participate.

We need to recognise 'masculinities' in the diverse contradictions that they offer, for example, while in many cases men may be gender-equitable as fathers, they could be subjecting their partners to violent behaviour. It is essential to understand that there are contradictions among characteristics and behaviour traits in men and women. We need to find and open the cracks in the traditional normative social structures, find men who subvert gender norms and take them as opportunities to begin interventions.

## 2.8 A Lifecycle Approach

To intervene in the lives of boys and men, we need to do so at various stages of their life cycle:

**Young Boys/Pre-School:** Children - even before they learn to speak - begin internalising gender norms, informed by the behaviour of adults around them. Therefore, we need to begin intervening at this stage.

**School Age (6-12 years of age):** Normally female teachers teach children at this age and men teach older children. So children start receiving gender stereotypical messages from a very young age. The educational curriculum reinforces traditional views and values. To reach out to children at this stage, it is necessary to sensitise teachers through teacher trainings, after school programmes and through other educational activities.

**Adolescence:** It is in this phase of life that young girls and boys experience their first intimate relationship and are able to analyse the world and its complexities. We can engage young people at this stage to think critically on what it means to be men and women. We can promote critical thinking about gender roles through information, campaigns and group educational activities and by giving them hands-on experience in caring for children.

**Late Adolescence/Young Adulthood:** Most men experience fatherhood at this stage in their lives. We can reach out to them through relationship courses and pre-marital counselling.

**Mid-Adulthood:** At this stage men need to be engaged in sexual reproductive health, family planning and in maternal and child health.

**Late Adulthood:** Men become grandfathers at this stage, and are generally involved in the lives of their grandchildren. Positive role of men in families can be seen here. Grandfathers are generally involved in preparing the next generation and interventions at this stage can also be beneficial.

## 2.9 Applying an ecological perspective to changing gender norms

The discussion about manhood and fatherhood needs to become a standard fare, the norm,

### The ecological perspective can be used to change gender norms through the following approaches:

- Explicit inclusion of discussions of manhood/masculinities in all current interventions.
- Create an enabling environment (through peers, social groups that support change) - We need to take something back to the community by giving them positive reinforcement for being gender-equitable.
- Alliance building (using an ecological perspective to reinforce positive messages) - These gender norms have been building over centuries. It is a bold idea to change it. In order to be able to withstand the pressure it is important to address it as an alliance, rather than as an individual or organisation.
- Critical reflection about violence, manhood - These issues are part of religious references, so it would be beneficial to explore what the religions actually say about it. This can eventually be used as a point of intervention.
- Vocational/direct benefits of some kind - Men define themselves in relation to their work, so it is crucial to address issues of livelihoods while engaging men.

Although these approaches appear utopic, there are a growing number of people working on this so we have a base to start from. For instance, Program H in Brazil, MaP (Men as Partners) in South Africa, CMA (Concientising Nigerian Male Adolescents) in Nigeria, Stepping Stones (an Action Aid project), Men Can Stop Rape project in USA, White Ribbon Campaign in Canada, CORO (Committee of Resource Organisations) and MASVAW (Men's Action for Stopping Violence against Women) in India. In South Asia, Save the Children Sweden has undertaken a mapping to capture tools for working with men and boys to end violence against girls, boys and women.

especially when we discuss health, gender and equality. For instance, very often it is seen that men ignore their bodies, as they tend to consider themselves invincible. But their bodies wear out too. Health providers need to understand this notion of masculinity (as part of their training) so that they are able to reach out to men just as are trained to reach out to women and children.

To reach out to the general public through art forms like street theatre and information campaigns that question existing notions of manhood is another strategy that should be adopted. This strategy must include and highlight what men do right, for instance, providing for and protecting the family are positive traits to nurture a family.

## 2.10 Fatherhood and men in the family, in different settings

Working in country groups, participants reflected on the expected roles of men in families in their country and cultural setting. Questions for reflection were:

1. What are the expected roles of men and boys in domestic chores?
2. What are the expected roles of men and boys in the lives of boys and girls?
3. What are the roles of men in families apart from being fathers?

4. How does the expected role of the father change with the growing age of the child?
5. How have father's roles changed in the recent years?

### Emerging Policy Implications

- **Engaging male policymakers in public discussions about harmful aspects of traditional manhood.**
- **Making clear the 'costs' of traditional views of manhood in campaigns, policy briefings.**
- **Engaging men and boys via the public sector: military, police, public education, health sector, national youth corps, the scouts, media, technical schools etc.**
- **Put into operation a perspective on 'masculinities' in national AIDS programmes and public health.**
- **Importance of leadership: Reflecting on the versions of manhood we present to the world. There are leaders like Nelson Mandela and Gandhi who have been role models of peace, while many others have been well known for their violent ways.**

## BANGLADESH

Expected roles of men and boys in domestic chores	No major expectations from men and boys.
Expected roles of men and boys in the lives of boys and girls	To protect girls from violence outside the house and control their mobility.  To send boys to educational institutions, involve them in productive work: men and boys are also expected to act 'strong' and be involved with the society.
Roles of men in families apart from being fathers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Be involved in community, economic, cultural and political activities</li> <li>■ Control women and resources</li> <li>■ Lead religious institutions</li> </ul>
Expected role of the father with change in the growing age of the child	<p><i>Children:</i> Ensure education, food, clothes, treatment and security</p> <p><i>Adolescents:</i> Control their mobility</p> <p><i>Adults:</i> Fathers expect sons to earn for the family while girls are expected to marry and leave.</p>
Change in father's role in recent years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Participation in domestic work</li> <li>■ Taking up issues that are traditionally considered to be women's issues, such as child-care.</li> <li>■ Men are aware about evils of early child marriage, benefits of girl child education</li> <li>■ Benefits of allowing women to go outside the house for economic activities.</li> </ul>

## INDIA

Expected roles of men and boys in domestic chores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Interaction with the outside world, especially when mobility is required, for instance getting milk.</li> <li>■ Men are involved in economic transactions like paying bills.</li> <li>■ They provide protection and leadership, like accompanying girls.</li> <li>■ Boys are expected to go to the market to fetch cigarettes.</li> </ul>
Expected roles of men and boys in the lives of boys and girls	<p>To provide leadership, guidance and protection, moral policing, play a monitoring role and the role of the head of the family.</p> <p>Boys are asked to take risks and be champions in every field, men inculcate competitive attitude in boys. Men are also responsible for reinforcing stereotypical notions in boys and girls.</p>
Roles of men in families apart from being fathers	Men play multiple roles, including that of a protector, teacher and guide. Men and boys also have to live up to other relationships in the family (brother, son, grandfather). Above all men and boys have to 'be a man'.

Expected role of the father with change in the growing age of the child	<p><i>Younger children:</i> fathers guide them; make them study while children are expected to obey their father.</p> <p><i>Older children:</i> They are expected to support the family. Girls and boys are expected to help their mothers and fathers respectively. Children must also marry in accordance with the father's wishes.</p>
Change in father's role in recent years	Due to changes in the family structure (joint to nuclear family) the father's role seems to be changing.

## NEPAL

Expected roles of men and boys in domestic chores	No significant role for men and boys except for major fixing around the house.
Expected roles of men and boys in the lives of boys and girls	Older boys are seen as providers, they also provide women and girls in the house access to services. They also play the role of a chaperone, providing protection and security. Older boys are also responsible for socialisation of younger girls and boys. Additionally, they teach younger boys in the family regarding work.
Roles of men in families apart from being fathers	-
Expected role of the father with change in the growing age of the child	In Early Childhood Development (ECD) there is no significant role of fathers. After Early Childhood, fathers are responsible for disciplining and guiding children. They also teach them family occupation.
Change in father's role in recent years	In rural areas, fathers are getting involved in children's lives but much less as compared to fathers in urban settings.

## PAKISTAN

Expected roles of men and boys in domestic chores	Purchase household items, attending to the telephone, attending to houseguests, teaching younger children, brothers and sisters. Overall playing a protective role.
Expected roles of men and boys in the lives of boys and girls	<p><i>Boys</i> - given more freedom and mobility, encouraged to have a social life.</p> <p><i>Girls</i> - more protected than boys, restricted to homes, limited access to develop social relations.</p>
Roles of men in families apart from being fathers	They have time for personal tasks, social life and extended family.
Expected role of the father with change in the growing age of the child	-
Change in father's role in recent years	Fathers are more involved in taking care of the children. They have become more sensitive to children's education. Fathers are willing to share economic burden and priorities and are encouraging the processes of women's empowerment.

## Synthesis

The South Asian region shares common values on manhood. Boys and men are the breadwinners, protectors of the family honour and who take care of the physical needs of the family, including children, spouse and others. In all the countries, there are similarities in the roles of boys and men, where there is none or little expectation from them to participate in domestic work. Their roles are limited to help the family access services outside the house. In addition, it is seen that men control most of the money in the family and are mainly responsible for all the financial decisions.

Men's role as fathers in relation to care giving is often limited in the early childhood of girls and boys. India, given the change in the economic structures of the families, there is a debate on whether men are beginning to involve themselves with child-care. Some people believe that men, especially in urban areas, are stepping forward to look after children as their spouses have also joined the workforce. Others believe that it has only added to women's problems as many men expect them to work outside the house and take full responsibility of the children and home. The rigidity of the roles and tasks associated with men and women are ingrained in the social system, changing which require interventions at multiple levels.

Similarly in Bangladesh, in the urban areas there is an increasing awareness in men on early marriage of girls, but in rural areas change is a long way ahead.

Further, the reflections reiterate and highlight the fact that patriarchal power has multiple dimensions. It is important to discuss ways to move beyond a simplistic zero sum game in terms of power i.e. that for women to be empowered, men must be disempowered. Increasingly, researchers and activists working in the arena of gender equality are promoting the model of interdependence and shared power, finding benefits to both men and women when power is more evenly distributed. Yes, in some cases, men must give

up power, but diverse experiences suggest that men too can come to see the benefits of sharing power. The Yari Dosti and Program H programmes (in India and Brazil respectively), in their work show positive effects on men when they share power - more satisfying relationships, based on trust rather than domination, etc. When we shift the power from men to women, it does not mean that women will get more power. We endeavour to create a gender-equitable society, not one where one sex has power over the other. It is important to understand that working on 'masculinity' doesn't mean women need to give up their role of caring and nurturing.

In fact, depending on their socio-economic status, there are men who may have power within the family but none in the outside world. In a certain social stratum, children may consider their mothers having great power over them. In yet another social setting, men as a group may have more power, but their individual equations might differ. Therefore power is a complex issue, which needs to be deconstructed in a given context.

At the same time, there are men who perceive the demands of being a provider and a protector as a burden. These are multifaceted issues, which need to be discussed with men keeping in mind that their role can be a privilege and an obligation at the same time.

It is an imperative that we address masculinity and fatherhood issues, as part of our ongoing interventions and rather than as a separate programme. For instance, we believe that if we can get the right health and support services, we can prevent children from dying. Health and support services are necessary but insufficient, as in most societies, health of the child is the responsibility of the mother, who is in turn dependent on the men and boys in the family for her access to these services.

In the field of health, we notice that when it comes to reproductive and sexual health, men too often play a passive or indirect role, as they are not directly affected by the consequences of the sexual activities. This too is the result of

socialisation processes, which do not expect men and boys to be nurturers but encourage girls and women to be more involved in issues related to care, including health care. This expected role transcends to parenting where fathers don't involve themselves actively in child rearing. There is an acute need, especially in nuclear families but also extended families to design mechanisms to make men more

involved, sensitive and gender-equitable fathers. There is a need to find ways to take a more equitable role in providing care in general for the family, including members who may be ill, or elderly. This is an important issue in countries heavily affected by HIV/AIDS, where women provide the majority of care giving for family members living with HIV/AIDS.



### 3. CONCEPTS OF FATHERHOOD

This chapter explores the role of fathers in modelling gender-equitable attitudes for children, both boys and girls. Getting men to be willing partners in healthier families by tapping on men's self interest to be good fathers will engage their interest in this direction. Understanding factors affecting fatherhood and its influence on the entire family including the father himself is highlighted below.

#### 3.1 Fatherhood in international perspective

In 2003, at the International Fatherhood Summit in UK, available literature on fatherhood was reviewed. Though most of the

information then came from North America, Europe and Australia, today some research is available from the developing world too. Some reflections from those studies are as follows:

Some universalities about fathers:

- **Most men desire to do well for their children, they feel parenting is a socially valuable role.**
- **Societies and cultures and other men often value the role of men as fathers.**
- **The provider and protector role of men is perhaps the most highly valued.**

**But, most societies do not value or promote men's active involvement with young children.** In a review of 156 cultures, only 20 per cent of the societies promoted men's close relationships with infants, and only 40 per cent with young children. In most societies it is observed that fathers play with young children but it is the women who provide the care.

When fathers participate in child-care, there are positives outcomes for children, family, society and the father himself. Professionals all over the world are now agreeing that men's participation as fathers, as co-parents and as partners with women in domestic chores, child-care and childrearing, do matter, for the following reasons:

- Father's presence, depending on the quality of that presence, is generally positive for children.
- Father's or male presence, other things being equal, is positive for household income.
- Men's greater participation in child-care and domestic tasks is generally good for women.
- There is empirical evidence from Western Europe and North America that positive involvement of fathers increases the chance that sons will be more gender-equitable and more nurturing as fathers, and that daughters will have more flexible views about gender.
- Various studies from North America and the Caribbean have found that having an involved father or a father who is actively present is related to enhance cognitive development and school achievement, particularly for boys.
- Positive engagement as caregivers and fathers is generally good for men themselves.

#### The Diversity of Fathers

##### **Some children have .....**

**Fathers who live in a different country or region and send home, money and clothing**

**Fathers who live nearby and visit regularly**

**Fathers who raise them alone**

**Fathers who regularly share home and caring duties with their mothers**

**Fathers who they stay with them on weekends and holidays**

**Fathers who are imprisoned**

**Fathers who live with them but are rarely home or engaged with them.**

**They are physically present but not emotionally.**

**Fathers who are too poor to provide for them**

**Stepfathers or foster-fathers**

**Uncles or grandfathers who father them**

**No father figures**

**Fathers who are adolescents**

*So working on fatherhood, is an effective and a long-term investment towards creating a gender-equitable and a gender just society.*

Men who are involved in meaningful ways with their children report this relationship to be one of their most important sources of well being and happiness. Various qualitative studies and descriptions of men around the world suggest that men who are engaged in caring and care giving relationships, including fatherhood, may be less likely to engage in certain risk behaviours such as criminal activity. **This offers a powerful and potential motivation for men to want to become more involved as fathers.**

### 3.2 Emerging terms and concepts in fatherhood

- *Biological father* – We assume most of our work is with the biological father.
- *Social father* – It is not only the man who is the biological father that we have to work with. It could be an uncle, a stepfather, or any other man who is part of children's lives and has an impact on them and is a caregiver that we need to address.
- *Fatherwork*: It is a term to denote what men really do in the lives of children rather than normative views. Men may not always do things that are part of fatherhood but they do play economic roles, and that too counts, immensely.

There are societies in the world, where functions of mothering and fathering are equally shared. One oft-cited example is the Aka pygmies in Central Africa. Research suggests that Aka pygmy fathers spend the most time with their children when compared to existing data about fathers worldwide. When Aka babies cried, anthropologists noticed that children turned equally to fathers as to mothers. This example shows the potential within human social groups for men to take equal or nearly equal responsibilities in child rearing. Individual and group examples like this can be found in many settings around the world. The point is that within the realm of

human experience and variation, men can be nurturers and provide care for children in ways that are similar or equal to those frequently attributed to mothers.

Further, it was observed that men and women have the same economic role of capturing and hunting small animals in the pygmy society. The trap to hunt requires two people to operate so there is gender equality at the workplace. This translates to equal functions of care of children at home. In other parts of the world, where women have entered the workplace, things are also changing, but slowly. For instance, in India, a newspaper raises the question ‘Should men in India get three months paternity leave?’. Other such media articles and debates illustrate that the issue is being raised in developing countries too.

### 3.3 Focusing on fatherhood

Studies show that in developing regions 10 per cent - 30 per cent of the households are female-headed and this rate is increasing. Therefore, it becomes important to understand how mothers can play role of both parents. At the same time, social fathers may be present, and they might need working with.

There is an increase in participation of women in the formal workforce (non-domestic work) in some parts of the world, while men’s participation remains the same. Indeed it is stagnating in some regions. However, women’s income is generally less than that of men worldwide. This change in the structure of the households makes it imperative for us to redefine fatherhood. There is an increase in the number of women and girls attending schools and university. Changes in gender equations outside the house require change within the family. At the same time, there is a reduction in the fertility rates in most parts of the world. Parents are focusing on quality and not quantity. In quality child rearing, sensitive and caring fatherhood becomes vital.

#### *Images in the media and broader society*

All over the world, media has a powerful

influence on people. Most often media portrays the traditional image of the father, which might clash with the image of the ‘new’ father who is trying to break free of the mould. Media also has the tendency to portray fathers as ‘deficient mothers’. This comparison between the mother and father conveys the message that their roles are indeed opposites and one cannot take over the other. Last but not least, media tends to reinforce traditional ideas about family/gender roles, which couples/families might aspire to when realities suggest the need for shared model.

#### *Public policies view of men as fathers*

Public policy and policymakers generally assume that men:

- are not important in the lives of children
- do not want to participate in the care of children
- are often violent, self-centred and do not contribute as much to family income proportionally as mothers/women do and
- are sexual predators unless proven otherwise.

Although present policies do not promote fatherhood, there is a need to think how we can use policies to encourage men to be more connected with their families. For instance, there could be workplace policies that make it possible for men to have more time with their children.

### 3.4 Factors involved in father’s participation

Father’s participation is generally measured as: **availability, engagement and responsibility.**

#### *Factors:*

- Men’s own experience of their fathers - if men missed their fathers growing up, they might want to be there for their children or might follow the same model of their father.
- Availability of child-care – absence of an adult to take care of the children could

force men to be more involved with the children.

- Men's own mental state – men might not be psychologically prepared to participate as a father.
- Specific family conditions – in settings where the mother is sick or dies, men may take an active role in child-care.
- Mother-father relationship – research from North America and Europe suggests that the father's participation depends significantly on what the couple has negotiated about their roles in the family. Moreover, if women are discouraging and critical of men's ability to be a parent, then men tend to live up to low expectations of them. Very often mothers are seen to be gatekeepers of men's abilities to care for the children.

### 3.5 Fathers/men and child development

Research suggests that the sex of the caregiver is less important than the quality or manner of care provided. What matters is that the care is provided in a constant and stable manner. However, it is better to have two caregivers, as raising a child is an immense responsibility. Therefore, we can say that although father's involvement in child-care is positive, it is not inherently necessary for healthy and positive child development.

At the same time we see that depending on the setting, the father playing a central role might be important, while in other settings father playing a supporting role might be sufficient. However, in every situation men have the potential to provide care and to model and demonstrate gender-equitable attitudes for children – both boys and girls. For example, some research suggests that children who see their fathers as caregivers, demonstrate more flexible gender roles in later life.

We see that in some cases father's involvement and school achievement and cognitive development are related, i.e. some studies have suggested that father's presence and

participation is associated with higher school degrees attainment for boys. Limited research suggests that fathers may be the key for preventing low-income boys from dropping out of school in specific cultural settings. Other researchers have argued that fathers contribute to the social development of children by helping them understand the 'uncontrolled' settings of the outside world.

At times we may find men in other spaces where child development is promoted, such as teachers or child-care providers in crèches or in home of others. However, such cases are very few as most of these roles are played by women.

In addition, it is seen that both fathers and mothers can be sensitive to the needs of young children, although women often show more capacity. Some research suggests that women are more attuned to their children because of hormones or other biological factors associated with childbearing. Other researchers have argued that child rearing and child-care is largely a learnt skill, which is often taught to girls from early ages because of family and cultural expectations. Research suggests that given a chance, men can too demonstrate such skills.

We see that children play tough and challenging games with their fathers while they come to their mothers for care. This is because the play and interaction modalities of fathers and mothers often differ. But this again, is learnt behaviour, which both the parents can demonstrate. It is also seen that fathers' roles and relationships change over the lifecycle. For instance, fathers may feel comfortable interacting with their sons when they become adolescents. In other cases, we see that some men who may have had limited interaction with their children when young, become affectionate grandfathers.

#### *Fatherhood and the rights of the child*

The UNCRC specifies parental rights and responsibilities as well as the child's right to access of both parents, who need to take the economic and financial responsibility of the child. Child maintenance legislation exists in

most countries but is enforced primarily against fathers. Moreover, in some cultures, men exercise absolute authority over their children.

### ***Men as fathers in the health system***

Men as fathers have key roles to play in the following areas:

- Antenatal care, child-birth, child health
- Sexual reproductive health
- HIV/AIDS

However, men seldom take responsibility for children's and women's health. Within fatherhood discourses, there is the need to promote a male culture of care, where men and boys take an active role in the health of their families. We have to view men/fathers as complex subjects with their own needs and include them in a 'maternal-child' health system. Very often men tend to ignore self-care, as the traditional model of masculinity discourages men to project themselves as weak beings.

### ***Men, fathers, work and income generation***

There is a possibility, backed up by research that men do not contribute as much as women to

family income as a percentage of their total income. Most family income support programmes assume that mothers are 'trustworthy' and men are not. They believe that when the mother is given money through an income-generation scheme or income support programme, she will spend more proportionally on the family, where as men are more likely to spend the money on themselves. If this is true in many settings, it is also the case that such programmes that support only women can, inadvertently, reinforce the idea that men are not trustworthy. There is an additional presumption in many family support programmes that men are always employed. In fact quality and nature of men's work is a factor in how and how much they participate as fathers.

### ***Fatherhood and contribution to future generations***

Fatherhood provides meaning and happiness to many men's lives. It fundamentally questions gender role in the household, which provides a model of gender equality to children. This is the way to change, as children who see fathers providing care, are less likely to accept stereotypical roles.



The chapter outlines learnings and experiences from different countries and settings at various levels highlighting an approach that is common in most interventions. Finding a common language with men, supporting and trusting them is vital. These experiences provide us with ideas on how to approach and work with men and boys on fatherhood, child development, protection issues, gender equality and violence.

#### **4.1 Policy experiences and learnings from Sweden**

Despite a long history of active, purposeful commitment to gender equality, Swedish society is still characterised by a gender-based power structure. Efforts to promote gender equality have long been exclusively directed at women. Moreover, efforts to promote gender equality has often been focused at the adult world, neglecting girls and boys, whose situations and

## **4. PROGRAMME AND POLICY EXPERIENCES TO PROMOTE FATHER'S INVOLVEMENT**

opportunities in life are affected profoundly by unequal gender structures.

The Swedish Government's National Plan for Gender Equality, highlights five areas that need to be given special attention:

- Representation, equal access to position of power and influence,
- Equal pay for equal work of equal value
- Violence committed by men against women, prostitution and trafficking in women for sexual exploitation,
- Men and gender equality
- Sexualisation of the public sphere.

The National Plan does acknowledge the importance of involving men in gender equal work; but the document is directed at only adults. Most of the work on promoting gender equality is focused at the work place (conditions, salary structures, sexual harassment etc.). In relation to children, the plan focuses on promoting gender in relation to UNCRF, education and health issues. In addition, laws on violence against women and children in all settings, including the home exist.

**Key references/pre-conditions for the government to give this support:**

- Sweden is signatory to the UNCRC which follows the principle of ‘best interest of the child’ and gives the right of parenting to both the mother and father.
- Sweden is signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW): Gender equality is about men and women having the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities. A gender equal society will not be achieved unless men and women work together to transform the conditions that govern the lives of both the sexes. This means that responsibilities in the home are also shared.

The Swedish government regularly publishes gender-disaggregated data relating to work, income and child-care. Education is the only field where disaggregated information on children is available. The purpose of publishing this data is to make gender inequalities visible, to make it possible to measure change and to monitor the various government policies affecting women and men.

All employers with more than ten employees are required to make an annual gender equality plan, which should include a situation analysis and an explicit plan to address any inequalities with an inbuilt monitoring mechanism. As part of the plan, the employers are required to state policies and practices for making it possible for both men and women to combine paid work and parenthood. It is recognised that girls and boys need access to both their parents and that measures need to be taken to encourage men to spend more time with their children.

According to the present system, 12 months of parental leave is offered to the staff, which is expected to be shared by the parents. During parental leave, they receive 80 per cent of their salary. One month of parental leave is non-transferable for each of the parents. Ten days are granted to the father after the birth of the child so that both parents are involved in child

rearing during the first few days of the child’s life. Most fathers are present during the birth of the child. In addition, parents are granted sick leave, to be able to stay at home with a child up to the age of 12 years.

70-75 per cent of the fathers take the one-month ‘compulsory’ parental leave, but only 14 per cent take more than one month. Most women reduce their working time to 75 per cent during the years when their children are small, while few men do the same.

Currently, a proposal that promotes gender equal responsibility for child rearing is underway before the Swedish government. This proposal recommends increasing parental leave to 15 months, while making it compulsory for the mother and father to individually take at least 1/3 of the time as leave. The rest of the time can be divided as decided by the parents. The main argument behind this proposal is the children’s right to both their parents. This promotes gender equality within the family. There has been a lot of resistance in Sweden to this proposal. The argument is that the State should not decide and regulate family life. They should only intervene when there is violence and abuse within the family.

As part of developing the proposal, a study was done on why men do not take their parental leave. According to the assessment of the study, the following reasons were cited:

- *Societal expectations:* For women, motherhood is seen as an obligation. Employers do plan for women to take parental leave, work part time and be home with a sick child. However, the mother’s domestic responsibilities do adversely affect her career development. For men it is seen as an opportunity to spend more time with the child. Many employers react if the man takes out more than one month as parental leave or if he works part time. For a man to have a family is seen as an asset for his career development.
- *Information from pre-natal and natal care institutions and theory and perceptions of child development, focus primarily on the mother:*

Development theories are focused on the symbiotic relationship between the mother and the child during the first years of the child's life. The father's role is to support the mother.

- *Mothers as gatekeepers:* In Sweden, most marital relations are equal before the birth of the first child. The spouses share domestic responsibilities and encourage each other in their career development. In fact, in Sweden, women are more educated than men. However, after the birth of the first child, the roles become traditional. Researchers put forward that because women know that they will not have the same chance as their spouse in their career development, they would not like their spouse to take over and have more power in the domestic sphere.

The underlying cause of men taking less parental leave is due to structural inequality between men and women in the society that makes it difficult for an individual (or a couple) to bring about changes in gender relations. However, these relations are not static and several changes have taken place over the years. Men are spending more time with their children. There are many men and women who are contributing and bringing about changes, addressing both the structural causes and the gender relations in their own family.

In Sweden, there also exist a number of networks of fathers, support groups for fathers, courses for divorced fathers and young fathers, etc. Numerous books are available for fathers-to-be and for fathers on child development, relations with spouse, on ways to deal with children who are facing problems, positive discipline and so on.

### ***Pre-natal care support***

In Sweden, pre-natal and natal care support is focused on the mother, while father is seen as someone assisting the mother. Before the child is born, the mother visits the clinic regularly for check ups. The father is allowed and indeed encouraged to join during the first few visits. Around four sessions (2-3 hours each) is

provided for both the parents. The session provides information about the birth and the first few days after the birth. Fathers are strongly encouraged to be present during the birth, with most fathers taking the opportunity to do so.

### ***Natal care support***

After the birth, parents (most often the mother) visit the natal care unit for checkups of the baby. Both parents are offered parental training (around 4-10 sessions of two hours each) during working hours. During this training, they are given support and training on how to take care of the infant. They are usually participatory sessions based on the questions parents want to discuss. Since it is usually the mother who is home with the child during the first six months (because of breast feeding and other reasons) and it may be difficult for the father to take leave, it is the mothers who receive this training. Some municipalities also offer a few sessions for the father during evening time, but the sessions are not compulsory. It is observed that usually fathers who are already engaged with child-care take these sessions.

Furthermore, the government provides the service of a parental telephone line where parents can call and ask questions related to child-care.

### ***The Swedish school system***

The education system has an obligation to promote gender equality at schools, including pre-school. There are some initiatives to address gender stereotypes in the curricula, to ensure that both boys and girls attend domestic classes (cooking, child development, child-care etc). There are some programmes to encourage girls to choose male dominated professions and vice versa. Some initiatives are more structural. For instance, some pre-school classes have a specific gender equality focus. Girls and boys work both in mixed groups and in gender specific groups where girls are encouraged to develop 'male attributes'. Girls are trained to be more assertive and boys are

trained to develop their nurturing and caring aspects by taking care of small babies. Boys are further encouraged to express their emotions.

The staff interaction is filmed and the authorities watch these videos to see the staff member's approach to girls and boys in classrooms. It is observed and understood that the staff do treat girls and boys differently. Girls are praised for being caring, wearing nice outfits, they are spoken to with a soft voice and are encouraged to help the teachers with domestic chores. Boys are spoken to in a loftier voice and are encouraged to run and play active games. Boys are also expected to be naughtier than girls and a higher level of mischief is accepted as the norm.

Encouraging more men to work in the day care centres has been a strategy to promote gender equality and upholding them as role models for children. However, men and women tend to take on traditional gender specific tasks in the day care centres, where women nurture and prepare the food while men play games with the children outside. In order to address this, in day care centres with specific gender equality focus, gender roles of male and female staff are observed, discussed and suitably addressed.

### ***Some recommendations for bringing about a change***

- A prolonged and compulsory parental education for both men and women. Special sessions meant only for fathers need to be provided. The employers should be obliged to give fathers and mothers paid leave to attend parental education sessions. Discussions on gender relations need to be included in the education.
- Parental education needs to be more prominent in the education system, so that both girls and boys are prepared for their future responsibilities.
- Girls and boys should be encouraged to take on non-traditional gender roles, including sessions with girls and boys on gender relations.
- Special emphasis should be given to reach

young fathers and mothers, as well as parents from minority communities.

- Professionals such as teachers, nurse assistants, social workers etc. should be trained on gender equality. Gender should be a stronger component in all higher education.
- Awareness raising campaigns should be conducted to encourage men and boys to become nurturing fathers.
- More emphasis must be laid to encourage boys and women to choose non-traditional occupations with special support to the under represented sex in employment situations.
- More crisis and support centres for men need to be organised, where men can meet and get professional support.

### ***Save the Children's initiatives to strengthen gender equality***

- Save the Children Sweden has prioritised gender equality as an important programme area. They are undertaking advocacy with the government to provide more support to parents and families in a more gender specific way, where both mothers and fathers are involved.
- As part of Save the Children Sweden's gender and diversity policy, it should make it possible for its staff to combine parental responsibilities with employment. However, Save the Children at the Head Office or at the Regional Office level has taken no specific initiatives. At the Head Office, a parents group was initiated by staff members. The group proposed a parental policy that was rejected by the management.
- Save the Children Sweden Head Office has a parental help line, where 17 per cent of the calls come from fathers. Most of the calls are questions relating to divorce and on custody.

### ***Reflections***

Employers have a responsibility for developing gender polices and programmes that promote

gender sensitivity and encourage men to take parental leave. It is important to adjust work situations so that it is possible to combine professional work with parenthood. This applies to our own organisations, the NGOs in which we work, and requires that we all take responsibility in promoting these policies within our organisations.

There is a need for the state and civil society to promote and encourage young men in their roles as fathers. The state has to put in place gender sensitive policies and practises which support young men to be involved in their children's life. Civil society needs to encourage men to take on so called 'female occupations' so as to provide young boys with a role model. Men's participation in workplaces such as pre-schools, schools, crèches and day care centres and other professional domains dominated by women should be encouraged and supported.

Activity: Opposites or Complements

**As part of this activity, participants are asked to name the opposite of the word spoken by the facilitator. They were quick to give opposites for big, tall, happy, sad etc. When the facilitator asked for the opposite of 'mother', the participants immediately replied 'father'.**

**This was an interesting revelation as it exposed the deep roots of ingrained gender stereotypes in all of us. Mothers and fathers are believed to have opposite attributes, roles and responsibilities rather than complementary roles. Although both parents differ in 'sex', which is a biological function, it is often misinterpreted as 'gender', which is socially constructed. While working with men and boys on gender issues, such factors need to be kept in mind.**

## 4.2 The Dialogue Project

In 1993, Save the Children Sweden formed a network of men against violence. Two thousand men came forward to form groups in different cities in Sweden, where they discussed non-violence and gender equality. Over a period of time, participation of men in the family and upbringing of children became a core issue in the network, which resulted in the initiation of The Dialogue Project in 1997.

The project makes special efforts to target the *segregated part* of the ethnic minority population of Sweden (14 per cent), who tend to live in isolation from other communities and are male dominated. Through several men and women clubs, volunteers raise issues of masculinity, crime, violence and fathering. The project has further diversified to traditional male groups in other countries where SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency) operates, such as Moldavia, Russia, Ukraine and Thailand.

The Dialogue Project addresses fatherhood through culture, art and history, which tend to depict traditional notions of masculinity. The project uses the psychological approach to influence fathers to participate in the lives of their child before he/she is born.

### *Educating boys to be violent*

By showcasing pictures of historical art and modern day and old films, the presenter, Nicklas Kelemen, demonstrated the role of fathers and the larger socialisation process of girls and boys across cultures.

From old Charlie Chaplin films, to films like Superman, media is often guilty of reinforcing

**While most countries in the world fare badly in the area of gender equality, Scandinavia and Canada are the most gender-equitable countries in the world.**

gender stereotypes. Even children's literature, dwell on the importance of young boys becoming strong and powerful and being the protector. In reality, such goals become difficult for boys and men to achieve. Such messages are further emphasised through art and cultural symbols. For instance, at the gates of the Forbidden-City in Beijing, China, where male and female angels (lions) are sculpted on either side of the gate as protectors, the female lion is shown with a child while the male holds a ball, as a symbol of power.

The consequence of such division is that the world is led by men. Political power, the world over is held by men. Seldom do women head religious groups. It is a staggering task to work with such groups, as for centuries men have been raised with a feeling of superiority and a false sense of 'machoism'.

### ***Penetrating traditional male surroundings***

In Sweden, there is disagreement in and debate on the following areas:

- In 1970s when the anti-spanking law was established in Sweden, 50 per cent – 60 per cent of the population was against it. Over a ten year period, the opposition went down to 7 per cent. Conscious work was undertaken on the issue, which did result in an attitude change even in orthodox communities.
- Gender equality, is unfortunately considered as a 'western' issue by many men.
- Law in Sweden and some other countries, forbid rape within marriage, but men do not agree with it.
- In some ethnic groups, it is forbidden for girls to have premarital sexual relations. This can result in very serious, sometimes deadly, conflicts between children and parents. (Each year there are about three cases of honour killings in Sweden. The number of honour related suicide is not known.)
- Death penalty

These issues challenge the authoritarian ways of males, making it difficult to penetrate traditional communities. A useful suggestion here would be to persuade men by showing them the economic benefits of change. It helps to be armed with facts and figures and initially avoid confrontations. Being assertive and finding a common language with men goes a long way in making them partners to bring about a change.

### **4.3 The Program H Alliance<sup>4</sup>**

Instituto PROMUNDO undertook some of the first ever research on men and gender violence and its correlation to sexual and reproductive health in Brazil. The results of this study were used to create a project that aimed to involve men in sexual and reproductive issues, make them responsible for the violence they perpetrate and develop community projects to prevent violence against women, as well as promote men's positive participation as fathers.

Studying life histories during the research revealed instances that made some young men more gender-equitable than others:

- Boys and men having alternative male peer groups who supported alternative, gender-equitable views of manhood;
- Boys and men having reflected about the costs of traditional views of manhood;
- Boys and men having family members or contact with persons who modelled alternative views about gender.

The realisation that there must be some men who could examine gender norms around themselves, and would be interested to take them further, resulted in the development of Program H.

Based on this research, five integrated components of Program H were developed:

<sup>4</sup> For more information on Program H, refer to 'Mapping of tools for working with men and boys to end violence against girls, boys and women in South Asia', by Save the Children Sweden.

1) *Workshops to promote critical reflection* – A number of group educational activities have been compiled, which is supplemented by a toolkit, ‘Working with Young Men’. The toolkit includes issues of sexuality and reproductive health, fatherhood and care-giving, violence, peaceful co-existence and reasons and emotional response to HIV/AIDS. It is intended for outreach workers, teachers and professionals. The Hindi and Marathi versions of the toolkit will soon be available. Cartoon films such as ‘Once upon a Boy’ are used to reinforce the message.

The manuals and video promote reflection about ‘costs’ of traditional and harmful aspects of masculinity. They offer an alternative male peer group while discussing positive male attitudes and behaviours.

2) *Lifestyle social marketing to change community norms* – Program H reaches out to youth, boys and men through messages and slogans made popular through community festivals and street theatre. Male celebrities such as sportsmen and rock-musicians, role models for young men and boys, were engaged as ambassadors for ‘promoting men as fathers’. The idea was to position a new definition of manhood as a socially acceptable notion and a lifestyle choice.

In other words, social marketing of lifestyle aims to:

- Identify more gender-equitable young men in the community
- Design communication strategies based on youth culture
- Combine condom use and other health strategies with a more ‘gender-equitable’ lifestyle.

The messages are subtle, intending to seek change in the overall lifestyle of the target group to become more gender-equitable. Rather than singular and preachy such as ‘go to health care, don’t beat your partner etc’. The inspiration for this came from studying a group of youth who wore branded clothes and accessories. When probed further it was clear that the consumer choice was more out of a sense of belonging to a certain lifestyle than about the product per

se. This became the basis for lifestyle marketing targeting men and boys to be more gender-equitable.

Young men revealed that they didn’t want to be told what to do. Therefore messages and slogans were created which gave boys and men a sense of ‘receiving something’ from being gender-equitable. The messages were taken to the community through popular routes, such as rap singers who created songs on violence against women. Caps, T-shirts with ‘H’ written on them were sold at community hangouts, music festivals played the message laden songs and street plays were performed.

3) *Engaging health services and other community allies:* Program H works to get other groups in the community on board. Groups that disseminate similar messages, such as the health sector. Sports groups, whose members were idealised by young men and boys were engaged.

4) *Advocacy at the national and international level* – Along with other organisations like the White Ribbon Campaign, Rede H etc, Program H undertakes advocacy at different levels to promote the inclusion of men and boys in national-level initiatives and policies related to gender and gender equality.

5) *Impact evaluation* – PROMUNDO and its partner organisations, in collaboration with the Horizons Program (administered by Population Council and other partners), developed an evaluation scale called the Gender-equitable Men Scale (GEM Scale) to assess the extent to which men agree with or question a series of traditional views about manhood and gender norms. This instrument, along with other behavioural questions, has been used in impact evaluation studies (pre-, post- and including a control group) to confirm changes in attitudes and behaviours as a result of participation in the Program H activities and campaign.

The Program H Alliance presently has 12 organisations. The Steering Committee comprises of PROMUNDO (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), Instituto PAPAI (Recife, Brazil), ECOS (Sao Paulo, Brazil), Salud y Género (Mexico),

Pan American Health Organisation, International Planned Parenthood Federation and World Education International. Other members include Durex Condoms (the only private sector), Population Council, PATH, JohnSnowBrasil, Consultoria and CORO (Committee of Resource Organisations, Mumbai, India). All the alliance members follow similar work, share learnings and carry forward the global work.

### ***Campaign Development in India***

In India, PROMUNDO is working with Population Council and CORO (Committee of Resource Organisations) in Mumbai, and MAMTA in Uttar Pradesh to adapt this process to the Indian context. An impact evaluation will be carried out using a revised version of the GEM Scale. Initial testing of the process in India, with approximately 100 young men between the age group 15-24 years, confirmed changes in attitudes and a reduction in young men's use of violence or harassment against women. Both these are self-reported. As part of this process, CORO and Population Council have adapted portions of the Program H manuals called *Yaari Dosti* in India.

In addition, CORO, Population Council and Promundo carried out baseline research with young men in Mumbai to identify relevant themes and began to design community-based campaigns. Themes identified by CORO as a result of the research include:

- HIV risk and men going to sex workers
- Various forms of gender-based violence, including eve teasing and sexual violence
- Empathy for people living with HIV/AIDS
- General gender inequalities, e.g. domestic activities and fatherhood

The research further identified some gender-equitable men who could be motivated to partner with the project.

Taking a cue from what young men and boys feel about their masculinity and factors that influence them, such as Bollywood films etc, the IEC material was created. For instance, posters were designed in typical Bollywood poster patterns with messages that positively reinforced rather than being 'preachy'. A poster read- "Have you heard - Sanju doesn't hit his wife" or "When she says no, Nitin doesn't force himself upon her". When these

### **ONCE UPON A BOY** **Film from Instituto PROMUNDO**

This animated film screened at the workshop, showcases stereotypical gender roles of boys and girls in the society, focusing on the socialisation process. In particular, the film highlights gender-based violence, violence between men, male identity issues and stereotypical roles around fatherhood and motherhood.

The film is without dialogue, but with explicit use of sound and graphics. This makes it a valuable educational tool that cuts across language and cultural barriers. Having animated characters softens sensitive issues, which works well with traditional communities. The film uses an animated pencil as a metaphor for gender socialisation.

The film targets audience with low literacy rates in Latin America and Caribbean. It has been pre-tested with low income youth groups in six countries in the target area and has been accordingly modified.

The organisation uses the film as part of its group educational processes and community campaigns that question traditional views of manhood. Volunteers rarely show the movie as a stand alone, but supplement it by other informational activities. However it is useful to observe what the audience responds to and needs information on. If they are silent on certain issues in the film, they become our area of work. The organisation is undertaking other animated productions, on issues such as homophobia, physical and humiliating punishment (supported by Save the Children Sweden), alternate family set-ups etc.

posters were field tested, the community said that these situations were impossible. This led to creation of the tagline “It is possible!” – ending with the affirmation “The thinking man thinks right.” The protagonists were seen wearing red caps in the posters, depicting the ‘thinking man’.

Currently, the project is working to create comic books along the same lines. These activities are supported by street theatre, performed at the community level. The street plays used the following situations:

- Man helping around the house. Dividing chores with his wife, providing child-care.
- Young men questioning whether they should go to a sex worker.
- Married couple negotiating condom use.
- Man questioning another man on violence against wife and partner.
- Man questions his male friend, who forces his wife to have sex with him.

The volunteers wear red caps, again strengthening identification with a gender sensitive man. The performances are followed by a group discussion, ending with distribution of IEC material and information on referral centres.

### Evaluation

Program H has an elaborate evaluation system, which includes pre and post-test questionnaires with emphasis on attitude and behaviour questions, which help create a GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure) scale. The twenty four questions in the test help to determine how much the men believe in traditional views surrounding manhood. In addition, individual in-depth interviews with 20 young men and their girlfriends/wives are undertaken. Facilitator field notes and group session evaluation forms also aid the evaluation process.

Currently the campaign is still being developed in India, so these evaluation tools are yet to be applied. The sample size for the evaluation in India will be much larger than those of other similar projects. However in already existing partner projects of Program H, the following

qualitative results emerge:

- Reported changes in styles of interacting with other men: movement towards more cooperative, less aggressive interactions
- Ability to discuss sexuality openly (male and female)
- Recognition of women as having sexual rights, sexual agency
- Worry about their own health needs, HIV testing (male and female)
- Delayed initiation of sexual activity with current partner

### Synthesis

Community-based interventions focusing on changing social norms and individual attitudes on manhood can achieve a measured change in attitudes and behaviours. People believe that such behaviours can’t change, but Program H’s experience shows that it is possible to change and measure attitudinal change through qualitative and quantitative instruments. Moreover, such interventions can be implemented in diverse settings, at a reasonable cost and on a large scale. Program H’s experiences in Brazil, Central America, USA, Mexico, India and Nepal are culturally specific in each setting, where such results are visible.

## 4.4 Rozan

The presenter, Saima Ashraf, introduced Rozan, an organisation based in Pakistan, working on mental and emotional health, gender issues and violence against women and children. Few years ago, Rozan’s programme focusing on emotional health of sexually abused children (*Aangan*) worked to devise ways to involve men in their programme. The inspiration came from women in various communities, who showed interest in involving men and fathers on the issue of child sexual abuse. This led to the initiation of a small but specific project addressing child security and development, focusing on the involvement of mothers, fathers, community and local bodies, including men in the police force, male teachers and health professionals.

To work actively with the community, Rozan appointed and trained an intern on child sexual abuse who created a committee at the community level. The committee worked with *maulvis* (Islamic religious leaders) and religious teachers as well, undertaking awareness raising and publicising referral services.

Interestingly, it was noticed that men applauded the work being undertaken by the committee but were reluctant to come forward as supporters. Rozan found a way around it by always letting such men know that there were other men like them who complimented their work. This broke the barrier and gave men an impetus to actively support the work.

This encouragement and interest of men pushed the programme to find ways of involving fathers on emotional health of children in a more active way. Organising

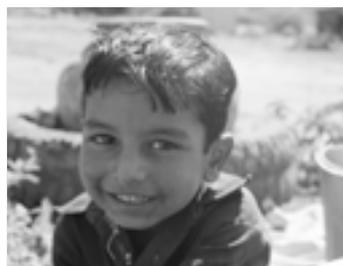
specific workshops for fathers and couples, with emphasis on early childhood development were supported.

Moreover, on insistence of the community, a male community leader was trained to become a counsellor on positive discipline techniques and child sexual abuse. If a case came to the notice, *maulvis* and religious teachers began taking a stand, involving other men in it, helping other men to take responsibility for the issue.

The experience of the project highlights that it is often wrongly assumed that men are not interested in such issues. There will always be some men or one man in the community who is sensitive. The challenge is to find them. In a Life Skill training for schools, organised by Rozan, Ministry of Education sent female teachers as participants. Male teachers were excluded on the assumption that they wouldn't be interested or capable. In reality, frequently it is the lack of opportunity that hinders male participation. In fact, NGOs also need to learn to involve both mothers and fathers i.e. parents as whole, in issues that impact children.

The project sheds light on other issues concerning fatherhood, such as incest by fathers. Thus, finding ways of combining fatherhood and protection issues becomes important. Further, the notion that all men violate children is a belief that many women hold. Making women trust men is part of this work.

**Discussions about women's liberation started as early as 1790 with a book on Women's Liberation by Mary Wollstonecraft, which some call the beginning of women's liberation. What has sometimes been called 'The Male Movement' was initiated only about ten years ago. This knowledge is significant as a constant reminder of the work required in the field of gender equality.**



Father's involvement along with the mother is vital for proper child development. Like the mother, father's role in child-care changes with the age of the child and depends on the specific needs of each child. This chapter attempts to explain this correlation between father's participation and child development. It provides an understanding of the rights and duties of both parents as highlighted in the UNCRC.

### 5.1 A Children's Developmental Needs

A vast body of literature on child development has confirmed that there are distinct basic minimum needs of children<sup>5</sup> that are imperative for their holistic development. These include:

## 5. PROMOTING INVOLVEMENT OF FATHERS IN FULFILLING NEEDS OF CHILDREN

- Stable and constant relationships;
- Protection and sense of security - being exposed to violence impinges upon children's abilities to evolve capacities.
- Learning experiences and support that takes into account individual differences.
- Learning experiences appropriate for different developmental stages.
- Limits, structures and clear expectations to make the children aware of what is appropriate behaviour in their setting.
- Stable communities and continuation of culture and traditions so that children feel part of a wider community.

It is also desirable to put these needs into legislation, as they are inalienable rights of all children.

While there are cultural differences, it is seen that in nearly all cultures, families themselves desire children to have certain competencies and growth. For instance, the ability to care for one's own body and maintain physical vitality; competencies to care for others and interact in

<sup>5</sup> Brazelton and Greenspan, 2000

interpersonal relationships with mutual respect and with increasing complexity and depth; cognitive abilities to participate actively in production/work and competencies to participate in social, political and spiritual/religious aspects of life, as well as in local and global culture. Such holistic development, which is universally desired for children, can only be achieved when their basic needs are met.

### Group Task

To reflect on this issue, participants formed groups and discussed the different needs that children have at different ages and the diverse roles that fathers and mothers play in it.

### Group 1 - A new born baby

What are the specific needs of the child?	Depending on whether the child is a girl or boy, difference in treatment emerges even before birth (e.g. sex-selective abortion in some parts of the region). However basic needs remain the same, such as, love, food, water, clothes, shelter, protection, stimulating toys, positive reinforcement.
Who is responsible for fulfilling these needs?	The father most often provides material needs, while emotional needs are fulfilled by the mother and other women in family and grandparents.
What is the role of the community? What spaces, services and support does the community provide for the child?	There should be availability of day care centres, health care, vaccinations, religious institutions, parks and playgrounds for the child.
What is the role of the family in caring for this child?	The family plays an important role in the socialisation process. It should also prepare for the new arrival.
What is the responsibility of the father in relation to the mother?	Both the parents should take decisions and have a consensus on parenting. Budget and expenses should be agreed upon. Fathers and mothers should read and learn about health care of a new born baby. Parents should be conscious of how they solve conflict in front of the child.  The father should be sensitive to biological changes in his wife's body and provide moral support. Parental leave if available should be availed. Fathers should involve themselves in feeding the child, changing nappies and support the mother in domestic chores.
What are the expectations of the child and possibilities of the child to participate? / What is expected of the child?	Parents should support the child in its development, fulfilling the basic need of love, food and shelter, responding to the child as appropriate and providing him/her a safe environment.  Parents should be aware of how infants communicate. There is immediacy to their needs and parents should respond to them in an appropriate manner. Body contact is vital for infants, who depend on it for a sense of security.

## Reflections

The presentation is a combination of what the situation is and what we want to achieve. Research with new born babies suggests that fathers can look after infants just as well as mothers. As mentioned repeatedly in this document, child rearing is a learnt behaviour, which fathers can learn if it is expected of them. Unlike women who are get mentally prepared for child-care very early in life, boys are kept away from such activities..

Aware of this and keeping it in mind, a few NGOs are trying to initiate courses where boys can avail of vocational training for working in crèches. They are asked to look after delicate objects representing children such as sack of flowers, balloon, eggs etc, giving them an insight into child-care. In some countries men are encouraged to help their wives in the birth of the child, which leads to the father developing an appreciation for his wife and the new born baby.

## Group 2 - A three-year-old boy

<p>What are the specific needs of the child?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The child needs to be toilet trained</li> <li>■ Pre school preparation</li> <li>■ Curiosity of the child should be addressed</li> <li>■ Vaccination and health issues should be looked into</li> <li>■ Speech training</li> <li>■ Moral policing</li> <li>■ Adequate diet and clothing</li> <li>■ Since the child is beginning to socialise, he should get opportunities to interact with similar age group.</li> </ul>
<p>Who is responsible for fulfilling these needs?</p>	<p>Normally mothers and grand mothers take the lead role in toilet training of the child, while fathers take a keen interest in pre-school preparations. A growing child has a lot of questions, whose curiosity is and should be satisfied by parents and the community. They need to take an active role in ensuring health services, vaccinations for the child. Speech training is the responsibility of the family in general. The child also depends on the parents, extended family and the community for social interaction.</p>
<p>What is the role of the community? What spaces, services and support does the community provide for the child?</p>	<p>The general environment in which the child is growing is important. Moreover, the neighbourhood should be hygienic with accessible health facilities for the child. In fact community supervision should be an extension of parental supervision.</p>
<p>What is the role of the family in caring for this child?</p>	<p>The child should be protected from domestic quarrels. Family should refrain from using foul language in front of the child and should set a good example by following religious and cultural values. In addition, monitoring of media messages received by the child should be undertaken earnestly by the family.</p>
<p>What is the responsibility of the father in relation to the mother?</p>	<p>Fathers can play all the above roles apart from breast feeding. In many instances, the child sleeps with the parents and might see his parents in a sexual act. Parents should be careful and conscious of it, providing proper answers to the child's curiosity.</p>
<p>What are the expectations of the child? What are the possibilities of the child participating? What is expected of the child?</p>	<p>At this age, it is important for parents to encourage the child to question, by providing him correct and age appropriate information. The child's spirit of enquiry should not be stifled.</p>

### Reflections

Even at this young age, discrimination between a boy and girl child is manifested. Sons may be sent to pre-school, while the daughters stay at home. There is a marked difference in the choice of entertainment and play for the children as well. While boys are often encouraged to play with guns, girls are encouraged to play with dolls.

One way of promoting gender equality at this age is to have fathers who involve themselves with child-care providing children a model of gender balance. If boys grow up seeing their fathers taking care of them, there are good chances of them growing up to be involved fathers as well.

### Group 3 - An eight-year-old girl

What are the specific needs of the child?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Entertainment</li> <li>■ Freedom of expression, dress, friends, mobility, access to education</li> <li>■ Knowledge of affirmative touch to the body</li> <li>■ Awareness of her rights</li> <li>■ No discriminatory attitude</li> </ul>
Who is responsible for fulfilling these needs?	Mother, father, teachers and educational institutions are responsible for providing proper environment and opportunities to the child.
What is the role of the community? What spaces, services and support does the community provide for the child?	The community is responsible for providing a healthy supportive environment along with education and entertainment to the child. Community policies should be child-friendly.
What is the role of the family in caring for this child?	Parents should support the child to take decisions in minor family matters.
What is the responsibility of the father in relation to the mother?	Both parents should equally participate and care for the child. Good interpersonal communication between the parents and between the parents and the child helps the child gain confidence.
What are the expectations of the child? What are the possibilities of the child participating? What is expected of the child?	The community expects the child to be a good citizen, be communicative and obey its rules and regulations. The child expects opportunities to be groomed and non-discriminatory behaviour.

### Group 4 - An eighteen-year-old boy

<p>What are the specific needs of the child?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ More attention and recognition from the parents and the community.</li> <li>■ Sexual satisfaction and sexual health</li> <li>■ Access to education</li> <li>■ Balanced diet</li> <li>■ Education</li> </ul>
<p>Who is responsible for fulfilling these needs?</p>	<p>Parents, teachers, elder brothers, sisters, peers, community members and the state are responsible for fulfilling these needs.</p>
<p>What is the role of the community? What spaces, services and support does the community provide for the child?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The community should enable the boy to effectively participate in its activities.</li> <li>■ Availability of recreational space in the community.</li> <li>■ Involvement in the decision making processes in the family and community.</li> <li>■ Psychological issues should be identified and discussed through proper counselling.</li> </ul>
<p>What is the role of the family in caring for this child? / What is the responsibility of the father in relation to the mother?</p>	<p>The father should behave like a friend and educate him on sexual issues. The boy should receive proper peer counselling. Negotiation should be used by the parents to debate on sensitive issues with the boy. The boy should be sensitised in taking care of younger siblings. The mother specifically should involve the boy in household chores.</p>
<p>What are the expectations of the child? What are the possibilities of the child participating? What is expected of the child?</p>	<p>Good and respectful behaviour, refraining from anti-social activities, working hard to achieve academic success and keeping good company is expected of the boy.</p>

### Reflections

Generally mothers shy from discussing sex with their sons. Further, they don't usually involve or expect their 18-year-old sons to help in domestic chores. Since the sons do not also see their fathers involved in household tasks,

they do not consider it their role. At times boys, who are unable to develop good communication patterns with their fathers, are emotionally open and freer with their mothers. In addition, boys tend to learn good and responsible behaviour from their peers, engaging in tasks that their fathers did not undertake.

### Group 5 - A twelve-year-old girl with visual impairment

What are the specific needs of the child?	<p><i>Emotional Needs:</i> Security, respect, love and care, support, responding and understanding</p> <p><i>Educational Needs:</i> Formal and special education, sex education, social and health education, personal hygiene</p> <p><i>Training Needs:</i> Special trainings for the blind are available, which should be continued over a long run</p> <p><i>Material Needs:</i> White stick, Braille, special clothing etc</p> <p><i>Health Needs:</i> Regular health checks</p> <p><i>Recreational Needs:</i> Sports for blind children, safe areas to play in</p>
Who is responsible for fulfilling these needs?	Father, mother, sibling, neighbours, relatives, teachers, trainers, friends, NGOs, private sector, local clubs, government are responsible for fulfilling these needs.
What is the role of the community? What spaces, services and support does the community provide for the child?	The community should adequately respond to the need of the child for a safe and secure environment. Fellow community persons should be made aware of a special child among them. Community should negotiate with the government to establish institutions and mechanisms to address blind girls' needs.
What is the role of the family in caring for this child?	The family should provide proper attention to all her needs. Emotional support and all necessary age appropriate information should be provided to the child. The child should regularly be made aware on happenings in her community, country and the world. The family should provide her solutions to problems and help her function normally.
What is the responsibility of the father in relation to the mother?	Both the mother and the father are equally responsible for the child. Spending quality and quantity time with the child, providing financial support and emotional support are vital. Helping with homework, food, clothing, providing age appropriate sex education, ensuring that other family members keep her safe, secure and happy are responsibilities of both parents.
What are the expectations of the child? What are the possibilities of the child participating? What is expected of the child?	The child requires proper attention, understanding and care while being treated as a normal child, irrespective of her disability. The community and the family play a large role in her social and career development.

### Reflections

The group work represents an ideal situation. In reality, fathers and mothers respond differently to children with special needs. Some studies suggest that fathers find it more difficult to accept a child with a disability. In case of disabled boys, who might not be as strong or virile as fathers imagine or idealise, they may distance themselves from the child. Again, these are tendencies and in no way mean that all fathers act in this way.

### Synthesis

While working with parents it is imperative not to make them feel overwhelmed and inadequate by their tasks in child rearing. Mothers and fathers are human too and who can falter. Communities should therefore create spaces for parents to share difficult issues. Various researchers working in the area of child development suggest that the key factor is that children perceive and believe that their parents mean well or have positive intentions for them. Children are often forgiving of their parent's faults and limitations when they perceive this.

## ACTIVITY

Participants were asked to note three activities/chores that they are responsible for at home. Men and women participants stacked their cards separately, which revealed that women mostly undertook cleaning, washing, looking after children, cooking and also finishing office tasks at home. Men appeared very specific with their household responsibilities like cleaning their room, washing dishes etc. Some men were proud of helping their wives with chores such as purchasing and cooking. Over all men stated what they would *like to do* at home, while women stated what they do at home. Ironically even if men did undertake the chores, women in the group were often sceptical about whether they actually did all of what they said. Moreover, some things that men do undertake weren't on the list like fixing the car and the leaks, electronic and mechanical fixing etc, which are important part of domestic chores.

It was shown that if men performed domestic tasks that are traditionally women's role, they were ostracised by the family and peers. Men were often teased for not being a 'real man'. Different countries have specific degrading statements for men who don't act in 'manly' ways. Moreover, men enjoy the privileges that they receive. If a man enjoys it, he can cook, but the primary responsibility of the kitchen always lies with the woman, whether she likes it or not. Above all, it is seen that it is not the individual decision of the man to change. It always depends on what the others will think. This is a useful understanding that helps us develop approaches to work with men and boys.

## 5.2 Perspectives from Children's Rights

Children's rights are based on children's needs. In the group task above, specific and general needs of children were outlined which are all part of children's rights. In particular, a favourable family environment and primary care are most important areas. Protection of rights within the family, right to privacy, education and cultural rights, right to play, special protection measures for boys and girls were highlighted in the group task. The

communities' support to the family and help to the child itself is pivotal. Responsibility of the private sector such as encouraging parental leave is important. Media is responsible to promote positive values. Moreover the child is an important actor in his/her own development as even a very young child can express his/her needs. All these rights are stated in the UNCRC, which emphasises the responsibilities that complement the rights.

The following articles in the UNCRC emphasise the importance of parenting:

### Article 5

The state must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents, or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of their rights in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.

### Article 3

In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

### Article 2

The right to non-discrimination, irrespective of the child or his parents or legal guardians race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

### Article 4

The State Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislation, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognised in the present Convention.

#### **Article 6**

The State Parties have an obligation to ensure every child's survival and development.

#### **Article 9**

State Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, unless it is necessary in the best interest of the child.

#### **Article 12**

Children's views must be taken into account in all matters affecting them

#### **Article 13**

The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

#### **Article 14**

States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

#### **Article 18**

**Both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing of the child. State Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child rearing responsibilities and ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.**

#### **Article 19**

The right of the child to protection from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parents, legal guardians, or any other person who has the care of the child.

#### **Article 20**

A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment or in whose own best interest cannot be allowed to remain in that environment shall be entitled special protection and assistance provided by the State.

#### **Article 27**

The parents or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities, the conditions of living necessary for the child's development.

### *The UNCRC and the evolving capacities of a child*

The UNCRC focuses on the child as an individual with rights and challenges the presumption that parents have the right of ownership of the child. The UNCRC provides the parents rights and responsibilities to guide and direct the child as a function of parenthood, until the child is capable of exercising those rights on his/her behalf. The UNCRC presents support to families when they are not able to provide appropriate guidance and support to the child and when parents violate the rights of the child. It empowers the state to intervene when necessary, recognising that the best interest of the child is not always protected by parents.

Child development is a central agenda within the child rights framework. The UNCRC highlights 'best interest of the child' but its interpretation is critical. Similarly 'non-discrimination' implies that parents should not discriminate between children. Child participation would imply listening to children's perception on parenting. Child protection in relation to fathering and mothering needs to be understood. UNCRC also highlights the responsibility of the state, parents, community and international bodies to ensure the realisation of child rights. In particular, the UNCRC illustrates that childhood is not only a preparation for adulthood; it has a value in itself.

The Convention also recognises that:

- Children in different environments and cultures who are faced with unique life expectations will acquire competencies at different ages, and the acquisition of competences varies according to circumstances.
- The importance of stability in social relations and the need to be loved and valued are universally accepted for children in all cultures. Children need love and security, new experiences, praise and recognition and taking responsibilities.
- The impact abuse or divorced parents depends upon the level of social stigma associated with divorce and abuse and the expectations on how children will be affected.
- Child development:
  - There is clear biological evidence of universality in children's physical development. Development of children's bones and musculature follows a known sequential order. .
  - Children up to the age of three years are not able to fully understand the perception of others and lack any significant decision making capacities.
  - From ages 3 to 11 years, children are increasingly able to recognise that people have different perspectives and that they gradually acquire the ability to see another's point of view.
- By the age of 11 years, children begin to be able to understand a third person's perspective and appreciate that people may have mixed feelings about issues.
- In adolescence, children can reflect on what is good or bad for society and develop a legal and moral perspective.
- However, children as well as adults demonstrate different competences in different contexts. Experiences, self esteem and societies' expectations affect what a child is able to do. Expectations vary with factors such as social background, gender, abilities and so on.
- Research reveals that as more opportunities for decision making are given to children, they are better able to exercise informed choices.
- Positive loving relations are crucial in the first few years of a child's life. However, research has shown that children can have several close relationships. Good and stable relationships will contribute to a deep and harmonic identity development.



## 6. APPLYING THE MASCULINITIES APPROACH

The chapter details ways of involving men and boys and finding the points of entry at various levels and settings. Country and regional plans are showcased, which follow an integrated strategic approach addressing the different areas of child rights including child participation, education, non-discrimination, child development and violence, in order to engage men as partners for healthier families.

### 6.1 Promoting change in individual men

A more nuanced approach to gender suggests that we examine how rigid ideas and norms related to gender create disadvantages and

inequalities for women on aggregate, but also create disadvantages or vulnerabilities for certain groups of men. This approach helps us understand that both women and men benefit from more equitable structures, norms and values related to gender. This means that we can help men see how they benefit from change as well. In this way, the debate is not about working with either men or women, but with both in order to have a more gender-equitable society.

Moreover, the specific realities of groups of men and individual men differ. There are individual men who criticise gender norms too. We cannot generalise men by any particular set of attributes.

Research carried out by CORO and Population Council in India has suggested six levels or categories of attitudes and behaviours in terms of men and gender equality. These categories emerge from interviews with men in a low income setting in Mumbai. They suggest that men may be in different qualitative categories in terms of how they view gender inequalities. The following are the proposed six stages or levels:

1. Denial of gender-based discrimination
2. Justification of gender-based discrimination
3. Questioning of gender-based discrimination
4. Acceptance that gender-based discrimination exists
5. Changes in attitudes
6. Changes in behaviour

Individual men can be in any of these phases. They may also acknowledge that inequalities

exist on one issue (men' use of violence against women, for example), but deny that they exist on other issues (men's average income, for example). In fact they might be stuck at a particular stage. Understanding this helps us design interventions. Efforts need to be made to engage policy makers in this process as well. At the same time, we need to apply the ecological model in order to follow an integrated approach. We have to understand the system that creates gender inequality.

## 6.2 Involving fathers in securing child rights

### 1. Child Participation

Fathers can create an environment of sensitivity and listening, which can go a long way in controlling abuse and exploitation of children. By involving children in different decisions, giving priority to children's desire and helping children develop negotiation skills, fathers can promote child participation within the family.

### 2. Reducing Violence against Children

Men often use violence to control children's behaviour and sometimes to sexually abuse them. Many fathers feel that it is their right to hit children.

Very often, the family is divided into informal groups, with the father in one group and other members in another. Fathers need to be given ways to hold discussions with children in order to develop a free and more comfortable relationship between them.

It is also vital to work with fathers on anger management and conflict resolution. This is not to say that women do not hit children. Due to stereotypical division of roles, women are more likely to carry out physical and humiliating punishment in the home setting. Presently, numerous agencies are producing material and undertaking initiatives to get both parents to use non-violent forms of disciplining. All family members need to be engaged in such interventions, such as older sons and grandfathers.

It is also seen that women actively participate in how manhood is constructed. We cannot blame women, but it does reinforce the fathers' authority. We need to address violence against women and violence against children together. Many times men may not hit their children but hit their wives. Creating a dialogue within the family and parental education are important to eliminate the culture of violence in the family.

### 3. Promoting Child Development

Parents tend to project their unfulfilled desires on the child that hampers the child's development process. At the same time, comparisons create a sense of low self-esteem in children. Excessive competitiveness fuelled by the education system can also hamper a child's growth. However, this competition does appeal to the masculine identity.

Globally, there are several activities for young fathers and men that get them to spend time

Finding points of entry

**Even in settings where gender norms are rigid, there are men who question them. Identifying these gender-equitable men is a starting point in engaging with them as allies. There are peaceful, non-violent, gender-equitable men in every society. The challenge is to learn what makes these men doubt stereotypical notions of masculinity. One way to gain entry on this discussion with men is to choose a topic area which men may resist the least such as fatherhood. Most men do think that fathering is important, so it could be used as an entry point. Additionally, building on positive aspects of traditional versions of manhood is vital when engaging men as partners. For instance, being responsible for families, protecting them are positive and desirable traits that should be encouraged.**

with children, thus helping them to learn about a child's development needs. Special emphasis is given to the mental health of children. Fathers are taught to encourage expressiveness and question competitiveness in the society.

#### **4. Promoting Non-Discrimination**

Sensitising fathers on giving equal opportunities to the girl and boy child is an important area of work. There needs to be an equality of expectations from children. Boys are expected to take care of their own families and also their parents, and when they are unable to do so, they made to feel guilty. Equal property rights for the girl and boy children are yet another area of consideration. The legal framework needs to be altered as children, whose paternity is not recognised are vulnerable in the community.

#### **5. Ensuring Right to Basic Education**

Ensuring both fathers and mothers active role in children's education is vital. Schools need to find ways of involving both working parents. For instance, PTA meetings can be arranged at a time that is comfortable for a working couple/parent. At the same time, reducing gender exclusive areas, such as fathers' participation in boys' education and mothers' in girls' education needs to change. Educational material has to be reviewed to promote value based and gender-equitable ideas. Reduction in class and caste hierarchy between teachers and parents is equally important.

**Working on all these issues requires parental education along with creating an understanding among children.**

#### **Regional Strategy for Working with Men and Boys to end Violence against Children and Promote Gender Equality**

The meeting in March 2004 led to a strategy where like minded organisations came together to define a common goal. Their work involved not only men and boys but also women and girls. Organisations such as UNIFEM at the regional level, Amal in Pakistan, Instituto PROMUNDO in Brazil, PAVHNA in India, Pro Public in Nepal and a network of NGOs in Bangladesh are working closely to form a larger web of rights-based programmes. Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Maldives are being influenced as well. The aim is to integrate work with men and boys in ongoing programmes. At the regional level, study tours and research are being planned, with an idea of getting an intensive country specific understanding from a diversity lens.

### **6.3 Seven themes for action**

The following provides a framework within which country plans can be developed:

*1. Research:* Outlining information or research that is needed to move the issue forward, while finding ways to use the information that already exists.

### **ACTIVITY**

Participants were asked to form pairs with one person tightly closing his/her fist and the other attempting to open it. Most participants used physical force while others simply asked or tickled the other participants so that they would open their fists.

The first reaction is to use force because that is the way we are socialised. We tend to follow society's predetermined norms and behaviour patterns. We are conditioned to behave in a prescribed manner and often act without questioning our behaviour. Generally, we tend to be either passive or aggressive in situations where we are challenged. Physical force and violence are seen as easy or immediate reactions to such situations. In order to address larger social relationships we must first question our own role and behaviours. Changing negative values and norms requires strategic thinking and a holistic approach that involves children, parents, community and decision makers.

2. *Capacity building*: Identifying technical assistance, training and programme development needs to understand the requirements of the programme and the target audience.

3. *Policy formulation*: Child rights legislation, recognition of maternity in the legal framework, violence against children legislation including fathers, is some areas that require work. In Maldives, for instance, both men and women are legally bound to care for children younger than four years of age. This is supported by budgetary provisions and reporting systems that create responsibility and accountability in the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare.

Moreover, it is important to understand that it is the men who are the policy makers and many times they are fathers too. Finding ways to get their attention is crucial.

4. *Advocacy*: Creation of campaigns and events that celebrate fatherhood, question norms around men's roles as fathers and gather government support to change or adapt policies are required. For instance, Rio de Janeiro in Brazil celebrates a fatherhood awareness month, and this creates awareness in the media. Policy formulation relates to advocacy, as the government is already a signatory to relevant international covenants. Partnering with groups that haven't included this issue, involving new actors such as the media are vital components of the advocacy strategy. Being specific about the target group

and developing appropriate messages are useful mechanisms.

5. *Communication*: Appropriate IEC material needs to be developed. There is material at the field-level that can be adapted to local contexts and settings. Currently a comic book is under production in India.

6. *Work life issues*: Finding ways to engage employers to streamline the number of working hours while providing paternity leave, so that fathers have time to be with their children are practical ways of dealing with the work - life issues. Lobbying with the trade unions is essential so that they demand these necessities from the management. Research suggests that when fathers are involved with new born children, it has a positive impact on the child's overall development.

7. *Monitoring and evaluation* – Program H and the *Yaari Dosti* project have a well worked out system of impact evaluation. Similar programmes or ongoing programmes that adopt this issue require finding ways to measure, monitor and evaluate the impact.

## 6.4 Country action plans

The seven themes for action is an integrated approach that needs to be coupled with the five areas where fathers can be involved in securing child rights. Together they help to strategically detail action plans, suited to a country context.

	<b>Bangladesh Action Plan</b>
<b>Research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conduct a study to review the existing education curriculum to identify gaps on masculinity and fatherhood issues in the perspective of gender equality.</li> <li>■ Develop baseline data to identify people's perception of fatherhood from a gender perspective.</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Organise a sharing workshop on study findings.</li> <li>■ Develop a core group of trainers, who would require a TOT (Training of Trainers). Support from other organisations would be required here.</li> <li>■ Incorporate masculinity &amp; fatherhood issues in ongoing programmes (parents meetings, group meetings, community meetings).</li> <li>■ Incorporate issues related to fatherhood and masculinity in training modules.</li> <li>■ Organise training on masculinity and fatherhood for staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Organise a round table discussion on review and research findings with policy planners and civil society members.</li> <li>■ Campaign protesting violence against women and children - 25 November to 10 December (16 days Activism Campaign).</li> <li>■ Observe 8 March (International Women's Day) involving men and boys.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop a guideline to initiate discussion with staff &amp; community.</li> <li>■ Develop campaign material on fatherhood and gender based violence.</li> </ul>
<b>Work/Life issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Organise a one day orientation for partner organisations.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop tools for monitoring and evaluation.</li> <li>■ Prepare an annual report along with process documentation.</li> </ul>

Bangladesh boasts of an existing network of NGOs who are working on masculinity issues, which will soon include fatherhood as a core issue. Inspired by the White Ribbon Campaign, the network organised a rally on 8 March 2005 in Dhaka, which was attended by well known figures from the State as well as civil society, including the Attorney General, President of the Union Council, District Commissioner, President of Press Club, Editor of a leading daily newspaper, members of the cricket team, a film star, Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University etc. They all gave a one-minute talk affirming their solidarity with the issue. The event received extensive media coverage.

Organisations part of the network, such as Care Bangladesh is working on masculinity issues with their male staff. However to influence organisations that are not part of Save the Children's family is a problem. Improper budget allocation poses a hindrance. The network also plans to involve other international networks on diversity and gender equality. In 2006, they plan to start a dialogue with female groups in Bangladesh to avoid misunderstandings.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> For more details on the network, refer to Annexure I

	<b>India Action Plan</b>
<b>Research</b>	<p>Thematic area: The role of fatherhood in promoting in gender equality.</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To collect information from current activities to address the issue of fatherhood.</li> <li>■ To understand the perceptions of young men on fatherhood and other stakeholders.</li> <li>■ To develop strategies to end violence against children (child sexual abuse, commercial sexual exploitation of children, trafficking, physical and psychological punishment etc.).</li> </ul> <p>Activities of Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Holding consultations both at regional and national levels.</li> <li>■ Formation of a core team of researchers, who would decide the methodology.</li> <li>■ Review of policies and programmes.</li> <li>■ Interfacing with diverse stakeholders.</li> </ul>
<b>Networking/Alliance Building</b>	<p>Establishing a national network of organisations and individuals working on mainstreaming issues of masculinities and fatherhood. Exposure visits.</p>
<b>Capacity Building</b>	<p>Masculinity issues will be mainstreamed into the capacity building processes with NGOs, Community Based Organisations, Networks, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI), Academicians, PTAs, media and the state.</p>
<b>Advocacy and Campaign</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Advocacy with the government and private sector for policies to promote men's responsibility in child-care. Organised and un-organised sectors are to be targeted. Paternity leave shall be lobbied for. Trainings to be held for men on fatherhood.</li> <li>■ Awareness campaign for engaging men in child-care with PRIs and youth.</li> <li>■ Advocacy with media for promoting positive forms of masculinities and fatherhood.</li> <li>■ Advocacy with education authorities/institutions for inclusion of lessons on fatherhood and parenting.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop workbook, games, stories, posters, flash cards, posters and greeting cards.</li> <li>■ Use existing material and developing electronic materials like cartoons and documentaries.</li> <li>■ Explore folk media, street theatre and local media such as fad.  <i>(A long piece of cloth with a story written/drawn on it. The storyteller unfolds it slowly as he/she narrates.)</i></li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop indicators for impact assessment.</li> <li>■ Develop monitoring mechanisms in consultation with the different stakeholders.</li> </ul>

Although there is a lot of interest on fatherhood and masculinity in India, organisations are still fragmented. There is a need to advocate for masculinity and fatherhood issues in other networks to mainstream it in all gender programmes. In terms of a step forward, Groupe Developpement has already undertaken a workshop on masculinity in shelter homes for

street boys and children on the railway station.

Additional research on fatherhood is required, which will be undertaken by Save the Children Sweden, Regional Office for South and Central Asia. The research would have a strong focus on fatherhood while looking at government commitments and policies.

	<b>Nepal Action Plan</b>
<b>Research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Situation Analysis</li> <li>■ Understanding perceptions on fatherhood and masculinity from different key groups such as the parliamentarians, judges, police, NGOs, media etc.</li> <li>■ Mapping of national, regional and international initiatives.</li> <li>■ Review of laws, policies and international instruments.</li> <li>■ Literature/research review on masculinity.</li> <li>■ Documentation of research findings.</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ TOT on masculinity for NGOs and other stakeholders. Develop a resource pool on masculinity/fatherhood.</li> <li>■ Capacity building for monitoring and evaluation.</li> <li>■ Sensitisation programmes for community, law enforcers, parliamentarians, school teachers, NGOs, youth groups, adolescent groups, media personnel, migrant groups, celebrities, TV artists etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy Formulation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Paternity leave</li> <li>■ Citizenship rights for women</li> <li>■ Birth Registration</li> <li>■ Reform laws against child abuse</li> <li>■ Include issues of masculinity in the school curriculum</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Media advocacy (orientation programmes for media persons)</li> <li>■ A policy for PTA exists. Advocacy for effective implementation of this policy needs to be undertaken</li> <li>■ Advocacy for implementation of International Human Rights Instruments</li> <li>■ Advocacy for policy formulation and enactment of law.</li> <li>■ Networking with national and international stakeholders for sharing information and advocacy.</li> <li>■ Mainstreaming issues of masculinity in programmes and activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create posters reflecting fatherhood, men in a caring position, men taking care of children, taking on women's roles etc.</li> <li>■ Create leaflets on the father's role in child-care.</li> <li>■ Form an email group, discussion forum on the web.</li> <li>■ Develop television spots on masculinity/fatherhood.</li> <li>■ Develop radio programmes and discussion programmes on television.</li> <li>■ Put information on masculinity/fatherhood on websites.</li> <li>■ Develop dramas and folk songs.</li> <li>■ Influence comedy television programmes to include the issue.</li> <li>■ Include the issue of fatherhood in cultural programmes such as gai jatra.</li> <li>■ Highlight the role of a father in school cultural programmes.</li> </ul>
<b>Work/Life Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ensure paternity leave in employee contracts.</li> <li>■ Ensure prohibition of sexual harassment at the workplace.</li> <li>■ Undertake programmes for fathers in hospitals, industries, corporate sectors, hotels, schools etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop indicators.</li> <li>■ Undertake process evaluation.</li> <li>■ Prepare shadow reports under the CEDAW and UNCRC and other relevant instruments.</li> </ul>

	<b>Pakistan Action Plan</b>
<b>Research</b>	<b>Situation Analysis</b> (With focus on current activities and interventions in which masculinities and fatherhood can be incorporated.)
<b>Capacity Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sensitisation of staff at the organisational level.</li> <li>■ Sessions on fatherhood with committee members in different communities where work is already underway.</li> <li>■ Inclusion of parenthood and masculinity issues in child sexual abuse workshops with parents, in mother and child health sessions, with school teachers, local body representatives, religious and community leaders.</li> <li>■ Inclusion of session on fatherhood in workshops with policemen, with youth peer educators/change agents during trainings, HIV/AIDS trainings, life skills education training and in specific trainings on masculinities.</li> </ul>
<b>Networking/ alliance support</b>	Linking up with existing networks like Mubaraza, Child Rights Consortium and PAVHNA.
<b>Advocacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Incorporate the new concept of fatherhood in the White Ribbon Campaign - a combined intervention of many organisations in Pakistan.</li> <li>■ Child Abuse Prevention Day campaign with focus on role of fathers in prevention.</li> <li>■ Find partners to work on policy formulation.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inclusion of articles, material/information in ongoing publications, newsletters.</li> <li>■ Development of IEC material on fatherhood and male involvement.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inclusion of indicators related to fathering in the existing formats of evaluation.</li> <li>■ Inclusion of fathering/parenting issues in organisations' annual planning exercises.</li> </ul>

### Initiatives at the Regional Level

Regionally, Save the Children Sweden and UNIFEM will continue to look at issues of masculinity and fathering at the regional and national level, working in partnerships with Groupe Developpement and Instituto PROMUNDO. Following are their plans for 2006:

- The regional office has produced a discussion paper on *Government's Support to Parenting in Bangladesh and India*<sup>7</sup>.
- Mapping of work with men and boys in Bangladesh will be extended to the South Asian level. In addition, a mapping of organisations working on masculinity issues would be undertaken.
- An in depth research on children's voices on child participation with special emphasis on the family setting would be undertaken. The study would look at parenthood as a whole, with emphasis on both mothering and fathering. Issues of fathering from single mothers' perspectives and vice-versa would be looked at.
- Taking inspiration from 'Once upon a Boy', a South Asian cartoon series on fathering, with sound but without dialogue, would be produced.
- There is a possibility of research on understanding transition from boyhood to adolescence and then to youthhood,

<sup>7</sup> Written by Fahmida Jabeen and Ravi Karkara, Reviewed by Annika Malmberg and Lena Karlsson (December 2005)

with positive and negative aspects. Complimentary role of working with boys and elderly men on masculinity and fatherhood issues is another area that has potential and needs to be explored.

- A book on South Asian examples of working with men and boys shall be edited.
- To take these initiatives forward, a national workshop will be held in India in 2006.

#### MENENGAGE

**Menengage is a proposed partnership between a set of global, regional and national organisations - Engenderhealth, Instituto PROMUNDO, Save the Children Sweden, Family Violence Prevention Fund, Sahayog/Masvaw, Oxfam-UK, and the World Health Organisation - to promote an exchange of lessons learned and research on engaging men and boys in gender equality.**

**Menengage would focus on three components:**

- **Training/technical assistance**
- **Advocacy**
- **Creating a global 'portal'/network on engaging men and boys**

**The interventions would target three regions: South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and East and South Africa. Regional seminars would be carried out to develop joint planning and collaboration in including men and boys in policy and programme initiatives related to gender equality. Country teams would be identified to foster cross-regional collaboration and globally and regionally network on the issue.**

#### **Global stand - Save the Children Sweden**

Save the Children Sweden is committed to address the root causes of violence against children by promoting and engaging in working with men and boys to address gender discrimination and violence against children. Working with men and boys has been an effective strategy for preventing HIV/AIDS. Save the Children is particularly focusing on the involvement of boys in this issue, not just men. Moreover, fatherhood is a good approach to see how younger boys can be influenced to become more gender-equitable.

In addition, Save the Children emphasises the 'bottom to top approach', building on experiences and learnings from the regional and national level. While work on linking other regions on this issue is being undertaken, cross regional learning is encouraged.

The organisation is working to involve its policy department to work on men and boys issues, while finding ways to include the issue in its follow up mechanisms. Other programme areas like 'children without sufficient adult support' are being influenced to look at both, mothering and fathering. Additionally, there is an idea of creating a side panel on working with men and boys, when the UN Study on Violence against Children is presented in the UN General Assembly in October 2006.



## CONCLUSION

The issue of working with men and boys has not been initiated so as to create a new funding stream. It has germinated as a movement that should be incorporated in all existing themes. Working with men and boys, does not mean we work for boys and men alone, but for men, boys, women and girls together. The 'male movement', is not separate from the women's movement, but an extension of it.

The emergence of this issue has led to debate and reflection in organisations and individuals across South Asia. There are multiple facets to this discussion. Some criticise the male movement for demonstrating men as victims. However, in reality there are both positive and negative aspects to manhood. Men and boys' position of power brings them privilege while burdening them with the obligation of being the protector and provider. This is a fundamental understanding that we require to imbibe ourselves, before working with men and boys.

To make men and adolescent boys more involved, sensitive and gender responsive fathers we need to find ways to address the issue with them without being intimidating. Tapping men's self interest in being good fathers is a doorway to discussion and

negotiation with them. Finding a common ground with men and boys, understanding the various factors that affect fatherhood and supporting them are important. To encourage and create a new definition of fatherhood, support of the extended family, community, employers and government is imperative. Further, we need to identify already existing gender-equitable men in our societies and engage them as allies.

Strategising for interventions on masculinity in general and fatherhood in particular, requires work in research, capacity building, policy formulation, advocacy, communication and monitoring and evaluation, following a rights-based approach. To secure children's rights, interventions are engaging fathers in child participation, work on violence against children, promoting child development, non-discrimination and education. HIV/AIDS is another area where men's involvement as sensitive and responsible fathers can play an important role in mitigating the epidemic. Therefore it is important to weave in the issue in already existing thematic areas than create a new programme.

At the same time, we need to be realistic, as we cannot pretend to dissolve tradition that is thousands of years old. We need to celebrate small successes. This is an uphill task that requires commitment and resolve, along with a clear strategy.

## ANNEX I

### Bangladesh Network for Working with Men & Boys

This network of NGOs works with men and boys to end all forms of violence against children & women.

#### Objectives of the Network

- To develop a resource base for conceptual clarity on gender-based 'violence and masculinities' that works for creating non-discrimination between women and men and between girls and boys.
- To develop capacity for programmatic actions to end gender discrimination and violence through working with men and boys.
- To promote equitable responsibilities between girls and boys, women and men to end violence in Bangladesh and identify the best practices to do so.

#### Core group Membership

- Association for Community Development-ACD
- Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF)
- Aggragati Sangstha (AA)
- Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts (BITA)
- CARE - Bangladesh
- Concern Bangladesh
- INCIDIN Bangladesh
- Save the Children Sweden-Denmark
- Save the Children UK

#### Some activities undertaken by the Network

On the occasion of International Women's Day (8<sup>th</sup> March 2005), Save the Children Sweden-Denmark printed 50,000 copies of

white ribbon cards, detailing commitment of men and boys who took part in the campaign. These were distributed to male staff members, men and boys participating in the 8th March rally and in other 'men only' gatherings. The rally was an immense success, involving men from various fields while gaining recognition through wide media coverage.

#### Planned activities of the Network

- To develop a ToR (Terms of Reference) for this network along with an annual action plan.
- To develop training modules and materials based on this issue.
- To adopt and review the strategies and tools for working with men and boys to end violence.
- To exchange views on organisational learnings through practical experiences on working with men and boys for achieving gender equality and to end gender based violence (at organisational and programme levels).
- To identify best practices at national, regional and international levels.
- To work closely with other national level gender networks and at the state level especially with Ministry of Women and Children Affairs of Bangladesh, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNAIDS.
- To celebrate white ribbon campaign.
- To contribute in research and studies of various organisations, networks and resource teams on violence against children, women and other men.
- To advocate against gender based

violence and discrimination against children, women and other men by working with men and boys at the macro and micro level.

- To share experiences as planned in the Regional Action Plan developed in December 2004 at Delhi, India with the region via Save the Children Sweden's Regional Office.

### **Role of the Secretariat**

Currently, Save the Children Sweden-Denmark has been selected to work as the Secretariat. Its main function is to coordinate the member organisations. Its specific roles are:

- To maintain regular contact with the member organisations

- To organise meetings and disseminate minutes of such meetings
- To organise workshops, trainings and discussion for conceptual clarity
- To facilitate action plan for the network
- To collect information and materials and share them with member organisations
- To arrange funds for campaign programmes at network as well at the individual organisational level

### **Role of Members**

- To attend meetings
- To play an active part in the implementation of the action plan
- To share any issue related documents and materials, etc.

## ANNEX 2

# Regional Strategy of Working with Men and Boys to end Violence against Children and Promote Gender Equality (Draft)

### **Background**

Save the Children Sweden-Denmark organised a three day regional workshop on 'Partnerships with Men and Boys to Promote Gender Equality and End Violence against Girls and Boys' on 23-25 March 2004 in Kathmandu. This workshop provided an opportunity for individuals and organisations from all over South Asia to share and learn from other initiatives of partnership with men and boys to address violence against boys and girls in South and Central Asia. Around 35 participants from the region developed strategies and concrete action plans for increasing partnership with men/boys to address violence against girls and boys and for promoting gender equality from a child rights based approach.

Gender-based violence has been a focus of movements, research, films, etc. in the South Asian region, but if we were to carefully look at all this material being generated on the issue, there is very little that focuses on children and young people. International research has clearly demonstrated that amongst young boys, ideas of masculinities become the most impelling force for risk taking behaviours, violence, unsafe sexual practices and misogyny. The socialisation process of boys sows the seeds of gender inequality very early in life.

### **Rationale**

To build meaningful partnerships with men/boys to achieve gender equality and a less violent world requires the creation of spaces

and opportunities for men/boys to start questioning gender norms and roles - and to develop healthier relations with women/girls. While some individuals and groups have sought this understanding, they have often worked in relative isolation from each other. There has not been a concerted effort or opportunity for an exchange between groups to map successes and failures (what works and what doesn't), or discuss strategies and methodologies for working with men and boys, especially in the area of building a partnership towards addressing violence against girls and boys and for promoting gender equality in South and Central Asia.

It is in this context that Save the Children Sweden-Denmark has made a commitment to address gender discrimination and violence against children by working with men and boys to challenge unequal gender and power relations and hegemonic forms of masculinities through a child rights approach. Further, Save the Children Sweden-Denmark is committed to link various forms of discrimination and address it holistically from a child rights programming perspective where addressing the root causes of rights violation, such as conventional forms of masculinities is a key challenge. To achieve these goals boys and girls have to be involved in designing and monitoring these interventions and to address duty bearers such as family members, community leaders, governments and the private sector to challenge traditional violent forms of masculinity and to promote equality in gender relations.

**GOAL:** Boys and men in partnership with women and girls (from various backgrounds ethnic group, cast, religion, class, ethnicity, HIV/AIDS, sexual preference, etc) to take an active role in challenging dominant forms of masculinities and patriarchal structure for addressing child rights violation in general and violence against children in particular.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

### Research and Analysis

- Conduct and update regional mapping of initiatives on working with men and boys on issues of masculinities and gender equality
- Conduct a research on what works on working with men and boys (methods and tools) for promoting gender equality and to end violence against children.
- Conduct a research on working with men and boys to end violence against children (child sexual abuse, commercial sexual exploitation of children, trafficking, physical and psychological punishment, etc).
- Conduct a research on good practice of working with men and boys on masculinity, which demonstrate the impact on children lives in relation to a reduction of violence against children.
- Assess how masculinity issues are reflected in the State Party reports, alternative report and concluding observations through the reporting mechanisms of UNCRC, CEDAW, etc.

(Note the above research will give rise to future research needs.)

### Capacity Building

Capacity building of Save the Children staff and partners, networks, government officials, academia, etc through:

- Development of methods and tools on working with men and boys on masculinity issues ('general' and theme specific) from a child right perspective.

- Learn from existing programmes (visit programmes, secondments and study tour)
- Sectoral (for example education, health, justice, etc.) capacity building of working with boys and men of different backgrounds

### Supporting Innovative Project (s)

- Initiate and support pilot projects on working with boys and men on masculinity issues.

### Networking/ Alliance support

- Establish a South and Central Asia Network of like minded organisation and individual (national networks) working with men and boys on masculinity issues.
- Network and build alliances with donor organisation, women' organisation, human rights organisation, child rights networks (including thematic networks), academia, media etc on the issue of networking with men and boys on masculinity issues from a rights based perspective.
- Link up with other regional networks and global networks on gender and masculinity.
- Networking with children's organisation especially boys organisation to promote gender equality and further issues of masculinities

### Advocacy/Campaign

- Conduct regional and country level campaigns to make the issues of masculinities visible and part of the developmental agenda.
- Conduct media campaign on depicting positive forms of masculinities like fathering, non-violent men and boys, etc.
- Make the governments more accountable to address gender-based discrimination by allocating resources for working with men and boys.

- Integrate masculinities issues as part of the UN Study on Violence against Children, Yokohama Mid Term Review

### **Communication and Information**

- Develop a website on experiences of working with men and boys in South and Central Asia.
- Create an E-group on working with men and boys on masculinity to address violence against children
- Create a regional resource hub in a strategic location in the region
- Develop a documentation and dissemination strategy

### **Monitoring and impact assessment**

- Develop clear indicators for assessing and evaluating the impact of advocacy, communication and programme initiatives.
- Develop mechanisms for regular monitoring of the strategy and programme.
- Undertake an evaluation on the impact of the strategy in five years time.
- Monitor government's commitments on gender and masculinity issues.

## **ACTION PLAN 2004**

- Develop a regional strategy and an action plan on working with men and boys on masculinity issues for addressing violence against children for year 2004.
- Update regional mapping of initiatives on working with men and boys on issues of masculinities and gender equality in South Asia.
- Initiate a process of collecting and further developing tools and methods on working with men and boys.

- Link up with organisations, networks and government officials for assessing their interest on taking forward the agenda of working with men and boys to address violence against children.
- Develop a website on experiences of working with men and boys in South and Central Asia.

### **India**

To start the planning process for conducting a national wide campaign on working with men and boys on masculinity issues.

### **Bangladesh**

- Update the mapping on working with men and boys and specifically look for organisations working from a child perspective.
- Present the mapping and discuss it with Save the Children Alliance members and partner organisations for further actions.
- Undertake research on men and boys perceptions of acid throwing in collaboration with the Bangladesh Acid Throwing Foundation - and based on the research, undertake actions of working with men and boys.
- Initiate discussion on masculinity issues with SC members, partner organisations and key networks and organisations (Women's Right, Human Rights, Child Rights organisations).
- Integrate masculinity issues with Save the Children Sweden-Denmark strategy process, upcoming research, mappings and other initiatives.
- Write an article based on the outcome of the workshop and disseminate it in the region and to Head Quarters.

## ANNEX 3

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## ANNEX 4

### List of Resources

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- Visit [www.promundo.org.br](http://www.promundo.org.br) for more information on Instituto PROMUNDO



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