

The Change Project

Understanding gender, masculinities and power to prevent gender-based violence

Despite decades of work to end gender-based violence, there is no indication that aggregate levels of violence have decreased in Asia and the Pacific. *What are the root causes of gender-based violence? How can we stop violence before it starts?*

The majority of research and interventions on gender-based violence focus on women's rights and empowerment, legal reform, protection and service provision. While these interventions continue to be key priorities, understanding prevailing social norms, men's attitudes and behaviours – and how they perpetuate violence – is vital because gender-based violence is rooted in power relations among women, men, girls and boys and linked to dominant notions of “what it means to be a man”.

The Change Project is undertaking cutting-edge research to understand the root causes of gender-based violence and their relation to masculinities. Over 15,000 men and women are being surveyed in seven countries across Asia and the Pacific - Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam – providing a comprehensive and holistic picture of the social structures, underlying norms, attitudes and behaviours related to the use of GBV in different countries in Asia and the Pacific.

Coordinated by Partners for Prevention: Working to Prevent Gender-based Violence (P4P), a UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV regional programme for Asia and the Pacific, the project is a collaboration between the UN, civil society, government and researchers from around the region and globally.

The Change Project stems from the Men and Gender Equality Policy Project (MGEPP), led by Instituto Promundo and the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW). P4P gratefully acknowledges that this project draws on the experiences and tools of the MGEPP, particularly IMAGES, the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence and the Medical Research Council Relationship Household Survey.

“This kind of research has never been done. It is part of a new wave of work that will produce valuable, cutting-edge material, and open opportunities for new information and new ways of thinking.” Raewyn Connell, Professor, University of Sydney, author of *Gender*, and Technical Advisor to the GBV Prevention and Masculinities Research Project

Objectives

The Change Project aims to prevent gender-based violence in the region by:

- Deepening understandings of masculinities and their connections to gender-based violence in Asia and the Pacific
- Translating research findings into comprehensive evidence-based programme and policy interventions for GBV prevention across the region, particularly engaging boys and men
- Providing a baseline/benchmark of boys' and men's attitudes and behaviours related to GBV and masculinities in Asia and the Pacific
- Developing research tools for future use in the investigation of GBV and masculinities

Our work is about transforming communities, attitudes, and behaviors on masculinities as a way to prevent gender-based violence. It is important to collectively improve our understanding, perspective, skills, and strategy on how to challenge masculinities and patriarchies.” Nur Hasyim, Coordinator of the Men’s Programme, Rifka Annisa, Indonesia

Project overview

- The project methodology combines quantitative, qualitative, sociological and ethnographic methodologies at the national and regional level .
- Fieldwork is being conducted in 2011, with findings available in 2012.
- Based on the policy recommendations that stem from this research, a series of regional and country level initiatives will be launched to advocate for specific policy changes and the prioritisation of comprehensive GBV prevention.
- The project aims to inspire future research on GBV and masculinities, providing a comprehensive set of research tools for research on GBV and masculinities and baseline data against which change can be measured.
- A pooled data set with a sample of more than 15,000 men and women will provide unprecedented power for analysis on masculinities and violence in the region and be made available to qualified researchers for ongoing analysis for many years to come.

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