Targeting Men, Transforming Masculinities

Conceptual and Operational Overview
Some definitions

- **Masculinities**: The range of roles, behaviors and attributes that are associated with maleness and considered appropriate for boys and men in a given society. Masculinities are expressed personally (in behavior), culturally (in images and stories) and institutionally (in policies and practices.) Masculinities are defined socially, historically and politically, rather than being biologically driven.

- **Patriarchal masculinities**: Those ideas about and practices of masculinity that emphasize the superiority of masculinity over femininity and the authority of men over women. Ideas about and practices of patriarchal masculinities maintain gender inequalities.
TMx2: Conceptual Overview

• TMx2 is an approach to work with men and boys on transforming patriarchal masculinities and promoting gender justice by understanding and addressing:

  • **Patriarchal Power:** Patriarchal masculinities operate at multiple levels: individual (personal attitudes and behaviors); institutional (policies and practices); and ideological (social norms and cultural traditions)

  • **Masculine Vulnerabilities:** Many of the masculine roles, behaviors and attributes that grant men patriarchal privileges also make them vulnerable to a range of harms

  • **Intersectional Inequalities:** Many of these vulnerabilities are themselves linked to intersectional inequalities, shaped by other forces of social marginalization, linked to class, ethnicity, caste, citizenship status etc, which intersect with gender to influence men’s expressions of masculinity and experiences of patriarchal power

• In other words, **TMx2 is good gender analysis and good gender justice programming in action**
Context: International Agreements

• **Beijing Conference 1995**: James Wolfensohn, World Bank President, insisted on the need to focus on “not just the liberation of women, but also the liberation of men – in their thinking, attitudes, and willingness to take a fairer share of the responsibilities and workloads that women carry on their shoulders. To bring about real improvement in the quality of women’s lives, men must change. And action must begin at home.

• **Commission on the Status of Women**: CSW48 in 2004 was dedicated to the theme “The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality”

• **Human Rights Council**: 2017 resolution refers to “Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: engaging men and boys in preventing and responding to violence against all women and girls”
Context: International Agreements

- **CEDAW Convention and General Recommendations**: Refer to ‘patriarchal structures’ as root causes of gender inequality, and specifically mention “social norms, attitudes and expectations that are associated with traditional femininity and masculinity” and ‘violent masculinities’ as key elements to be addressed.

- **Women, Peace and Security agenda**: UN Secretary-General’s 2015 report on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 urged Member States, the UN and civil society to “[p]rovide financial, technical and political support to encourage educational and leadership training for men, women, boys and girls, which reinforces and supports nonviolent, non-militarized expressions of masculinity.”
Background: **Growth of Men & Masc work**

- **2009 MenEngage Symposium**: 400 participants from 80 countries
- **2014 MenEngage Symposium**: 1200 participants from 95 countries
- **SRHR and HIV work**: Men as Partners paradigm
- **VAW/GBV prevention and response**: Focus on harmful masculine norms
- **Men and fatherhood**: Positive masculinities approach
- **Men’s health**: Costs and crises of masculinity
Evidence for M & M work

- Meta-review of the evidence base by EMERGE project concluded that: “strategies with men and boys shown to be effective at the individual and community level in changing gender attitudes and behaviors include a combination of peer education, using male advocates, large-scale media programs, workplace programs and community/rights-based programming that aim to reduce gender inequality by working to change social norms.”
Critiques of M & M work

- Too focused on individual attitude and behavior change

“Most male engagement programming focuses at the individual level—with some work also being done at the community level—without addressing the broader structures of patriarchy within which individuals and relationships operate” ICRW 2018

“Unfortunately, the framing of much male involvement work focuses solely on the individual and relational aspects of masculinity rather than engaging in more transformative work that challenges the fundamental assumptions upon which masculinities are constructed.” COFEM 2017
Critiques of M & M work

• Too focused on individual attitude and behavior change
• Too separate from and unaccountable to women’s rights movements

In 2017, COFEM warned of “a parallel system” emerging, of “male engagement campaigns, programmes, organisations and networks that, although allied theoretically to feminist principles, stand largely independent of the women’s movement.”
Critiques of M & M work

- Too focused on individual attitude and behavior change
- Too separate from and unaccountable to women’s rights movements
- **Too focused on the harms of masculinity to men & boys**

“not all efforts under the banner of working with men and boys share a commitment to gender justice. Some are focused only on men’s specific gendered needs, which are real and deserve attention but sometimes fail to adequately address the relational dimensions of gender and to challenge the extent to which men continue to be, in the aggregate, politically, economically, and socially privileged by the current gender system.”
Critiques of M & M work

- Too focused on individual attitude and behavior change
- Too separate from and unaccountable to women’s rights movements
- Too focused on the harms of masculinity to men & boys
- Too heteronormative
Critiques of M & M work

• Too focused on individual attitude and behavior change
• Too separate from and unaccountable to women’s rights movements
• Too focused on the harms of masculinity to men & boys
• Too heteronormative
• **Too depoliticized**
From M&M to TMx2

- Beyond personal emphasis on men and ‘their’ masculinities
- **Intersectional analyses**: Diverse positioning of men in power hierarchies
- Beyond the emphasis on attitudinal and behavioral change
- **Institutional change**: Patriarchal masculinities are embedded in institutions
- **Ideological change**: Masculinities are put to ideological work
- **Accountable programming**: Connected to and reinforcing of feminist work
- **Inspirational programming**: Moves people to demand and make change
TMx2: Conceptual Overview

• TMx2 is an approach to work with men and boys on transforming patriarchal masculinities and promoting gender justice by understanding and addressing:
  - Patriarchal Power
  - Masculine Vulnerabilities
  - Intersectional Inequalities
• In other words, **TMx2 is good gender analysis and good gender justice programming in action**
TMx2: Patriarchal Power

- Continuing patriarchies: political, economic and social subordination of women and girls, and gender and sexual minorities
TMx2: Patriarchal Power

- Continuing patriarchies
- And new patriarchies:
  - Politicized and popularized misogyny
TMx2: Patriarchal Power

- Continuing patriarchies
- And new patriarchies:
  - Politicized and popularized misogyny
  - Authoritarian anti-gender politics
- “Antifeminist mobilisation is growing in the United Nations”, uniting a diverse range of forces around “the aim of restoring the ‘natural family’ and opposing ‘gender ideology’.” Cupać and Ebetürk 2020
TMx2: Patriarchal Power

- Continuing patriarchies
- And new patriarchies:
- Politicized and popularized misogyny
- Authoritarian anti-gender politics
- Ethnonationalism and racialized masculinities
TMx2: Patriarchal Power

- Continuing patriarchies
- And new patriarchies:
  - Politicized and popularized misogyny
  - Authoritarian anti-gender politics
  - Ethnonationalism and racialized masculinities
- Sexualized rage, anxiety and mass murder
TMx2: Patriarchal Power

- Continuing patriarchies
- And new patriarchies:
  - Politicized and popularized misogyny
  - Authoritarian anti-gender politics
  - Ethnonationalism and racialized masculinities
  - Sexualized rage, anxiety and mass murder
- Male victimhood and men’s rights
TMx2: Male Vulnerabilities

- Men’s health issues

“Leading health-risk behaviors that account for a major share of men’s ill health are directly related to masculine norms and masculinities interacting with other factors. These six health behaviors – poor diet, tobacco use, alcohol use, occupational hazards, unsafe sex, and drug use – account for more than half of all male deaths and about 70 percent of male illness globally.” Promundo 2019
TMx2: Male Vulnerabilities

- Men’s health issues
- Men’s mental health issues
- “When we include all variables in the regression equation there is a significant positive relationship between the percentage of marginal farmers, cash crop production, and indebted farmers, and suicide rates. This model accounts for almost 75% of interstate variation in suicide rates.” Kennedy and King 2014
“The Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC) conducted a qualitative exploratory study to examine the nature and characteristics of sexual violence perpetrated against refugee and migrant men and boys traveling the central Mediterranean route to Italy. Sexual violence against all refugees and migrants—women, men, girls, boys, and persons with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or sex characteristics (SOGIESC)—appears to be commonplace along the route. Sexual violence, including sexual torture, against female and male refugees and migrants appears widespread in Libya.”
TMx2: Male Vulnerabilities

• Men’s health issues
• Men’s mental health issues
• Sexual violence against men and boys

• Violence and discrimination against persons with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or sex characteristics (SOGIESC)
TMx2: Intersectional Inequalities

- **Class**: Economic exploitation
- **Race/Ethnicity**: Racism and racialized masculinities
- **Citizenship**: Xenophobia, anti-migrant policies
- **Age**: Age-based hierarchies and discrimination
- **Disability**: Invisibility and exclusion
Individual Change Strategies

- Group education
- Behavior change communications
- Male-friendly services
- Individual/group counseling
- Social norms change interventions
Institutional Change Strategies

- Organizational leaders as gender champions
- Gender training (eg in Security Sector Reform)
- Gender mainstreaming
- Organizational culture change (eg Gender @ Work prog)
- Bystander training to change organizational culture
Ideological Change Strategies

- Advocacy for legal and policy change
- Political leaders as gender champions
- Gender training with religious orgs and leaders
- Media campaigns to shape narratives & images
- Hacking the manosphere, contesting conspiracism
- Getting organized to demand accountability & change
**TMx2: What will be provided**

- 2-3 online coaching sessions + email support
- Focus on the questions you want answered
- Guidance on situation analysis and problem definition
- Advice on project design and stakeholder consultation
- Linking you with project tools & technical resources
- Identifying opportunities for persuasion & pressure
- Troubleshooting resistance: institutional & ideological