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WHAT IS THE MALE COUNSELLING PROGRAMME ABOUT?

2.1 PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE MALE COUNSELLING PROGRAMME

The purpose of the Male Counselling Programme is to help men who are violent in their intimate relationships to change their behaviour so that they become respectful partners. The men who participate in this programme can expect the following outcomes –

- Exercising control over their violent behaviour
- Personal growth in understanding of themselves, their self-esteem, confidence and self-control
- An improved relationship with their partners
- Better relationships with their children
- Avoidance of more drastic punitive interventions such as protection orders, incarceration, etc.

It was with this vision in mind that we embarked on the development of a Male Counselling Programme.

2.2 CONTEXT OF PROGRAMMES FOR MEN TO ADDRESS INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Internationally nations are increasingly looking at the introduction of rehabilitative and educational programmes for men as a means of addressing intimate partner violence. Locally, NGOs have developed various forms of intervention with male perpetrators with programmes aimed at holistically addressing, challenging and changing attitudes and beliefs around gender-based violence and around the development of behaviour that promotes greater gender equity. Interventions have included media campaigns to raise awareness and shift gender norms; men mobilising for anti-violence marches as partners with women's groups/organisations; community-based workshops with men; and various efforts to engage men on issues of gender-based violence and masculinity.

Many male groups across the globe are searching for new definitions of male identities where there is more space for care, an active fatherhood role and non-aggressive relationships. Increasingly, men all over the world are taking an active stand against violence against women and are joining campaigns such as the *White Ribbon Campaign* and *We Can End Violence Campaign* (Oxfam). *Men Engage* offers a forum for (men's) organisations to further exchange and upscale effective interventions, and to advocate for gender equality. New partnerships are arising. Strategic collaboration between the men's and women's movement, and exploring creative forms of resource mobilisation need further attention and action. The Rio de Janeiro *Men Engage Declaration Global Symposium on Engaging Men and Boys on Achieving Gender Equality* (Rio de Janeiro, March 29 – April 3, 2009) and the Johannesburg *Men Engage Africa Declaration and Call to Action* (October 9, 2009) clearly spell out calls for action in addressing gender-equity. Regional conferences and networking are taking place, such as the regional conference on *Men as a Partner in Gender Based Violence Prevention* held in Bangkok, Thailand, at the end of 2007; the *National Seminar on Formulation of a*

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National Strategy to Involve Men in Gender Based Violence in Indonesia in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, at the end of 2007; symposiums on *Engaging Men & Boys* held in Brazil and South Africa in March and October 2009 respectively, and in Nepal in November 2010. These regional workshops on *Engaging Boys and Young Men for Gender Equality and SRHR* reflect a growing sense of discomfort among men and boys with the way masculinity is shaped in societies.

2.3 HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MALE COUNSELLING PROGRAMME

The Male Counselling Programme is the culmination of a collaborative partnership between the *Mosaic, Training, Service and Healing Centre* in Cape Town, South Africa, *Rifka Annisa* in Yogyakarta and *Cahaya Perempuan Women's Crisis Centres* in Bengkulu, Indonesia. All three organisations have begun working with men as a measure to stop violence within intimate relationships. In 2007, the *World Population Foundation (WPF)*, a sexual and reproductive health and rights NGO based in the Netherlands and with a field office in Jakarta, identified with its partner organisations the need for male counselling in the context of domestic partner violence as the focus of a joint collaboration. This resulted in the male-counselling programme. Since 1 January 2011 WPF has formally merged with the *Rutgers Nisso* group into *Rutgers WPF*(www.rutgerswpf.org). Therefore reference will be made to *Rutgers WPF* in this manual.

The Male Counselling Programme was developed by making use of a systematic, evidence-based methodology, called *Intervention Mapping (IM)*. *Intervention Mapping* is a step by step way of developing and implementing health promotion programmes, targeting behaviour change. In this particular case the counselling programme is aiming at stopping the violence and contributing to a respectful relationship.

The Male Counselling Programme is based on –

- extensive research in the form of a global literature review on male counselling interventions
- local situation needs assessments in South Africa and Indonesia, an analysis of services, consultation with related organisations and focal group discussions with men in both countries
- the formation and cooperation of Working Groups and Advisory Boards of experts in respective countries
- a number of partner consultations and workshops in collaboration with partners in South Africa, Indonesia and the Netherlands to define objectives and design the manuals
- a number of training workshops of counsellors in South Africa and Indonesia, based on the manuals
- a pilot period of counselling male clients in South Africa and Indonesia
- a quality assurance of the process by an external expert
- an implementation manual which describes the steps undertaken for the development of the toolkit, guiding future organisations that intend starting with similar male counselling programmes
- documentation of the learning process among all partners involved, reflecting the counselling programme and the broader organisational changes.

The **Toolkit for Men** which the Male Counselling Programme makes use of consists of training manuals (Facilitator's Guide and Counsellor's Workbook), a Counselling Guide and a set of Monitoring and Evaluation tools. So far, the Toolkit is the result of a pilot phase in Indonesia and South Africa. An external quality assurance of the manuals has taken place and recommendations have been integrated. However, as field testing and final evaluation is limited, the Toolkit is presented as "work in progress". Only when the programme is formally evaluated in both countries and the results of continuous monitoring have been included in the final Toolkit for Men, can it then be presented as a formal "Best Practice" measure.

2.4 THE CONTEXT OF A WOMEN'S ORGANISATION

The beneficiaries of a male counselling programme within the context of a women's organisation are both men as perpetrators and women as survivors of intimate partner violence. Working with male clients is considered as a crucial, necessary and strategic step in the fight to stop intimate partner violence.

The priority should always remain the reduction of abuse and improved quality of life for the women, their children, as well as for the men.

This is a programme for men who are perpetrators of intimate partner violence and women abuse. It is NOT an intervention for abused men.

Why offer a programme for men who are abusive?

There are a number of reasons, among others –

- Few abused women abandon their husbands, as 90% of women who are abused by their partners return to their abusive relationship (for instance, in the case of Indonesia)
- Women who are survivors of violence ask women's organisations to offer support to their abusive partners
- Although abusive men increasingly want to deal with their problems, there is a lack of behavioral change programmes for them. Therefore, women's organisations have started offering services for men based on their substantial experiences in offering (counselling) support to survivors of violence
- In Indonesia, Thailand and South Africa, Domestic Violence Acts have started indicating programmes for perpetrators
- The Court system in South Africa "experiments" in the counselling of abusers in collaboration with NGOs (like Mosaic).

2.4.1 Organisational challenges for women's organisations

- How dedicated should women's organisations be to the implementation of programmes aimed at men in a country where four to six women are killed every day by their partner?
- Is a women's organisation capable of working with men when it is known as offering support to survivors of violence from a feminist perspective?
- What are the organisational implications in terms of mission, image, human resources, capacity, networking, lobby, etc.?
- While it may be easy for female counsellors to show compassion with the 'survivors' of violence (women), will they be able to avoid partiality when counselling male perpetrators of violence and is neutrality training feasible?
- Male counsellors/social workers are scarce, but urgently needed.
- What exactly are the benefits for the men themselves?

2.5 INTERVENTION MODELS

In developing this toolkit many intervention models were studied. A 2001 World Health Organisation (WHO) commissioned survey identified 56 batterer intervention programmes in 38 countries. Of these programmes, 43% were located in developing countries (WHO, *Intervening with Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence: A Global Perspective*, 2003).

While the change objective of each of the intervention models is to reduce – or ideally eradicate – abusive behaviour by men, the models differ in what they assume as the basis for domestic violence. Some ascribe partner violence

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to behavioural, cognitive or emotive factors, due to traumatic childhood experiences, or based on socio-cultural influences – patriarchy, in particular. Most models assume a combination of these.

The existing programmes for men who are abusive differ on numerous aspects, such as the length of the programme, the underlying philosophy of the intervention, the type of treatment modality (individual, group or couple) and whether men enter voluntarily or via court orders. The way in which an intervention is structured and the methods used, depends to a large extent on the assumptions about the determinants of abusive behaviour.

In the WHO report, a number of models based on these assumed determinants are described. These models are usually derived from Western culture. Even though it can be assumed that aspects of these models can be applicable across contexts and societies, it is important to also address socio-cultural determinants specific to a particular population. Interestingly, there is little information available on the influence of these factors.

What is clear from our research with current interventions is that there is no “one-size fits-all” approach.

2.6 CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF MALE CLIENTS

The male counselling intervention is based on the belief in the abusers’ or perpetrators’ capacity to change their (violent) behaviour. For this reason, it was decided to change the terminology and to refer to *male client* instead of abuser or perpetrator. Male client has a more positive connotation. It is assumed that men will feel less threatened and more open for change when not approached only as a violent abuser of women – which is similar to “bad guy” or “criminal”.

Who can be counselled?

A man that –

- has an abusive behaviour towards his partner
- comes voluntarily (not court mandated)
- has been referred by his partner, social service agencies, other institutions, or by himself
- has expressed genuine acceptance of responsibility for the violence and willingness to change his behaviour
- has no existing mental illness problem, and
- in the case of substance abuse (alcohol, drugs), the client may attend the programme but should not be under the influence of alcohol when attending the session. In the case of serious addiction problems he should be referred to a specialised organisation. Even then, he can continue on this programme.

The person who meets these criteria can be accepted for the counselling intervention. When the client is not suitable for this intervention, he should be referred. (A referral list is available within the organisation.)

2.7 PROGRAMME METHODOLOGY

To a large degree, the family violence literature has advocated for group therapy to deal with perpetrators of domestic violence (Cogan & Porcerelli, 2003). Group work creates a space of safety where other men who have had similar experiences are present and can show understanding. Group members can challenge a man when he shows defensive behaviour – and this might be seen as more legitimate than if it had come from a paid counsellor. The group setting also allows for group dynamics to play themselves out, enables learning from others and provides a micro cosmos where socio-cultural stereotypes can be addressed. Daniels and Murphy (1997) report that movement toward active change might be faster within a group context, but that within an individual context it might be easier to tailor the treatment to the particular needs of the client.

The development of the Toolkit for Men has been based on the Stages of Change Model (Begun et al., 2001), which suggests that composing a group of men who are in different stages of the change process may be counterproductive, rather than facilitate their treatment. For example, men who are in the pre-contemplative/resistant stage are unable to see the benefits of change, and might undermine and frustrate the progress of men who have reached the more advanced action stage.

The choice to develop a Toolkit for Men, with individual counselling as the methodology, was supported by the fact that the Indonesian partners of this pilot programme strongly expressed the preference for individual counselling as a starting point – based on their experience that shame was an expected barrier for men joining group counselling. In addition to this, the partners agreed on the following additional benefits of individual intervention:

- In individual work, the counsellor can more effectively consider the individual causative factors peculiar to each specific male client, his upbringing and family relationships and the various influences that shaped his perception of self and others. Individually relevant options can be explored in relation to problem situations.
- The power dynamic in groups can encourage abusive men to express bravado with their male counterparts. In individual work, this false sense of power and control falls away and it is the counsellor's role to establish the presence and influence of positive power. It provides opportunity to demonstrate how the constructive use of power benefits all involved. In short, it is a “win-win” situation.
- Individual work can enable real, honest communication because it is a safe and confidential environment. When trust is present it enables the man to speak about things he may never have raised with anyone before. It can also help men feel safer when dealing with strong emotions.
- Individual counselling enables the male client to participate fully in the session and facilitates the ownership of decision-making.
- Sensitive issues such as culture, religion and sexuality can be freely discussed in individual sessions.
- In comparison to couple and group counselling, individual counselling is easier to manage.

While evidence from literature suggests a preference for group-counselling, the involved partner organisations opted for starting with individual counselling, their decision justified by existing cultural limitations related to shame, particularly in the Indonesian context. Group- and couple-counselling methodology will be explored in a later phase as supplementary interventions, which will then become part of a comprehensive toolkit on male counselling in the context of intimate partner violence.

2.8 BEING PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY-BASED RESPONSE SYSTEM

Providing intervention programmes with male perpetrators of domestic violence requires a collaborative response by all relevant stakeholders. These include the police services, the criminal justice system (courts), health services and child and family care services. Intervention with perpetrators should always be additional to responses by police and court services. It is best to develop and preserve a partnership with stakeholders working in this field.

Referral to Community Outreach Programmes that include community-based interventions like post-programme support groups, access to education and training (local resources such as educational books/videos), joining a local NGO and supporting awareness-raising workshops, campaigns promoting non-violence and equality, employment assistance and further supportive family counselling, should form part of the intervention “package”.

It is highly recommended that close coordination with stakeholders be maintained to ensure post-programme intervention adherence. For example, Mosaic maintains regular contact with the court system through regular meetings with the magistrate, as well as through reports and telephonic contact. Mosaic does this in order to ensure that joint efforts are made to maintain and/or improve high quality legal support services for abused people. Where programme attendance is conditional to the granting of a Protection Order, compliance with conditions must be closely monitored and evaluated. In the Indonesian context, Rifka Annisa always informs the Shariah court about referred male clients on the progress of counselling, and the judge will consider the counselling for further legal process. The same process is applied when collaborating with the police and hospital.