

Program H

(Implemented in its entirety in Brazil and Mexico, with segments implemented in Bolivia, Colombia, Jamaica, as well as in several other countries beyond Latin America, including India)

Target population:

In Brazil – low income, urban-based men and boys 14-25 years old

Intervention description:

Program H (H is the first letter for the word men in both Portuguese ‘homem’ and Spanish ‘hombre’) adopts an ecological model – addressing young men within their social context – to promote a critical reflection of gender norms within intimate relationships, highlighting the ‘costs’ of gender inequity to both men and women. The initiative is developed by a coalition of four non-governmental organizations that includes: PROMUNDO, PAPAI, ECOS and *Salud y Género* (Health and Gender). The former three are located in Brazil, while the latter is based in Mexico.

The initiative is composed of three integrated components, including:

- 1) Interactive Group Education - Program H developed a methodology to train professionals to work with young men with the goal of fostering discussion and challenging traditional gender roles as they relate to masculinities, health and gender relations. This methodology was validated in six countries in Latin America and the Caribbean among 271 young men. Subsequently, five training manuals and one video were created to enable the four organizations to replicate the methodology in multiple countries. Each of the five training manuals addresses a different topic, including: sexual and reproductive health, paternity, violence, emotions (including drug use) and HIV/AIDS. (The materials are currently available in Portuguese, Spanish and English.)
- 2) Community-wide social marketing campaign of condoms – By identifying barriers to condom use, this initiative aims at promoting appropriate strategies that will encourage safe relationships. This social marketing strategy also aims at increasing access to condoms and generating income to support the program via the sale of condoms by peer promoters, who also become role models within the community.
- 3) Promoting ‘male-friendly’ health services - This component of the initiative aims at both training health professionals to provide services for young men and at adapting health service-delivery programs so that they are more appealing to this population. In Rio, Instituto PROMUNDO is working with 6 public health units with support from the PAHO and WHO.

Evaluation

This initiative stands out also because of the rigor of its evaluation. In partnership with Horizons, Program H developed and validated a scale called Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) Scale, which measures young men's attitudes related to gender roles and masculinities. The following are examples of the traditional norms measured by the

scale: “It is okay for a man to hit his wife if she won’t have sex with him.” and “I would be outraged if my wife asked me to use a condom. While “it is important that a father is present in the lives of his children, even if he is no longer with the mother” is an example of an egalitarian norm.

The evaluation design in Brazil included:

Quantitative

- a quasi-experimental design in 3 low-income communities with a sample of 780 men;
- assessment before the intervention and 6 and 12 months after
- a control group consisting of the delayed intervention community

Qualitative

- Couple and individual interviews (6 couples and 6 young men)

In both intervention arms, young men were more likely to support equitable gender norms at the 6 and 12 month intervals. No change was observed in the comparison group. Men who decreased their support for inequitable gender norms were significantly less likely to report STI symptoms over time.

At six months, significant positive changes in both interventions sites with changes in 10 of 17 gender attitude items (using Gender-Equitable Men – GEM – scale) in one site and changes in 13 of the 17 items in the second community. In the site of the control/delayed intervention, responses to only one of 17 items significantly improved. As an example of one of the positive changes, in one of the intervention sites, at baseline 52 percent of the young men agreed with the statement “men need sex more than women do,” which significantly decreased to 43 percent at six-month follow-up and the decrease continued to 37 percent at one year.

Program H was not able to measure changes in self-reported use of violence against partners because the frequency of such behavior in the test group was too low to be able to measure a statistically significant change. Nonetheless, the statistically significant changes in both communities in the GEM Scale questions suggests that we were able to achieve attitude change in key attitudes that are correlated with men's use of violence against women.

Resources available

- **Program H Manuals (Promundo and partners, Brazil)**

This is a set of methodologies to motivate young men to critically reflect about rigid norms related to manhood and how they influence their lives in different spheres: health, personal relations, sexual and reproductive health, and fatherhood. This toolkit provides program planners, health providers, peer educators, and others who work with young people with innovative resources to facilitate discussions and encourage critic reflections about manhood.

The Program H toolkit includes the Program H Manual, featuring group activities for young men, the cartoon DVD “Once upon a boy” and its accompanying discussion guide. Each manual addresses a different topic, including:

- sexual and reproductive health,
- fatherhood and care-giving,
- from violence to peaceful co-existence;
- reasons and emotions;
- preventing and living with HIV/AIDS
- paternity, violence, emotions (including drug use) and HIV/AIDS.

They are available in Portuguese at:

http://www.promundo.org.br/396?locale=pt_BR

They are available in English at:

<http://www.promundo.org.br/396>

They are available in Spanish at:

<http://www.promundo.org.br/396?locale=es>

Program H Manuals were adapted to be used in the India context by Population Council and CORO for Literacy with the support of Instituto Promundo. This adaptation is called Yaari Dosti and is available in English at:

<http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/horizons/yaaridostieng.pdf>

- Video “Once Upon a Boy” - The 20 minute no-words cartoon was created to encourage young men to question the way in which they are socialized and the gender roles they were taught. A discussion guide accompanies the video.
<http://www.promundo.org.br/354>
- Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) Scale
For a brief summary of the GEM scale in **English**, please refer to page 35 at:
http://www.promundo.org.br/materiais%20de%20apoio/Toolkit-ENG_tools.pdf

For a brief summary of the GEM scale in **Portuguese**, please refer to page 35 at:

http://www.promundo.org.br/materiais%20de%20apoio/Toolkit-PORT_ferramentas.pdf

For a brief summary of the GEM scale in **Spanish**, please refer to page 35 at:

http://www.promundo.org.br/materiais%20de%20apoio/Toolkit-ESP_herramientas.pdf

Sources

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