Strategies to Engage Men and Boys in Violence Prevention:

A Global Organizational Perspective

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Abstract

Efforts to increase men and boys' engagement in preventing violence against women are expanding worldwide. Systematic understandings of the strategies organizations use to recruit men and boys as well to deepen and sustain engagement are missing from the literature. This study presents descriptive findings from in-depth interviews with 29 representatives of organizations in Africa, Asia, Europe, Oceania, and North and South America that engage men and boys in preventing violence against women and girls. In particular, the findings suggest that strategies to recruit men and boys are shaped by the context of the community, with nuanced messages and appropriate messengers. Additionally, respondents reported key principles informing their organizational strategies to deepen men and boys' engagement. Attention is also paid to respondents' caution about the risks of framing of men and boys' engagement practices as separate from both women's organizations and women and girls themselves. The authors conclude by drawing implications for the global movement to engage men and boys in preventing violence against women and girls.

Key words: Organizations, Engaging men, Strategies, Violence Prevention Against Women, Global.

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Ending violence is a global priority (United Nations, 2010; WHO, 2009). In the last several decades, a wide spread emphasis on strategies to engage men and boys in preventing violence against women and girls has grown (Flood, 2011). This emphasis is evident across many different levels of organizations, from large scale ones such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations, and regional and national organizations (i.e. Partners for Prevention, Sonke Gender Justice, White Ribbon) to the local grassroots level. Organizations and activists are instituting practices of engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls, as well as other interconnected issues, such as HIV/AIDS and gender equality (UNFPA & Promundo, 2010; United Nations, 2010; WHO, 2007). As practices to engage men and boys continue to develop globally, descriptive and comparative examinations of emerging engagement strategies will inform the refinement and efficacy of anti-violence efforts. Overall, engaging men and boys in violence prevention is defined as any effort that examines the fundamental causes of men and boys' violence including social and structural ones as well as men and boys' gender role socialization and men's sexism (Berkowitz, 2004b).

Strategies and supporting principles of engagement are shaped by a variety of factors. First, the range of efforts organizations use to engage men and boys in violence prevention is varied, and therefore shapes their strategies. One explanation for this range may be the different levels of prevention at which men and boys' engagement takes place, such as primary prevention (focused prevention before violence occurs), secondary prevention (once the violence begins) and tertiary prevention (responding to violence after it occurs, preventing reoccurrence)

(Chamberlain, 2008). In addition, efforts may also differ based on how they are tailored for particular contexts, such as for different age groups or cultural communities.

This study aims to increase knowledge about organizational strategies to engage men and boys in violence prevention by describing how 29 respondents described their organizations' initial engagement efforts and ongoing engagement deepening principles. Implications of these findings for strategies to engage men and boys, particularly in light of gender equality and a pro-feminist framework are then discussed.

Theories and Frameworks of Engaging Men and Boys in Violence Prevention

Although research focused on increasing men and boys' engagement in violence prevention is on the rise, documentation of an overarching and guiding theoretical framework for this engagement is still evolving. One theoretical framework, often identified as a key paradigm applied to gender equality work, is a pro-feminist framework (Flood, 2011; Crooks, Goodall, Hughes, Jaffe & Baker, 2007). The pro-feminist rationale to engage men and boys in violence prevention, as articulated by Flood (2004; 2011), hinges on the argument that if the goal is to end violence against women then men must be involved, because they are the primary perpetrators of violence against women (Black et al., 2011); and because adherence to rigid or traditional notions of appropriate masculinity are associated with greater acceptance of and risk for perpetration of violence (Murnen et al., 2002). Following this pro-feminist rationale, Flood (2011) proposes that men indeed have a positive role to play in ending violence against women. Other activist and scholars agree that efforts to engage men and boys need to include positive messages that inspire them to become involved (Berkowitz, 2004b; Flood, 2005), as well as be a positive experience (Crooks, et al., 2007). From a pro-feminist framework, engaging men and

boys in violence prevention is in the interest of women and girls, but ending gender-based

violence is also in the interest of the men and boys.

Addressing social norms is another theory-informed approach often used when discussing

the engagement of men and boys in violence prevention (i.e. Berkowitz, 2004a). This

perspective posits that correcting individuals' misperceptions of social norms can decrease

problem behaviors and increase the prevalence of healthy behaviors (Berkowitz, 2004a). Specific

to engaging men, social norms approaches seek to identify the misperceptions of men's

concurrence with each other's sexist and violence supportive norms and thereby, challenge

men's own beliefs and attitudes (Fabiano, Perkins, Berkowitz, Linkenbach & Stark, 2004). For

example, Kilmartin, Smith, Green, Heinzen, Kuchler, and Kolar's (2008) study illustrates the

framework of social norms. Their study found that 128 young men they surveyed on a college

campus in the United States overestimated other men's sexism and underestimated men's

discomfort with sexist attitudes (Kilmartin et al., 2008). Through role models, education, surveys

and even formal media campaigns, social norms approaches attempt to rectify these kinds of

misperceptions, thereby potentially empowering the previously quiet majority of men who value

respect and non-violence to take a more active stance in promoting these ideals. Also embedded

in social norms approaches, is the goal of developing culturally relevant, comprehensive, and

intensive interventions to engage men and boys in violence prevention (Berkowitz, 2004b).

The pro-feminist and social norms frameworks are two approaches to theoretically

grounding violence prevention work with men and boys. Complementing these is the Prevention

Spectrum (Cohen & Swift, 1999), a framework outlining specific prevention strategies across

micro to macro levels of analysis. Applied to myriad social and health issues, this tool is

regularly employed in the field of engaging men and boys in violence prevention (Flood, 2005-

2011; Sonke Gender Justice, 2002; UNFPA, 2010; WHO, 2007). The six levels of strategy that make up Cohen and Swift's (1999) Prevention Spectrum include: 1) strengthening individual knowledge and skills, 2) promoting community education, 3) educating providers, 4) fostering coalitions and networks, 5) changing organizational practices, and 6) influencing policy and legislation. The aim of the Prevention Spectrum is a multi-systems approach, rather than an exclusively individual education approach. In the context of engaging men and boys in violence prevention, this approach warrants organizations' adoption of multiple approaches to engaging men and boys in violence prevention, not just individual and group but also structural and political efforts that aim to address social norms and structural gender inequality.

Specific Strategies to Engage Men and Boys

Worldwide, organizations with initiatives to engage men and boys in preventing violence against women and girls are increasing in number and focus, and typically include the practices of group education, community outreach and mobilization (Kimball et al., in press; UNFPA, 2010; WHO, 2007). WHO (2007) compared published documents on 58 programs engaging men and boys on the issue of gender-based inequity in health (one key focus was violence) to determine their effectiveness. The findings pointed to best practices that included: group education; community outreach, mobilization and mass media campaigns; and service based programs. Similarly, in 2007, experts from WHO, MenEngage and Instituto Promundo highlighted programs in the form of case studies and policies designed to engage men and boys in the promotion of gender equality and health equity. They identified three key programmatic strategies: group education; campaigns, such as social marketing, and community mobilization; health and human services (UNFPA, 2010). Although no one single set of strategies and tools to engage men and boys was suggested to be a simple fix to these complex issues, the authors

proposed that the most effective strategies for changing attitudes and behaviors used an approach

defined as "gender transformative." A gender transformative approach applied to gender-based

violence prevention challenged rigid gender roles and included critically questioning both the

influence of social-cultural, community, and institutional factors as well as individual beliefs and

attitudes (see Gupta, 2000 & 2002; UNFPA, 2010).

On a more basic level, evidence is also beginning to emerge about the recruitment and

engagement strategies which may be effective at generating individual men's interest in and

sustained involvement with violence prevention programs. Men's catalysts for joining anti-

violence efforts include making a very personal connection with the issue of violence against

women (Casey & Smith, 2010), peer support for getting involved (Coulter, 2003), and tailored

invitations that highlight men's strengths and potential specific contributions (Casey & Smith,

2010). Additionally, general consensus among anti-violence allies and scholars suggests that, to

be effective, outreach efforts must approach men as a critical and positive element of solving

violence against women (e.g. Flood, 2005; Funk, 2008). Further, male anti-violence allies

involved in efforts to engage other men report tailoring their invitations to the strengths of

individual men and recruiting messengers who reflect the identities and concerns of the men they

hope to involve (Casey, 2010). Still unknown, however, are the degree to which these

engagement strategies are used by different types of organizations around the world and what

additional approaches to engagement may best foster men's on-going investment in violence

prevention efforts.

Purpose of this Study

Organizations and activists throughout the globe have taken up the work of engaging men

and boys in preventing violence against women and girls. There remain major gaps, however, in

our understanding the larger picture of how organizational representatives describe their

strategies to reach out to and partner with men and boys. Current information is largely limited to

some organizations' program descriptions and evaluations, thus focusing on broader program

activities and likely omitting the more subtle strategies involved in reaching out and appealing to

men. The strategies literature has also most often been constructed in a toolkit fashion for

workers and agencies that may be engaging men and boys already, and shaped by the conceptual

framework of the organization creating the toolkit. Finally, although descriptive literature on

organizations engaging men and boys in violence prevention from a global perspective is

emerging, limited analysis between countries has been performed. The purpose of this study was

to explore how organizational representatives across the globe describe both their recruitment

strategies and ones that promote deeper engagement of men and boys in preventing violence

against women and girls. Here we present descriptive analyses of interviews with representatives

from 29 organizations around the world who self-identified as implementing efforts to engage

men and boys in violence prevention. Specifically, the findings describe the key recruitment

strategies, the central principles of deepening men and boys' engagement, and a critique of the

gendering of violence prevention. The concluding discussion outlines the intersections between

these findings and the current literature in the field, as well as suggests further research questions

and implications for practice.

Methods

Interviewee Recruitment

Research procedures described below were approved as exempt by the University of

[blinded for review] Institutional Review Board due to the professional nature of respondents.

Organizations were recruited from interviewees in a prior survey study conducted by this

research team, as well as a few additional referrals provided by these interviewees. In the first study, men's engagement programs were recruited through multiple global email listservs and online communities pertaining to violence prevention. Eligibility criteria included proficiency in English and identifying that their organization engaged men in preventing violence. "Engaging men in violence prevention" was defined as "men taking action to stop violence against women and children before it begins by advocating and creating respectful relationships" (see [blinded for review], in press, for a more in-depth description of the online research phase of this project). Respondents for this study indicated their interest at the conclusion of their anonymous online survey, providing their name and email address. Research team members contacted the respondents via email to set up a telephone interview for this study. After consent for participation was received, interviewees were then interviewed by phone or via Skype.

One hundred and four survey respondents indicated a willingness to participate in the interview by submitting their name and contact information at the conclusion of the earlier online survey. Two additional interviewees were added at the suggestion of original sample respondents during their interviews. Forty-eight individuals were contacted via email and invited to participate in the study. For the purposes of this study, interviewees from all countries outside of the United States (n=41), plus six randomly sampled interviewees from the United States were contacted for an interview. Of these, 29 responded to email and completed an interview that was included in this study. Twenty-one men and eight women from organizations in Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, Grenada, India, Kenya, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Rwanda, Scotland, South Africa, Syria, Thailand, Uganda, and the United States were interviewed. Eighteen contacted interviewees either did not respond to repeated email contact, or did not

follow through to schedule and complete an interview. Overall, the study achieved a 70.7%

response rate.

Sample

Participating organizations' diversity included several dimensions. The organizations'

length of program history ranged from less than two years (7%, n=2), two to five years (41%,

n=12), six to eight years (14%, n=4), and eight or more years (38%, n=11). Organizations also

varied in identification of organizational structure (see Table 1). Thirteen (45%) were stand-

alone programs, largely non-profits, with a primary focus on engaging men; 6 (21%) were units

within larger agencies that sponsored a range of activities and services; 6 (21%) were regional or

multi-country coalitions, 2 (7%) operated within university settings; and 2 (7%) were

governmental organizations. Interestingly, 7 (24%) of the programs could be characterized as

partly or primarily Batterer's Intervention Programs (BIPs). Although these types of program

fell outside of our initial definition of participation eligibility because they do not fall within

common public health definitions of "primary prevention" (Chamberlain, 2008), these programs

clearly defined their own activities as prevention, and often sponsored other activities with a

primary prevention focus. These interviews were therefore retained for analysis.

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Table 1 About Here

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Data Collection

Interviews were semi-structured, with broad questions about an organization's strategies

to engage men and boys in preventing violence against women and girls, followed by prompts

individualized to elicit more detailed descriptions about an organization's strategies. The

interviews ranged from 45 to 90 minutes in length. Follow-up questions included what the

organizational representative saw as the most effective strategies for reaching men, as well as

what challenges their organization had encountered. All interviews were conducted over the

telephone or via Skype in English by one of four interviewers on the team.[i] The interviews were

digitally recorded and transcribed.

Data Analysis

Transcripts were entered into the qualitative software program ATLAS-Ti and analyzed

using techniques drawn from grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). Close coding and

constant comparisons across interviewees make up key analytic tools of grounded theory.

Transcripts were coded for domains relevant to men's engagement strategies by two researchers.

Taking pertinent portions of the transcripts, the first author reviewed the transcripts line by line

in an open coding approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). Emergent themes were examined for

broader conceptual categories. Constant comparison within and between cases was facilitated by

the use of matrices (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to refine concepts emerging from the data. Three

members of the research team reviewed the emergent themes and supporting data as a check on

analytical trustworthiness. [ii]

RESULTS

The following results are organized into three sections: strategies for initial engagement,

principles for deepening men's engagement, and a critique of gendering violence prevention

work. All three sections are based on key domains that emerged from the data as well as relevant

violence prevention literature. Taken together, the first two sections – strategies and principles –

highlight what the organizational interviewees described as their approach to the process of

engaging men and boys in violence prevention efforts. The last section reflects the concern

organizations shared about the current trends in gender-based violence prevention efforts. Overall, the findings presented below offer insight into the strategies of organizations from around the world that work to engage men and boys (and in some cases also women and girls) to prevent violence. In the supporting interviewee quotes associated with each theme, we refer only to an interviewee's identification number from our original on-line survey so as to preserve anonymity.

Strategies for Initial Engagement

All interviewees reported the practice of recruitment or making initial efforts to engage men and boys. Responses illustrated the subtle yet substantive difference between recruitment to a pre-defined activity and a community organizing or mobilizing model, where the communities themselves are developing their goals. This difference will be explored in more detail in the subsequent discussion of initial engagement themes but, for the time being, recruitment and initial efforts will be used interchangeably. Overall, five main themes emerged from the data: accessible entry points, intentional invitation, enlist ambassadors, concrete opportunities and men's reasons for becoming engaged. The first four themes illustrate strategies organizations used to recruit men and boys, the fifth theme elucidates interviewees' views and experiences of why they thought men and boys initially become engaged. In the text below, we refer only to an interviewee's identification number so as to preserve anonymity.

Accessible Entry Points. The first theme in the category of initial engagement strategies speaks to how organizations sought out means to connect with potentially disinterested or skeptical men and boys, and to locate specific places to "meet" them. Fourteen interviewees representing every region of the world (48%) described the importance of identifying these starting places, which took two forms. The first was locating specific physical locations or

communication media to connect with men and boys (i.e. radio, schools, movies, newsletter, or face to face). For example, the following interviewee from Africa describes how to find men in everyday naturally occurring meeting places:

> In (country) is the Market general cleaning day. When they clean the environment. So on this particular day, after cleaning, by 10 is when they have meetings; each market must have a meeting. So on this meeting, we met with them to sensitize them on the issue and began to call out for those who are entrusted in by spreading the prevention training for peer educations, and of course, this was when we encouraged the men to take the lead. (P 32)

The second strategy for initiating contact is a conversation starter, such as a topic like fatherhood or domestic violence statistics, as illustrated in the following passage from an organizational representative in South America:

> We used to show them statistics, statistical data, specially to the police officers...with more skeptical person you can show them statistical data and even with people…who are not very sensitized you can use…the economical implications of violence to convince them. (P 23)

Intentional Invitation. In addition to identifying approachable places and topics to meet and begin conversations with men and boys, interviewees described the practice of inviting them to take part in violence prevention activities. Twelve interviewees from all regions of the world except Europe and South America (41%) reported using an "invitation" as a strategy to recruit men and boys. One Australian interviewee illustrated the importance of invitation as a strategy stating that to engage men in violence prevention: "the first way and the major way is by invitation" (P 18). The idea of an invitation speaks to these organizations' aspiration to have the

boys and men join pre-defined work that the organization sponsored. The people who were

inviting men and boys were often fellow community members, as indicated by one interviewee's

remark, "The people that are in the community themselves are the ones that are doing that piece

of work" (P 61, North America). However, the list also included members of women's

organizations, and famous sports figures. Less frequently formerly abusive men from the

community made the invitations. While a formal invitation to become active in violence

prevention events was a focal engagement strategy, some interviewees identified the process of

engaging men as growing out of their strong, existing social networks, as reflected in the

following comment from an interviewee in North America:

> …a lot of them come by way of their own relationship. So the people here speak or
>
> people know men that involved and so they bring them. Men bring men, boys bring boys,
>
> the program, that's how it happens. So that's one way. (P 76)

Enlist Ambassadors. While some organizations "invited" boys and men's engagement,

eight organizations (27%) disseminated the message of violence prevention outwards through

peer educators or community representatives in their own communities and social networks.

These organizations were located in Asia, Australia, Europe and North America. The rationale

for the ambassador approach seemed to be to increase credibility and to overcome a variety of

cultural, political, and language barriers, as well as to inspire men and boys to connect to the

ambassador as a role model, which would hopefully lead to engagement. Here is one

interviewee's description of the ambassador role and an example of how the ambassador puts a

message out about violence prevention:

> We have ambassadors we have identified in the community, you know males who are
>
> leaders in the community who will speak out against family violence. So one of the

> people, one is the captain of our footie club, is one our ambassadors, the chief executive
> officer of the football league is a White Ribbon ambassador and he produces the
> newsletter that goes out to 25,000 people every week for 20 weeks. And we have an
> article in that newsletter every week for 20 weeks around family violence.[1]

Four of the eight organizations identified working to enlist White Ribbon ambassadors, who are men who take an oath to stand up and speak out for ending violence against women in their own lives and in their communities. White Ribbon is an international movement to engage men in violence prevention founded two decades ago after the murder of 14 women on a Canadian college campus and now has affiliates in 48 countries (see http://whiteribbon.ca/). In general, ambassadors tended to become active after participating in other parts of the organizations programs, or being moved by a personal event or experience regarding gender inequality and gender based violence.

Create Concrete Opportunities. Nine interviewees (31%) described developing and offering men and boys actionable opportunities in discussing and taking part in events to bring about violence prevention awareness. All regions of the world except for South America were represented by at least one organization reporting this theme. For some interviewees, these were ongoing opportunities, such as weekly peer support groups in schools or college campuses, forums to talk about male violence, and campaigns, such as those focused on changing gendered social norms. Others spoke about specific events (e.g. Walk a Mile In Her Shoes) as opportunities to get men involved, as indicated by one North American interviewee's remark:

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[1] Given the specificity of this quote, interviewee identification was removed to preserve confidentiality.

> …we actually have a thing we've done in the park here recently, which is like a positive
>
> Father's Festival. It's really small, but we get a lot of interest in that and guys come out
>
> and help volunteer and cook hotdogs and that kind of stuff. (P 25)

Four out the nine identified a wide range of concrete actions available to men generated by the

implementation of local White Ribbon events, including taking an anti-violence pledge,

becoming an ambassador, or participating in a White Ribbon work group or White Ribbon Cities

program.

       Men's Reasons for Becoming Engaged. Uniquely interwoven in six interviewees'

(21%) descriptions of their recruitment strategies was their analysis of why boys and men wanted

to be involved. Although the study's interview guide did not contain questions inquiring about

organizations' conceptions of why men became engaged, interviewees from Africa, Australia,

and North and South America spoke about the men's reasons when talking about why

organizations shaped their recruitment the way they did. Fatherhood was most often the reason

given.

> Absolutely, (fatherhood), it's the way to hook men in because the men always talk about
>
> wanting to be good dads. When we talk about family of origins things it's really very
>
> moving. I think often that's the thing that moves men. (P 18, Australia)

Other reasons included men's desire to give back after they had benefited from a program, their

recognition of their wealth and privilege, their relationships to others, and finally, men's focus on

overall health behaviors brought them around to looking at violence as an issue and engaging in

violence prevention.

Principles for Deepening Men's Engagement

Beyond getting men and boys in the door or taking part in community violence prevention work, interviewees spoke extensively about the strategies employed to deepen and sustain men's and boys' commitment to an anti-violence involvement. All interviewees but two (93%) identified that the organizations they represented used several principles to deepen men's and boy's engagement in activism and participation in violence prevention. Four subthemes emerged, including: (1) rooted in the community, (2) beyond workshops, (3) hopefulness about men, and (4) relationships and power. These themes will be discussed in greater detail here.

"Rooted in the Community". The first of the deepening engagement subthemes, "rooted in the community" (P 108), was reported by 16 interviewees (55%) representing all regions of the world except for Europe. These interviewees described community-focused violence prevention to engage boys and men in violence prevention in two main ways: society-wide social change, and community-specific strategies. Eleven of the 16 interviewees (69%) described being focused on creating society-wide social change by encouraging individual men or by mobilizing communities of men to become active. This frame of a social change widened the focus of the initial work of engaging individual men and boys to prevent their own violence to harnessing that engagement to create social change on a broad scale. Interviewees talked about social change using words like community level change, changing community norms, and "people making change" (P 32, Africa). Others defined the work of engaging men and boys in violence prevention as community-specific, that is tailoring the strategies and goals to the community where it was done, as well as to the people who were engaged in that work. As one interviewee describing an effort in South Asia stated:

> They help to mobilize a real movement in (country) at the community level and that's
> one model I think is interesting in terms of, you know, it's men working as kind of

volunteer outreach and mobilizing agents in the local communities and really, it's just

raising the voices and saying "we stand up against violence against women. Come and

join us." They've done direct action stuff. They do a lot of marches and… they built on

the history of social justice movements and activism in (country). What they've done is

familiar because it's been done around other issues. And, you know, they've given men a

space to articulate a positive role. (P 106)

Hopeful about Men and Boys. In addition to organizing their work around community

centered approaches, nine interviewees (31%) from all regions except South America reported

that their organizations' staff attitudes and behavior must be authentically grounded in the

overall principle of being hopeful about men and boys. Interviewees used words like "honor",

"respectful", and "nonjudgmental" to articulate this hopeful stance. This hopefulness about men

and boys ranged from their general "goodness", to their ability to change, to being inspired and

mobilized for change in larger systems, such as their work places, communities, and society-

wide, in the face of the gender-based violence that men perpetrate. Engaging boys and men with

a hopeful or positive approach translated into a different way of working for some organizations:

> So we're simply engaging with those better parts of all men and boys. Just to give
>
> you an example, our approach is quite different from what it might have been 20, 15
>
> years ago where we would do all kinds of things like leaflet on the street in front of a
>
> pornography shop or something like that, and have couples walk by and the women
>
> were really keen about what we were doing and the men were really
>
> disengaged…We're now interested in respectful engagement that actually engages".
>
> (P 25, North America)

Five of nine organizations used this hopeful lens to see violence prevention not as a women's

issue, but a community issue, that required men's participation in solving.

Beyond Workshops. Linked to the theme of community-based action, eight interviewees

(28%) from Africa, Australia, Asia and North America spoke of how their organizations

recognized that if social norms about gender inequality and gender-based violence were going to

change, then their work needed to take place on multiple levels of intervention, not only

conducting educational workshops, as evident in this interviewee's response:

> I think there continues to be a narrow focus on workshops. I think there's this kind of
>
> mistaken notion that if you want to do work with men and boys what you need to do is
>
> workshops. But that's not going to bring around social transformation. Now, we all, I
>
> think, know deep down that's not what brings about large-scale social change. (P 38,
>
> Africa)

For many of the interviewees, their thinking about this need for multi-level work led to

incorporating or exclusively using a community organizing or mobilizing model. Other

expressions of this subtheme of "beyond workshops" were found in the public artwork and

theatre that organizations initiated to help spread the message of changing gender and violence

social norms, as well training of communities in community organizing.

Relationships and Power First. Finally, 16 interviewees (55%) identified that their

organizations steered away from accusatory, blaming language about male violence when

working to engage men and boys. Instead these organizations used an approach that connected

men by discussing their experiences in relationships (i.e. fatherhood) and power, as seen in the

following quotes from interviewees.

> So that's why we're trying to get people to engage more through conversation, having topics and discussing more common things that people can discuss; relationships with people and all those other things that are not so heavy and you may not be so defensive. (P 97, North America)

Another stated:

> No matter who you are, men, women, whoever. Every one of us has experienced a lack of power in our life, whether it's in our relationship, whether it's with our parents, whether that's with our boss, whoever. Everyone has experienced a lack of power and us talking about power has really opened up this new way of actually turning men and women on. (P 47, Africa)

Some reported they did not start the conversation to address male violence or human rights but instead used what one interviewee described as a "soft peddle" approach (P 27, South Asia), beginning with other topics such as the "negativities of masculinity" (P 30, Africa). In a different approach, one interviewee used the entry point of connecting preventing violence with men's interests, as illustrated by this statement from another organizational representative in Africa:

> So, I think we are able to say to men 'it's in your best interest to help shift notions of manhood and masculinity'…men are less like to use violence, and it is in your indirect interest as much as it affects women who you care deeply about. (P 38)

Interviewees who defined power and relationships as their starting point in the strategy to deepen engagement with men (and women) did not stop there. These interviewees, from Africa, Asia, Australia and North and South America, used this as a starting point to then go deeper, exploring social norms, male violence and accountability as seen in the final theme.

Critique of Gendering Violence Prevention Work.

While interviewees were asked questions specifically about how they engage boys and men in violence prevention, six (20%) from Africa, Australia, Asia and Europe addressed the reality that their work is community work, and they engage men and women as co-participants in addressing gender-based violence, as well as creating change in their communities. One interviewee reported adopting a social marketing slogan, "This is everyone's business", incorporating the belief that this issue is a community problem (P 10, Australia). Rather than men or women, one interviewee from Africa expressed that the work of social change to end gender-based violence must be a model of men and women working together:

> But I do feel, and this is a really big concern that we have (that there is a) push around working with men, engaging men and the language around it is so tricky because it's about engaging men that actually, our perspective has always been that we HAVE to work with both women and men if we're about to create social change. How else can we do it? If we're in a community where men and women, together, make up the values of that community, how can we be working with just one group? (P 47)

DISCUSSION

The strategies outlined by those interviewed focused on how to initially engage men and then to deepen the engagement of individual men and boys and of the communities in which they live. Interviewees reported creative efforts to overcome men's initial reluctance and to continue to engage them and their broader communities, starting in places like local markets and using local leadership to make connections. A common theme across these strategies is the deeply contextualized and tailor invitations, the identity of ambassadors and the specific engagement approach to the perceived concerns and daily lives of target men in the organizations'

communities. These organizations' experiences suggest that men are most effectively drawn into this work when they are invited by people they know, in contexts that are familiar to them, and through topics or discussions that facilitate a personal connection with the issue of gender-based violence. Although organizational representatives across regions of the world endorsed these general principles of engagement, appropriately, the specific recruitment tactics used by each organization were grounded in their local context and culture. These general engagement principles are also consistent with extant research documenting the use of individually tailored approaches and concrete, strengths-based invitations identified by some men's engagement efforts in the U.S. (e.g. Casey, 2010). Interestingly, most recruitment and engagement themes were endorsed by at least one organization in every part of the world, with gaps (often from Europe or South America), being more likely due to under-representation of these regions in the sample than to the absence of a particular strategy. However, further study is needed to confirm these organizations' perceptions. For example, additional research is needed that more fully examines the relationship between how organizations perceive men's reasons for engagement, how that informs their practices, and whether these result in messages and approaches that are indeed compelling to men and effective in sparking their long-term participation.

Gender played an interesting role in these organizations' conceptualization of prevention and implementation of specific recruitment and engagement strategies. Acknowledging the gendered nature of interpersonal violence was fairly universal among these respondents. How organizations then conceptualized their outreach strategies to address the inevitable tension involved in inviting men to talk about gender-based violence varied across respondents. Some relied on beginning conversations with topics that were perceived to better resonate with men, such as fatherhood or the nature of relationships, while others recruited messengers to which

male audiences would respect and relate. At the same time, a number of the interviewees

reported struggling with the issue of gender and choosing to focus on gender-based violence as a

community-wide issue in order to include both men and women in their work. Their struggle was

to develop a strategy that would interest both men and women in engaging to prevent such

violence.

The themes that have emerged from interviewees around the world are consistent with

the themes in the conceptual literature. Interviewees reflected a pro-feminist approach (Flood,

2011) that sought to include men in solving the problem of violence against women and girls,

and many reported working toward changing social norms (such as through role models or

recruiting ambassadors to share prevention messaging in their communities; Berkowitz, 2004a).

Further, organizations around the world were focused in many cases on multi-level interventions

as described in the Prevention Spectrum originally outlined by Cohen and Swift (1999).

Specifically, organizational representatives reported attempting to move beyond one-time

educational events to work toward deeper and more on-going community mobilization and social

change. These interviews, however, provide a much more concrete description of the day-to-day

work that is required to take these conceptual ideas and apply them to practice on the ground.

This study is an early effort to understand an emerging global movement to engage men and

boys in preventing violence against women and girls. It contributes concrete information about

strategies being used globally to accomplish such engagement and compliments the conceptual

work of others. This study was limited in several ways, including interviewee self-selection by

providing their contact information in an earlier online study. In addition, English was a pre-

requisite for participation in survey and for the interviews. Finally, from the limited response of

the original sample from organizations in areas such as Europe, Northern Asia and Eastern Asia,

Central America, this study's data is limited in its full and equal global representation.

Deeper and more systematic collection of information from a broader set of organizations

is sorely needed as is specific testing of the strategies outlined in the findings presented here.

Developing an evidence base for engaging men and boys in violence prevention will help

provide direction to the growing numbers of activists and organizations worldwide becoming

interested in this work and provide a pathway to greater success in preventing violence against

women and girls.

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[i] Interviewers included article authors.

[ii] Data analysis performed by first and second author, along with fifth author.

TABLE 1

Participating organization characteristics

Characteristics	N (%) of sample
Region	
Africa	7 (24%)
Australia	5 (17%)
Central / South America	3 (10%)
Europe	3 (10%)
North America	7 (24%)
South Asia / Southeast Asia / Middle East	4 (14%)
Type of organization	
Stand-alone agency (mostly non-profits)	16 (55%)
Unit or program within a larger, multi-service agency	5 (17%)
Regional or multi-national coalition	5 (17%)
Program in a university setting	2 (7%)
Governmental organization	1 (4%)
Length of program history	
Less than 2 years	2 (7%)
2-5 years	12 (41%)
6-8 years	4 (14%)
8+ years	11 (38%)