

TRANSFORMING MALE GENDER NORMS – CONSTRUCTIVE MALE INVOLVEMENT IN HIV/AIDS PREVENTION, CARE, AND SUPPORT SERVICES AND IN THE REDUCTION OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Ntayiya S¹

Background

Research in South Africa and elsewhere has underscored the importance of working with men to address health and development issues. Globally, about 27.5 million men are HIV+ with 10 million HIV+ men in Africa. Furthermore, specific groups of men e.g. men who migrate for work, men having sex with other men, men in conflict settings, etc; drive the HIV epidemic. The demonstrable connections between gender-based violence and SRH outcomes further exacerbate the HIV/AIDS situation. In 1994 the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) drew attention to the fact that, if men are left out of the reproductive health equation, they are unlikely to be able to exercise the much needed responsibility.

Description

The global Men as Partner's program (MAP) implemented by EngenderHealth in 20 countries since 1998, primarily, targets various groups of men through an ecological model to transform male gender norms. The purpose of MAP is twofold: 1) to challenge the attitudes, values, and behaviors of men that compromise their own health and safety as well as that of women and children; and 2) to encourage men to become actively involved in preventing GBV as well as in HIV/AIDS-related prevention, care and support activities. The Health Systems Trust (HST), within its Community Development Program, developed a gender transformative program, and through the Male Sexuality and Reproductive Health project the organization has, inter alia, built capacity and provided technical assistance to various civil society institutions as well as government agencies in 5 district municipalities, across the 4 provinces of Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Kwa-Zulu Natal and North-West.

Lessons Learned

Results from various pre-workshop and post-workshop evaluations have indicated that men's participation in the gender and sexuality workshops have resulted in some attitudinal changes in South Africa. Findings from the HST-commissioned baseline survey (conducted by the Social Surveys) will be shared to showcase the technical processes as well as the entry point into the gender transformative programming, using the HST experience. Some findings from other scientific evaluations will also be shared.

1. EngenderHealth South Africa