

INCREASING ENGAGEMENT OF MEN AND BOYS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

PAUL DOVER

### Development Trends

SEPTEMBER 2014



# Working with men and boys in development cooperation

Development cooperation has an increasing focus on gender equality with the aim to improve women and girls' disadvantaged position and status. The focus is mostly on women and girls as target groups, while gender mainstreaming is the commonly used strategy. What is often missing is the *inter-relational* lens of gender analysis; attention is

... There is a clear trend for a greater integration of men and boys in gender equality efforts in the development cooperation.

confined to one sex. It ignores men and boys' situation and their influence on and relations with women and girls, as sisters, mothers, grandmothers, girlfriends, partners or other. Furthermore, men' roles and relations as co-workers, employers, service providers, community leaders, religious leaders also have important influences on women and girls' lives.

There is a clear trend for a greater integration of men and boys in gender equality efforts in the development cooperation. Evidence shows that

... The current trend offers an opportunity to rethink a little and strategically integrate issues of male involvement and responsibility, where relevant, into the 'gender equality agenda'.

the involvement of supportive men and boys contributes to lasting socio-cultural changes in favour of gender equality. Supporting the trend is an accumulation of research and evidence-based interventions, as well as the growth of gender justice organisations that focus on men and boys. Nevertheless, the interventions are still to a large extent confined to small projects; mainstreaming in sector work is negligible and there is a clear need to improve indicators and results reporting.

Working with men and boys is not a 'silver bullet' for gender equality achievements. It is, though, an important part of the equation and one that needs more concentrated efforts. The current trend offers an opportunity to rethink a little and strategically integrate issues of male involvement and responsibility, where relevant, into the 'gender equality agenda'. In this Development Trends a short background to work with men and boys is given, followed by examples of interventions in strategic sector areas. A discussion on the need for targeted interventions with men and boys is followed by overviews on cur-

#### ... Working with men and boys is not a 'silver bullet' for gender equality achievements.

rent research and the international agendas. In conclusion, the trend in relation to future scenarios and its strengths and weaknesses in present approaches to gender equality with men and boys is discussed.

Work with men and boys for gender equality has much longer antecedents in social work than it does in development cooperation. For example, efforts to encourage responsible fatherhood and interventions against street gang culture in poor communities in different parts of the world. During the second wave feminism's uprising in the 1960's and 1970's, concerned men, generally left-wing, organised male groups and outreach organisations, with Latin America providing a



lot of impetus on these issues. Furthermore, there developed an academic genre during the 1980s of masculinity and gender studies within sociology, anthropology, psychology and public health. The activism of these studies has led to action research and, as with mainstream feminist studies, close relations between academics and implementers.

Work with men and boys within development cooperation started in the 1990s, but it is since the turn of the millennium, and especially the last ten years, that has seen a major increase in interventions. Work with men and boys has been integrated by organisations with broader agendas, as well as been the focus of specialised gender organisations.

#### SWEDEN'S SOCIAL WELFARE REFORMS TO BOLSTER GOOD FATHERHOOD

Sweden has good examples on social welfare reform and health-sector structural facilitation to increase fathers' involvement in maternal health and child-care. Fathers are expected to attend some ante-natal classes and are generally present at the birth. They have ten days paid work-leave rights to support their partner during the immediate post-natal period. There are also the 60 days 'use it or lose it' of parental leave allowance that the father must take out. Men's use of parental leave has increased from 5% in 1980 to 24% in 2011¹ of the total allowance for a couple. Hopefully, this figure will continue to increase as paternal

leave increasingly becomes a norm. The situation in many low and middle-income countries, with high levels of informal employment and resource poor public health facilities, is quite different. Nonetheless, there are entry points to integrate men that can be utilised in maternal and child health programmes, as well as in the roll-out of social protection schemes. For example, father's days at under-fives check-ups, fathers' ante-natal discussion groups and encouraging men to accompany their partners to at least one ante-natal service meeting etc.

# Gender equality interventions for men and boys

Generally, there have been two main reasons for working with male involvement and responsibility for gender equality; to improve Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and in the prevention of gender based violence (GBV).

SRHR efforts obviously need to engage men and boys in, for example, avoiding unwanted pregnancies, prevention of sexual transmitted infections – including HIV, family planning and maternal health, and in encouraging engaged fatherhood, including care-work. Similarly, GBV prevention, rather than reacting to its consequences, involves changing norms to make violence against women and girls unacceptable. Men and boys have to both repudiate violence against women and girls, as well as to take action against it.

As of late, the importance of involving men in promoting women's economic and political empowerment has also been more widely acknowledged. Women's economic empowerment (WEE) is major means to increase women's independence and central to transforming gender relations. Projects often face the difficulty that without support from their partners, women remain with the main responsibility for household tasks and looking after children, on top of income generation activities.

... without support from their partners, women remain with the main responsibility for household tasks and looking after children, on top of income generation activities.

They may also not be able to take decisions on the household's finances and resources or travel from home. Interventions have thus been initiated to involve men in taking their share of the unpaid

care-work and in running a joint household economy with their partner. SRHR, GBV and WEE are also all closely connected and together constitute a crucial joint area for work on gender equality.

The three areas outlined above are illustrated with gender equality initiatives for men and boys as follows.

#### Improving sexual and reproductive health and rights

Engaging men and boys in SRHR efforts has been implemented at grass-roots level, in health centres, ante- and postnatal services, community work, male dominated work-places, as well as schools and higher learning institutions. Media outreach, often contextualised to local situations, has also been a useful channel for communication.

One of the successful examples is Young Men as Equal Partners (YMEP) by RFSU<sup>2</sup>, between 2006 and 2010 in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. The aim was to change young men and boys attitudes and behaviour in relation to SRHR and GBV through reaching out to schools, health centres and communities. Among the achievements were the development of youth AIDS clubs and an increase in HIV testing for both young men and women. Attitudinal changes among the male participants as well as behavioural changes were reported with a marked improvement in particular on communication and sexual negotiation between women and men. The evaluation of the programme showed a marked decrease in pregnancies among girls at participating schools, as compared to non-participating schools in the same areas. Interestingly, the methods developed in YMEP are now being utilised in RFSU pilot interventions in Swedish schools.



Another successful programme has been the organisation *Men for Gender Equality Sweden* 'Father Schools' in Russia and Eastern Europe. The birth of the first child can be a difficult adjustment period for a couple and intimate partner violence has been noted as increasing during this period. With the aim at increasing fathers' involvement in maternal health, child wellbeing and preventing intimate partner violence the project recruits men through coopera-

#### ... The interventions have been successful with marked attitudinal change and less likelihood of GBV among participants.

tion with ante-natal services. The model involves a series of seminars in which information is weaved together with group reflections and discussions. The interventions have been successful with marked attitudinal change and less likelihood of GBV among participants. The programme has furthermore continued beyond the support period, being expanded nationally by the NGOs and heath service providers, as well as has been utilised in collaboration between Men for Gender Equality and South African based Sonke Gender Justice Network in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa.

#### Preventing gender based violence

Primary prevention of GBV is becoming a major international area for work, which obviously necessitates working with men and boys. The reasoning is that support to survivors of GBV, whilst important, is well mapped out and more a matter of allocation of resources than intervention development. Prevention of GBV is an area in need of further research and the development of measurement indicators, intervention methods and result indicators.

A major ongoing programme working against GBV is the UN *Partners for Prevention* (P4P). This is a joint UN programme working in South and South-East Asia. The first phase resulted in research into the reasons for men's violence against women and the subsequent development of intervention tool-kits. The second phase is to support civil society organisations in integrating anti-GBV work.

The studies, which include interviews with 10,000 men in Asia and the Pacific, found that use of physical and/or sexual violence against a female partner, ranged from 26 percent to 80 percent across the sites studied. Nearly a quarter of men interviewed also reported perpetrating rape against a woman or girl. Whilst these are horrendous figures, the study concludes that a range of common sociocultural factors

fuel GBV and can be targeted by interventions. Though some factors are more difficult to broach then others – for example, being neglected, witnessing and being subject to vio-

...witnessing and being subject to violence as a child has a high significant relationship with perpetrating violence as an adult.

lence as a child has a high significant relationship with perpetrating violence as an adult. Legal impunity is also a major factor with a large majority of men reporting no punishment for rape. A further important issue is the low age at which many men reported first instance of committing GBV, showing the need for work with youth.

The recommendations include ending impunity for GBV and empowering communities, women and girls to take a stand against it. They also call for the institution of parental guidance programmes and child protection schemes. Plus, there is the important issue of promoting nonviolent and caring ways to be a man. This latter aspect includes the community work with men,

together with integration of gender aware anti-GBV interventions in school curriculum, youth and sports clubs and other. This is not, though, a simplistic response; there are an increasing number of evidence based interventions for men and boys that work. The problem is one of scaling-up and mainstreaming them in sector responses.

To illustrate, the *Stepping Stones* community approach to risk reduction for HIV has shown a good potential for reduction in intimate partner violence. The Stepping Stones community train-

... the low age at which many men reported first instance of committing GBV, showing the need for work with youth.

ing package helps groups of women and men to reflect, analyse and discuss positive and negative factors of gendered roles and what they would like to change. There are specific tools developed for working with men and boys. A 2008 study<sup>3</sup> in 70 participating and control villages in Eastern Cape, South Africa, showed reduced reported use of GBV among men at both 12 and 24 months after the intervention, a result also

#### MEN AND BOYS IN SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The importance of working with men and boys in promoting gender equality in development cooperation is and has been an integral part of Swedish development cooperation policy since the late 1980's.5 Whilst there has been sporadic funding of gender equality initiatives for men and boys since the 1990s, it is within the last 10 years that a stronger focus has emerged. Sweden has been supporting efforts in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia, both as integral aspects in gender equality work, but specifically the development of organisations and networks of men who focus on gender equality based on the analysis that these issues are often not on women's organisations' agendas. Within bilateral support there are quite a number of projects focusing on men and boys and there is also some pilot integration in bilateral health and education sector support funding.

Support has funded the development of the research and method base and helped the global and regional organisations to gain a foothold with major actors such as the UN and World Bank. The next step involves integrating efforts within broad-

er development work. This does not mean a need to work with men and boys for gender equality generally. Rather, it implies needs analysis and strategic interventions when and where relevant. Moreover, it means utilising the many pilot lessons learnt within social sector work on men and boys rather than reinventing the wheel. In this regard, collaborations with the networks and organisations working with men and boys are an important resource.

In terms of funding volumes, the development cooperation support to men and boys organisations for gender equality is quite small in relation to the total direct support for gender equality. Sweden, for example, gave direct support<sup>6</sup> through Sida to organisations or programmes targeting men and boys in 2012 of approximately 18.5 million SEK (2.8 million USD). Total Sida direct supported funding to gender equality<sup>7</sup> was approximately 2.4 billion SEK (364 million USD). Thus work with men and boys is relatively low-cost and is not, as yet, encroaching on funding to women and girls.

reported in a number of other Stepping Stones evaluations.

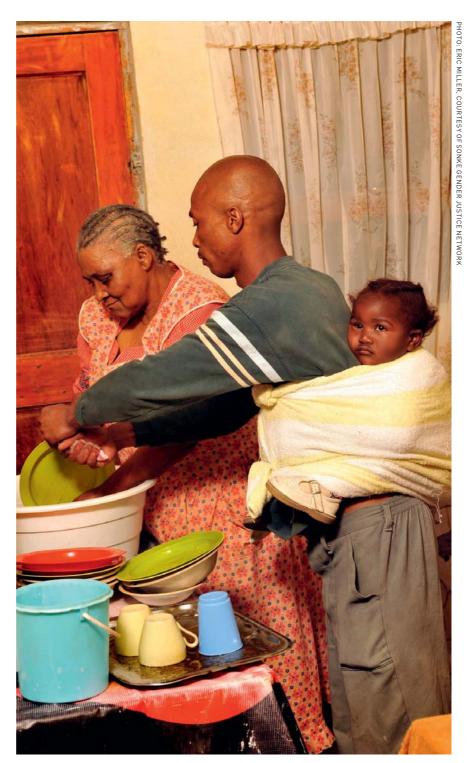
To summarise, GBV prevention is not a technical quick fix area. It demands legal support and social welfare interventions, as well as sociocultural change. Working with men and boys to eliminate GBV is an important aspect and there are a number of evidence based interventions to employ, as well as ongoing action-research developments. The responses though need to be mainstreamed into sector support. Moreover, result indicators need to focus on measuring behavioural and not just attitude change.

#### Promoting women's economic empowerment

Work with men is increasingly being integrated in entrepreneurial and private sector development programmes with WEE components given the interconnectedness between activities and responsibilities within and outside the household. The Agricultural Support Programme in Zambia (2001-2006) is a good example of such an approach. The programme aimed to both support increased food security and develop entrepreneurial skills. The household as a unit was targeted and household action plans developed. The methodology included gender sensitisation and a mapping of tasks, responsibilities and decision-making. Men are often unaware of

## ... the underlying sociocultural attitudes, as well as the social institutions that bolster gender inequalities are not changing at the same pace as new economic realities.

the burden on women and girls of household and caring tasks. The joint household economy and decision-making often led to efficiencies and economic improvements that bolstered the changed gender order. A household approach is, naturally, work-intensive and costly. Nevertheless, there are lessons learnt from these approaches that can be scaled-up in market development. In particular, structural interventions to involve men in care-work need to be developed. A recent International Coalition for Research on Women (ICRW) report on the effects on women's lives of fertility decline in low and middle-income countries, notes that despite much increased female economic participation, the domestic situation often remains the same for women. Men appreciate the increased



income to the household, but it does not always lead to progress in women's decision-making and usually not to a fairer sharing of household tasks and care-giving. The problem is that the underlying sociocultural attitudes, as well as the social institutions that bolster gender inequalities are not changing at the same pace as new economic realities. This is one of the compelling reasons to work with men and boys.

## Men organizing for gender equality

... need for 'safe spaces' for men and boys to discuss and understand male privilege, female subordination and to develop personal responses.

Work with men and boys has often been integrated by organisations with broader agendas, but a major factor in the current trend is the increase in gender organisations focusing solely on the role of men and boys. The organisations have broad gender equality and women's rights perspectives, but focus on work with men and boys. They are increasingly linking up in national and regional, as well as a global coalition, which allow research collaborations, sharing of method development, capacity building and advocacy at different levels. The MenEngage Global Network is the main international organisation with nearly 700 NGO members of the alliance, including a number of affiliated UN8 organisations. Given resources, these organisations are increasingly making their voices heard at country level and developing both community and media outreach.

This leads to the question: why is there a need for separate organisations for gender equality working with men and boys? Why cannot men become involved in supporting women's rights organisations and integrate the work with men and boys within them instead? Men have not always been welcome in women's rights venues and there are experiences among grass-roots women's movements of men trying to take over. Women's organisations, moreover, quite naturally, tend to focus on women's needs and rights.

The organisations working with men and boys have emerged, in part, from the gender and masculinity studies already mentioned. Whilst female academics have entered the genre since, the main impetus came from male researchers and is still an academic area somewhat outside of mainstream feminist studies. A related impetus derives from the reflective and transformative approaches developed by the men's groups

supportive of the feminist movements in the 1970s and 1980s. Part of this process is the need for 'safe spaces' for men and boys to discuss and understand male privilege, female subordination and to develop personal responses.

The gender equality organisations focusing work on men and boys should not be confused with various 'men's rights' and 'fathers' rights' groups, who argue that a creeping feminisation of society has disempowered men, or social conservative and religious fundamental movements for patriarchal responsibility. Gender equality organisations working with men focus clearly on women and girls' rights and empowerment. They are also increasingly allied with women's rights organisations. For example, MenEngage has ATHENA9 and ICRW on its steering committee and UN Women and UNF-PA on its advisory committee. A further trend is the increasing recruitment of women to the organisations, including to senior management posts. To take two major organisations; Instituto Promundo and Sonke Gender Justice Network (leading MenEngage members) both report around 50 percent female and male staff at all levels. These are signs of a mainstreaming of men and boys into the gender agenda. Increased collaboration with women's rights organisation, the UN family, in particular UN Women, and the World and Regional Banks is crucial to expand and scale-up interventions. Ideally, work in the future should not be split between organisations focusing on either women's rights or men for gender equality, rather women and men should be working together for gender equitable societies. This does not mean that donors should pressurise women's rights partners to take on a men and boys agenda, but certainly development cooperation should encourage inter-movement dialogue and collaborations.

## Research influencing interventions

The growth of gender justice organisations focusing on men and boys has been instrumental in the development of a solid body of cross-cultural research, including action research. If one looks at the results emerging from work with men and boys for gender equality, a major output has been in the mapping of male attitudes and behaviours, with the subsequent development of participatory methodologies. The interventions are contextual and ecological, geared towards promoting positive aspects of masculinities and creating community and household dialogue between women and men. In terms of measurable outcomes, interventions are increasingly showing shorter-term positive results, particularly as organisations use baselines and more stringent measurement methodology, such as control groups.

Two linked initiatives stand out in their international uses and thus ability to make cross-comparisons: the Gender Equitable Men (GEM)<sup>10</sup> Scale and the International Men and Gender

Equality Survey tool (IMAGES)<sup>11</sup>. The GEM scale uses a question battery to measure baselines and intervention outcomes in relation to a gender equitable attitudes score. IMAGES is a quantitative household survey tool measuring men's and women's perceptions and behaviours on themes related to gender equality. At the date of writing it has now been carried out in ten countries<sup>12</sup> and in all regions. A version specifically for GBV has also been used in the regional Asia survey, conducted by the UN *Partners for Prevention* (P4P) programme.

An overview of results from nine of the IMAG-ES studies<sup>13</sup> shows a number of key factors across regions and cultures. Overall the reports show progress and increasing male acceptance of gender equality goals, particularly among young men. A main conclusion of the IMAGES overview report is on the need for structural level changes that enable and encourage men and boys' participation in gender equitable relations. Many poor men in the studies report stress and

#### MEN ARE ALSO AFFECTED BY PATRIARCHAL HIERARCHY AND DISCRIMINATION

A main concept established within gender masculinity studies is of hegemonic masculinity<sup>16</sup>. This is a patriarchal ideology of male supremacy that is often accepted by women and girls. For example, men are strong and decisive, whilst women are weak and emotional. Hegemonic masculinity grants various general privileges to heterosexual men and boys, but it also subordinates them in male hierarchies and encourages aggressively competitive and violent forms of expressing manhood. Thus not all, or even the majority of men benefit equally, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged, or discriminated against because of race or sexual orientation. In fact, monetary economy, agribusiness and urbanisation

have systematically undermined patriarchal authority within the extended family, leaving men frustrated at their inability to live up to traditional roles. An equal partnership between couples is, obviously, a much more viable model for survival in a modern economy.

Hegemonic masculinities' macho ideals also have distinct disadvantages for men and boys in terms of risk taking, being subject to violence, substance abuse and upholding male emotional autonomy. Thus developing caring, and social empathy - increasingly important attributes in modern day post-industrial employment - aspects of masculinity is beneficial to both men and women.



... Higher levels
of education and
childhood
experience of
having fathers
who engaged in
care-work are
positively correlated
to male gender
equitable attitudes
and practices.

depression at not being able to adequately provide for their families. The male bread-winner ideal is strongly entrenched and also related to male lack of engagement in household carework. Higher levels of education and childhood experience of having fathers who engaged in care-work are positively correlated to male gender equitable attitudes and practices. Social learning between generations, or from role models and media, is thus an important aspect.

The IMAGES reports show high levels of male violence both between men and against women and children. Men who report ever perpetration of violence in seven of the countries range between 23.97 percent in Brazil to 38,66 percent in Rwanda. In a recent World Bank report<sup>14</sup>, the factors most associated with male perpetration of intimate partner violence were low marital satisfaction, illicit drug use, alcohol abuse and attitudes condoning marital violence, including traditional sex-roles ideology.

The GEM scale and IMAGES surveys are examples of how the work with men, boys and gender equality is moving through applied research to measurable interventions. Two challenges emerge from this work; scaling-up and result measurement. Firstly, there is the small-scale 'pilot' nature of the interventions. If transformative changes are to be achieved, then the work needs to be scaled-up. A critique

of work on and with men and boys has been that it focuses too much on individual behavioural change and not enough on dealing with structural and institutional changes for gender equality. As the IMAGES studies' conclusions show, there is a certain truth in the observation and structural work with men and boys is taken up later in this paper. Though, of course, individual change and structural facilitation necessarily go hand in hand. One can also consider that structural changes that focus on men and boys' needs can contribute to gender equality, e.g. SRHR services for men and boys or work with young men in violent and criminal neighbourhoods.

The second challenge is that the theory of change is based to a large degree on before and after intervention self-reported attitudes and, sometimes, self-reported behaviour changes. Without some form of measurement triangulation, for example proxy indicators, this allows for response bias. An example of a proxy indicator is the reduction in school-girl pregnancies that was observed in the participating schools in the RFSU regional program in Africa mentioned before. Another limiting factor is the few examples of longitudinal measurements of interventions to show sustained change<sup>15</sup>. Thus projects need to improve longitudinal mapping of attitude change and link it to indicators of behavioural changes other than self-reporting.

# Increasing interest on the international agendas

On the international arena there is growing number stakeholder interest in working with men and boys. To give an example, at the 2014 Commission on the Status of Women, there were approximately 18 side-events on working with men and boys. Whether this interest will translate into integrating a perspective on men and boys in the international agendas remains to be seen. There is currently a strong international focus within both bilateral and multilateral donors on improving women and girls' situation and status. This focus will acknowledge the need to work with men and boys to achieve results for women and girls.

UN Women is taking a strong role on leading efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment. They have recently launched the 'HeforShe' campaign as to promote men's engagement. They are also working together with UN Statistics Division (UNSD) on developing indicators on gender results. Increased sex disaggregation of data is a main issue, but also some indicators on men and boys would be useful for measuring gender equality and women's empowerment. For example, indicators on men and boys time spent on care-work, joint household decision-making and male attitudes to GBV and other. The research on men and GBV is an area in which men's organisations and particularly background work, such as the IMAGES studies can contribute for developing indicators.

Two main tasks on the international agenda are wrapping up the millennium development goals (MDG) efforts and reaching an international agreement on sustainable development goals (SDG) to replace them. The MDGs are not strong on integrating gender and ignore the structural embedded issues that underpin gender inequalities. MDG 3 (Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women) is the only goal for gender equality and has limited areas of focus<sup>17</sup>. There are, though, a number of sexdisaggregated indicators within the MDGs.

Strong advocacy work, is being made for both a stand-alone SDG for gender equality and its integration in the other goals. The report by the UN Secretary General appointed High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post-2015 agenda<sup>18</sup> makes a case for gender equality as an own SDG, as well as gender indicators to be included in the other goals. The High Level Panel's conclusions are supported by an OECD paper<sup>19</sup>. UN Women has also published a document<sup>20</sup> supporting a 'transformative' stand-alone gender equality SDG, accompanied by indicators, as well as integration of gender equality in the other goals. In July 2014 the Open Working Group of the General Assembly presented the outcome document to the UN Secretary General with 17 goals<sup>21</sup>, of which one is to 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and

... Gender equality work with men and boys does not figure largely in any of these documents. But if one looks at the consensus around the issues for a stand-alone goal, the integration of men and boys could make an important contribution to achieving results.

Gender equality work with men and boys does not figure largely in any of these documents. But if one looks at the consensus around the issues for a stand-alone goal, the integration of men and boys could make an important contribution to achieving results. MenEngage has issued a call for action<sup>22</sup> on the post-2015 agenda with gender equality indicators related to the proposed SDG goals that take up work with men and boys.

## Looking to the future

There is general agreement that the way forward in scaling-up work with men and boys is through structural mainstreaming in strategic areas of sector support, such as in health, education, agriculture and market development. Eliminating GBV is both an issue to be integrated in these efforts and a goal in itself. There is good evidence of interventions that work in all of the above sectors, as has been illustrated above. There are also economic and social welfare changes that can enable men to take part in care-work and active fatherhood. Simultaneous to these efforts is the need to continue working with national civil society efforts, including with media. Community work as a continuum from national to local levels is an essential aspect, including work directed to community leaders. Traditional and religious leaders at all levels are an essential focus for advocacy efforts. Assumptions of conservative attitudes often prove incorrect when dialogue is opened.

... There is general agreement that the way forward in scaling-up work with men and boys is through structural mainstreaming in strategic areas of sector support, such as in health, education, agriculture and market development.

Moreover, a main impetus needs to be on developing measurement and results of work with men and boys. At the moment interventions are too reliant on self-reporting of post-intervention attitude change, as a result. Means for triangulation and use of proxy indicators need to be developed, particularly in relation to GBV. This work can be related to the on-going internation-

al focus on result indicator development, as well as to the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation's goal<sup>23</sup> of improving national gender indicators. Main efforts need to be on increasing sex and age disaggregated data, but there is also a need to include some specific international indicators on men and boys, for example in relation to GBV, women's voice and agency, as well as the care economy. Including indicators on men and boys is particularly important in the formulation of SDGs and especially in relation to a possible stand-alone goal for gender equality.

There are two main obstacles to scaling-up work with men and boys. Firstly, gender main-streaming itself has not been an unmitigated success; management and staff commitment, consistent leadership, staff capacity and allocation of sufficient resources being the main problems. Thus the addition of men and boys to the ingredients will be a challenge. It will require special training inputs and support. Secondly, is the factor of gaining partner ministerial commitment for sector policy development and implementation. So whilst structural integration is the way forward, it is likely to be somewhat of a long trek.

This Development Trends paper started out by stating that there is currently a critical mass of interest, evidence and organisational competence to take the agenda with men and boys for gender equality forward. It has argued that work with men and boys can make supportive contributions to women and girls advancement and empowerment both sector wise, but also more generally in achieving gender equality in households, workplaces and society generally.

Not all men, or all women, welcome the message. Backlash reactions to women and girl's advancement can be found among individual



men, as well as formally organised within religious fundamentalist, social or cultural conservative movements and politics, including the emergence of 'men's rights' groups. A further sticking factor is the ambivalent attitudes among a fair number of feminists and women rights activists.

What needs to be underlined is that gender equality has benefits for men and boys, as well women and girls. Men have lower life-expectancy and often higher mortality than women due to risk-taking life-styles and violence. They have higher levels of substance abuse than women and often lack supportive social networks. Poor men report being stressed and depressed at not being able to live up to the role of the providing household head. Men have thus much to gain in developing caring and nurturing aspects of masculinity, becoming

close to their children and sharing responsibilities with their partners.

... What needs to be underlined is that gender equality has benefits for men and boys, as well women and girls.

Work with men and boys is a small part of the total of gender equality efforts, but an important aspect. It entails an integration of men and boys where relevant and particularly in some sectors and thematic areas. Faced with an ever rapidly changing world, traditional roles and customary social ties increasingly lack relevance and are often based in discriminatory patriarchal values. Women and men, girls and boys need to ally with each other for the benefit of households, communities and society.

- 1. SCB Statistics Sweden Women and Men in Sweden 2012 Örebro: 2012. (p.43)
- 2. Riksförbundet för Sexuell Upplysning, Sweden's International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) member association
- Jewkes et al. Impact of Stepping Stones on incidence of HIV and HSV-2 and sexual behaviour in rural South Africa: cluster ranDomised controlled trial BMJ 2008:337:a50D.
- Kirsten Stoebenau et al. How Have Fertility Declines Benefitted Women's Lives in Low- and Middle-Income Countries? ICRW, Washington DC: 2014.
- Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Aid Policy Framework, 2013/14:131;
   Swedish MFA On Equal Footing Policy for Gender Equality and the Rights and Role of Women, UD 10.062P:2010; and in previous Sida specific policies including: Promoting Gender Equality in Development Cooperation:2005; Women and men. Sida's Programme for Gender Equality:1997; and Plan of Action for Womenoriented Development Assistance: 1983.
- This is funding to organisations or programmes specifically focused on work with men and boys. The approximate sum does not cover initiatives for men and boys integrated within core or programme framework funded organisations.
- 7. The DAC/OECD code for gender equality is used to rate all contributions as gender equality being a principle objective (i.e. direct targeted support), significant objective (mainstreamed) or not applicable. The code does not indicate whether the target group or beneficiaries are women, girls, men or boys.
- 8. UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA & UN Women.
- 9. ATHENA is a non-profit organisation for women's leadership.
- 10. The GEM scale was developed by the men's gender justice organisation PROMUNDO, together with the Population Council's Horizon program.
- 11. The IMAGES survey tool was initially developed by PROMUNDO and the International Coalition for Research on Women (ICRW).

- Bosnia, Brazil, Chile, Croatia, Democratic Republic of Congo North Kivu, India, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Rwanda and South Africa.
- ICRW & Instituto Promundo Evolving Men: Initial Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey Men + Gender Equality Policy Project. Washington: 2011.
- 14. Fleming et al. Engaging Men and Boys in advancing Women's Agency: Where We Stand and New Directions Women's Voice Agency and Participation Research Series 2014. World Bank Group. Washington: 2014.
- For example see: Ricardo C., Eads M. & Barker G. Engaging Boys and Young Men in the Prevention of Sexual Violence: A systematic and global review of evaluated interventions. Sexual Violence Research Initiative, Promundo. Washington DC: 2011. (p.7).
- For an overview of hegemonic masculinity see Connell, R. Masculinities Polity Press, Cambridge: 1995. Pp.76 – 81.
- 17. These are education ratios by sex, women's share of wage employment non-agricultural and proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments.
- 18. United Nations Report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda – A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development New York: 2013.
- OECD Gender equality and women's rights in the post-2015 agenda: A Foundation for Sustainable Development OECD Post 2015 Element 3, paper 1. Paris: 2013.
- UN Women A Transformative Stand-Alone Goal on Achieving Gender Equality, Women's Rights and Women's Empowerment: Imperatives and Key Components New York: 2013.
- 21. Outcome Document Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html
- 22. MenEngage Call for Action: The post 2015 Agenda Washington DC: 2013.
- Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Busan, Republic of Korea, 29 November-1 December 2011.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHER**



Paul Dover, PhD (1952-2014) was a Gender Policy Specialist at the Department for International Programmes and Policy Support.

This Development Trends report was written by Paul during the spring of 2014 and reflects his dedication and efforts to always include an interrelational lens in gender analyses. Paul has led the knowledge development on how to work with men and boys on gender equality issues within the agency, and has been part of the international community pushing the agenda forward. In January 2014, Paul's article "Gender and Development Cooperation: Scaling up Work with Men and Boys" was published in the IDS Bulletin.

Paul had a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Uppsala University. His thesis "A man of power: gender and HIV/Aids in Zambia" was the result of two years of field work among the Goba people in a rural area in southern Zambia and two peri-urban communities near Lusaka. Paul's career at Sida started in 2001 and has continuously had a strong focus on masculinities, gender relations and sexual and reproductive health and rights. During seven years, Paul was part of the regional HIV/Aids team based in Lusaka. Paul has throughout his professional life continued to challenge what we know about gender relations and masculinities and has published widely on the subject for a range of academic, policy and practitioner audiences.

In September 2014, Paul passed away after a brave battle with cancer. He was an inspiration to all who had the privilege to know him and will be sorely missed by friends, colleagues and family.

Sida works according to directives of the Swedish Parliament and Government to reduce poverty in the world, a task that requires cooperation and persistence. Through development cooperation, Sweden assists countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Each country is responsible for its own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge, skills and expertise. This increases the world's prosperity.

