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# Involving Men in Efforts to End Violence Against Women

Men and Masculinities

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## **Abstract**

Around the world, there are growing efforts to involve boys and men in the prevention of violence against women: as participants in education programs, as targets of social marketing campaigns, as policy makers and gatekeepers, and as activists and advocates. Efforts to prevent violence against girls and women now increasingly take as given that they must engage men. While there are dangers in doing so, there also is a powerful feminist rationale for such work. This article provides a review of the variety of initiatives, which engage or address men to prevent violence against women. It maps such efforts, locating them within a spectrum of prevention activities. Furthermore, the article identifies or advocates effective strategies in work with men to end violence against women.

## **Keywords**

violence, advocacy, feminism

## **Involving Men**

Deliberate efforts to shift men's involvements in gender relations are increasingly common around the world. Such efforts take various forms, from grassroots mobilizations to government initiatives, and are driven by various agendas, from feminist to antifeminist. At the grassroots level, there are pro-feminist men's groups and networks dedicated to promoting men's advocacy of gender equality (Flood 2004a) as

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well as antifeminist men's groups determined to push back the gains of feminism (Flood 2004b). National governments and international agencies have affirmed the need to involve men in work addressing gender equality, families, HIV/AIDS, and a host of other issues (Flood et al. in press).

One of the most significant efforts to alter men's involvements in gender relations centers on men's violence against women. There is a growing consensus in violence prevention circles that to end this violence, we must involve and work with men. While men have long been addressed in secondary- and tertiary-based interventions as perpetrators, now they are also being addressed as "partners" in prevention (Flood 2005-2006). There are growing efforts to involve boys and men in various capacities associated with the prevention of violence against women: as participants in education programs, as targets of social marketing campaigns, as policy makers and gatekeepers, and as activists and advocates. There is a steadily increasing body of experience and knowledge regarding effective violence prevention practice among boys and young men, often grounded in wider efforts to involve men in building gender equality.<sup>1</sup> As I note below, this work is growing in both theoretical and political sophistication.

There is a powerful feminist rationale for addressing men in ending violence against women, with three key elements. First and most importantly, efforts to prevent violence against women must address men because largely it is men who perpetrate this violence. For example, a nationally representative sample of 16,000 men and women in the United States documents that violence against women is predominantly male violence. Of the women who had been physically assaulted since the age of 18, 92 percent had been assaulted by a male, and of the women who had been sexually assaulted, all had been raped by males (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000, 46). Thus, to make progress toward eliminating violence against women, we will need to change *men*—men's attitudes, behaviors, identities, and relations.

Second, constructions of masculinity play a crucial role in shaping violence against women: at the individual level, in families and relationships, in communities, and societies as a whole. A wide variety of studies have found, for example, that men's adherence to sexist, patriarchal, and/or sexually hostile attitudes is an important predictor of their use of violence against women, as several meta-analyses document (Murnen, Wright, and Kaluzny 2002; Sugarman and Frankel 1996; Schumacher et al. 2001; Stith et al. 2004). While masculine attitudes are one factor, another is male dominance itself. Male economic and decision-making dominance in the family is one of the strongest predictors of high levels of violence against women (Heise 1998, Heise 2006, 35).

These first two insights boil down into the point that we have no choice but to address men and masculinities if we want to stop violence against women. However, violence prevention work with men has been fueled also by a third and more hopeful insight: that men have a positive role to play in helping to stop violence against women. Violence is an issue of concern to women and men alike and men have a stake in ending violence against women. While men receive a "patriarchal

dividend”—a set of material and interpersonal privileges—from gendered structures of inequality (Connell 1995), men can be motivated by other interests. There are various ways in which such interests, and the benefits to men of progress toward the elimination of violence against women, have been articulated (Expert Group 2003, Kaufman 2003). They typically include personal well-being (freedom from the costs of conformity with dominant definitions of masculinity), relational interests (men’s care and love for the women and girls in their lives), collective and community interests (the benefits to communities, e.g., of a diminution in the civil and international violence associated with aggressive constructions of masculinity and patriarchal nation states), and principle (men’s ethical, political, or spiritual commitments). While men’s violence against women expresses and maintains men’s power over women, men in general also pay a personal price for this violence. Violence against women fuels women’s distrust and fear of men, and hurts the women whom many men love.

There is no doubt that involving men in the work of preventing violence against women involves dangers: the dilution of a feminist agenda, the lessening of resources for the victims and survivors of this violence, and the marginalization of women’s voices and leadership. These dangers overlap with those associated with involving men in gender-related programming and policy in general (Flood 2007). At the same time, there is also a compelling feminist rationale for addressing men. Hence, efforts to involve men must be guided by a feminist agenda and done in partnership with, and even be accountable to, women and women’s groups (Flood 2004a).

## The Spectrum of Prevention

There is much more that one could explore here about the delicate politics of involving men in preventing violence against women. However, this article has a different purpose: the construction of a framework for understanding and assessing men’s involvement in violence prevention work. It brings together two developments: the emergence of efforts which engage men in preventing violence against women and the evolution of the field of violence prevention itself. In the latter, there has been in the last decade, a profound shift toward primary prevention, aimed at preventing violence before it occurs.<sup>2</sup> Contemporary violence prevention also includes increased emphases on comprehensive approaches that address multiple levels of the social order, the value of evaluation and evidence of effectiveness, and the targeting of the determinants or causes of violence against women associated with particular settings, communities, and social dynamics (Walker, Flood, and Webster 2008).

Around the world, there is now a bewildering variety of initiatives aiming to engage or address men to prevent violence against women. To make sense of them, to assess their effectiveness, and to guide further initiatives, two models provide invaluable frameworks: the “ecological model” and the “spectrum of prevention.” Used in work aimed at preventing men’s violence against women, the ecological

**Table 1.** The Spectrum of Prevention

Level of Spectrum	Definition of Level
Strengthening individual knowledge and skills	Enhancing an individual's capability of preventing violence and promoting safety
Promoting community education	Reaching groups of people with information and resources to prevent violence and promote safety
Educating providers	Informing providers who will transmit skills and knowledge to others and model positive norms
Engaging, strengthening, and mobilizing communities	Bringing together groups and individuals for broader goals and greater impact
Changing	Adopting regulations and shaping norms to prevent violence and improve safety
Influencing policies and legislation	Enacting laws and policies that support healthy community norms and a violence-free society

model embodies the recognition that this violence is the outcome of a complex interplay of individual, relationship, community, institutional, and societal factors and that violence prevention too must work at these multiple levels (Heise 1998; VicHealth 2007; World Health Organization 2002, 2004). Similar insights, and a similar framework, are provided by the spectrum of prevention (Lee et al. 2007, 16). This offers a simple framework for understanding and organizing prevention initiatives, which is summarized below (Davis, Parks, and Cohen 2006, 7; table 1).

In the remainder of this article, I map men's involvement in violence prevention work. I use the spectrum of prevention to organize the discussion, examining six levels of intervention and discussing examples of working with men in each. However, I also review the effectiveness of these efforts, identifying promising strategies in work with men. How and on what basis then do we judge the effectiveness of this work?

### *Evaluating Effectiveness*

To identify the most promising strategies for the primary prevention for violence against women, we must be guided by both research on the determinants of this violence and evidence for the effectiveness of particular interventions. In relation to the second source of guidance, we face two significant challenges. First, there has been very little evaluation of primary prevention strategies (World Health Organization 2002), including efforts of engaging men in violence prevention. Second, existing evidence regarding the effectiveness of *any* kind of intervention is sparse (Flood 2005-2006). To the extent that impact evaluations have been undertaken, often they are poorly designed, limited to retrospective reports of participants' satisfaction, or only assess proxy variables associated with violence against women rather than this violence itself (Berkowitz 2004a; O'Donohue, Yeater, and Fanetti 2003; Tolan et al.

2006; Whitaker et al. 2006). In most cases, postintervention assessments are made only immediately after the program or only weeks later and there is no long-term follow-up. Evaluations often assess only attitudes, not behaviors or social and sexual relations, and do not address the intervention's impact on perpetration or victimization. Evaluations rarely examine the mediators of changes in attitudes, behaviors, or other factors, that is, of the causal processes through which the program achieves change (Cornelius and Resseguie 2006; Morrison et al. 2004; Tolan, Gorman-Smith, Henry 2006; Whitaker et al. 2006; Yeater and O'Donohue 1999).

Nevertheless, there are a wide range of strategies of primary prevention, which are promising or worthy of consideration, and there is some evidence with which to assess their effectiveness. Where possible, the following discussion describes existing strategies and interventions in terms of the level of evidence of their effectiveness. Some strategies and interventions are *effective*: they have a theoretical rationale, they show evidence of implementation, and they have evidence of effectiveness. Others are *promising*: they have a theoretical rationale, and they have been implemented, although they do not yet have evidence of effectiveness. Other strategies are *potentially promising*: they do have a theoretical rationale, but they have not been tried or evaluated (VicHealth 2007, 43).

All the strategies identified below have at the very least a theoretical rationale, making them "potentially promising." Of these, some have been implemented, making them "promising" (although this term risks overstating their value, given that implementation alone is no guarantee of effectiveness). In addition, of these, some have been evaluated, making them "effective" (if the results of their evaluations demonstrate some level of effectiveness). However, this should not be taken to suggest that the best and most important interventions can be found only among those strategies identified as "effective," while those identified as "promising" or "potentially promising" necessarily are less valuable. Some of the strategies with the strongest theoretical rationale, such as community development and community mobilization, have been implemented only rarely and evaluated even less often. At the same time, their strong rationale makes them critical elements in future violence prevention efforts. However, other efforts such as school education programs have a substantial body of evidence supporting their effectiveness, reflecting the fact that they are a common form of violence prevention. The level of evidence supporting their use is in part an artifact of their widespread adoption, as well as their genuine effectiveness. They are undoubtedly valuable and at the same time they must be complemented by other promising strategies with equally compelling rationales.

While the following discussion maps and assesses efforts to involve men in violence prevention, there is no space to provide detailed guidance on the most effective or appropriate forms and strategies of engagement and education. However, there is a steadily expanding body of materials from which to draw such guidance. Useful overviews of effective pedagogies in face-to-face violence prevention education among boys and men can be found in works by Berkowitz (2004a, 2004b), Flood (2005-2006), Funk (2006), Instituto Promundo (2002), Katz (2006), and Kilmartin

(2001). Wider overviews of a range of strategies for involving men in violence prevention are given by the Family Violence Prevention Fund (2004), Greig and Peacock (2005), Malik, Karlsson, and Karkara (2005), and Malik, Karkara, and Baruah (2006). In March 2010, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) will launch a “virtual knowledge center to end violence against women and girls,” with a module on working with men and boys.

## **Six Levels of Intervention**

### *Level 1: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills*

The smallest and most localized form of prevention is transferring information and skills to individuals and increasing their capacity to prevent or avoid violence against women. For example, teachers, carers, and physicians may help boys and young men to increase their safety and their equitable attitudes, health care practitioners may engage patients and parents to promote healthy relationships, and other community leaders and public figures may speak to boys and men to encourage non-violence (Davis, Parks, and Cohen 2006). It is particularly important that we address programs and services to boys who have witnessed or experienced violence in families. Boys who have witnessed or experienced violence are more likely to grow up holding violence-supportive attitudes and perpetrating violence themselves (Flood and Pease 2006).

Prevention efforts among youth can address the associations between domestic violence and poverty, low work attachment, and low educational attainment, and other social factors. For young boys (and girls), promising strategies include the provision of quality child care, home visiting programs, intensive clinical work with battered mothers and their young children, and encouraging parental involvement in children’s early education and school. Among adolescent and young adult males, relevant measures include mentoring programs, premarital relationship education, and welfare-to-work strategies. Prevention efforts also should target associated high-risk behaviors among boys, such as illegal drug use and delinquent behavior (Vezina and Herbert 2007), especially given that males’ adolescent delinquency—antisocial and aggressive behavior committed during adolescence—is a significant predictor of later perpetration of sexual assault (Abbey et al. 2004).

Among older male populations, other direct participation efforts include responsible fatherhood programs, those addressing prisoners’ reentry into communities, and premarital relationship education. For example, family policies and programs can support positive parenting and encourage shared power and decision making. Some campaigns focus on expectant and new fathers, addressing them through prenatal education and obstetrics clinics (Gault 2006). However, there is little evidence with which to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in preventing intimate partner violence. Agendas aimed at engaging fathers have had little or no relation to those aimed at tackling intimate partner violence, although those individuals who

are violent are often fathers and mostly men (Featherstone 2003, 248). At the same time, there are encouraging signs of an emerging dialogue between those who work with notions of fathers as risks and those who work with notions of fathers as resources (Featherstone 2003, 251).

## *Level 2: Promoting Community Education*

I define “community education” broadly here, focusing on four streams of education: face-to-face educational groups and programs, communication and social marketing, local educational strategies such as “social norms” and “bystander” approaches, and other media strategies.

*Face-to-face educational groups and programs.* The most extensive body of evidence in the evaluation of primary prevention efforts concerns educational programs among children, youth, and young adults. From a series of evaluations of violence prevention education, delivered in schools and universities in particular, it is clear that such interventions can have positive effects on males’ attitudes toward violence against women (Whitaker et al. 2006). For example, male (and female) secondary school and university students who have attended rape education sessions show less adherence to rape myths, express less rape-supportive attitudes, and/or report greater victim empathy than those in control groups (Brecklin and Forde 2001; Morrison et al. 2004). Some programs have reduced men’s reported likelihood to rape, while some have reduced men’s actual perpetration of sexual aggression (Lonsway et al. 2009, 2).

Far too few violence prevention education programs have been evaluated, and existing evaluations often are limited in methodological and conceptual terms (Cornelius and Resseguie 2007). When evaluations have been undertaken, they show that not all educational interventions are effective, the magnitude of change in attitudes often is small, changes often decay or “rebound” to preintervention levels one or two months after the intervention and some even become worse, and improvements in men’s violence-supportive attitudes do not necessarily lead to reductions in their perpetration of violence (Breitenbecher 2000; Flood 2005-2006; Flores and Hartlaub 1998; Meyer and Stein 2004). A systematic review of sexual assault prevention programs over 1990–2003 identified fifty-nine studies, including nine that focused on all-male groups rather than mixed-sex or all-female groups. Of these, all had mixed results on attitudes and/or behaviors, and their study designs were categorized as of “medium” quality in five cases, and “low” and “high” quality in two and two cases, respectively (Morrison et al. 2004).

All the same, at least some education programs that are intensive, lengthy, and use a variety of pedagogical approaches have produced positive and lasting change in attitudes and behaviors. For example, evaluations of the Safe Dates program among American adolescents (which included a ten-session school curriculum, a theatre production performed by peers and a poster contest) found that four years

after the program, adolescents who had received the program continued to report less physical and sexual dating violence perpetration (and victimization) than those who had not (Foshee et al. 2004). Among adult men in a U.S. multimodule program, five months after the program, while some men had “rebounded,” others continued to show improvement on attitudinal and behavioral measures (Heppner et al. 1999). We know far less about the effectiveness of violence prevention education among other male populations such as professional athletes.

One of the most well-documented programs for young men has been developed by Program H, a consortium of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) based on Brazil and Mexico. In sites in which young men were exposed to weekly educational workshops and a social marketing campaign, they showed improved attitudes toward violence against women and other issues (Pulerwitz et al. 2006). The Program H materials and process have been adapted to the Indian context, and here too, young men in the intervention sites showed declines in their support for gender-inequitable norms and in self-reported violence against a partner relative to a comparison group (Verma et al. 2008). In South Africa, men who participated in workshops run by the Men As Partners project were less likely than nonparticipants to believe that it is acceptable to beat their wives or rape sex workers (White, Greene, and Murphy 2003, 22). Discussion groups and forums also are being used among adult men to prompt questioning and transformation of dominant constructions of masculinity in Zimbabwe (Mtutu 2005), India (Malik, Karlsson, and Karkara 2005), and Nicaragua (Esplen 2006, 6). Community education strategies have been used to good effect in contexts affected by war, militarism, and civil conflict. In Namibia, for example, participatory research, community plays, resource centers, and family visitors’ programs have produced shifts in attitudes and behaviors, including a decline in boys’ ritualized sexual violence against girls in hostels (Kandirikirira 2002).

Interventions among boys and young men, in general, should be complemented by other strategies aimed at addressing particularly intensive forms of support for violence in the peer cultures and group norms of some boys and young men, such as peer education and mentoring. Among males, there is consistent evidence that peer support for intimate partner violence is an important predictor of men’s perpetration of sexual and physical abuse. Men with “rape-supporting social relationships”—with male friends who give advice, for example, that girls owe them sex and who approve of or use violence against girls and women—are more likely to use sexual and physical abuse themselves (Flood and Pease 2006). In violence prevention education, programs for men are more likely to be effective if they use peers in leadership roles, and nonviolent men can play a powerful role as peer educators.

*Communication and social marketing.* Communication and social marketing campaigns are one of the more common means of primary prevention of violence against women. There is evidence that social marketing campaigns can produce positive change in the attitudes and behaviors associated with men’s perpetration of violence

against women (Donovan and Vlasis 2005). Soul City, a multimedia project in South Africa, is one of the most thorough and well-evaluated examples of this strategy. It combined prime-time radio and television dramas with other educational activities, and the evaluation “found increased knowledge and awareness of domestic violence, changed attitudes and norms, and greater willingness on the part of the project’s audience to take appropriate action” (World Health Organization 2002).

Men’s groups and networks have adopted a wide range of creative communication strategies, from films, pamphlets and “guerilla theatre” in bars to marches across entire countries (Flood 2004a, 461). One of the most well known is Men Can Stop Rape’s “My strength is not for hurting” campaign in the United States. This uses media materials, in tandem with school-based Men of Strength (MOST) Clubs for young men and other strategies, to build norms of sexual consent, respect, and nonviolence. An evaluation of the Californian campaign documents that students exposed to the campaign had slightly more respectful and equitable attitudes, while schools with MOST Clubs had more favorable social climates (Kim and White 2008). The social marketing campaign now is being extended to the U.S. military by the U.S. Department of Defense.

In Brazil, Program H developed postcards, banners, comics, and a film, which drew on mass media and youth culture to promote respectful identities and gender-equitable lifestyles among young men and women. These have since been adopted in other settings, for example, in India (Barker 2006). In Nicaragua, a mass media campaign among heterosexual men aged twenty to thirty-nine generated increased support for the ideas that men can prevent gender-based violence and that men’s violence affects community development (Solórzano, Abaunza, and Molina 2000). Some social marketing campaigns use well-known male figures to help address boys and men, whether in trying to prevent acid attacks on girls and women in Bangladesh (Malik, Karlsson, and Karkara 2005, 9) or to encourage norms of consent and nonviolence among young men in Australia and the United States (Flood 2002-2003).

*Local educational strategies: “social norms” and “bystander intervention” campaigns.* Two further approaches are promising ones for the primary prevention of violence against women, with both a theoretical rationale and evidence of implementation. “Social norms” campaigns begin by recognizing, and seeking to close, the gap between men’s perceptions of other men’s agreement with violence-supportive and sexist norms and the actual extent of this agreement (Fabiano et al. 2004). By gathering and publicizing data on men’s attitudes and behavior, U.S. campaigns on university campuses have sought to undermine men’s conformity to sexist peer norms and increase their willingness to intervene in violent behavior. For example, after a recent social norms initiative on a U.S. university campus, college males reduced their overestimation of other males’ sexist beliefs and comfort with sexism, although the intervention had less impact among acquainted than unacquainted males (Kilmartin et al. 2008). Social norms campaigns could be adopted in

universities, workplaces, and other public institutions, although more robust and long-term evaluations are needed.

Using a “bystander intervention” approach, other campaigns have sought to place “a sense of responsibility and empowerment for ending sexual violence on the shoulders of all community members.” They teach men (and women) skills in de-escalating risky situations and being effective allies for survivors and foster a sense of community responsibility for violence prevention (Banyard, Plante, and Moynihan 2004; Tabachnick 2009). Again, recent experimental evaluations among undergraduates have shown that approaching men (and women) as potential bystanders or witnesses to behaviors related to sexual violence can improve attitudes, knowledge, and behavior (Banyard, Moynihan, and Plante 2007).

### *Level 3: Educating Providers (and Other Professionals)*

Education among providers and other professionals has a strong theoretical rationale, in that it may shift their everyday involvements in sustaining, or undermining, the norms and relations through which violence against women is maintained. In relation to interpersonal violence, the most common primary prevention education that has occurred in workplaces in general concerns sexual harassment. Various studies have demonstrated that workplace training can improve attitudes toward sexual harassment, among employees in universities and in federal government workplaces (Antecol and Cobb-Clark 2003). Workplace-based prevention could build on the substantial body of experience in secondary and tertiary prevention strategies established in training health care providers to diagnose and intervene in intimate partner violence.

Workplace strategies often involve working with men, given that police, law, and medical institutions typically are dominated by men. However, very little primary prevention work has been conducted with men in workplaces in gender-sensitive ways. At the same time, there are some inspiring and promising instances of such work. In south and central America, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has trained soccer coaches to promote more gender-equitable masculinities among boys (Schueller et al. 2005). In Islamabad, an NGO called Rozan has run gender violence sensitization workshops with police on gender-based violence (Lang 2003). In the United States, the U.S. Family Violence Prevention Fund (2006) encouraged coaches (and other adult men, including fathers, teachers, uncles, older brothers, and mentors) to teach boys that there is no place for violence in a relationship.

Another key form of violence prevention relevant to this area of action is increasing workforce and organizational capacity to prevent violence against women, by developing resources and technical assistance (Oregon Department of Human Services 2006). Workplace education is one component of a broader effort to change the practices and cultures of community organizations and institutions, as I discuss under Level 5 below.

#### *Level 4: Engaging, Strengthening, and Mobilizing Communities*

To prevent violence against women, we must change the social norms, gender roles, and power relations that feed into violence. We must build local communities' capacity to respond effectively to violence and encourage their ownership of the issue. In addition, we must address the social contexts in which violence against women occurs (Rosewater 2003). Community development and community mobilization strategies have a strong rationale, although evaluations of actual initiatives are rare.

Promising community strategies include community and media education campaigns, "community action teams" designed to involve communities in building strategies for community safety, awards programs for responsible media coverage and effective community leadership in violence prevention, and holding religious and political leaders accountable for providing clear messages that violence against women is unacceptable (Davis, Parks, and Cohen 2006). In terms of changing the social and community conditions that lead to violence, one key strategy is to link violence to other issues that influence community well-being, such as poverty, affordable housing, access to health care, and economic development.

We must also involve male community leaders in such efforts. For example, while religious beliefs historically have been used to justify violence against women and church clergy at times have been complicit in this violence (Flood and Pease 2006), religious institutions and leaders also have a potentially powerful role to play in encouraging an ethic of nonviolence. The spiritual and theological understandings of Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and other world religions each contain emphases and values that could serve to undermine community tolerance for violence against women. Relevant examples of faith-based violence prevention initiatives include the Black Church and Domestic Violence Institute (USA) and interfaith strategies among religious bodies in Melbourne, Australia such as the Interfaith Council Declaration Against Family Violence. Spiritual and religious leaders should be encouraged to challenge violence against women and gender inequality, through public statements, sermons, teachings, and religious materials, and through the provision of assistance when this is sought.

We must also foster coalitions and networks to increase the "critical mass" behind particular prevention efforts, improve collaboration on interventions, and reduce unnecessary competition among organizations. We need coalitions between researchers and community providers, among art and music organizations, between grassroots organizations and sectors of government, and with businesses and workplaces (Davis, Parks, and Cohen 2006, Expert Group 2003, 33).

*Mobilize communities through events, networks, and campaigns.* Community development strategies are complemented by strategies of community mobilization. We must not only educate men and women but also organize them for collective action (Greig and Peacock 2005). More activist involvements are needed to change the

social norms and power relations that underpin men's violence against women. Engaging men in activism is vital in catalyzing broader social change. In particular, it can facilitate engagement with structural factors and forces and put pressure on governments to take action (IDS 2008, 50).

We must create opportunities for individuals to mobilize their communities through events, networks, and campaigns. Examples of key strategies here include community workshops and events, work with influential groups and community "gatekeepers," cultural tools of art and drama such as murals, competitions, and street theatre, and fostering grassroots men's and women's groups and networks committed to advocacy for nonviolence and gender equality (Greig and Peacock 2005). It is particularly important that we mobilize men through such work, because of men's relative absence from efforts to end violence against women. Around the world, a variety of grassroots men's groups and networks work to engage men in personal and collective efforts at violence prevention (Flood 2004a).

The most widespread example of an antiviolenence campaign organized by men is the White Ribbon Campaign. Men are encouraged to show their opposition to men's violence against women by purchasing and wearing a white ribbon. In some countries, the White Ribbon Campaign also involves year-round educational strategies, including advertising campaigns, concerts, fathers' walks, and fund-raising for women's organizations. There are few, if any, evaluations of White Ribbon Campaigns' actual impact on the norms and relations of gender. Nevertheless, some efforts have made significant achievements. In Australia, for example, the White Ribbon Campaign has distributed over 200,000 ribbons in each of the last four years, established substantial institutional presence and support and generated significant media coverage and community awareness. However, its television and print materials, produced pro-bono by the advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi, did little to engage men in violence prevention and attracted negative publicity (Donovan et al. 2008).

Another well-developed example is EngenderHealth's Men As Partners program, which uses community education, grassroots organizing, and advocacy for effective policy implementation. Other groups and networks can be found across the United States (Flood 2004a) and in countries such as India, Cambodia (Lang 2003), Namibia (Odendaal 2001), Kenya (Miruka 2007), and South Africa (Tshabalala 2005). In many instances, such men's groups and networks are initiated by men themselves, but in others, women's groups and organizations have nurtured and trained male antiviolenence advocates.

### *Level 5: Changing Organizational Practices*

Organizational and workforce strategies for the primary prevention of violence against women are scattered and underdeveloped. Yet, changing the practices of sports organizations, schools, faith-based organizations, councils, media, and other institutions can have a significant impact on violence, for two reasons. First,

organizational efforts “scale up” the impact of violence prevention, in that they have the potential to influence both their internal cultures and the communities which surround them. By changing its own practices, policies, and culture, an organization can have an impact in surrounding communities, serve as an example for other organizations, influence wider policy, and inform community norms (Davis, Parks, and Cohen 2006). Second, settings-based efforts are necessary to address the violence-supportive cultures of some workplaces, organizations, and other local contexts.

The transformation of formal institutions is particularly vital, given their roles in reproducing dominant, patriarchal masculinities (IDS 2008). There is evidence that male-dominated and homosocially focused subcultures in some sports, workplaces, and informal social groups involve elevated risks of violence-supportive norms and the perpetration of intimate partner violence (Flood and Pease 2006). In other words, some contexts and cultures are particularly dangerous for the women who come into contact with them. Intensive interventions in such contexts are necessary to address their violence-supportive local cultures.

Military institutions, nonformal military formations (such as militias and paramilitary groups), and uniformed services (police and security forces) are obvious targets for violence prevention efforts among men, given their cultures of violence and practices of domination. Responses in such organizations have been confined largely to training, of limited scale and intensity, and changing written policy, rather than oriented toward institution-wide change (IDS 2008, 45). In 2009, however, the U.S. Department of Defense launched a sexual assault prevention campaign, “My Strength is for Defending,” with a wider agenda. This includes communications materials focused on bystander intervention but also addresses military policies and institutional leadership.

Thus far, there has been relatively little work addressing key institutions of male socialization such as education, entertainment industries, and sport. There is very little evidence of the effectiveness regarding violence prevention of efforts to transform institutions. However, one of the most promising examples of an organization’s systematic orientation toward the primary prevention of intimate partner violence has been adopted by a national sporting body, the Australian Football League (AFL).

Following a series of allegations of sexual assault perpetrated by AFL players in 2004, the AFL adopted a “Respect and Responsibility” strategy, formulated, and managed in collaboration with violence prevention agencies. The strategy represents a model of systematic organizational change, including the introduction of model antisexual harassment and antisexual discrimination procedures across the AFL and its Clubs, the development of organizational policies and procedures to ensure a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for women, changes to AFL rules relating to problematic or violent conduct, the education of players and other Club officials, dissemination of model policies and procedures at community club level, and a public education program (AFL 2005). In 2008, AFL Victoria extended this with the

program “Fair Game—Respect Matters.” This is intended to foster cultural change throughout the sporting code, in encouraging community clubs to assess their own cultures and inviting players, coaches and supporters to improve their attitudes and behaviors toward women. In rugby league too, education programs addressing violence against women now are being rolled out to players in the rookie camps and the national youth competition. In both codes, players themselves are being recruited and trained to educate their peers. Similar and substantial initiatives in other formal organizations and contexts—military institutions, university colleges, and workplaces—also would be desirable.

### *Level 6: Influencing Policies and Legislation*

Legal and policy reforms in relation to violence against women have been largely concerned with tertiary responses to intimate partner violence. Yet, law and policy also are crucial tools of primary prevention, at national, state, and local levels. National and state-based plans of action for eliminating violence against women are necessary elements in any systematic prevention effort (Office of the Status of Women 2004).

Law and policy are critical tools too in establishing and disseminating particular strategies of primary prevention. For example, they are necessary in establishing and spreading violence prevention curricula for schools and universities (including sexuality education addressing sexual violence prevention), influencing the availability and consumption of alcohol, shaping the content of advertising, pornography and other media, and restricting gun use. The criminal justice system only responds to a very small proportion of domestic violence and sexual assault matters, given both low rates of reporting and attrition through the legal process (Lievore 2003). At the same time, the criminal justice system does have an important symbolic role in shaping community perceptions of violence against women, and strong legal sanctions do encourage community intolerance for this violence (Flood and Pease 2006). Again, men can play an important role here. For example, in Pakistan, some male lawyers and judges have worked to encourage appropriate convictions for perpetrators of violence and to advocate for the rights of women vulnerable to honor killing (Lang 2003).

There is a growing consensus that the most effective violence prevention efforts will be those which are intended to generate change at multiple levels—individual, relationship, community, institutional, and societal—and which use multiple strategies to do so. Evidence from other fields suggests that multilevel, ecological interventions will have a greater impact on attitudes, behaviors, and social norms (Casey and Lindhorst 2009). Multilevel interventions address a variety of factors associated with violence at different levels of the social order, and the interrelatedness of both these factors and the strategies addressing them maximizes the resulting change (Davis, Parks, and Cohen 2006). Such interventions can be described as “comprehensive”: they use multiple strategies to address the problem behavior, and do so

in multiple settings and at multiple levels (Casey and Lindhorst 2009; Nation et al. 2003). Very few efforts addressing men's roles in preventing violence against women have adopted comprehensive approaches. Nonetheless, inspiration may be drawn from examples such as school-based efforts that combine a multisession student curriculum, theatre production and a poster competition (Foshee et al. 2004), and bystander intervention campaigns, which combine educational workshops and social marketing (Lonsway et al. 2009).

Finally, ongoing research into the determinants of violence against women is needed to extend our understanding of the risk factors for, dynamics of, populations most at risk of violence. In addition, our efforts at primary prevention themselves must be subjected to rigorous scrutiny. Outcome-based evaluations of existing prevention programs, and investment in evidence-based prevention programs, are necessary in furthering our prevention efforts (Office of the Status of Women 2004).

## **Conclusion**

Preventing men's violence against women will require sustained and systematic efforts at the levels of families and relationships, communities, institutions, and societies. Men must be engaged in this work: as participants in education programs, as community leaders, as professionals and providers, and as advocates and activists working in alliance with women.

Work with men has demonstrated significant potential in shifting the attitudes and behaviors associated with violence against women. There is some evidence that program and policy interventions can bring about positive change among men, although rigorous evaluation of the impact of violence prevention efforts among men often is absent, methodologically limited, or shows mixed results. In addition, there is an international mandate for policy and programming addressing men. However, most violence prevention work with men has been local in scale and limited in scope. To be effective at the societal level—to transform violence against girls and women around the nations and regions around the world and the pervasive gender inequalities with which it is associated—work with men will need to be scaled up. While policy and legislation have been relatively underutilized in the primary prevention of violence against women, they are a central means to this goal. To truly transform gender inequalities, we must go beyond scattered, small-scale interventions and efforts (no matter how effective), toward systematic, large-scale, and coordinated efforts (Flood et al. in press).

We will only make progress in preventing violence against women if we can change the attitudes, identities, and relations among some men, which sustain violence. To stop the physical and sexual assault of women and girls, we must erode the cultural and collective supports for violence found among many men and boys and replace them with norms of consent, sexual respect, and gender equality, and we must foster just and respectful gender relations in relationships, families, and communities. While some men are part of the problem, all men are part of the solution.

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## Notes

1. See for example publications by Bannon and Correia (2006), Esplen (2006), Family Violence Prevention Fund (2003, 2004), Greig and Peacock (2005), Instituto Promundo (2002), Ruxton (2004), and World Health Organization (2007).
2. Secondary' prevention refers to reducing opportunities for violence by supporting the men who are at risk of perpetrating violence. 'Tertiary' prevention aims to prevent the re-occurrence of violence, and refers for example to work with men who have already used violence. At the same time, it is also important to recognise that the groups of boys or men who are the objects of ostensibly 'primary' efforts usually include individuals who have used or are using violence.

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