

# Engaging Men in Public Policies for the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls





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## Report

**UN Women**  
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# Introduction





AS IN OTHER REGIONS OF THE WORLD, violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a serious health and human rights issue in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) (Bott et al., 2012; WHO, 2013; UN Women, 2015).

The scope of VAWG in the region is significant. The rate of **physical violence** used by men against a female partner, current or former, between the ages of 15 and 49 ranges from 13.4 percent to 52.3 percent, depending upon the country, while the rate of **sexual violence** used by men

As the magnitude of VAWG has become clearer, national and international institutions have initially focused on protecting victims of VAWG and punishing aggressors with laws, policies, guidelines, and programs.

against a female partner, current or former, ranges from 5.2 percent to 15.2 percent (Bott et al., 2012). Current or former male partners are the most frequent perpetrators of violence against women (UN Women, 2015).

As the magnitude of VAWG has become clearer, national and international institutions have initially focused on protecting victims of VAWG and punishing aggressors with laws, policies, guidelines, and programs. Today, however, there is consensus that to prevent VAWG, and to undertake efforts to eliminate it, men and boys must be engaged as part of the solution (Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento, 2007; MenEngage, 2014).

After twenty years of research and programming on masculinities in LAC, there

is now a large body of knowledge on a variety of topics, contexts, and approaches to engaging men and boys. However, the majority of impact evaluations of rigorously designed interventions aiming to prevent and eliminate VAWG (i.e., evaluations that are experimental or quasi-experimental, with pre/post comparisons and with a control group) have been carried out in high-income countries (Arango et al., 2014). Regarding quantitative research, only recently have a few studies become available in the Global South, such as the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) (Barker and Aguayo, 2012) and the UN Multi-Country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and the Pacific (Fleming et al., 2015).

The purpose of this report is to review impact-evaluated programs that engage men in the prevention and elimination of VAWG. This report does not attempt to map all of the interventions in LAC in the field of engaging men. Rather, the objective is to provide evidence regarding efforts in the region to prevent and eradicate all forms of VAWG used by men, and to outline effective interventions and highlight progress in the field, as well as the obstacles, lessons learned, and challenges. Given the paucity of programs that have been evaluated for impact, and to broaden the overview of prevention programs that engage men in the region, innovative and promising programs have been included.

# Men's use of violence against women and girls: Scope and characteristics

## Overview of men's use of VAWG worldwide

Despite widespread acknowledgement of its existence and the various efforts undertaken to eliminate it, VAWG continues to be a reality throughout the world.

Domestic and intimate partner violence committed by a current or former partner is one of the most prevalent and concerning forms of VAWG. Worldwide, it is estimated that 75 percent of all violence against women is committed by a current or former intimate male partner (Fleming et al., 2015); similarly, about 38 percent of female homicides are committed by current or former partners, while 30 percent of women who have been in an intimate relationship have been the victims of physical or sexual violence committed by a current or former partner (WHO, 2013).

While it is true that the majority of quantitative studies focus mainly on understanding women's experiences as

**Domestic and intimate partner violence committed by a current or former partner is one of the most prevalent and concerning forms of VAWG.**

victims of violence, recent studies have begun asking men about their use of violence. The IMAGES studies, undertaken

in eight countries (Bosnia, Brazil, Chile, Democratic Republic of Congo, Croatia, India, Mexico, and Rwanda), found that between 17 and 46 percent of the men reported having committed physical violence against a female partner in their lifetime (Levtov, 2014).

Sexual violence is a prevalent form of VAWG worldwide, as well. In their lifetime, 35 percent of women worldwide have been the victim of sexual violence by a partner or by third parties. Young women are particularly at risk for sexual violence, given that 50 percent of sexual aggression worldwide is committed against girls under the age of 16. Approximately 30 percent of women report that their first sexual experience was non-consensual, and that increases to 45 percent among women who were under 15 years old at the time of their first sexual experience (WHO, 2013).

There are forms of VAWG that are less documented but equally important. Among them are gender-biased sex selection, female infanticide, female genital mutilation and/or amputation, non-consensual and child marriage, and commercial sexual exploitation. Women and girls represent close to 75 percent of the victims of human trafficking worldwide.

In 2014, close to 700 million girls under the age of 18 were married. It is estimated that 30 million girls are at risk of genital mutilation within



the next decade (UN Women, 2014). In addition, new forms of VAWG used by men are appearing as the result of new information and communications technology, including the intimidation and harassment of women and girls via social media (UN Women, 2015; WHO, 2013).

Certain groups of women and girls are particularly vulnerable and tend to suffer multiple forms of violence due to overlapping forms of discrimination and social and economic exclusion. Among others, these include indigenous women – whether or not they are minorities in their own country; women who identify as LGBT; women living with HIV and AIDS; female migrants and undocumented workers; women with disabilities; women who have been deprived of their rights; and women who have been victims of armed conflicts or emergency situations (UN General Assembly, 2006).<sup>1</sup>

However, VAWG is not limited to physical and sexual violence. Systemic institutional, cultural, and economic violence against women and girls continues to be a large-scale problem in all countries. Examples of this include wage and salary gaps between men and women; political and labor discrimination; sexism in the media; and the overburdening of women and girls with domestic responsibilities and caregiving tasks.

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1 Resolution approved by the General Assembly on December 19, 2006, based on the report of the Third Commission (A/61/438): <http://www.un.org/es/comun/docs/?symbol=A/RES/61/143> (Spanish) [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/A\\_RES\\_61\\_143.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/A_RES_61_143.pdf) (English).

Several theories suggest that approaches to the elimination and prevention of VAWG must be undertaken comprehensively. The ecological model, for example, is characterized by the acknowledgment of the cultural roots of VAWG and the institutions that perpetuate it. This model recognizes that the phenomenon of VAWG is influenced by a complex interplay of individual, community, and societal relationships (Fulu and Miedema, 2015). Evidence confirms this model's premise: that at every level there are risk factors and protective factors (WHO, 2003; Fulu and Miedema, 2015). This is why a global vision of the problem and its possible solutions is proposed (Olivares and Inchaustegui, 2011).

### Overview of men's use of VAWG in Latin America and the Caribbean

Current statistics on VAWG in Latin America and the Caribbean are consistent with data gathered from other parts of the world, although there are unique characteristics associated with certain countries and contexts.

Physical and sexual violence are problems throughout the region. The WHO estimates that 36 percent of Latin American women have been victims of physical or sexual violence committed by a partner or of sexual assault committed by other persons (Guedes, García-Moreno and Bott, 2014). National surveys on violence against women from 12 LAC countries indicate that, depending on the country, between 13.4 and 52.3 percent of all women experience physical violence perpetrated by a male partner

## BOX 1

# Findings from a comparative analysis of violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean

The first comparative analysis (Guedes, García Moreno and Bott, 2014) of nationally representative data collected via population-based surveys regarding violence against women (VAW) in 12 LAC countries (2003–2009), published by the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States, resulted in the following findings for women between the ages of 15 and 45 who were married or in a relationship:

- ◆ 17 percent in the Dominican Republic (2007) and 53.3 percent in Bolivia (2003) experienced physical or sexual violence by a husband or partner at some point in their lives.
- ◆ 7.7 percent in Jamaica (2009) and 25.5 percent in Bolivia (2008) were victims of the aforementioned forms of violence within the last year.
- ◆ The majority of women who reported experiencing physical violence by a partner within the previous 12 months also reported emotional abuse: from 61.1 percent in Colombia (2005) to 92.6 percent in El Salvador (2008).
- ◆ The proportion of women who reported experiencing injuries as a result of this violence (e.g., bruising, broken bones, burns, cuts, etc.) within the previous 12 months ranged from 41.2 percent in Honduras (2005–2006) to 81.6 percent in Paraguay (2008).
- ◆ Suicidal thoughts are more frequent among women who have suffered violence. In El Salvador, 31.7 percent reported suicidal thoughts in the past year, while in Colombia 23.7 percent reported having entertained suicidal thoughts at some point in their lives (2008).
- ◆ The most relevant factors associated with experiencing VAWG are being separated or divorced, having had numerous children, and having had a father that perpetrated acts of violence against the mother.
- ◆ Economic status did not bear a significant relationship to greater risks of violence. For example, on the whole, incidents of violence were greater in middle-income groups than in lower-income groups.

*Source:* Guedes, García-Moreno and Bott (2014).

during their lifetime; and at the same time, between 5.2 and 15.2 percent of women experience sexual violence in their lifetime (Bott et al., 2012). In 2014, 1,678 women in the region were murdered by a current or former partner. Honduras, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala recorded the highest rates of such violence (Observatory of Gender Equality for Latin America and the Caribbean, CEPAL).

Specific populations, such as indigenous women, may be at greater risk for VAWG. According to the 2011 National Survey on Domestic Relationships and VAWG against Women (INEC and SENPLADES,

2012), in Ecuador, the highest rate of VAWG (physical and psychological) was reported among indigenous women (59.3 percent) and Afro-Ecuadorians (55.3 percent). Meanwhile, 88 percent of female victims of rape and torture during the thirty years of civil war in Guatemala were indigenous, mainly Maya (CHIRAPAQ and ECMIA, 2013).

These data demonstrate the prevalence of the problem of VAWG in the region, and the numerous forms it takes, as well as the fact that women are generally at the highest risk of suffering violence in their own home, within partner relationships.

### BOX 2

## Gender attitudes that “justify” violence

Quantitative scales have been developed to assess attitudes on gender and violence by asking men and women to what extent they agree or disagree with certain affirmative statements (Barker et al., 2004). The evidence suggests that there is a relationship between attitudes towards gender and self-reported acts of violence committed by men (Barker, Aguayo and Correa, 2013; Barker et al., 2014; Fleming et al., 2015).

In Jamaica, 27.2 percent of young men (between 15 and 24 years of age) agree with the statement that “a wife is required to have sex with her husband even when she does not want to” (versus 24.5 percent of the women); 16 percent agree with the statement that “it is all right for a man to beat his wife if she is unfaithful” (versus 4 percent of the women); 10.8 percent agree with the statement that “hitting a wife when [she] disobeys her husband is justified” (versus 1.5 percent of the women) (Reproductive Health Survey, Jamaica, 2008).

*Continued on page 9*


**BOX 2**

*Continued from page 8*

In Guatemala, 67.6 percent of men believe that a good wife must obey her husband or partner even if she disagrees with him; 49.2 percent believe that the man has to demonstrate that he is in charge at home; 20.7 percent agree that a wife is required to have sexual relations with her husband even if she does not want to; and 11.9 percent believe that there are circumstances in which a man has the right to hit his wife or partner (Ministry of Public Health and Social Services of Guatemala (MSPAS), 2011).

Moreover, men in Guatemala reported that their female partner must request their permission in certain situations, such as going out (81.6 percent) and managing family finances (67 percent); such percentages increased among indigenous men or men from rural areas. In general, of all married or partnered men surveyed, over 25 percent believed their partner must request permission to do certain activities. Among men in rural areas, this percentage increased to 33.5 percent, among indigenous populations to 36.2 percent, and among men lacking a formal education to 39.4 percent (National Survey of Maternal and Children's Health (ENSMI), 2008–09).

In Ecuador, according to the 2004 Demographic Survey of Maternal and Children's Health (ENDEMAIN) (Center for Social Development and Population Studies, 2005), one out of five women believed that failure to inform a partner that they are going out, or failure to perform domestic or caregiving duties, justifies the use of violence; almost one third believed that the suspicion of infidelity also justifies its use.

In population surveys in eight countries in the region, VAWG appears most frequently justified by rural women. Among this group, support for inequitable gender norms such as those reflected in the statements “a woman must obey her husband even when she disagrees with him” and “a man must demonstrate to his wife that he is in charge” is widespread.

*Source: Bott et al. (2012).*

At the same time, in some LAC countries, a great deal of violence against women occurs outside the home and intimate relationships. This is the case in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, countries that report the highest murder

rates for women in the world, often in connection with drug trafficking. In addition, Mexico, El Salvador, and Honduras, between 2011 and 2014, reported the greatest increases in female homicide in the world. The use of weapons,

which intensifies VAWG and increases VAWG-related mortality, is a particular problem in a number of countries including Guatemala and El Salvador (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2015).

### Effects of men's use of VAWG in Latin America and the Caribbean

The effects of VAWG manifest themselves physically, socially, and economically. The health of women and girls is an area where the effects of VAWG are especially visible, generating mental health problems and incapacitation resulting from injuries, among others (Arango et al., 2014; WHO, 2013). Among all of the women who reported receiving an injury within the previous 12 months, the percentage of those who reported a serious injury as a result

was 31.7 percent among those who reported such violence within the most recent year, and 23.7 percent among those who reported having experienced such violence at some point in their lives (Bott et al., 2012).

The sexual and reproductive health of women is also frequently affected by VAWG. There is evidence that male violence against a partner affects contraceptive use and generates unequal power dynamics in addressing sexual relations and family planning. Female victims of abuse also experience more unwanted pregnancies, contract more STIs, undergo more abortions under unsafe conditions, and are more likely to give birth to babies with low birthweight than women who are not abused (WHO, 2013).

### For societies and governments, the economic and social costs of VAWG are enormous.

of physical violence by a partner ranged between 8 percent in El Salvador (2008) and 56 percent in the Dominican Republic (2007) (Bott et al., 2012). The percentage of women who reported physical or sexual violence by a partner within the previous 12 months and who entertained suicidal thoughts or stated that they had attempted suicide within the preceding four weeks ranged between 14.1 percent in Paraguay (2008) and 26.8 percent in Guatemala (2008–9). In El Salvador, the percentage of women who indicated that they wished to end their lives as a consequence of physical or sexual violence inflicted by a partner

Another effect of discrimination, control, and violence by men against women is the pervasive fear and insecurity with which women live. The result, among other consequences, is a reduction in their participation in public spaces, community, and political activities, in their access to economic opportunities, and in their personal well-being (USAID, 2015).

For societies and governments, the economic and social costs of VAWG are enormous in terms of loss of human life, lost workdays, reduced civic participation, and costs to the justice and health sectors arising from injuries, health problems, mental health services, and more (Guedes, García-Moreno and Bott, 2014).

## Masculinities and VAWG

Studies on gender, masculinities, and men's use of violence against women and girls in Latin America and the Caribbean have sought to better understand its effects on the health, rights, and overall well-being of women and girls (Barker and Aguayo, 2012; Contreras et al., 2010; Olavarria, 2009; Ramirez, 2006; Ramirez, 2008). Such studies have found strong evidence of the relationship between VAWG by men and the

**Studies have found strong evidence of the relationship between VAWG by men and the ways in which men learn, live, and practice gender norms within a patriarchal framework.**

ways in which men learn, live, and practice gender norms within a patriarchal framework (Barker and Aguayo, 2012; Fleming et al., 2015; Ramirez, 2008; Jewkes et al., 2011).

Certain characteristics associated with traditional masculinity have been found to be strongly associated with men's use of violence. Among them are the need to demonstrate or defend "manhood"; the need to assert power and be in control; an inability to manage anger or frustration; the holding of beliefs that justify the violence; a sense of ownership over women's bodies; victim blaming; the perception of women as sexual objects; and the idea that male sexual desire is uncontrollable (Contreras et al., 2010; WHO, 2003).

The close connection between violence and masculinity is reflected in the fact that men are the perpetrators of the majority of violent acts, against women as well as against men, in several social contexts. Also, in certain circumstances, male violence is highly legitimized and even encouraged. In some countries, the use of violence by male government agents – for instance, by the police – is high. Similarly, sexual violence has been used in armed conflicts as a weapon of war, while in the context of repression by dictatorial regimes it has been used as a form of punishment and domination. In some populations, youth from poorer backgrounds form gangs and carry out sexual violence as a method of asserting power (Jewkes, 2012). At the same time, the use of weapons in some of the above-noted contexts intensifies the effects of the violence (Arango et al., 2014; Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2015; WHO, 2013).

Many men who commit VAWG do so to demonstrate – to others and themselves – their power or "manhood" with respect to their partner (Fleming et al., 2015). In some countries, aside from the traditions, norms, and conventions that legitimize male power over women, there are still laws that reinforce it – for example, the right to dowry (or bride price) and a husband's legal ownership of a woman's property upon marriage.

Overall, global evidence indicates that violence committed by men against women is linked to:

***Inequitable and discriminatory gender norms.*** Hypermasculine gender norms – still quite present and dominant in the LAC context – legitimize the control, domination, abuse, and devaluing of women. The IMAGES survey (Fleming et al., 2015), in which the GEM scale on gender attitudes was applied, has found a correlation between inequitable gender attitudes – or low scores on the GEM scale – and the perpetration of physical violence against a female partner. The proportion of men who totally

or partially agreed with the statement “there are times in which women deserve to be beaten,” was 19 percent in Brazil, 10 percent in Chile, and 6 percent in Mexico (Barker et al., 2011).

***Male chauvinism and violent male socialization.*** From childhood, boys are immersed in a culture that encourages them to be the protagonists of violent situations. The differing forms of violence that largely afflict men and women are also a product of gender norms: a woman is more likely to be physically assaulted or murdered by someone she knows, while in the case of men, a stranger is more likely to perpetrate the

### BOX 3

## Principal risk factors of VAWG

Recent multi-country studies on masculinities have found evidence of the contributing factors in men’s use of VAWG. In a United Nations (UN) study on men and violence in six Asian and Pacific countries, a significant relationship was found between a man’s use of violence against an intimate partner and his age, attitudes towards gender equality, experiences of abuse in childhood, mental health, and participation in armed conflict (Fulu et al., 2013).

Similarly, in the IMAGES survey, undertaken in eight countries of the Global South, the authors identified the following risk factors for the perpetration of physical violence against a female partner: greater age, having witnessed violence against the mother prior to the age of 18, permissive attitudes towards VAW, low scores on the GEM scale (gender attitudes), and having been involved in an armed conflict.

*Source:* Fleming et al., 2015.

act; and, in general, women run a greater risk of falling victim to male violence in the home rather than outside of it, while the reverse is true of men (WHO, 2013).

**Exposure of men to violence during their lifetimes.** The evidence suggests that men who, as children, were victims or witnesses of child abuse or violence against their mothers by a male partner run a greater risk of committing violence against their female partner as adults (Barker et al., 2011; Contreras et al., 2012). For example, in Guatemala, 34.9 percent of men witnessed violence by their father toward their mother and 49 percent of men were abused by someone before the age of 15. In that country, witnessing acts of violence against the mother is significantly associated with the use of physical and sexual violence in adult life. Indeed, 25.4 percent of Guatemalan men who witnessed violence as children have used physical or sexual violence against a partner at some point in their lives; the proportion is 11.4 percent for those who have not witnessed such acts (Ministry of Public Health and Social Services of Guatemala (MSPAS), 2011). It is worth noting that not all men exposed to acts of violence – whether as a victim or witness – will use VAWG.

**Violent environments.** There are countries and contexts in which violence is more generally pervasive. Some male-dominated spaces – for instance, where drug traffickers dominate, and in jails, armed groups, and gangs – are saturated with violence and a culture of the defense of honor and manhood. These environments pose the greatest risks for

women. In El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, the results are pronounced: the majority of female homicides take place outside the home, many times in connection with drug trafficking (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2015).

**Use of weapons.** The IMAGES survey concluded that one of the factors associated with physical violence against a partner is current or former participation in armed conflict (Fleming et al., 2015). More than 60 percent of all homicides of women in El Salvador in 2011 were committed using firearms. In Guatemala (2010), firearms were used in 77 percent of homicides of women, and in 85 percent of homicides of men (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2015).

**Male mental health.** Many men are at risk of poor mental health – especially in contexts of social exclusion, post-conflict settings, and unemployment – and an analysis of the IMAGES survey of men in eight countries found that depression is associated with acts of violence against a partner (Fleming et al., 2015). Hyper-masculine norms in certain cultures restrict men from addressing their physical and mental health needs. In addition, there are barriers to access and use of mental health services after a problem or crisis arises for men who do not properly care for their mental health. Many men also seek too little help or seek it too late (Barker et al., 2014; Robertson et al., 2015).

**Excessive consumption of alcohol among men.** There is ample evidence that excessive alcohol consumption functions as a facilitator of violence (WHO, 2013). The PAHO multi-country study (2007) on alcohol, gender, culture,



and violence in the Americas determined that the risk that a man will use VAWG increases with his consumption of alcohol.

**Poor enforcement of legislation and weak institutions against VAWG.** It has been observed that more legislation, policies, and programs against VAWG lead to greater visibility of the issue and reduced incidence of the phenomenon. Characterizing incidents of VAWG as crimes, punishing its perpetrators and issuing corrective measures, and favoring education to prevent it are basic strategies for addressing the reality (Ortiz-Barreda and Vives-Cases, 2013; Weldon and Htun, 2013). But while the region has improved in this respect, current legislation and guidelines on VAWG

have yet to be fully implemented. Moreover, stricter, more comprehensive and effective legislation is required, as well as adequate funds to implement and enforce it.

It should be noted that the subject of men's use of VAWG must be treated with caution and that the factors associated with men's use of violence should not be used as an argument to minimize or eliminate the responsibility of those who commit such acts. It is always a reprehensible behavior. But this relationship cannot be ignored when one considers policies aimed at prevention, in the sense of taking into account certain social preconditions that make the occurrence of violent behavior more likely.

# Global tools and guidelines to address VAWG

VAWG has been recognized for decades by international organizations and governments as one of the most widespread forms of human rights abuse (UN Women, 2015).

The United Nations has declared that violence must be eliminated from relationships and societies, and accordingly has developed relevant international declarations, guidelines, and resolutions. At the same time, more and more

official policies are being implemented in the Latin America Region, creating a surge of public and private initiatives with the aim of ending VAWG at the national level.

That current and historic inequality between men and women is the most fundamental contributing factor in the perpetuation of VAWG around the world has been acknowledged by international organizations and has been

the basis of a number of tools that seek to highlight this fact and eliminate such discrimination.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1979, is a significant instrument in the fight against gender injustice and VAWG. It establishes a framework of measures intended to end discrimination against women, provides protective mechanisms in cases of injustice and violence, and empowers women to assert their rights. Similarly, it sets forth the need to challenge discriminatory

gender norms and achieve equality of rights and responsibilities for women and men in the various aspects of social and personal life.

During the 1990s, greater efforts were made to eliminate gender discrimination against women within the framework of the United Nations by seeking to actively engage men and boys for the purpose of achieving gender equality, among other measures. This approach was explicitly stated in the International Conference on Population and Development of 1994 in Cairo and in the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

### BOX 4

## Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

Although the International Conference on Population and Development of 1994 in Cairo and the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing were high points in the effort to engage men and boys in the fight against VAWG, it was the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) that helped create entry points on how to engage men in gender equality. Approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979, the CEDAW is often described as an international declaration of women's rights. It provided a framework for the adoption of national measures directed towards ending discrimination against women in the social, economic, cultural, and political spheres. It was also the first international agreement to include specific terms regarding the equal responsibility of men and women in family life and the importance of transforming gender norms in cultural and social contexts.

*Source: MenEngage (2014).*

Consistent with international standards, LAC countries approved the 1996 Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (Convention of Belem do Para). It established, for the first time in the region, the right of women to live free from violence. Similarly, this convention has inspired a series of action plans and information dissemination initiatives: laws and legal procedures; models for providing assistance; sensitization processes and training for staff in the fields of law, health, and safety; monitoring initiatives, assessment, and supervision; and advisory services and assistance to female survivors in all of its member countries.

### Scant attention was given to men's roles in inequality and violence and the need to design policies focused on masculinities.

Prior to the conferences in Cairo and Beijing, the main debates and documents regarding gender equality were focused on the consequences of discrimination against women and girls, ensuring the protection of their rights, implementing protective policies and gender promotion, and creating mechanisms for the punishment of instances of violence. Scant attention was given to men's roles in inequality and violence and the need to design policies focused on masculinities.

These reflections and realities were subsequently taken into account during the drafting of policies at an international

level. The review of the Cairo Action Program (Cairo+5, 1999) not only reaffirmed the importance of promoting male participation in the gender equality discussion, it also recognized the importance of addressing needs specific to men in matters associated with sexual and reproductive health.

The inclusion of men from this perspective is clearly recognized at the global level in the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (United Nations, 1995). There, a specific section of Chapter IV, "Gender Equality, Equity and Empowerment of Women," is dedicated to the responsibility and participation of men in the achievement of equality between men and women, and promotes the active role of men in all aspects of family and domestic life.

Now, with male gender studies – or studies on masculinities – and male activism for gender equality, the need to engage men around the roles they play and the ways in which they affect women's lives – in issues relating to sexual and reproductive health, co-parental and domestic work responsibility, and domestic violence (Aguayo and Sadler, 2011; Fabbri, 2015; Nascimento and Segundo, 2011; MenEngage, 2014) – is beginning to be proposed by men themselves.

The role of men, not only as aggressors, but also as potential allies, facilitators, and activists in the fight to achieve gender equality and eliminate all forms of VAWG, has begun to be viewed as an indispensable element that requires specific policies and strategies (MenEngage, 2014).

BOX 5

## 48th Session of the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women: The role of boys and men

One of the most formative post-Beijing discussions on men and boys emerged from the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 48th session in 2004, which examined “The Role of Men and Boys in Achieving Gender Equality” as one of its priority themes. In preparation for the session, the UN Secretary-General issued a report that described the struggle for gender equality as a “societal responsibility that concerns and should fully engage men as well as women and requires partnerships between women and men.” The report also stressed that “[m]en and boys have much to gain from increased gender equality, as they pay significant costs in terms of quality of life from the way gender relations are currently defined and practised.”

In its Agreed Conclusions, the CSW reaffirmed that both men and women must participate in promoting gender equality and provided recommendations to continue and expand inclusion of men and boys in key areas, including: (i) the socialization and education of boys and young men; (ii) the workplace and the sharing of family and care giving responsibilities; (iii) the prevention of and response to HIV/AIDS; and (iv) the elimination of violence. The Agreed Conclusions are considered the first international policy document to systematically treat men and boys as agents in the gender equality process, recognizing that men and boys can and do make contributions to gender equality in their many capacities and in all spheres of society.

*Source: MenEngage (2014).*

## Report methodology

In preparation for this report, search criteria were developed to provide a basis for the review of available literature, principally in English and Spanish. Publications taken into account included academic articles, impact assessments, systematic reviews, and gray literature.

This search produced 121 relevant titles. Among these, 33 were theoretical articles on the subject; 44 were articles regarding international experiences, assessments, and reviews; four were assessments carried out in Latin America and the Caribbean; and ten involved work experiences with men who committed violence against women in that region. Finally, 29 laws, amendments, or reforms to penal codes, along with 11 national action plans intended to address the matter in LAC, were reviewed.

Similarly, a survey was developed to investigate the efforts of VAWG-prevention programs and activities in LAC that included male participation and had


been subjected to impact assessments. It includes 24 questions aimed at establishing the nature of the implemented programs, their target population and methodology, whether they were the subjects of impact assessments or any other reference, and the lessons learned. This document was distributed by electronic mail to several networks on masculinities and MenEngage, as well as specialists and activists in the region. Fifteen completed surveys were returned regarding VAWG-prevention programs or initiatives in several countries that had included male participation (Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, and Uruguay).

Finally, a review was performed of VAWG-related legislation in countries in the region, as well as related action plans, which are further described below. Appendix 1 sets forth a list of the reviewed laws and action plans.



## Legislation and action plans on VAWG in Latin America and the Caribbean





**A**LMOST EVERY COUNTRY IN THE REGION HAS laws and institutions designed to prevent, protect against, punish, and redress VAWG. Their level of development varies by country, although an increase in concern and willingness to implement regional and international standards in this area has been observed.

All the LAC countries examined for this report have made progress in developing comprehensive VAWG action plans and programs, especially in the last decade. This means that there is an effort to address the problem in a broad and complex manner, an attempt to take

**Almost every country in the region has laws and institutions designed to prevent, protect against, punish, and redress VAWG.**

into account all of the circumstances in which this reality arises (social, cultural, workplace, ethnic, educational, and political, among others), and to not focus exclusively on the domestic sphere and enforcement of penalties. Multiple actions have been developed to eliminate violence against women, among them sensitization efforts and prevention training that, although incipient, increasingly include men in an active manner.

The objective of the majority of VAWG policies and prevention programs in the region has been targeted prevention involving women, an approach that is clearly necessary but insufficient. Very little effort on VAWG prevention has involved the male population in general,

and even less has taken into consideration culturally specific contexts.

Several laws, plans, and programs in the different countries have recognized the need to include preventive work with men to address VAWG. However, there is little guidance, strategies, or concrete action in this regard.

Meanwhile, there are several LAC countries that do not refer to the participation of men as a strategy to prevent or eradicate VAWG in either their policies or programs. Similarly, few VAWG indicators refer to men or opportunities for their intervention or change.

Since the adoption of the 1995 Belen do Para Convention, the countries of the region have gradually adapted their national legislation to the international and Inter-American legal framework on women's rights. This has encouraged the development of laws and policies on VAWG in the States Party to the Convention and a political and strategic framework for its implementation (Follow-up Mechanism to the Belen do Para Convention or MES-ECVI, 2014).

Between 1994 and 2000, almost every LAC country issued rules or legislation regarding VAWG, generally referring to them as the law on "family" or "intra-family" or "domestic" violence: Bolivia, 1995, "Law Against Domestic or Family Violence"; El Salvador, 1996, "Law Against Intra-Family Violence"; Venezuela, 1998, "Law on Violence Against Women and the Family"; Paraguay, 2000, "Law Against Domestic Violence"; and others. While such legislations

reflect differences as to what qualifies as violence against women, the circumstances addressed and actions proposed do refer to a common constellation of problems that have been identified in the region. These include elements of human rights and public health, and reflect a concern by the states to address and punish violence perpetrated by men against women and girls.

The almost exclusive focus on the domestic sphere and/or “the family” in government policies on VAWG is most common in legislation from the 1990s.

**Several countries in the region have issued new legislation on VAWG, addressing its causes and effects in a broad and comprehensive manner.**

Such legislation refers to violence that takes place in the home, and is limited, in some cases, to the framework of heterosexual marriages. The common purpose of legislation issued during that decade was mainly to protect women and girls who were victims of violence or, as stated in some laws, who were in “violent circumstances.” They provided mechanisms for victims’ protection, shelter, assistance, and redress. In the meantime, the male aggressors were consigned to various forms of punishment, and in some legislation it was proposed or required that they attend rehabilitation centers (Brazil, Chile, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and Uruguay, among others).

However, the development of policies and/or the implementation of preventive action – whether for the general

population of women or of men – was scarcely considered in 1990s VAWG legislation.

In recent years, several countries in the region have issued new legislation on VAWG, addressing its causes and effects in a broad and comprehensive manner – beyond the sphere of the home and family relationships. These laws refer to the inequality of power that constitutes the basis for VAWG, and takes into account different types of violence, relationships, and circumstances in which it occurs.<sup>2</sup>

These newer laws are referred to as “second generation legislation” in the VAWG field (UNDP-UN Women, 2013), as they expand the understanding of causes and specific aspects of the phenomenon, and promote different types of interventions. An important element is that they not only approach VAWG subsequent to the perpetration of violence, but also propose efforts for its prevention through programs and initiatives that, in some cases, include men.

Specific progress in legislation is evident, for example, in the penalization

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<sup>2</sup> **Brazil**, 2006, “Maria Penha Law”; **Mexico**, 2007, “Law on General Access of Women to Live Free from Violence”; **Venezuela**, 2007, “Law on the Rights of Women to Live Free from Violence”; **Argentina**, 2010, “Comprehensive Protective Law for the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women in the Context of their Interpersonal Relationships”; **Dominican Republic**, 2011, “Law for the Prevention, Assistance, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women”; **Bolivia**, 2013, “Comprehensive Law to Guarantee Women a Life Free from Violence.”



of sexual harassment in several institutional environments. Several countries have awareness campaigns and legislation regulating these incidents. Recently, the issue of harassment or violence traditionally suffered by women in public spaces has begun to be addressed. Peru has issued a law addressing this form of violence, while Argentina, Chile, and Paraguay are considering bills that specifically address street harassment.

An important subject that was recently included in legislation of the region is the classification of crimes against women based on their gender. Fourteen Latin American and Caribbean countries have defined “femicide”: Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru (Observatory for Gender Equality of Latin America and the Caribbean, CEPAL).

Laws against femicide are based, in part, on the obligation of the states to conform their legislation to international agreements. Similarly, they are a part of the development of a policy against VAWG committed by men – usually intimate partners, former partners, or boyfriends – for the purpose of strengthening the strategies to prosecute and punish those responsible for these acts. Lastly, these laws are a part of a group of policies directed towards eradicating all forms of violence, discrimination, and inequality against women and girls (UNiTE Campaign of the UN Secretary General).

The manner in which the crime of femicide has been included into legislation in all fourteen countries discussed

above has been inconsistent. While some have chosen to amend their existing penal code (Peru, Chile, Mexico), others have issued special comprehensive laws (El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua). The advantages of the latter are that they are specific to crimes against women, and they include important directives for the understanding and definition of the criminal nature of femicide and violence in places other than the home. All of this contributes to a better understanding of the systemic nature and continuum of violence suffered by women and girls throughout their lives, in public and private places, and to the creation of specialized institutions of a penal nature for the crimes’ prosecution, punishment, and redress (UNiTE Campaign of the UN Secretary General).

The nineteen states in the region that participated in the follow-up phase of the Convention of Belem do Para reported specific plans to combat VAWG, either as an action item within the framework of national development plans or national equality plans, or in strategies or national plans specific to the eradication of VAWG (OAS, MESECVI, 2014). Some include the issue within domestic or intra-family violence plans (Chile, Nicaragua, Uruguay), while others include it within plans on violence on the basis of gender (Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru), and still others include it in plans for gender equality and equity (Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Venezuela). In all of those countries, VAWG is regarded as a human rights issue and a public health problem.

The forms of interventions presented in the national plans against VAWG include

several actions: prevention, assistance, punishment, and redress. Their objectives are directed at eradicating VAWG through the empowerment of women; the facilitation of legal processes and other assistance mechanisms; the development of a culture of equal rights and gender equality; the punishment

**The issue of the man as aggressor is addressed by the national VAWG plans, principally through the types of actions associated with criminal penalties and protective measures, in some cases with the support of rehabilitation and/or re-education programs.**

of discriminatory and violent behavior; and redress after a crime has been committed.

The issue of the man as aggressor is addressed by the national VAWG plans, principally through the types of actions associated with criminal penalties and protective measures, in some cases with the support of rehabilitation and/or re-education programs (OAS, MESECVI, 2012). In some instances, laws explicitly call for the inclusion of men within the prevention policies, either as subjects of actions (Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Venezuela) or as participants in prevention workshops (Brazil, Colombia, Honduras). Some plans assign resources for prevention efforts with

the male population (Brazil, Colombia, Paraguay, Venezuela.)

The great majority of national plans addressing VAWG refer to monitoring, supervision, and/or evaluation activities. However, a culture of implementing evaluations is just beginning to develop in the region. Until 2013, only eight countries included evaluation in their plans, which provided targets, indicators, and responsible institutions. Moreover, few countries assign funds to carry out those plans and programs. In many cases, such activities are undertaken solely or exclusively with resources from international technical cooperation or donations, which limits the sustainability of the policies (UNDP-UN Women, 2013).

Regional organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS) have developed evaluation mechanisms and follow-up indicators for the Convention of Belem do Para, which in and of itself is a great step forward. Nonetheless, the inadequacy of a focus on masculinities that takes into consideration men in VAWG-prevention programs is evident. Male aggressors, men at risk of becoming aggressors, and/or the general male population are not referred to or taken into account in such indicators, and certainly not as subjects of intervention and/or assessment (OAS, MESECVI, 2015).



## **Assessments of programs that include men in VAWG prevention**



## Review of global programs

At the international level, there are several rigorously designed impact evaluations of programs that include men in VAWG prevention (Arango et al., 2014; Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento, 2007; USAID, 2015).

Similarly, there have been several evaluations of VAWG-prevention programs in which men have not necessarily participated, but whose impact has been assessed (Arango et al, 2014; USAID, 2015). An example of this is a review of reviews of impact evaluations of interventions to reduce VAWG (Arango et al, 2014). It included 23 systematic reviews, as well as 35 meta-analyses that

### In the case of VAW, interventions at the primary prevention level have been studied less.

contained references to 290 individual impact evaluations. In 98 of these, experimental or quasi-experimental designs were applied, and only 21 reported a statistically significant impact regarding the reduction of VAWG. Several types of interventions were implemented: advocacy, workshops, financial empowerment, psychosocial support, male aggressor interventions, home visits, cash transfers, and community mobilization (Arango et al., 2014).

In the case of VAWG, the most evaluated interventions, at a global level, are secondary-level interventions such as protective measures, psychosocial support to female victims, and interventions

with men who have used violence. Interventions at the primary prevention level have been studied less, although promising results have been reported in connection with multi-sector community mobilization (Arango et al, 2014).

In studies using experimental or quasi-experimental designs, fundamental changes in gender attitudes towards violence have been found in the groups subject to the intervention. In general, the available evidence is not conclusive with respect to behavioral changes, which are more complex to measure. There is consensus regarding the need to undertake more studies using experimental designs with long-term follow-up (USAID, 2015).

It is worth noting that the interventions' unexpected and/or undesirable consequences, as well as their positive impacts, are the subject of study and debate. For example, interventions in which traditional gender roles and male chauvinism are challenged have caused men to feel their male privilege threatened and react by intensifying their controlling conduct over issues such as financial decision-making or distribution of domestic chores (USAID, 2015).

Following are some of the findings of the impact evaluations of VAWG-prevention programs in which men have participated, at the global level:

- ◆ A review of 57 gender-equity programs that included participation of men and impact evaluation, in

### 3. Assessments of programs that include men in VAWG prevention

various parts of the world, determined that the most promising and effective programs were those that have a focus on the transformation of gender norms, rigorous design, more than one program component such as several workshop sessions, and a community campaign (Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento, 2007).

**The most promising and effective programs were those that have a focus on the transformation of gender norms, rigorous design, more than one program component such as several workshop sessions, and a community campaign.**

- ◆ Interventions implemented in schools have succeeded in modifying gender attitudes about violence, homosexuality, and other subjects. One such program is the GEMS (Gender Equity Movement in Schools) program in India, which works with children between the ages of 10 and 14. In a quasi-experimental evaluation of interventions in schools that included group education and campaigns, changes were found in gender attitudes toward violence between couples, toward early marriage, and toward the education of girls.
- ◆ Program H has been implemented in more than 20 countries worldwide. Using socio-educational workshops developed by trained facilitators, several of those sessions are carried out with young men in schools or in the community. In quasi-experimental impact evaluations, significant changes have been reported in the target groups' attitudes around gender and violence. For example, young men who participate in Program H frequently report greater use of condoms, reduced symptoms of STIs, and a decrease in the use of violence against a partner (Obach, Sadler and Aguayo, 2011; Pulerwitz et al., 2006; PAPAI, Health and Gender and ECOS, 2013). In India, Program H (called Yaari Dosti) sought to challenge gender norms and reduce violence against women through workshops with young men (n=1015) between the ages of 15 and 29, as well as through a social campaign. Post intervention, participants in Mumbai reported using five times less physical or sexual violence against the partner, and in Gorakhpur two times less, compared to the control group (Arango et al., 2014; Verma et al., 2008). In the Balkans, the YMI (Young Men's Initiative) program (an adaptation of Program H) with young men found that young men's attitudes towards gender roles and homosexuality had improved (USAID, 2015).

## Review of regional programs

One of the goals of efforts to prevent VAWG in Latin America and the Caribbean has been to increase awareness of the magnitude of the problem. It is evidence of some success that, as mentioned at the beginning of this report, the region has population data on VAWG from national surveys in at least 12 countries (Guedes, García-Moreno and Bott, 2014).

A review of initiatives carried out in the region confirms that interventions and programs with rigorous impact evaluations are few. One reason for this is a scarcity of resources that causes all funds to be devoted to project activity

implementation. Insufficient awareness of the importance of directing efforts and resources to systematize and evaluate experiences may also be a factor.

Some of the region's prevention programs that include men, identified in the course of preparing this review, are outlined below (Chart 1). These programs have data on the impact of preventing of violence against women or include an impact evaluation in their program design that is currently underway.

## Chart 1. VAWG-prevention programs in LAC that include male participation and impact assessments

Sources: Promundo et al., (2013); Obach, Sadler, and Aguayo (2011); Bardales and Meza (2007); Michau et al., (2014); Interview with Nestor Vergara (August 20, 2015).

| Program Information   | Executing Agency   | Description of the Program   | Assessment and Results  |
|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Involving Young Men in the Prevention of Gender Violence (Chile)</b>                 | Fundación CulturaSalud – EME   | Prevention program for violence against women in which young men (aged 17 to 24) participated. Trained health staff facilitated workshops or socio-educational groups in schools. Sixteen sessions averaging 90 minutes were carried out using an adapted Program H Manual. Subsequently, the program was taken to scale by the National Service of Minors of Chile. | An impact assessment using a quasi-experimental design (n group of intervention: 260 pre-test and 153 post-test; n control group: 250 pre-test and 150 post-test) found that there was a statistically significant impact on gender attitudes and attitudes towards violence.   |
| <b>Soccer and Prevention of Violence Against Women (Brazil 2012)</b>                    | Instituto Promundo   | A soccer tournament was organized and accompanied by Program H workshop sessions and a campaign to increase reflection on unequal gender norms and the consequences of violence against women. Fifteen and thirteen soccer games were organized between young men and adult males, respectively (15 to 64 years old).  | An impact assessment using a quasi-experimental design (n group of intervention: 129 pre-test and 93 post-test; n control group; 132 pre-test and 87 post-test) found that positive changes in attitudes towards violence against women and a reduction of self-reported physical violence against a partner.   |
| <b>Training Program on Gender and Domestic Violence for the National Police of Peru</b> | Ministry of Women and Social Development (PNCVFS), Training School for National Police, and the Embassy of the United States | Two hundred active police officers were trained about domestic and sexual violence to improve assistance to victims that seek help from police. The course was provided in Chiclayo, Cusco, Puno, Ica, Pucallpa, Huancayo, and Lima.   | An impact assessment using a quasi-experimental design (n = 42 in the intervention group; n = 42 in the control group) was carried out.<br><br>The intervention group found an increase in useful knowledge for assisting victims and in positive changes in gender attitudes and attitudes towards sexual and domestic violence. Moreover, the training had an impact on participants' family relations, with a decrease in the use of violence and authoritarian attitudes. |

### 3. Assessments of programs that include men in VAWG prevention

| Program Information  | Executing Agency   | Description of the Program   | Assessment and Results   |
|--|--------------------|--|--|
| <p><b>Program H and M in Schools</b></p> <p>(Brazil)</p>           | Instituto Promundo | <p>Program in schools in two states of Brazil. Fourteen six-month long programs, with weekly two-hour sessions, were provided to young men aged 14 to 25 (in low-income, urban areas). The process has reached more than 2,100 professors and 5,000 students. The work in schools has expanded through PEGE, the portal for online training of professors in three Brazilian states. In Brazil, the work includes training and workshops with teachers and young men, as well as fathers of students, in the transformation of school culture.</p> | <p>An impact assessment using a quasi-experimental design consisting of two groups of intervention and one control group:</p> <p>Intervention 1 (SEG + campaign):<br/>pre-test = 258; midpoint = 230; post-test = 217.</p> <p>Intervention 2 (only SEG):<br/>pre-test = 250; midpoint = 212; post-test = 190,</p> <p>Control: pre-test = 272; midpoint = 180.</p> <p>Results showed, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An increase in support for gender-equitable attitudes;</li> <li>◆ Reduction in self-reported STI symptoms;</li> <li>◆ Increased use of condoms;</li> <li>◆ No changes in the behavior of the control group.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Program H Workshops in the Community</b></p> <p>(Brazil)</p> | Instituto Promundo | <p>Educational group sessions (SEG) and community campaign in favelas with young men between 14 and 25 years of age (low income, urban sector). Fourteen-session workshop, met on a weekly basis for two hours; sessions were held for about six months.</p>   | <p>An impact assessment using a quasi-experimental design:</p> <p>Intervention 1 (SEG + campaign):<br/>pre-test = 258; midpoint = 230; post-test = 217.</p> <p>Intervention 2 (only SEG):<br/>pre-test = 250; midpoint = 212; post-test = 190.</p> <p>Control: pre-test = 272; midpoint = 180.</p> <p>Results showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An increase in support for gender-equitable attitudes;</li> <li>◆ Reduction in self-reported STI symptoms and increased use of condoms;</li> <li>◆ Individual accounts of increased use of condoms.</li> </ul>  |



### 3. Assessments of programs that include men in VAWG prevention

| Program Information   | Executing Agency   | Description of the Program   | Assessment and Results  |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Television Series “Sixth Sense” (“Sexto Sentido”) and “Counter-current”</b></p> <p><b>(Nicaragua, 2008)</b></p> | <p>Puntos de Encuentro</p>   | <p>Sixth Sense is a weekly soap opera broadcast on national commercial stations and local cable stations. The complete series includes several stories and has successfully introduced several delicate and complex subjects, including violence inflicted by partners, sexual abuse in the family, marital rape, rape on the street, sexual harassment, coercion in relations between teenagers, commercial sexual exploitation, and human trafficking.</p> <p>At the same time, Sixth Sense Radio is an evening talk show broadcast simultaneously on a national FM station and on local radio stations. Subjects presented in the TV series are discussed and debated on the show. The stories are not designed to tell the public what to think or do, but to encourage reflection and conversation.</p> | <p>A longitudinal, or panel study was undertaken to assess the quantitative impact on individuals. It consisted of three surveys carried out in October of 2003, 2004, and 2005 with the same group of youth from three Nicaraguan cities (Esteli, Juigalpa, and Leon), whose ages ranged from 13 to 24 in 2003. This urban sample was estimated with a total of 4,800 participants, with 1,600 individuals (800 men and 800 women) for each city researched. Three qualitative studies were also undertaken during three consecutive years (2004, 2005, and 2006).</p> <p>Participants in the intervention presented higher scores in the index on gender attitudes (towards greater equality) and greater scores in the index of attitudes around stigma (towards lesser gender discrimination). They also showed greater knowledge and use of social and health service providers.</p> |
| <p><b>Involving Men in the Prevention of Gender Violence</b></p> <p><b>(Peru)</b></p>                                 | <p>Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations, General Secretariat for Gender Violence, National Program Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (Women’s Emergency Health Centers CEM). Supported by UNFPA Peru.</p> | <p>A manual for training of groups of men on gender equality was developed. The type of intervention is socio-communitarian. The work is in closed groups with an average of 15 participants. Twelve, two-hour work sessions are held on a weekly basis. The first phase involves a training process using theory and case studies that moves on to committed social activism. The purpose is to reach all of the Women’s Emergency Centers (CEM) in Peru.</p>   | <p>In the process of being assessed (2014–2016). To date, it is observed that the men organized in groups begin to develop social activism against VAW.</p>   |

## Findings from a review of impact evaluations of regional programs that engage men in VAWG prevention

The findings presented below are the result of a review of the programs that have worked with men and have been evaluated; of the specialized literature and applicable revisions; and of the interventions themselves (Arango et al., 2014; Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento, 2007; USAID, 2015.)

### Findings in programs and program evaluations

- ◆ Few programs for VAWG prevention in the region that include the participation of men have undergone impact evaluations.
- ◆ The majority of the assessments that have been undertaken of such programs were carried out with quasi-experimental designs.
- ◆ These interventions may qualify as “promising.” This is because the impacts identified in these evaluations mainly relate to the transformation of gender attitudes and the relationship between the participating men and violence.
- ◆ The paucity of programs with rigorous impact evaluations is compounded by the need to better systematize experiences and the failure to disseminate lessons learned.
- ◆ Programs that have undergone qualitative evaluations also show changes in attitudes towards traditional gender norms and VAWG.


### Findings in the interventions

- ◆ Intervention models, methodologies, and materials (manuals, audio-visuals, and other campaign tools, etc.) have been developed that focus on gender and masculinities for VAWG prevention with the participation of men.
- ◆ New programs are being developed for specific contexts such as sports (soccer), health, education, and public safety.
- ◆ The use of socio-educational sessions or workshop formats has a positive impact on gender attitudes and VAWG.
- ◆ The most promising programs are comprehensive and include several intervention components for transforming gender norms.
- ◆ When workshops are used, those with more sessions are more effective.
- ◆ Interventions must be culturally relevant and participatory, and must provide time for participants to share feelings and reflect.
- ◆ It is necessary to train the facilitators well and change their attitudes and practices before they themselves implement.



4

**Intervention programs  
for men who have used  
violence against women  
(or “batterer intervention  
programs”)**



**I**N SEVERAL COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD and in the region, governments and NGOs have consistently created and implemented programs for men who have used VAW.

Several entities – including legal tribunals and organizations in the movement to stop violence against women – have emphasized the need to work with men who have committed this type of violence, because of the risk that they represent to the lives and well-being of their former, current, or future partners (Filgueiras et al., 2010). It is important to note that while there is agreement regarding the need to engage in these efforts, there is an intense debate about their effectiveness due to the fact that available evidence is not conclusive and even appears contradictory (Taylor and Barker, 2013).

**In several countries around the world and in the region, governments and NGOs have consistently created and implemented programs for men who have used VAW.**

Men who have committed violence are placed into programs in one of three ways: voluntarily, with their partner, or mandated by the legal system (Taylor and Barker, 2013). The programs are usually known as re-education, re-socialization, or advisory programs, depending upon their objectives. Some are of a psycho-educational nature and others are clinical or psychotherapeutic, although the relevance of the latter focus is debated to the extent that the goal is not a psychotherapeutic change,

or to relieve discomfort or confront psychological trauma, but rather to put an end to the violent behavior. In many cases the programs involve professionals in clinical psychology who conduct interventions with a therapeutic focus (Carbajosa and Boira, 2013; Ferreiro et al., 2015; Filgueiras et al., 2010).

Some of the programs included in this report have been in operation for several years and have developed a model in which the particular causes of the violence, and the context of the target population are taken into account. Several theoretical and methodological approaches – gender-based, masculinities-focused, cognitive-behavioral, constructionist, psychodynamic, systematic – are used. An increasing number of programs focused on masculinities have been observed in the region (Beiras, 2014; Carbajosa and Boira 2013; Filgueiras et al., 2010b).

The effectiveness of some models, such as the cognitive-behavioral and Duluth models (Domestic Abuse Intervention Project), has been recognized internationally. The Duluth model combines gender and psycho-educational focuses (Beiras, 2014; Arias, Arce and Vilariño, 2013; Carbajosa and Boira, 2013; Filgueiras et al., 2010b).

Europe has systematized 170 programs that work with perpetrators of VAWG. For these interventions, there are several established quality standards, namely: Quality Criteria for Interventions for Men Who Commit Violence Against their Partner (Specialists from “Group 25”); Declaration of Principles and Minimum Standards for Programs

#### 4. Intervention programs for men who have used violence against women

for Domestic Aggressors and Related Services for Women (England); Standards and Recommendations for Working with Male Offenders within the Framework of Inter-Institutional Cooperation Agreements Against Domestic Violence (Germany); Guidelines for the Development of Norms for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Europe; and “Combating Violence Against Women: Minimum Standards for Support Services” (Council of Europe).

Some of the criteria from these existing standards in Europe that is most relevant for the Latin America region are:

(i) assessment of the victims’ risk and security of the victims as basic priorities; (ii) specialized models of intervention; (iii) adequate training of service providers; (iv) careful evaluation of offenders at the time of admission; (v) the need to contact the partner or former partner to ensure they receive services, remediation, etc, and (vi) the emphasis on group formats (Geldschläger et al., 2010; Geldschläger, 2011).

## Results of impact evaluations of programs for men who have used violence against women

Given the lack of evidence from impact evaluations of programs in LAC, some international data are presented here.

First, it should be noted that the results of existing evaluations of international programs involving men who commit violence are inconclusive and even contradictory (Arias, Maple and Vilariño, 2013; Taylor and Barker, 2013). As a result, there is disagreement about their reliability.

◆ A meta-analysis of 19 studies conducted between 1975 and 2013

(n = 18.941) found the following: (i) recidivism rates tend to be underestimated in official records when they are compared to reports from couples; (ii) Duluth and cognitive-behavioral programs are 38 percent and 42 percent effective, respectively; (iii) programs with more sessions are more effective; (iv) the outcomes of these programs are ambiguous, for while recidivism decreases as a result of some, others seem to produce negative effects (Arias, Arce and Vilariño, 2013).

#### 4. Intervention programs for men who have used violence against women

- ◆ Some evidence suggests that programs that engage men who commit violence have a moderate effect on the reduction of VAWG among participants (Babcock, Green and Robie, 2004; Gondolf, 2004; Taylor and Barker, 2013).
- ◆ A review of more than 40 programs with different types of evaluations found that the impact of men's violence is inconclusive (Gondolf, 2004), minimal, or non-existent (Feder and Wilson, 2005; Babcock, Green and Robie, 2004).
- ◆ There is also evidence of a significant decrease in the commission of violence by men who complete a program (Gondolf, 2002 and 2004).
- ◆ Similarly, evidence suggests that, as a result of these programs, acts of violence decrease in severity, though not in frequency (Arango et al., 2014).

Some analyses yield clues about the development of undesirable effects. For example, a negative impact on the financial situation of women has been detected in some cases where the man assumed the cost of participation in a program (Arango et al., 2014). In Mexico, it was qualitatively observed that some participants learned new justifications to commit new forms of violence, especially psychological violence (Amuchastegui, 2008).

Analyzing the reports of female partners in four assessments with a quasi-experimental design in the United States, Adorando (2009) found recidivism rates of 32 percent for participants who completed the program, and 46 percent for those who did not.

The evidence also suggests that these programs are more effective when they are part of a coordinated response from institutions and the community (Coordinated Community Response or CCR) (Gondolf, 2009; Hart, 2009; Adams, 2009).

Similarly, evidence has been found that the risk of repeated incarceration in cases of VAWG is reduced when care programs that target men are integrated with community and judicial services (Shepard, 2005; WHO and SONKE, 2012).

As for the results of existing impact evaluations of these programs at the global level, there is a variety of data, but equally contradictory, making it difficult to draw clear conclusions about them (Arias, Arce and Villareño, 2013; Echeburúa et al., 2010). Expert consultations by Taylor and Barker (2013) revealed these contradictions regarding the evidence of the impact of these programs, although there is consensus on the need for basic standards, evaluation indicators, cost-benefit analyses, and further impact assessments.

Problems with assessments of this type of program are often of a contextual or methodological nature. For example, men who completed the program are compared with those who dropped out or did not start it instead of with a true control group. Similarly, as previously noted, official reports reflect lower rates of recidivism than those reported by the partners or former partners (Arias, Maple and Vilariño, 2013).

**BOX 6**

## **Programs in LAC involving men who have used VAWG**

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the number of programs involving men who have used VAWG is growing. Many of them focus on masculinities and gender attitudes (Barker and Aguayo, 2012; Beiras, 2014; Filgueiras et al., 2010a), and many use a group format. Some of these programs are offered directly by governments while others are provided by NGOs that are funded either by governments or through international cooperation (Filgueiras et al., 2010a). There are no rigorous impact evaluations of these programs; there are only a few reports documenting experiences, such as a mapping carried out in Brazil (Beiras, 2014) or participant interviews for the programs conducted in Mexico (Vargas, 2009) and other countries (Filgueiras et al., 2010a), as will be explored further below.

Some of the most common approaches include: (i) increasing men's awareness of violence; (ii) improving men's understanding of power dynamics and the effect of violence on their female partners or former partners and on their children of both genders; and (iii) the confrontation of misogynist discourses (Filgueiras et al., 2010a).

A mapping of 19 programs with group services for perpetrators of violence against women was recently conducted in Brazil (Beiras, 2014). This mapping of experiences resulted in several findings: (i) the programs were first implemented in 1999, and a third of them were started in 2012; (ii) most of the institutions involved are government services, even though in almost a third of the programs there is NGO participation; (iii) half of the programs report the use of a gender, masculinities, and human rights focus, while almost half use a feminist and psychoeducational focus; (iv) 52 percent of the programs operate with open groups and 42 percent with closed groups; (v) some programs work with one facilitator and others with two (two men or a mixed pair); (vi) in 36.8 percent of the programs the man's participation is voluntary, in 36.8 percent it is required, and in 26.3 percent it is a combination of the above; (vii) nearly two thirds of the programs also address the

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## BOX 6

woman, the family network, or the children of both genders; and (viii) only a quarter of the programs work only with the man (Beiras, 2014).

A review conducted in Mexico with 17 institutions that work with men who have used VAWG found that the methods of intervention that were used varied: therapeutic workshops, awareness chats, and individual attention, among others. Only half of those institutions reported strategies to ensure victim protection (differentiated spaces, legal advice, etc.) (Vargas, 2009).

In Chile, an assessment of intervention programs that work with men who commit violence against female partners found that those who completed the program were less likely to become repeat offenders than were those who withdrew or who were terminated administratively. However, the results do not appear to be conclusive (Paz Ciudadana and Gendarmería, 2012).

Even though programs for men who have committed violence against women are increasing in number, some do not have adequate resources, planning, expertise, and training. While this is a phenomenon that can be observed at a global level, it is even more problematic in the region that already suffers from a lack of rigorous evaluations, making it difficult to justify further funding of such programs (Filgueiras et al., 2010b; Taylor and Barker, 2013).


Appendix 4 (pg. 73) summarizes some of the programs in the region that involve the participation of men who use violence against women.





## **Recommendations to include masculinities in VAWG prevention**





**T**HE LAC REGION HAS MADE SUBSTANTIAL progress – at the levels of legislation, national plans, research, and programs – in matters of penalizing VAWG. However, the region still lags behind where VAWG prevention strategies that engage the male population are concerned. Only recently have these types of interventions begun to be incorporated, and there are few cases in which impact evaluations are conducted.

This must change. The information drawn from the experiences that have been assessed in the region, together with that which comes from the

international field, reveals that it is possible to change attitudes towards VAWG through interventions that include male participation. Moreover, the accumulated data from studies make it clear that, in order to prevent and eventually eradicate VAWG, men must participate in its prevention.

Based on the diagnosis of the status of VAWG-prevention policies, programs, and actions in the region that include male participation, and the need to expand and strengthen such preventive efforts, the following recommendations are proposed:

### **Conduct more research with a focus on gender/masculinities in the prevention of VAWG**

- ◆ Conduct national VAWG surveys with men and women.
- ◆ Promote quantitative and qualitative research about VAWG committed by men.
- ◆ Identify the groups of women most vulnerable to male violence, and the groups of men who are most likely to commit it.
- ◆ Conduct critical gender and masculinities research on phenomena related to VAWG, such as sexism, cultural norms, substance abuse, and more.
- ◆ Research and publicize positive stories about men who treat women and girls as equals, men who have ceased to commit violence, male caregivers, and men who are involved parents and who share childcare equitably.

### **Expand men's engagement in the prevention of violence in the drafting of laws and national plans against VAWG**

- ◆ Develop policies and prevention plans around issues that have a positive effect on VAWG prevention, such as male participation in parenting and childcare, quality of work life, men's mental health, prevention of alcohol and other drug consumption, prevention of crime, and weapons control.
- ◆ Draft comprehensive laws on discrimination and VAWG that call for interventions with greater effectiveness in those cases from a perspective of masculinities and considering prevention with the male population.
- ◆ Incorporate VAWG prevention into legislation and national plans and promote it through campaigns, programs, and activities with the male population.
- ◆ Establish consequences for different forms of VAWG, while at the same time improving the response of institutions, so that women and girls who are victims are protected.
- ◆ Educate those who are responsible for the design of policies and decisions on the relevance and need to prevent VAWG with male participation.
- ◆ Include in national plans and programs a specific directive to actively include men in the eradication of VAWG.
- ◆ Design diverse strategies that involve men of all ages in VAWG prevention and incorporate these strategies into different contexts.
- ◆ Develop policies, programs, and actions aimed at involving men in gender equality.
- ◆ Increase investment in different initiatives against VAWG, and establish a specific budget for preventive work with men. It is advisable to allocate funds for VAWG-prevention efforts with the male population without reducing funds for programs that work with women.
- ◆ Include, within the national plans and programs, initiatives (personal support services, consultations, education, campaigns, training, organization of social groups, and others) that target men at risk of committing VAWG (such as individuals who abuse alcohol, those subject to protective orders, etc.).

### **Implement more actions at the sector level to prevent VAWG with men's participation**

- ◆ Implement VAWG prevention policies and sector programs that target men from the health, labor, education, citizen safety, and sports sectors, among others. Conduct campaigns, programs, and preventive interventions in the spaces and contexts where men are.
- ◆ Establish adequate collaboration between the various state services involved in the problem of VAWG (law enforcement, judiciary, health services, social services, training, etc.) that also work with men, so that the response to specific situations can improve, and effective and timely results can be achieved. It is also necessary that there be coordination between government institutions and civil society organizations.
- ◆ Draft staff-guiding protocols for the various state services that are responsible for addressing situations of VAWG, with specific actions towards women and men, as applicable.
- ◆ Conduct training in gender equality, masculinities, and prevention of VAWG for public servants involved in these issues (legislators, judges, law enforcement officers, healthcare providers, etc.) to facilitate and encourage their preventive work aimed at men.
- ◆ In the education, childhood, and youth sectors: establish early preventive measures against VAWG with young and adolescent boys in early education centers and schools, including the topic in the curriculum and carrying out specific socio-educational preventive activities.
- ◆ In the education sector, work with families to prevent VAWG, especially with those fathers who bring their children to early education centers and/or school. This can be done, for example, with workshops on violence prevention, positive parenting, and equitably shared parenting.
- ◆ In the health sector, prevent VAWG by engaging men with programs and services directed towards them: physical fitness, mental health, and those related to the health of their children, etc.
- ◆ In the health sector, provide telephone hotlines and/or similar services, aimed at men, for consultation and crisis intervention. These should be accompanied by proper referral protocols. (An outstanding example of this is the experience of Instituto WEM in Costa Rica; see Annex 3.)

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- ◆ In the labor sector, eliminate existing gender-based inequalities and discrimination (wages, access, etc.) and advance women's economic empowerment. Similarly, move toward decent work for women and men, taking into account the impact of job insecurity and long workdays on quality of life.
- ◆ In the labor sector, establish legislation and regulations against VAWG in the workplace.
- ◆ In the labor sector, create campaigns and workshops that are directed at men and that address VAWG prevention and promote related subjects such as shared parenting and fair treatment.
- ◆ In the public safety sector, shift from a predominantly criminal focus to VAWG prevention with a focus on gender and masculinities.
- ◆ In the public safety sector, improve measures to control the use of weapons.
- ◆ In the health and public safety sectors, improve prevention policies for the abuse of alcohol and drugs.
- ◆ In the justice and public safety sectors, as well as in support centers for victims, invest in the cooperation and coordination of institutions for the effective protection of the victims.

### Conduct more VAWG-prevention campaigns directed at men

- ◆ Conduct social campaigns that focus on the general population of men with messages that challenge VAWG and the gender norms that justify and legitimize it, as well as male violence, in general.
- ◆ Conduct social campaigns that target specific populations of men who are at higher risk of using violence.
- ◆ Conduct VAWG-prevention campaigns, programs, and interventions with men of different ages (boys, young men, adults, the elderly), with a special emphasis on early intervention.
- ◆ Diversify social campaigns to address various forms of VAWG: physical, sexual, psychological, economic, workplace harassment, street harassment, etc.
- ◆ Incorporate into campaigns and mass media positive male images and role models who treat women and girls in a respectful way and who care for their children of both genders.
- ◆ Challenge messages from advertising and the media (TV, press, radio, etc.) that legitimize violence and sexism.
- ◆ Conduct campaigns that are directed at men and in which men also participate actively, such as HeForShe or the White Ribbon Campaign (see Appendix 3). Take as examples of reproducible initiatives the White Ribbon Campaign and the HeForShe campaign.
- ◆ Improve the design and assessment of programs in which men who have perpetrated VAWG participate.
- ◆ Invest in the mapping, systematization, and impact evaluation of those programs in the region in which men who have perpetrated VAWG participate. The impact assessments must be rigorously designed, must include consultations with partners or ex-partners of participants and other members of their network, and must consider follow-up tasks upon completion of the sessions.

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- ◆ Develop guidelines, criteria, and standards for these programs based on international evidence and regional experience. It is advisable to consider some of the following elements:
  - ◆ A primary technical and ethical objective of these programs must be to ensure the safety and well-being of the women and children in the network of the participating men. To do this, it is essential that the program be in contact with the partner or former partner, and evaluate and monitor the man's risk of committing VAWG again.
  - ◆ Where the man participates by court order, the victim's safety must be guaranteed, completion of the program by the perpetrator must be ensured, and follow-up must be established.
  - ◆ A key objective of these programs is that the men assume responsibility for their acts of violence. A program's approach must include explicit exploration of VAWG in all its forms, the use of power, controlling behaviors, jealousy, anger, and stress management.
  - ◆ These programs must employ a transformative approach that questions male chauvinism, traditional gender norms, and the use of VAWG. It is essential to promote among men attitudes and practices of gender equity and nonviolence, toward women and minors of both genders, and toward other men.
  - ◆ It is vital that professionals be properly trained in gender, masculinities, VAWG, group facilitation, and relevant cultural aspects, such as class and ethnicity.
  - ◆ These programs must be coordinated and integrated with existing networks (judicial, community, etc.), both for support and for compensation of victims.
  - ◆ The programs should accept voluntary applicants in addition to men referred by the court or other institutions.
  - ◆ It is advisable to consider providing complementary interventions for those men who abuse alcohol and other substances.

## Carry out more VAWG-prevention programs and interventions with the general male population

- ◆ Design comprehensive VAWG-prevention programs directed at men and using a variety of intervention approaches (workshops, campaigns, graphic elements, the web and audiovisuals, community mobilization, education, and training, etc.).
- ◆ Design VAWG-prevention programs that consider the participation of men at different levels – institutional, community, local, regional, and national – taking into account each level’s possibilities and particularities.
- ◆ Develop VAWG-prevention programs that consider the participation of men through different government services: health, education, child protection, national service for minors, etc.
- ◆ Increase the number of programs that work with a variety of men to prevent and eliminate VAWG.
  - ◇ Conduct VAWG-prevention programs with boys, young men, students, workers, indigenous peoples, etc.
  - ◇ Increase the number of programs with men who are at risk of committing violence and/or with couples in antagonistic relationships.
- ◆ Incorporate in VAWG-prevention programs a transformative gender and masculinities approach.
  - ◇ Promote men’s attitudes and practices of gender equality and non-violence towards women and other men.
  - ◇ Explicitly challenge the use of VAWG in all its forms, the use of power and control, jealousy, anger, and stress- and conflict-management.
  - ◇ Promote the active and equal involvement of men in co-parenting and childcare, as well as in domestic work in general.
- ◆ Enlist a greater number of men as agents and leaders against VAWG.
  - ◇ Recognize that there are men who are sensitized to issues of gender equality and VAWG, and design strategies to involve them more actively in its prevention.
  - ◇ Connect with men and networks of men who pursue the objective of eliminating VAWG, and involve them in the design of innovative and relevant VAWG interventions that involve male participation.
  - ◇ Involve young men in the prevention of VAWG, strengthening their abilities and promoting leadership for gender equality.

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- ◇ Work on VAWG-prevention agendas with men who are in positions of leadership: community directors, politicians, athletes, indigenous and religious leaders, etc.
- ◆ Engage in VAWG-prevention efforts with men from a range of contexts, taking into account their socioeconomic and cultural differences and/or the institutions or organizations from which they emerge. These contexts may include:
  - ◇ peasant and rural environments
  - ◇ environments with indigenous and original peoples
  - ◇ urban marginality and middle classes
  - ◇ gangs, crime, and prisons
  - ◇ armed conflict, forced displacement, and disasters
  - ◇ police and other armed forces
  - ◇ sports facilities
  - ◇ workplaces
  - ◇ trade unions
  - ◇ churches
  - ◇ community associations
  - ◇ political parties
- ◆ Promote spaces for reflection, conversation, awareness, and meetings where men can share their experiences reflectively and critically;
  - ◇ Provide access for men to these spaces for conversation, debate, and critical reflection with each other on cultural gender norms, chauvinism, and VAWG, and the consequences of these on the health, rights, and lives of women and children, as well as on their own lives.
  - ◇ Create safe mixed- or same-sex (only men or only women) spaces, in which they can talk about their experiences with gender and violence.
  - ◇ Have trained facilitators who have been provided with relevant materials designed specifically for these types of experiences and objectives (manuals, guides, teaching materials, and others).
  - ◇ Use Program H (see Appendix 3) as a reference to prevent VAWG in workshops for men, given that the program has been implemented, adapted, and assessed in various contexts.

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- ◆ Incorporate evidence-based guidelines in the design of VAWG-prevention programs and interventions that involve the participation of men.
  - ◇ Design intensive and sustained interventions, since it has been demonstrated that changing gender attitudes, and especially violent behaviors, takes work and time.
  - ◇ Conduct group education interventions of six sessions or more.
  - ◇ Conduct comprehensive interventions with a variety of instruments, such as workshops, campaigns, counseling, community mobilization, etc.
  - ◇ Adequately train the professionals who conduct the interventions: include a focus on gender, masculinities, and violence against women, as well as group facilitation.
- ◆ Promote the inclusion of evaluation methods in the VAWG-focused programs and interventions that include men, be they about prevention, support, penalization, or redress.
  - ◇ Include impact evaluations with quasi-experimental and experimental designs with control groups and with baseline and post measurements.
  - ◇ Include observations of partners or former partners of the men when conducting evaluations.
  - ◇ Include methods to follow up and monitor the effects of the interventions.
  - ◇ Include qualitative assessments to deepen understanding of change processes, resistance, and unforeseen effects.
  - ◇ Systematize experiences that register learning and results.
  - ◇ Develop change indicators to assess male participants' attitudes and behaviors regarding VAWG before and after the interventions.
  - ◇ Develop indicators, for both men and women, that involve observation and reflection on the impact of preventive interventions in which men participate, especially on the lives of women, but also on their own lives.
  - ◇ Where there are insufficient resources to conduct an evaluation, focus on research, action, and recording experiences. This is so that there are records that lessons learned are documented during the process and then taken into consideration in the future.



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# Appendix 1

**Reviewed plans  
and laws**

| Country     | Year or period | Name of the law or national plan   |
|-------------|----------------|--|
| Argentina   | 1994           | Protection Against Family Violence   |
| Argentina   | 2010           | Law on Comprehensive Protection for the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women in the Context of Their Interpersonal Relationships |
| Bolivia     | 1995           | Law Against Family or Domestic Violence  |
| Bolivia     | 2013           | Comprehensive Law to Guarantee Women a Life Free of Violence   |
| Bolivia     | 2008           | National Plan for Equal Opportunities  |
| Brazil      | 1996           | Law to Prevent, Remedy and Punish Intra-Family Violence  |
| Chile       | 1994           | Law of Intra-Family Violence   |
| Chile       | 2010           | Penal Code Reform (Article 390) – Law Num. 20480   |
| Chile       | 2012–2013      | National Plan of Intra-Family Violence   |
| Colombia    | 1996           | Law to Prevent, Remedy and Punish Intra-Family Violence  |
| Costa Rica  | 1996           | Law Against Domestic Violence  |
| Costa Rica  | 2007           | Law for the Penalization of Violence Against Women – Law Num. 8589   |
| Ecuador     | 1995           | Law Against Violence Against Women and the Family  |
| Ecuador     | 2007           | National Plan for the Eradication of Violence Against Women and Girls  |
| El Salvador | 1996           | Law Against Intra-Family Violence  |
| El Salvador | 2010           | Special Comprehensive Law for a Life Free from Violence for Women – Law Num. 520   |
| Guatemala   | 1996           | Law to Prevent, Remedy and Punish Intra-Family Violence  |
| Guatemala   | 2008           | Law Against Femicide and other Forms of Violence Against Women – Decree 22 of 2008   |
| Honduras    | 1997           | Law Against Domestic Violence  |
| Honduras    | 2010–2022      | Second Plan for Equality and Gender Equity (PIEGH II)  |

| Country        | Year or period | Name of the law or national plan   |
|----------------|----------------|--|
| Mexico         | 1996           | Law of Assistance and Prevention of Family Violence for the Federal District and 22 other States |
| Mexico         | 2007           | General Law of Access for Women to a Life Free of Violence                                       |
| Mexico         | 2012           | Federal Penal Code Reform (Article 325)  |
| Mexico         | 2014–2018      | Comprehensive Program to Prevent, Address, Punish and Eliminate Violence Against Women           |
| Nicaragua      | 1996           | Law for Prevention and Punishment of Intra-Family Violence                                       |
| Nicaragua      | 2012           | Comprehensive Law Against Violence towards Women – Law Num. 779                                  |
| Nicaragua      | 2001–2006      | National Plan for the Prevention of Intra-Family and Sexual Violence                             |
| Paraguay       | 2000           | Law Against Domestic Violence  |
| Paraguay       | 2015           | Comprehensive Law Against Violence towards Women   |
| Peru           | 1997           | Regarding the State's and Society's Policies Against Family Violence                             |
| Peru           | 2011           | Penal Code Reform (Article 107) Law Num. 29819   |
| Peru           | 2009–2015      | National Plan Against Violence towards Women   |
| Dominican Rep. | 1997           | Law Against Intra-Family Violence  |
| Dominican Rep. | 2011           | Organic Law for the Prevention, Attention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women  |
| Dominican Rep. | 2007–2017      | National Plan for Gender Equality and Equity II  |
| Uruguay        | 2002           | Law of Prevention, Early Detection, Attention and Eradication of Domestic Violence               |
| Uruguay        | 2004–2010      | National Plan to Fight Domestic Violence   |
| Venezuela      | 1998           | Law Regarding Violence Against Women and Family  |
| Venezuela      | 2007           | Organic Law on the Right of Women to a Life Free of Violence                                     |
| Venezuela      | 2013–2019      | Mamá Rosa Plan for Gender Equality and Equity  |



# Appendix 2

## Recommended resources



- Barker, G. and Aguayo, F. (coords) (2012) Masculinidades y políticas de equidad de género: reflexiones a partir de la encuesta IMAGES y una revisión de políticas en Brasil, Chile y Mexico. Rio de Janeiro: Promundo.  
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*For links to Program H resources, see page 66.*

# Appendix 3

**Best practices for  
VAWG prevention  
through men's  
engagement**

## Program H: Prevention initiative with young men, developed in Latin America

Program H is a socio-educational intervention effort for young men that consists of group discussion sessions about gender, masculinities, and violence, accompanied by other community activities. Manuals for workshop sessions led by skilled facilitators have been prepared for this purpose.

This program was originally developed in 1999 by NGOs in Brazil and Mexico: Promundo, PAPAI, ECOS, and Salud y Genero. It has been implemented in a variety of contexts in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Balkans. The beneficiaries include young men from urban and rural areas, educated and uneducated, single and married, with different sexual orientations. It has been implemented in schools, in sports facilities, and in detention centers for minors and youth incarcerated because of legal entanglements, among other circumstances.

The goal of the workshops is to begin a process of critical reflection on gender and rights and to promote more equitable relationships between women and men. The aim is for participants to understand how gender can perpetuate the inequality of power in relationships and cause women and young men to be vulnerable to different types of problems. To complement this process, community activities are held, such as

sensitization campaigns, which seek to expand the impact in the community and reinforce the lessons learned in the workshop.

Program H has been the object of eight impact assessments with quasi-experimental designs. These reveal a statistically significant effect on gender attitudes and on attitudes towards VAWG and homophobia, and an increase in prophylactic use, a decrease in STI symptoms, and a reduction in the use of physical violence toward female partners. Qualitative assessments with different subjects corroborate the changes in attitudes toward violence (Pulerwitz et al., 2006; Obach, Sadler and Aguayo, 2011).

In Brazil, the original implementation of Program H in Rio de Janeiro consisted of workshop sessions and the community campaign “H Hour” or “On the Hour of the Hour.” The campaign invited youth to respect their partners, not to use violence against women, and to practice safe sex. Workshops were conducted with young men aged 14 to 25 and consisted of 14 two-hour weekly sessions over a period of about six months. The impact assessment – with a quasi-experimental design – found a statistically significant effect on the participants’ gender attitudes (GEM Scale), a decrease in STI symptoms, and an increase in prophylactic use (Pulerwitz et al., 2006).

In Brazil, Program H activities and campaigns have also been conducted in communities with men aged 15 to 64 years at venues such as soccer tournaments, volleyball leagues, and other sports events. The impact assessment detected an increase in the participation of men in caregiving chores and produced testimony of improved attitudes towards VAWG and reduced use of violence against intimate partners (Promundo et al., 2013).

In Chile, workshops provided by health-care workers were held with young men in schools. The impact assessment – with a quasi-experimental design – recorded a statistically significant increase in the participants’ scores on the GEM Scale of gender attitudes, as well as in attitudes against violence and homophobia (Obach, Sadler and Aguayo, 2011).

In India, in 2012, Program H was offered to more than 1,500 men and youth,

with whom both the consequences of VAWG and its prevention strategies were addressed. The same was done with community leader councils, youth groups, publicity campaigns, and community outreach. Topics of masculinity, gender, violence against women, and sexuality were addressed. The results revealed a statistically significant change of attitudes on gender equity and an important reduction in self-reporting of violence against female partners in the preceding three months. There were also improvements in the men’s participation in domestic work and promotion of women’s right to education (Verma et al., 2008).

In Mexico, the health sector held workshops for young men. In addition, an academic degree in gender was created, and, since then, it has been used to train more than 700 professionals, mainly in the health sector, but also in the education and social development sectors (Promundo et al., 2013).

## Program H Resources

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- Ricardo, C., Nascimento, M., Fonseca, V. and Segundo, M. (2010). Program H and Program M: Engaging young men and empowering young women to promote gender equality and health. Pan-American Health Organization and Promundo: Brazil. Available at: <http://promundo.org.br/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/01/El-Program-H-y-el-Programa-M-Evaluacion.pdf>

## WEM Methodology: An innovative model of support groups and a telephone hotline for men (Costa Rica)

Instituto WEM in Costa Rica coordinates open groups for reflection and therapy for men in several municipalities. It is a support group service for men who come for different reasons: mental health, partner issues, separation, jealousy, use of violence, alcohol abuse, unemployment, meaning-of-life crisis, and more. Most of them are referred there by partners, are recommended by male friends, or are there by personal choice. Others are referred by institutions, and occasionally required to attend by a court.

Participants attend weekly sessions. It is believed that participation in a certain number of these sessions is important to make progress in a process of personal change. In these sessions – facilitated by a pair of monitors – the reasons for their consultation and personal experiences of crisis or suffering are shared. Subsequently, there are in-depth discussions of the crisis or conflict of one or more of the participants using psychodrama techniques. Finally, the group reflects upon and discusses issues that resonate with the problems or the personal process of each participant.

The characteristics of the WEM model of intervention include:

- ◆ Support services or support group interventions exclusively for men, open to the community, with a minimum fee per session.
- ◆ A process based on the experience of the participants and conducted in their own language.
- ◆ The men come for any reason; they include men involved in legal proceedings or protective orders resulting from violence against their partner or former partner.
- ◆ A methodology with a focus on masculinities and gender equity, which challenges male chauvinistic arguments and practices, and violence, and problematizes the effect of violence on the lives of the women, and the lives of the men, as well.
- ◆ Use of a combination of techniques: humanist, physical, confrontation, and psychodrama.
- ◆ Trained facilitators who have gone through the full process of more than 45 sessions. Some are paid and some are volunteers; some are mental health professionals while others come from other professions.
- ◆ Links with mental and general health services and the courts.
- ◆ A telephone hotline staffed by trained personnel to support men over the age of 18 years who are going through crisis situations in their personal and family lives.

- ◆ The telephone line is an intervention device in and of itself and a source of referrals to the group therapy.
- ◆ The program, “School for Men,” which consists of workshops directed at men to help them acquire practical tools to manage certain situations (jealousy, anger, paternity, separation, sexuality), complements the process.
- ◆ The implementation of community and advocacy campaigns, such as

the White Ribbon Campaign for prevention of violence, the paternity campaign, and the campaign for health and male sexual and reproductive health.

Source:

Aguayo, F. Methodology observations. Consultation of Alvaro Campos and WEM website.

[www.institutowemcr.org](http://www.institutowemcr.org)  
[direccion@institutowemcr.org](mailto:direccion@institutowemcr.org)

## Stepping Stones: Towards sexual health and good practices

Stepping Stones is an intervention directed at small groups and designed to improve sexual health through the application of participatory learning techniques and encouragement of critical reflection. It focuses on building knowledge, increasing awareness of risks, and development of communication skills on gender, HIV, violence, and relationships.

Originally inspired by the popular education techniques of Paulo Freire, Stepping Stones workshops address a wide range of problems and have been adapted and used in 40 countries. Most of its iterations include 15 planned sessions, totaling at least 50 hours of intervention, over periods of 10 to 12

weeks. Ideally, the sessions are conducted in four groups, organized by age and gender, that meet occasionally to discuss matters that involve the entire community.

Stepping Stones was subjected to a rigorous assessment between 2006 and 2008 using a randomly selected group (*cluster randomized trial*) in the Eastern Cape province in South Africa.

The young men who participated in the intervention reported a reduction in use of violence against their intimate partners, compared to those of the control group. At 24 months, the decrease reached 38 percent, making it statistically significant. At 12 months, the



intervention also achieved significant reductions in the participation of the men in transactional sex and alcohol consumption. Although these results are promising, they are actually based on self-reported changes in behavior, a measurement that could be influenced by the participants' desire to deliver "the right answer" to questions raised by the workshop curriculum.

*Sources:*

Jewkes, R., et al. (2008) Impact of Stepping Stones on Incidence of HIV and HSV-2 and Sexual Behavior in Rural South Africa: Cluster Randomised Controlled Trial. *British Medical Journal*, 337(a506).

Heise, L. 2011. What Works to Prevent Partner Violence? An Evidence Overview. Working Document. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

## HeForShe: A global campaign by the United Nations

HeForShe is a global VAWG-prevention campaign of the United Nations directed at the male population. It is also a solidarity movement for gender equality developed by UN Women to engage men and boys as advocates and agents for change in the achievement of gender equality and women's rights. The campaign invites them to speak out and act against the inequalities that women and girls face.

The campaign's broad objective is to generate awareness about the problem of gender inequality and to invite action to emphasize the responsibility of both men and boys to eliminate any form of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

Other campaign objectives are:

- ◆ To link UN Women and United Nations agencies, as well as their national offices, to the development of transformative and sustainable programs that promote the full participation of men and boys in supporting gender equality.
- ◆ To collaborate with male organizations and other organizations in the civil society, as well as with universities and schools, in the creation and promotion of events and campaigns of HeForShe in their local area.
- ◆ To inspire people to act against gender discrimination and VAWG.

- ◆ To create a platform to highlight examples of men and boys who raise their voices against gender discrimination and VAWG around the world.

The campaign uses an action-kit for implementation of the HeForShe campaign as a whole. The kit contains general information about the campaign, simple measures, and a list of easy-access tools and resources.

Activities have been undertaken in several countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, including Colombia, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Brazil. The campaign has not yet been subjected to an impact assessment.

*Source:*

[www.heforshe.org](http://www.heforshe.org)

## White Ribbon Campaign: A global effort, directed at men, to prevent violence against women

The White Ribbon Campaign is a global initiative implemented in more than 65 countries for the purpose of engaging men to put an end to violence against women. The use of a white ribbon symbolizes the opposition of men to violence against women and their commitment to its elimination.

The WRC Canada campaign began in 1990 as a response to the massacre of 14 women at an engineering school in Montreal that took place the previous year.

In Latin America, the campaign promotes the participation of men in the elimination of violence against women and is coordinated by organizations

and individuals who participate in the international MenEngage network, in partnership with WRC Canada.

The regional slogan for the White Ribbon Campaign is “Involving Men in Efforts to End Violence Against Women,” and is directed at men of all ages. They are invited to commit to this cause by relating to each other with equality and respect for women; by contributing to the building of just and equitable gender relationships; by promoting fair treatment and the peaceful resolution of conflicts in relations between men and women; by participating in preventive and protective actions; and by denouncing anyone who commits violence against women. This campaign

treats men as part of the solution to this social problem.

Since its launch in Latin America, campaign activities have been carried out in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The campaign follows an open model, which means that any organization can take action and promote it in its country or city.

Since 2013, Canada uses a national assessment framework that seeks to synchronize the institutions or organizations that carry out activities aimed at involving men and boys in the prevention of VAWG in the context of the White Ribbon campaign.

Some common problems, such as the resistance of some communities to

addressing VAWG issues, have been detected. Likewise, Canada has shown a growth in anti-feminist or “men’s rights” groups that tend to denigrate and delegitimize the work of organizations that involve men and boys in the defense of the rights of girls and women, and in the prevention of VAWG. Other issues include the distances some people have to participate in campaign activities, the high turnover of leaders in the organizations, and the lack of common nomenclature between the organizations, have also been identified as issues (National Community of Practice [NCoP], 2015).

*Sources:*

[www.lazoblancolac.org](http://www.lazoblancolac.org)

<https://www.facebook.com/lazoblanco>

# Appendix 4

**Summary table of a selection of programs carried out in the region that engage male perpetrators of partner violence**

Although the region does not have programs for male perpetrators of VAWG for which rigorous impact assessments have been completed, below are some examples from different countries for which there is some information. They are initiatives that can be highlighted for their efforts in developing a rigorous model of intervention and because

they work with a focus on gender and masculinities. Several of the programs discussed have been developed by government services. However, it should be clarified that this effort did not attempt a thorough mapping or review of existing programs, therefore these are only representative initiatives.

## Examples of programs in LAC in which perpetrators of partner violence participate

*Sources:* Interview with Dario Ibarra and Yanela Lima, August 1, 2015; documents, Secretariat of the Woman of the Municipal Government of Montevideo (unpublished); Ramírez (2005); GENDES (1990); interview with Susana Hernández, GENDES Coordinator of Resources Management, August 28, 2015; interview with Raúl López, November 17, 2015; inquiry into website <https://portal.sernam.cl/?m=programa&i=11>; [www.institutowemcr.org](http://www.institutowemcr.org); Interview with Miguel Ramos in Filgueiras et al. (2010a); Verges and Contreras (2013).

| Information about the program                         | Implementing organization   | Program description  | Assessments and results (lessons learned)                                |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Men who Choose to Stop Using Violence, Uruguay</b> | Secretariat for Women, Municipal Government of Montevideo, Uruguay  | Tertiary health care service. Works with men who arrive voluntarily, and also those referred by the judicial system. Open group model with up to 20 people. Entry at any time. The intervention has a duration of 24-sessions that can be taken more than once. The weekly sessions are two hours long.  | There is no assessment of impact available for the program.              |
| <b>Men Working (on Themselves), Mexico</b>            | GENDES (Gender and Development) and CECEVIM (Center for Training to Eliminate Male Intra-Family Violence) | Based on the CECEVIM model developed in San Francisco, USA. Works with individual support and re-education groups that target men aged 18 and older who commit VAW. Consists of two levels of 26 sessions, with a total of 52 weekly sessions. The group is open, with 4 to 15 participants meeting for two-hour sessions. Participants can arrive by referral or voluntarily. | There is no assessment of impact, but there is a qualitative assessment. |

| Information about the program   | Implementing organization   | Program description   | Assessments and results (lessons learned)  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Support Center for Survivors and Center for Behavioral Intervention for Men, Dominican Republic</b></p> | <p>National Commission for the Prevention of and Fight Against Intra-Family Violence (abbreviated in Spanish CONAPLUVI), Dominican Republic</p> | <p>It features a group-intake format that includes therapeutic actions for men who have been charged with violation of Law 24/97 on intra-family and gender violence. The program seeks to ensure the safety of female victims.</p> <p>The program conducts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Group therapy sessions, operated as both open and closed groups; participants attend a 12-session process in each format type:</li> <li>◆ Individual therapy sessions; and</li> <li>◆ Maintenance sessions.</li> </ul> <p>At the end of the program, users commit to a network of accountability and community and family commitment to work toward the preservation of a culture of fair treatment.</p> <p>The length of the program varies between a minimum of six months and a maximum of two years. This length takes into account individual differences, risk, danger, and type of aggressors, among other parameters.</p> | <p>The Center for Behavioral Intervention for Men has received 4,760 referrals (2008 to 2012).</p> <p>Of that total, 2,751 men attended the program, while 2,009 never attended. In 2011, 81 percent of cases came from negotiated plea agreements, while in 2012 the proportion was 76.6 percent. Twenty-one percent of cases were referred by judicial resolution. One of the achievements among intervened participants is that none of the participants have committed femicide. Moreover, other changes have been achieved, such as reduced hostility; reduced obsessive, negative thoughts; and improved anger management.</p> |
| <p><b>Men for a Life Without Violence, Chile</b></p>  | <p>National Service for Women (SERNAM), Chile.</p>  | <p>There are 15 centers for Men who Perpetrate Partner Violence (HEVPA) in different regions. The support is directed to men over the age of 18 who use violence against their partner or former partner, and come voluntarily to the Centers for Men or are referred by the judicial system. The program's fundamental purpose is the protection of female victims of partner violence, as well as to stop, reduce, and eliminate this violence, and reduce the possibilities of recidivism. Likewise, the intervention focuses on men accepting their responsibility for the violence that has been committed, renouncing it, and beginning a process of change in their roles and attitudes in intimate and family life.</p>   | <p>Is currently under assessment (2015–2017).</p>  |

| Information about the program | Implementing organization                       | Program description  | Assessments and results (lessons learned)       |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Costa Rica</b>             | Instituto WEM                                   | WEM currently operates nine open groups of reflection for men in several municipalities of Costa Rica. They are coordinated by the NGO Instituto WEM. In some cases, municipalities fund the groups. WEM offers support group services for men who come voluntarily or by court referral. Participants attend weekly sessions led by a pair of facilitators. The reasons for consultation and personal experiences of crisis or suffering are shared. Subsequently, there is an in-depth discussion of the crisis or conflict of one or more of the participants using psychodrama techniques. Finally, the group reflects upon and discusses issues that resonate with the problems or the personal process of each participant. Here the male offenders participate in groups with others involved for other reasons. Confrontation and empowerment techniques are used. The program also has a related intervention device: the support hotline for men (A.p.H.), a confidential hotline staffed by trained personnel and directed to men over 18 years of age who are going through crisis situations. | Has not been submitted to an impact assessment. |
| <b>Peru</b>                   | Men who Renounce their Violence Program (PHRSV) | Voluntary rehabilitation program with men who have committed physical or sexual violence. The program focuses on gender and masculinities. It uses a weekly group format, with trained facilitators, using techniques such as confrontation.   | Has not been submitted to an impact assessment. |

