WEBINAR | 01 AUG 2023

Understanding men & boys as clients, partners and agents of change to improve HIV prevention and sexual reproductive health (SRH)



We're curious to know who is all here - in the chat, say hi and let us know what country you're joining us from, your affiliated organisation & if you're an SSLN/ Sycona champion!



Click on this icon and *choose* your preferred language:

- English
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In the participants tab, raise your hand if you'd like to speak during the discussion



Use the Q&A/ chat box at the bottom of your screen to ask questions to the panelists & upvote other attendees questions or comments















WEBINAR AGENDA

Sarah Magni, AGYW Lead (SSLN & Sycona)

15mins	Introductory remarks	Chair
25mins	Evidence Review Presentation	Ann Gottert & Julie Pulerwitz, Sycona (Population Council)
25mins	Panel Discussion & Reflections	 Chantalle Okondo, Sycona (Population Council) Nozipho Shabalala, KZN MoH (South Africa) Luwi Mercy Katoka, NextGen Squad MOSAIC project (Zambia) Michel José Drouyahi, SSLN Youth Champion (Côte d'Ivoire)
20mins	Open audience Q&A	Chair
5mins	Closing remarks	Chair

| WEBINAR OBJECTIVES

- 1. To share the findings of a global evidence, review that sought to assess what interventions have been successfully used to engage men and boys as clients, partners, and agents of change (a framework for categorising male engagement published in 2006) for SRHR and HIV prevention, and what implementation lessons have been learned.
- 2. Share best practices from interventions that have effectively engaged men and boys in promoting SRH and HIV initiatives.
- 3. Share learnings from country experiences of engaging men in HIV prevention and SRHR programmes, as clients, partners, and as agents of change
- 4. To foster dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders from diverse and influential sectors, including government representatives, researchers, youth and advocacy organisations
- 5. To gain insights from SSLN HIV prevention country champions on activities and evidence needs to strengthen male engagement.











Mentimeter



What comes to mind when thinking about male engagement for HIV and SRH programmes?

Qu'est-ce qui vous vient à l'esprit lorsque l'on évoque la participation des hommes aux programmes de lutte contre le VIH et de SSR?

O que lhe vem à mente quando pensa no envolvimento masculino nos programas de VIH e SSR?



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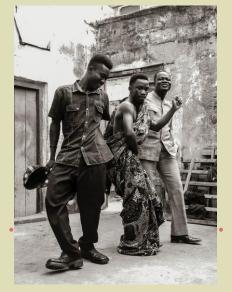








Engaging men and boys as clients and partners, and promoting an enabling environment, for HIV prevention and sexual and reproductive health



Sycona & SSLN Webinar

01 August 2023

Ann Gottert, Julie Pulerwitz, Chantalle Okondo, Renay Weiner, Jesse Werner, Grace Muguro, Sarah Magni







Speakers





Ann Gottert, PhD

Associate II Social and Behavioral Science Research



Julie Pulerwitz, ScD

Senior Advisor Social and Behavioral Science Research

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

Background and objectives

Overview of Systematic review of reviews

Summary of strategies to engage men & boys for SRH

Panel reflections & discussion

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Background

- Widespread agreement about the need to engage men and boys to improve HIV prevention and SRH, while protecting autonomy of women and girls
 - ✓ To improve their own wellbeing
 - √ To improve the wellbeing of their intimate partners, including adolescent girls and young women
 - √ To create enabling environments for better SRH and gender equality for all
- Uncertainty remains about HOW to engage men & boys

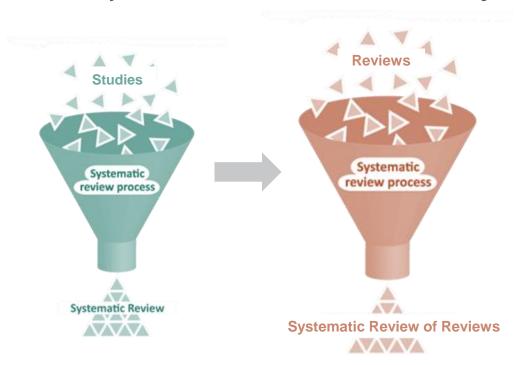
Are men and boys willing to participate in HIV and SRH programming?

Are there effective strategies to engage men and boys?

Would these strategies work in my country?

What does the evidence say about how to engage men & boys?

- In reality, there is a lot of evidence available to suggest a clear path forward
- There are thousands of relevant primary studies, and dozens of systematic reviews of these primary studies
- We synthesised the evidence via a systematic review of reviews



A systematic reviews of reviews "...provides 'user-friendly' summaries of the breadth of research relevant to a decision without decision makers needing to assimilate the results of multiple systematic reviews themselves..."

- Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions version 6.3; updated February 2022

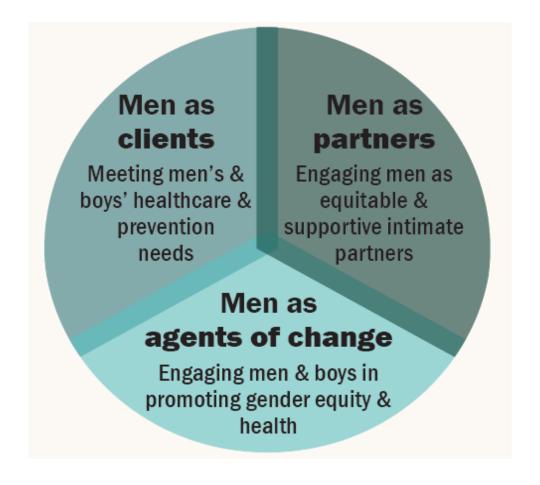
Objectives for today's session

- Share findings from a global evidence review focusing on strategies to successfully engage men and boys as clients, partners, and agents of change to improve HIV prevention and SRH.
- Create a space for champions and other stakeholders to engage further on the topic and reflect on how the findings can be applied in their HIV & SRH programmes.

Invite Champions & other stakeholders to share their experience and knowledge.



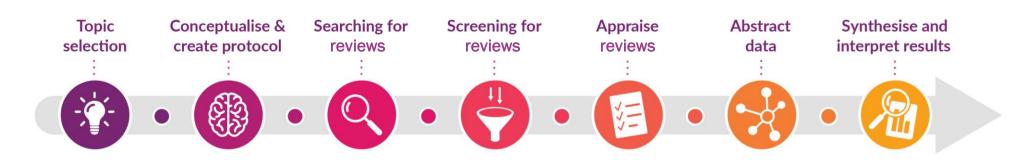
Organising framework



Adapted from: Greene ME, Mehta M, Pulerwitz J, et al. Involving men in reproductive health: contributions to development. Background paper prepared for the UN Millennium Project to contribute to the report Public Choices, Private Decisions: Sexual and Reproductive Health and the Millennium Development Goals. 2006.

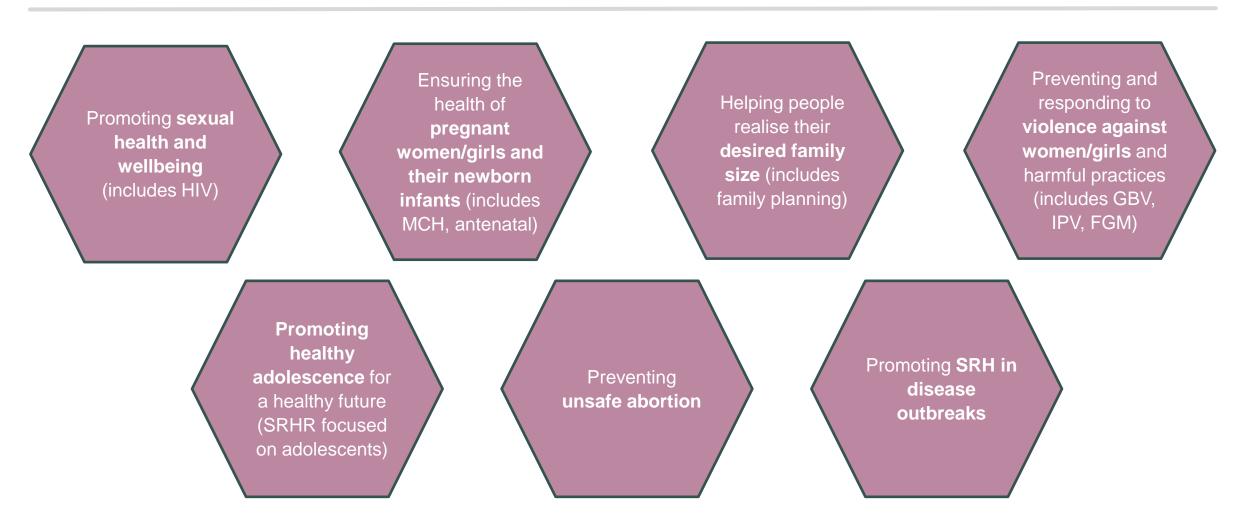
OVERVIEW Systematic review of reviews

Procedures for systematic review of reviews



- Followed Cochrane guidelines for Systematic reviews of reviews¹
- To be included, the review had to:
 - ✓ Be systematic
 - ✓ Be published 2015 to present; in English
 - ✓ Include at least half of the studies from low- or middle-income countries
 - ✓ Cover at least 1 of 7 SRH components (see next slide)
 - ✓ Include a focus on interventions that explicitly seek to engage heterosexual men and/or boys
 - ✓ Include studies with any methodology (quantitative, qualitative, both)
- Full text review and data extraction done by at least two study team members

Systematic reviews focused on male engagement in at least 1 of 7 SRH components



World Health Organization (WHO). Reproductive health strategy to accelerate progress towards the attainment of international development goals and targets. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2004. Available at: https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/68754/WHO_RHR_04.8.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Final set of systematic reviews

This review is a synthesis of the following:

- 31 Systematic reviews published since 2015
- Total # of primary studies included (average=29/review)

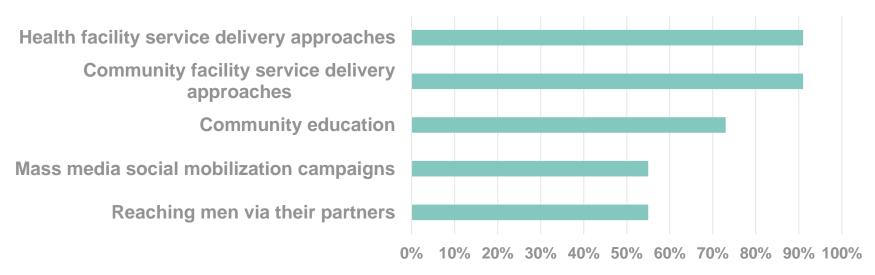
 May include duplicates
- Quantitative only (15), qualitative only (2); both/mixed methods (14). Includes 5 meta-analyses/meta-syntheses
- All 31 reviews included Africa; heavy focus on Eastern & Southern Africa. Less focus for other regions of world.
 - We synthesised findings under the 3 elements of the Men as clients, partners, and agents of change framework



Overview – Engaging men & boys as clients



- 11 reviews
- Geographic focus: Africa (11); Latin America and the Caribbean (2); Europe (1)
- Specific topics: HIV testing (4); Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC) (3); retention in HIV care (1); men as family planning users (2); HIV-focused sexual risk reduction for adolescent boys and young men (1)
- Most common types of interventions:



■ % of reviews including the intervention approach

Effectiveness of intervention approaches



- Interventions to increase men and boys' use of HIV testing and VMMC were found effective
 - Men were highly willing to participate
 - Community-based service delivery (e.g., mobile units, venue-based testing, home-based testing) was
 more effective than facility-based strategies more convenient, and private
 - HIV self-testing may further increase convenience and privacy, plus perceived autonomy
 - For VMMC, both school- and community-based programming are important; need to better tailor strategies and counseling/materials by age group
- Substantial room for improvement for linkage to/retention in HIV care among men living with HIV
 - Psychosocial vulnerabilities, often associated with harmful masculinities (e.g., shame, loss of dignity),
 appeared to be key barriers to engagement in care
 - Most evidence was for group psychosocial support groups, but these were rarely tailored for men specifically
- More work needed to engage men as family planning users (vs. partners of women as FP users); and to develop/promote FP methods for men

Key implementation strategies from effective programs



- Reviews consistently concluded that multi-level,
 multi-component interventions to increase men's use of SRH services are more effective than stand-alone/unidimensional interventions
- Multi-component interventions often entailed each of the following:
 - Generating informed demand for the service/product (e.g., via community education; comprehensive information for clients)
 - 2. Improving supply (e.g., friendly health services; training and task-shifting for VMMC/vasectomy services); and
 - 3. Creating an enabling environment in communities/regions/nationally especially to ensure men know about the service/product and do not feel shame when accessing services

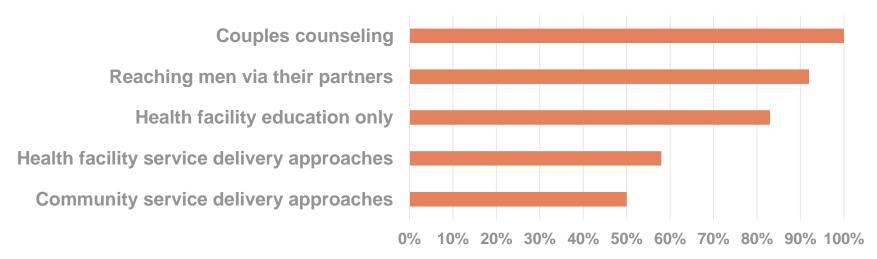
- Additional recommendations from reviews:
 - Address gender norms explicitly, to increase men's use of SRH services/products
 - Address men's psychosocial vulnerabilities
 - Improve linkage to care for community-based HIV testing (including HIV self-testing) – proposed solutions include improved use of mobile technologies; peer encouragement; communitybased ART initiation/distribution
 - Provide free or very low-cost services (e.g., for HIV self-testing); incentives for VMMC
 - Provide detailed information to promote informed choice and reduce potential harms



Overview – Engaging men as partners



- 11 reviews
- **Geographic focus:** Africa (11); Northern America (2); Asia (1); Europe (1); Latin America and the Caribbean (1); Oceania (1)
- **Specific topics:** PMTCT (5); Maternal health/MNH (2); Couples HIV testing (1); HIV risk reduction among sero-discordant couples (1); Reproductive health (1)
- Most common types of interventions:



Effectiveness of intervention approaches



- Overall, male partners want to be involved for their / their partner's SRH
- Male involvement highly beneficial for range of SRH outcomes; is not detrimental for women
- Multi-component interventions more effective than 'single', 'one-off' interventions
 - Example: PMTCT invitation letters from facilities alone are not effective
 - Example of multi-component: Couples counseling + welcoming health facility + community norms change
- Couples counseling effective for preventing HIV transmission; promoting MNH, RH
 - Use well-trained counselors, with appropriate characteristics (e.g., counselors living with HIV for PMTCT)
 - Use well-established behavioral techniques (e.g., cognitive behavioral skills)
 - Community health workers comparatively more effective
- Couples HIV testing is an important option, especially for pregnant women and their partners

Key implementation strategies from effective programs



Increasing detailed knowledge

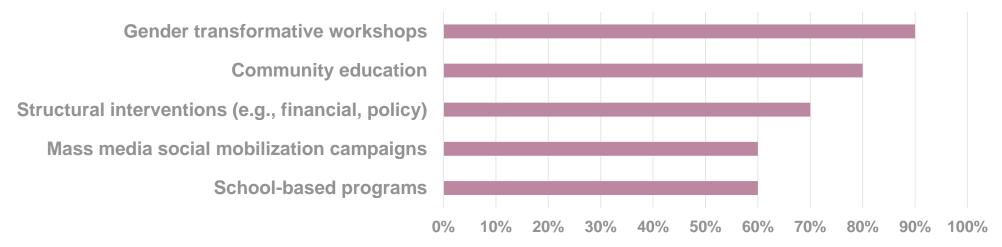
- e.g., details of PMTCT cascade, how to safely conceive if one/both members of couple is living with HIV, what to do in case of birth complications/obstetric emergencies
- Making health facilities more welcoming
 - o e.g., for male accompaniment in obstetric emergencies
- Careful intervention design is critical for ensuring avoidance of harms, given common unequal power dynamics in relationships. Especially for:
 - HIV sero-discordant couples facing range of challenges (disclosure, communication dynamics, desire for fertility and reproduction)
 - Improving maternal and newborn health, one of few domains in which women are empowered in more patriarchal societies



Overview – Promoting an enabling environment



- 9 reviews
- Geographic focus: Africa (9); Asia (8); Latin America and the Caribbean (6); Northern America (4); Europe (3); Oceania (1)
- Specific topics: Gender-based violence (GBV) / Intimate partner violence (IPV) / Violence against women and girls (VAWG) (6); Gender norms/relations (2); IPV and HIV (1); SRH (1)
- Most common types of interventions:



Effectiveness of intervention approaches



- Gender transformative interventions to engage men are effective in reducing gender-based violence and improving SRH outcomes
 - Typically focus on more than one SRH component most commonly IPV/GBV + sexual health/HIV
 - Consistently improve other important outcomes as well e.g., attitudes toward violence, communication within couples and families, conflict resolution skills
- Reviews did not report any interventions led to negative effects on prevalence of SRH outcomes (e.g., violence rates)
 - Most stressed importance of careful tracking of any potential harms / unintended consequences
 - And, one systematic review noted several qualitative reports of unintended consequences (e.g., more violent/controlling behaviors of male partners)

"Gender transformative" = Critically examines gender norms and dynamics, and strengthens systems that support gender equality.

Versus:

"Gender sensitive" – Which works around existing gender differences and inequalities; and "Gender exploitative" – which reinforces or takes advantage of gender inequalities and stereotypes.

USAID Gender Integration Framework

The following gender transformative programs have been evaluated more than once in LMIC (including in Africa), and found to be effective¹

Stepping Stones

SASA!

Program H

Male Norms Initiative

Key implementation strategies from effective programs



- Multi-component activities to educate, persuade, model and enable positive behavior change
 - Participatory, promote critical reflection around gender roles
 - Build couple communication and conflict resolution skills
- Reach beyond target groups; mobilise the wider community to adopt egalitarian gender norms and practices
- Working with both women/girls and men/boys, either in mixed sex groups or separately (ideally both)
 - Combining genders in same group is important to reflect and interact together
 - Opportunities for single-sex-only groups is also important when introducing new sensitive topics (to discuss separately before coming together), and to give men/boys opportunities to bond and discuss difficult topics openly with other men/boys
- Well-trained facilitators
- Sufficient duration (e.g., >3 months; >8 sessions); shorter programs were less/not effective
- Promote programing with men & boys that also addresses homophobia, examines gender diversity, and promotes SRHR for LGBTQ communities
 - To date, gender transformative programs have been highly heteronormative



Specific key takeaways

Men as clients

- ✓ Meet men's needs as clients of SRH services —provide a range of options including community-based services.
- ✓ Seek to reduce/address men's psychosocial vulnerabilities.
- ✓ Improve tailoring of interventions and messaging.
- Improve men's detailed knowledge about services and products.
- Advocate for **new family planning products for men**.

Men as partners

- Implement couples counseling, with well trained counselors and evidence-based techniques.
- Ensure a welcoming health facility environment for male partner accompaniment.
- ✓ Improve men's detailed knowledge of women's SRH issues.

Promoting an enabling environment

- Implement evidence-based gender transformative programs, that include community engagement.
- Implement program sessions with both women/girls and men/boys, over sufficient durations of time.
- ✓ Strive for **structural change** to strengthen *systems* to promote gender equality.

Notable gaps in the reviews

- Men as PrEP / treatment as prevention (TasP) users findings can apply, but a review is needed
- Per WHO topics: preventing unsafe abortions & SRH in disease outbreaks (e.g., COVID-19; Zika)
- Evaluations of social media approaches and workplace programming

Conclusions & path forward

Are men and boys willing to participate in HIV and SRH programming?

Yes! Applies to clients, partners, AND for promoting an enabling environment, but also across these conceptual frames / mutually reinforcing.

Are there effective strategies to engage men and boys?

Yes! Similar strategies show effectiveness for multiple topics
 (e.g., HIV, GBV, SRH), especially multi-level programming.
 No reporting of adverse impacts but need to stay watchful.

Would these strategies work in my country?

Yes! Given similar approaches and components across topics, and most evidence coming from eastern / southern Africa, likely applicable. But attention to cultural specificity remains key.



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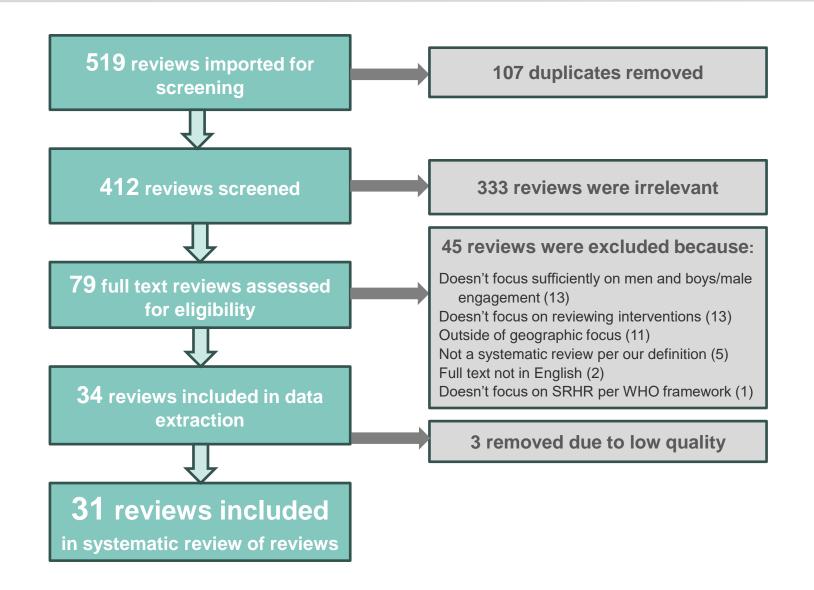






Supplemental slides

PRISMA diagram



Included reviews – Men as clients

Author (year)	Title	# of primary studies	Timespan of included studies
Kaufman et al. 2016	Adolescent sexual and reproductive health services and implications for the provision of voluntary medical male circumcision: Results of a systematic literature review	79	1990 - 2014
Shattuck et al. 2016	A review of 10 years of vasectomy programming and research in low-resource settings	75	2005 - 2015
Hardee et al. 2017	Are men well served by family planning programs?	47	2010 - 2015
Ensor et al. 2019	The effectiveness of demand creation interventions for voluntary male medical circumcision for HIV prevention in sub-Saharan Africa: A mixed methods systematic review	18	Up to 2018
Hlongwa et al. 2019	Mapping evidence of intervention strategies to improving men's uptake to HIV testing services in sub-Saharan Africa: A systematic scoping review	24	1990 - 2018
Hlongwa et al. 2020	Men's perspectives on HIV self-testing in sub-Saharan Africa: A systematic review and meta- synthesis	16	2005 - 2019
Atkins et al. 2020	Service delivery interventions to increase uptake of voluntary medical male circumcision for HIV prevention: A systematic review	29	1990 - 2018
Kusemererwa et al. 2021	Strategies for retention of heterosexual men in HIV care in sub-Saharan Africa: A systematic review	14	2005 - 2020
Hamilton et al. 2021	HIV self-testing uptake and intervention strategies among men in sub-Saharan Africa: A systematic review	63	2010 - 2020
Hlongwa et al. 2022	Linkage to HIV care following HIV self-testing among men: Systematic review of quantitative and qualitative studies from six countries in sub-Saharan Africa	15	2005 - 2022
Kanyemba et al. 2023	HIV focused sexual risk reduction interventions targeting adolescent boys and young men in sub- Saharan Africa: A scoping review	29	2000 - 2020

Included reviews – Men as partners

Author (year)	Title	# of primary studies	Timespan of included studies
Ambia et al. 2016	A systematic review of interventions to improve prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission service delivery and promote retention	34	Up to 2015
Takah et al. 2017	The impact of approaches in improving male partner involvement in the prevention of mother-to- child transmission of HIV on the uptake of maternal antiretroviral therapy among HIV-seropositive pregnant women in sub-Saharan Africa: A systematic review and meta-analysis	17	Up to 2016
Takah et al. 2018	The impact of approaches in improving male partner involvement in the prevention of mother-to- child transmission of HIV on the uptake of safe infant feeding practices by HIV positive women in sub-Saharan Africa. A systematic review and meta-analysis.	6	Up to 2018
Mashaphu et al. 2018	Psychosocial and behavioural interventions towards HIV risk reduction for serodiscordant couples in Africa: A systematic review	8	1990 - 2015
Tokhi et al. 2018	Involving men to improve maternal and newborn health: A systematic review of the effectiveness of interventions	13	2000 - 2012
Triulzi et al. 2019	The effectiveness of interventions to involve men living with HIV positive pregnant women in low-income countries: A systematic review of the literature	12	2008 - 2018
Takah et al. 2019	Male partner involvement in the utilization of hospital delivery services by pregnant women living with HIV in sub Saharan Africa: A systematic review and meta-analysis	8	2015 - 2018
Nkwonta et al. 2019	Male participation in reproductive health interventions in sub-Saharan Africa: A scoping review	18	2007 - 2018
Hailemariam et al. 2020	Uptake of couples HIV testing and counselling among heterosexual couples in Sub-Saharan Africa: A systematic review and meta-analysis	14	2000 - 2017
Forbes et al. 2021	Male partner involvement in birth preparedness, complication readiness and obstetric emergencies in Sub-Saharan Africa: A scoping review	35	2006 - 2019
Hampanda et al. 2022	A systematic review of behavioral couples-based interventions targeting prevention of mother-to- child transmission in low and middle-income countries	5	Up to 2019

Included reviews – Men as agents of change

Author (year)	Title	# of primary studies	Timespan of included studies
Bourey et al. 2015	Systematic review of structural interventions for intimate partner violence in low- and middle-income countries: Organizing evidence for prevention	16	2000 - 2015
Ellsberg et al. 2015	Prevention of violence against women and girls: What does the evidence say?	18	Up to 2015
Ruane-McAteer et al. 2020	Gender-transformative programming with men and boys to improve sexual and reproductive health and rights: A systematic review of intervention studies	68	2007 - 2018
Levy et al. 2020	Characteristics of successful programmes targeting gender inequality and restrictive gender norms for the health and wellbeing of children, adolescents, and young adults: A systematic review	61	2000 - 2018
Perez-Martinez et al. 2021	Positive masculinities and gender-based violence educational interventions among young people: A systematic review	15	2008 - 2019
DeHond et al. 2022	Prevention of perpetration of intimate partner violence by men and boys in low and middle income countries: A scoping review o primary prevention interventions	16	2001 - 2020
Sabri et al. 2022	Gender-based violence interventions in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review of interventions at structural, community, interpersonal, individual, and multiple levels	60	2004 - 2021
Kirkwood et al. 2022	The role of mHealth interventions in changing gender relations: Systematic review of qualitative findings	14	2013 - 2020
Keith et al. 2022	A systematic review of interventions to reduce gender-based violence among women and girls in sub-Saharan Africa	53	2000 - 2021











PANEL FACILITATOR



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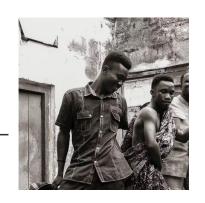




Mentimeter

What learning opportunities involving men would be beneficial to your HIV prevention and SRH programmes?

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Workshops	Information brochures/ evidence briefs	Learning visit	More targeted and interactive virtual	Technical support	Mentoring



Quelles possibilités d'apprentissage impliquant les hommes seraient avantageuses pour vos programmes de prévention du VIH et de SSR?

Ateliers | Brochures/notes factuelles | Visites d'apprentissage | Séances virtuelles plus ciblées et interactives | Soutien technique | Mentorat | Autre (précisez)

Que oportunidades de aprendizagem que envolvem os homens poderiam ser vantajosas para os seus programas de SSR e prevenção do VIH?

Workshops | Brochuras informativas / sínteses de evidências | Visitas de aprendizagem | Sessões virtuais mais direccionadas e interactivas | Apoio técnico | Mentori | Outra (especifique)

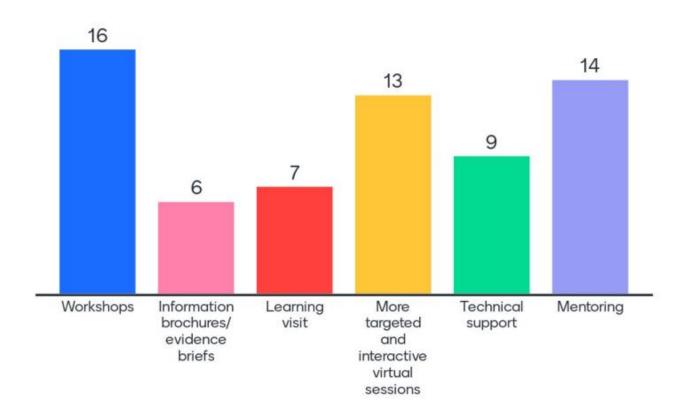


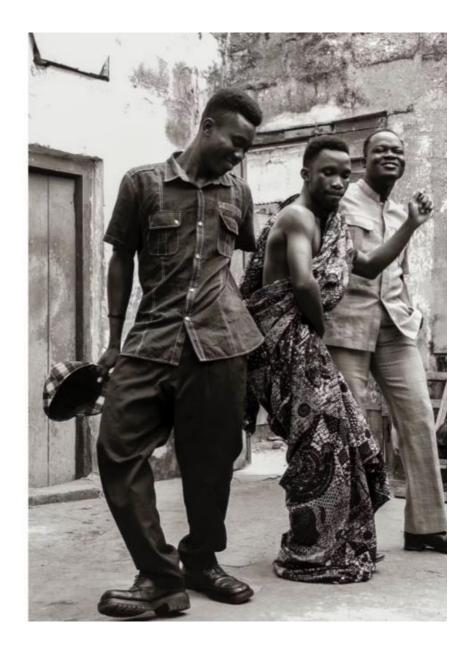
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What learning opportunities involving men would be beneficial to your HIV prevention and SRH programmes?















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