
Piloting a men-centered domestic violence research intervention: Strategies and effects

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The Philippines

- 84% functional literacy
 - Adult HIV/AIDS prevalence - <0.1 (2002)
 - Unwanted pregnancy: 18.2%
 - Traditional gender perceptions and roles
 - Absence of violence intervention for men; men have been identified as abusers and perpetrators
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Project sites and implementing organizations

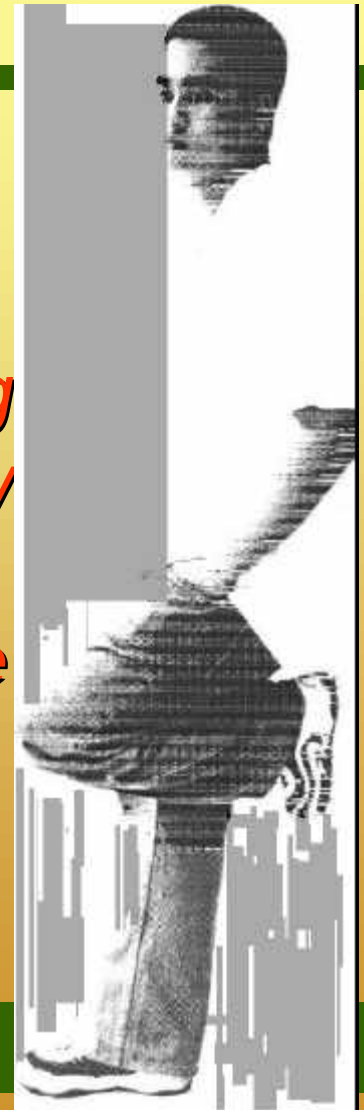
- Two urban centers and adjoining rural communities
 - Two private university-based research centers and one NGO
 - Ford Foundation funding
 - Two year pilot project
 - Two phases: research (1 year) and intervention (5 months)
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Project description

- Men from low-income occupations, in consensual unions, and with children
 - Men's history of violence was not an inclusion criterion
 - Research shows that eight of every 10 violence sources are men
 - Research (n=96), intervention (n=48)
 - Aims: explore men's gender and violence-related knowledge, values, beliefs and behavior; assist men in changing violent behavior
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Project approaches

- Community based
- Male-initiated
- “Male positive”: *creating an enabling environment for change; doing away with disabling and degrading environment of negativity and blame*
- Non-judgmental and non-incriminating



Project activities

- RESEARCH
 - INTERVENTION: workshops and interpersonal counseling and communication
 - Three one-day workshops (1. knowledge, 2. values and beliefs, and 3. skills acquisition)
 - One month gap between workshops used for interpersonal, follow-up counseling
 - Post test in every workshop
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Outcomes

- Possession of appropriate knowledge, values, beliefs and some skills
 - Reduction in or cessation of alcohol use
 - Involvement in household chores
 - Able to manage cursing and anger
 - Able to control physical violence
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Stakeholders

1. Project participants
 2. Implementing staff
 3. Authorities (community leaders, school officials)
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Obstacles

- Entrenched gender values and beliefs
 - Lack of community-based referral resources for male abusers
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Unanticipated positive outcomes

- Inspired other organizations to craft and implement similar initiatives.
 - Raised awareness of alternative perspectives in gender violence prevention based on understanding that:
 - a. men are not a monolithic group;
 - b. context of men's gender and family-based violence varies; and therefore
 - c. no single strategy to address such violence.
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Lessons learned

1. Intervention is more than activities; also about imparting and forming human values and principles.
 2. The use of non-incriminating and socially sensitive approaches was effective in sustaining men's attendance.
 3. The male-positive guiding principle must be consistently manifested in the design and contents of project activities.
 4. Project personnel must examine their own values, beliefs and principles; ensure that these are compatible with those of the project.
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Lessons learned

5. Men also possess values/beliefs that can be building blocks to promote personal change and gender equity:

It is possible to establish a relationship with men and women as co-equal.

Women should have the right to express their feelings.

Household decisions should be made by the couple based on mutual agreement.

Lessons learned

6. Not all men were changed - some values/beliefs inimical to changing violent behavior and gender inequity persisted:

Many men with violent behavior would not accept responsibility for their violent actions toward their wives/partners.

"The woman should not leave the relationship even if her husband is violent to her."

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- *Gender is also about men.*
 - *Achieving gender equity requires including men and recognizing their needs.*
 - *Meeting men's needs will help usher in men's participation in addressing gender violence.*
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