

EVALUATING MEN AND MASCULINITIES IN SOUTH ASIA

Introduction - This tip sheet is about evaluating men and masculinities in South Asia, the when, how and why men, masculinities, men's role became an intrinsic and necessary part of understanding gender roles and relations; an understanding of the elements and aspects of masculinity and manhood and what they mean to men and their contextualisation; various approaches, interventions, limitations and challenges in engaging with boys and men; the importance of evaluation of interventions; measuring tools and the way forward to bring about effective gender transforming evaluations and interventions geared towards eliminating the power imbalances between men and women.



MEN, MASCULINITIES AND GENDER EQUITY: WHEN, HOW AND WHY

- CEDAW- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women- comes into effect in 1975, and UN General Assembly marks 1975, for the first time, as 'The International Women's Year.
- A new paradigm in development for women termed 'Women In Development' (WID) is founded to focus on the role of women in development work and practice and related women specific projects.
- WID gives way to Gender and Development (GAD), an approach that focused on the socially constructed basis of differences between men and women and emphasized the need to challenge existing gender roles and relations.
- GAD presents the real problem as the imbalance of power between women and men, and, as the theory develops, begins to present gender power imbalances as contrary to men's real interests too.
- The role of the men and masculinities approach begins to receive attention with The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 as the first major international conference that recognized the role of boys and men in promoting gender equality.
- Discourses highlight the notions of manhood and masculinity- the social norms associated with manhood, and the social organisation of boy's and men's lives and relations - play a crucial role in shaping power structures and gendered relationship between boys/men and girls/women.
- Inequitable gender and social norms influence the way men interact with their female partners on a wide range of issues, such as, HIV/sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention, contraceptive use, physical violence, parenting.
- WHO reports that more than often examples of men's behaviour toward women related to inequitable norms is the use of violence against women. Between 10 and 69 per cent of women reported being physically assaulted by an intimate male partner at some point in their lives.
- In most South Asian societies, manhood, masculinity, manliness is characterized by male sexual dominance and unequal gender attitudes and behaviour often taking the form of violence against girls and women.

UNDERSTANDING MEN AND MASCULINITIES



- Multiple forms of masculinities exist and these change across settings and time.
- Masculinities are defined and redefined in social interactions and with relation to power
- structures such as class, caste, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation etc.
- Dominant forms of masculinities reflect characteristics of what it means to be a man, are used as a marker for men's individual behaviours and beliefs and shape dominant social norms and values. These generate systems of power inequalities and imbalances-like the patriarchal system- between men and women.
- These systems use violence as a means to ensure that these power imbalances stay in place.
- Along with plurality, hierarchies of masculinities also exist as Some men and masculinities are constrained and subordinated too by these power systems/structures.
- Masculinities are context specific and need to be understood from within their socio, cultural, religious, economic and political perspective..

ENGAGING WITH BOYS AND MEN: APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES



- Gender-transformative approach - approaches which actively target harmful stereotypes and norms and seek to transform underlying gender inequalities- are more likely to lead to changes in the attitudes of men and boys.
- Interventions with boys and men are diverse - nature of targeted participants, changes desired, settings, scope, and durations of interventions, varied gender theory or politics informing them, involvement of role models, sport stars, community/religious leaders.
- Interventions have used various strategies- involving non-violent participants, face to face education programmes, social marketing, awareness campaigns, community mobilization.
- Use of effective measuring tools that are able to capture gender attitudes, norms and related behaviours, information on prevailing norms and their consequences of these on women; are broadly applicable yet culturally specific, easily administered by different stakeholders, highlight links between experiences and consequent behaviours, able to address women's opinions and their report on men's practices.
- Prevalent and widely used measuring tools for evaluation- GEM Scale and Partners for Prevention toolkit.

LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES:



- Infrequent implementation and assessment of intervention, very low efforts at optimisation.
- Unidirectional belief that raising awareness and change gender attitudes, will be followed by behaviour change. When in fact research has shown the association between attitudes and behaviour to be complex and bidirectional.
- Lack of sustainability of shifts and/or changes in attitudes and behaviours in the long term.
- Short programme length and intensity, quality of facilitation and facilitator skills and gender belief and attitudes.
- Low or no long-term follow ups post project to assess the impact and sustainability of the changes/shifts, if any, during the project time.
- Lack of rigorous evaluations

WAYS FORWARD TO EVALUATING MEN AND MASCULINITIES



- Capturing long-term behavioural and structural shifts/changes
- Creating Reflective Spaces
- Acknowledging power structures
- Inclusive and Ecological Approach for effective gender transformative programming:
 - Effective male engagement programming must be accountable to women, acknowledge women's existing contributions towards gender equity, and create opportunities for collaborating with women and women's groups.
 - Male engagement programming must work across various ecological levels to be able to bring about gender transformation. It is important to focus work at individuals/ couples, communities, institutional and policy levels.
- Addressing gender norms in conflict settings
- Building Coalitions
- Holistic and Intersectional measurement