**Submission by Promundo-US for the Report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on engaging men and boys in preventing and responding to violence against all women and girls, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 35/10 of the Human Rights Council**

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**Promundo’s Approach**

Promundo[[1]](#footnote-1) (whose name in Portuguese translates as “for the world,” emphasizing the notion that gender equality is a “good” for the world) is a global consortium with staff in the United States, Brazil, Portugal, and Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Promundo is a leader in promoting gender justice and preventing violence in societies, communities, and homes: working to engage men and boys in partnership with women and girls. Promundo’s work seeks to transform inequitable gender relations and structural, **patriarchal masculinities** and to promote nonviolent and caring definitions of manhood, in order to improve the lives of men, women, and children and to alleviate the suffering associated with entrenched inequalities, gender-based violence (GBV), and the inability to fulfill one’s human potential*.*

Promundo’s three-pronged **socio-ecological** approach of (1) formative research and rigorous evaluation, (2) evidence-based programs, and (3) targeted advocacy efforts and partnerships strives to create change at multiple levels: with individuals through high-impact gender-transformative interventions and programs, with communities through campaigns and local activism, and with institutions, corporations, and governments through advocacy efforts and technical assistance aimed to influence policies and institutionalize approaches. Since its founding in Brazil in 1997, Promundo has worked with partners in over 40 countries to advance gender equality around the world, aiding:

* 10,000 men and women in post-conflict settings heal from trauma;
* 250,000 youth in over 30 countries challenge harmful gender norms;
* 50,000 men in over 40 countries become more active, non-violent fathers;
* Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in 40 countries to develop national advocacy platforms to promote parental leave and men carrying out more daily unpaid care; and
* Governments across three continents to take steps to amend laws and policies to include a greater focus on engaging men for gender equality.

Promundo is an **innovator** in the field of gender equality and violence prevention through its focus on including boys and men as full partners in the process—in short, by changing what it means to be men. Building on decades of work and accomplishments by the women’s rights field – **to which we are accountable** - Promundo believes that true equality will not be realized unless men and boys are full partners in the movement for gender justice. To accomplish significant, sustainable change, Promundo’s work is informed by rigorous research and impact evaluation. Its programs are built on principals of positive deviance, and collective consciousness, encouraging critical reflection of traditional gender norms and establishment of positive alternatives for men and boys through **gender-transformative approaches**. Its campaigns are participant-led, supporting youth, ex-combatants, and other target groups to shape the messages for their communities. Its advocacy is rooted in evidence.

Promundo’s programs and approaches are in many ways the “gold standard” for engaging men in gender equality and have informed and influenced the priorities of UN Women, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO), International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Bank, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, bilateral donors, corporations, national country governments and local and international NGOs.

1. **Concrete steps taken, at normative, institutional and program levels**

**Promundo and partners have carried out the largest, most detailed study ever on how men around the world are responding to gender equality.** Promundo developed the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)[[2]](#footnote-2) with the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) in 2008. IMAGES is the first and largest research effort to date to measure men’s attitudes and practices on a variety of issues related to gender equality via national household surveys, with an emphasis on understanding the drivers and patterns of men’s use of violence against women. With support from numerous foundations, governments, the World Bank, the Ford Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and others, Promundo has since worked with partners to carry out IMAGES in nearly 30 countries. Its results are actively used by Promundo and national partners to advocate for supportive policies and evidence-based programming around sexual and gender-based violence prevention, women’s economic empowerment, and men’s partnership in maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH). The research has led to changes in policies – in Brazil, Croatia, Chile and others settings (elaborated below) – which include parental leave and national government initiatives to engage men in GBV prevention.

Additionally, this research has informed several of Promundo’s landmark approaches, with particular relevance, across interventions to Paragraph 9 (a),[[3]](#footnote-3) (b),[[4]](#footnote-4) (f),[[5]](#footnote-5) (h),[[6]](#footnote-6) and (j),[[7]](#footnote-7) which have shown significant, measured impact, as relevant to Paragraph 9 (k)[[8]](#footnote-8), in reducing attitudes and behaviors supportive of GBV. This includes, but is not limited to the areas of:

* ***Youth and Equality:* Promundo and partners have reached more than 250,000 young men and women in over 30 countries, to reduce attitudes supportive of GBV and drive behavior change.** Promundo’s innovative Program H[[9]](#footnote-9) methodology combines group education with youth-led activism and teacher training, as relevant to Paragraph 9 (g),[[10]](#footnote-10) to achieve equality, reduce violence, and improve sexual and reproductive health, as relevant to Paragraph 9 (d)[[11]](#footnote-11) and (e).[[12]](#footnote-12) Program H has been evaluated in more than nine countries (and is undergoing a randomized controlled trial in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, United States and Washington, DC, United States); these evaluations found that a combination of group education that promotes critical awareness about gender norms which drive violence and of childhood experiences of violence, combined with community-level campaigns, consistently leads to changes in attitudes and behaviors related to GBV. Based on the results of impact evaluation, Program H – alongside its companion for young women, Program M,[[13]](#footnote-13) and their complement, Program D,[[14]](#footnote-14) promoting respect for sexual diversity - has been named a best practice by the World Bank and the World Health Organization and has been cited by UNICEF and the United Nations for its effectiveness. It has been officially adopted by Ministries of Health (MoH) in Brazil, Mexico, Chile, and Croatia, among other countries.
* ***Fatherhood and Caregiving:* Promundo, as a co-coordinator of MenCare: A Global Fatherhood Campaign[[15]](#footnote-15) and implementer of innovative fatherhood programing, has impacted millions of fathers and families, with a focus on violence prevention, and targeted policy makers in over 40 countries.** With particular relevance to Paragraph 9 (c),[[16]](#footnote-16) MenCare is an initiative to promote men’s engagement in caregiving and reduce men’s use of violence against women that includes media materials, evidence-based program tools, and global and national-level advocacy. Launched in 2011, building on IMAGES findings that men who grew up in more equitable households (with less violence) had more equitable attitudes, and those with more equitable attitudes are more likely to participate in caregiving, domestic tasks, and other more equitable behaviors, the campaign is already active in more than 40 countries. MenCare is estimated to have reached approximately 44 million people around the world through campaigns, and over 50,000 through direct programming via Program P, a toolkit for reaching expectant fathers as partners in maternal and child health and violence prevention. Program P has been implemented in more than 10 countries and officially adopted by MoHs in 5 countries. A recently completed randomized controlled trial in Rwanda using this approach found substantially lower rates of women's experience of intimate partner violence in the intervention group compared to the control group. As an advocacy arm of MenCare, Promundo led the production and launch of the first ever *State of the World’s Fathers*[[17]](#footnote-17) report to scale up this work to the national and international level in 2015. Over eight adaptations have been spearheaded since in countries and regions around the world, enabling partners around the world to work in their communities and with their national governments to advocate for change in supporting men’s caregiving and preventing violence against women and children.
* *"****Conflict and Security:* Promundo and partners have reached thousands of men to support men and women who have experienced conflict-related physical and sexual violence and shown in rigorous impact evaluation, a reduction in men’s use of violence against female partners.** Promundo’s Living Peace[[18]](#footnote-18) initiative, a gender-transformative trauma support model built on IMAGES findings of a strong association between men experiencing or witnessing violence and trauma as a part of the conflict and their later use of intimate partner violence in the home. Living Peace uses a combination of psychosocial support and group education, as well as training and engaging community members, to help men and women heal from trauma, rebuild their lives after conflict, and adopt positive coping strategies that exclude all forms of violence, including sexual violence, as relevant to Paragraph 10 (e).[[19]](#footnote-19) The program is currently reaching thousands of households in DRC, as well as the police and military, as relevant to Paragraph 10 (c).[[20]](#footnote-20) An impact evaluation of the pilot phase, supported by the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI), has found overwhelmingly positive, sustained results three years later. Nearly 95% of households interviewed reported that the violence at home has stopped altogether; that men are more positively engaged in household management and child care; and that their families’ socio-economic situation had significantly improved as a result of men’s participation in the intervention. Its model has been highlighted globally, including at the closing plenary of the 2016 Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting, and during the upcoming Geneva Peace Week in November 2017.

*“Although it may happen that I provoke him, he remains calm, he cannot beat me anymore as the nine years he had done… If there is crisis I am not afraid anymore.” -Wife of Living Peace Participant*

* ***Economic Justice:* Promundo and partners have increased men’s support for women’s economic empowerment (WEE) while also promoting attitude change related to GBV in more than 200,000 households.** Promundo’s Journeys of Transformation[[21]](#footnote-21) methodology, developed with RWAMREC (the Rwandan Men’s Resource Center) and CARE in Rwanda, was based on IMAGES and other research findings which revealed that women were experiencing higher levels of violence as associated with their higher levels of income. It was developed to engage men as partners in women’s economic empowerment to optimize the effects of poverty alleviation and women’s economic empowerment economic programs in low- and middle-income countries, ensuring that male partners understand the positive effects of shifting gender roles around earning power. Because of this work, households participating in economic development programs are seeing higher income and less conflict.

*“I thought that ‘being a man’ means that I have to do nothing in the house, but now I learned how I can do things together (with my wife).” -Journeys of Transformation participant, Rwanda*

With support from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Promundo is now scaling up evidence-based approaches (including Program H, Program P, Journeys of Transformation, and the implementation of IMAGES, as elaborated above) through Prevention+ is a five-year, multi-country program that envisions a world where healthy, respectful, and equal relationships are the norm. To contribute to making this a reality, the program addresses the root causes of GBV: the social, economic, religious, and cultural contexts that shape attitudes and behavior that lead to violence. Prevention+ takes a multi-level approach, intervening at four levels of society: individual, community, institutional, and government. By doing so, the program seeks to ensure long-lasting impact, and to transform the mutually reinforcing social and structural factors that support GBV and allow it to persist.

1. **Challenges at normative, institutional program levels**

While Promundo and partners’ work has been shown to achieve changes in violence-supportive attitudes, to reduce violence, reduce HIV risk, and to encourage more men to be engaged caregivers, there are challenges in institutionalizing this change at the national and international levels and in driving policy change, often – but not always - in the context of growing conservative political movements. Greater support and political will is needed from national governments, in particular, to adopt more gender equitable policies for GBV prevention and to embed approaches such as those developed by Promundo within their national structures and mechanisms.

One strategy to achieve sustained change at these levels is amplifying Promundo and partners’ national and international advocacy, and using IMAGES data and evidenced-based approaches as the basis for policy change. IMAGES has been used as a platform for national-level advocacy and strategy formation on engaging men in gender equality, with results in:

* *Brazil*: Data encouraged the Ministry of Health (MoH) to start a new collaboration with Promundo to engage men in maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) and to establish a men’s health unit at the MoH, which was then replicated within MoH structures nationally.
* *Chile*: Data has been used to encourage the government to engage men in MNCH and early childhood development, as well as bolstering support for government funding for GBV prevention that includes outreach to men and boys.
* *Rwanda*: IMAGES results were key in encouraging CARE International to test a successful model with Promundo and RWAMREC to engage men as partners in women’s economic empowerment (which has, in turn, been presented to the national government).
* *Croatia*: Presentations to government ministers have been instrumental in promoting new and more progressive sexuality education policies, as well as governmental support to the Young Men’s Initiative, an NGO effort to promote non-violent conceptualizations of masculinity across the Balkans region.

A further challenge, or area for learning, the organization faces is the need to build the evidence-base for psychosocial approaches to support healing of young men and women from violence and abuse as a secondary prevention strategy given that IMAGES and many other studies find a strong association between men’s and women's witnessing and experiencing of violence in children and later use of GBV (for men) or experience of GBV (for women).

1. **Involvement of women and girls, including women’s rights organizations**

Promundo's approaches are designed to have long-term impact, not only due to their theory of change, which encourages active transformation (rather than passive lecturing) at the individual level, but also due to Promundo’s ability to build local capacity, create networks, and institutionalize their approaches with government ministries and the public sector. Promundo has a rich history of collaborating with key local and international NGOs, governments, and UN partners.

Working meaningfully in partnership with women’s rights organizations, and women and girls is essential to ensure that the concerns of women and girls, their rights, and empowerment, as relevant to Paragraph 10 (a),[[22]](#footnote-22) are prioritized. Working with key, local partners and stakeholders from the beginning of a project, Promundo builds capacity and sustainability. Promundo has local partners, specializing in child protection, violence prevention, sexual and reproductive, and maternal, newborn and child health, therapeutic approaches, economic empowerment, women’s rights, and more, in over 40 countries. Key women’s rights partners include Together for Girls, ICRW, Puntos de Encuentro, and international NGO partners include Concern Worldwide, Save the Children, CARE International, Plan International, WorldFish, and ChildFund. UN and multilateral partners include the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, UN Women and UNFPA.

In order for Promundo’s work to be truly in service of a feminist agenda and improve the lives of women and girls in deep and meaningful ways, it co-founded and serves on the Board of Directors of MenEngage Alliance,[[23]](#footnote-23) a consortium of nearly 700 NGOs with approximately 35 active country networks in the Global South and the North that work in collaboration with numerous international NGOs and UN partners to reduce gender inequalities and to promote the health and well-being of women, men, and children, including through efforts to end all forms of GBV. As a part of this effort, MenEngage has since developed ‘Accountability Standards and Guidelines’ to address concerns and help to ensure accountability to women’s rights organizations.

Part of accountability efforts include the promotion of feminist and female-centric policies which take into consideration and consultation the needs and priorities of women and women’s rights groups; government and donor funding of grass rights women’s rights organizations; civil society partnerships with women’s rights organizations on funding proposals and on joint advocacy and research to work collaboratively to advance shared aims of gender justice and to ensure that any programs aimed to engage men in preventing and responding to GBV are implemented in tandem with new or existing initiatives targeting women and girls. These approaches were discussed in further detail during the SVRI Forum 2017, where Promundo co-hosted a pre-conference event on accountability of the work to engage men for violence prevention. Promundo is committed to these principles in advancing the work of engaging men and boys to end GBV and achieve gender equality.

1. See: www.promundoglobal.org [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See: https://promundoglobal.org/programs/international-men-and-gender-equality-survey-images/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “Fully engaging men and boys, alongside women and girls, including community and religious leaders, as agents and beneficiaries of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls as a contribution to the elimination of violence against women and girls;” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “Addressing the root causes of gender inequality, including gender stereotypes and negative social norms, attitudes and behaviours, and socioeconomic drivers of violence, and unequal power relations such as patriarchal norms that view women and girls as subordinate to men and boys and that normalize, condone or perpetuate discrimination and violence against women and girls;” [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. “Engaging, educating, encouraging and supporting men and boys to be positive role models for gender equality and promote respectful relationships, to refrain from and condemn all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, to take responsibility and be held accountable for behaviour, including behaviour that perpetuates gender stereotypes, including misconceptions about masculinities that underlie discrimination and violence against women and girls, to increase their understanding of the harmful effects of violence for the victim/survivor and society as a whole, and to ensure that men and boys take responsibility for their sexual and reproductive behaviour;” [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. “Developing, investing in and implementing evidence-based policies, strategies and programmes, and awareness-raising campaigns to promote respectful relationships, provide positive role models for gender equality and encourage men and boys, alongside women and girls, to see themselves as agents and beneficiaries of the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls;” [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. “Building on evidence-based research and policy initiatives and legislative approaches that support the constructive engagement of men and boys in preventing violence against women and girls, including in primary prevention, prevention skill building, group education, community outreach, mobilization and mass media campaigns and early childhood gender equality education programmes and curricula;” [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. “Measuring the effectiveness of policies and programmes to prevent violence against women and girls and address gender inequalities, including those aimed at engaging men and boys and understanding behavioural change as well as establishing the cost of violence against women and girls through collecting adequate and comprehensive disaggregated data and gender statistics to expose the costs of inaction, including through awareness-raising activities;” [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See: https://promundoglobal.org/programs/program-h/ [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. “Developing and implementing educational programmes and teaching materials […] in order to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women of all ages, to eliminate prejudices and to promote and build decision-making, communication and risk reduction skills for the development of respectful relationships based on gender equality and human rights, as well as teacher education and training programmes for both formal and non-formal education;” [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. “[…]recognizing that human rights include the right to have control over and to decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free from coercion, discrimination and violence;” [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. “[…] while fully engaging men and boys to recognize that gender equality and positive social norms promote effective responses to HIV;” [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See: https://promundoglobal.org/programs/program-m/ [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. See: https://promundoglobal.org/programs/program-d/ [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See: www.men-care.org [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. “ Designing, implementing and regularly monitoring the impact of national policies, programmes and strategies that address the roles and responsibilities of men and boys […] aiming to ensure the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men and girls and boys in unpaid care and domestic work, including through parental leave policies, and increased flexibility in working arrangements which would facilitate the equal sharing of responsibilities;” [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. See: https://sowf.men-care.org/ [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. See: https://promundoglobal.org/programs/living-peace/ [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. “Developing and implementing the establishment of rehabilitative services in order to encourage and bring changes in the attitudes and behaviour of perpetrators of violence against women and girls and to reduce the likelihood of reoffending, and to A/HRC/35/L.15 7 monitor and assess their impact and effect, while the safety, support and human rights of the victims/survivors remain their primary concern;” [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. “Holding persons in positions of authority, such as teachers, religious leaders, traditional authorities, politicians and law enforcement officials, accountable for not complying with and/or upholding laws and regulations relating to violence against women and girls, in order to prevent and respond to such violence in a gender-sensitive manner, to end impunity and to avoid the abuse of power leading to violence against women and girls and the revictimization of victims/survivors of such violence;” [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See: https://promundoglobal.org/programs/journeys-of-transformation/ [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. “Ensuring that all initiatives on preventing and ending violence against women and girls aimed at engaging men and boys are designed and promoted with the aim of ensuring that the concerns of women and girls, their rights, their empowerment, their safety and their equal and meaningful participation in decision-making at all levels are prioritized;” [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See: www.menengage.org [↑](#footnote-ref-23)