

BRIEFING

Take Action He For She

FREEDOM. CHOICE. RESPECT.





A human rights violation

Gender-based violence undermines the health, dignity, security and autonomy of survivors, yet it remains shrouded in a culture of silence.

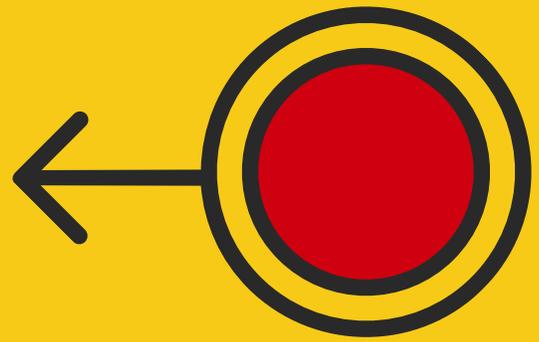
The magnitude of gender-based violence in Papua New Guinea is of epidemic proportions and continues to be a major human rights violation.

The problem is exacerbated by cultural and traditional practices and beliefs that have been misinterpreted to discriminate against and violate the rights of women and adolescent girls in society. There is also a culture of silence and acceptance around gender-based violence.

Patriarchal attitudes held by men and women are rife in Papua New Guinea where violence against women and adolescent girls is tolerated and continues with impunity. Anecdotal evidence from police indicates that 70% percent of reported cases involve family and sexual violence. Globally, as well as in Papua New Guinea, violence against women and girls is vastly underreported. Data collected through services helps understand trends in this violence, however, it should be recognised that these figures do not represent prevalence, which is likely to be much higher.

Victims of violence can suffer sexual and reproductive health consequences, including forced and unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, traumatic fistula, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, and even death.

WHY ENGAGE BOYS & MEN?

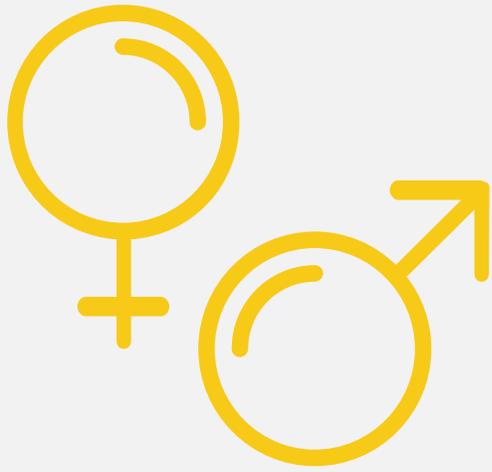


- 1 ▶ It is largely men and boys who perpetrate violence against women and adolescent girls.
- 2 ▶ Men and boys have a critical/important role to play in ending violence against women and adolescent girls.
- 3 ▶ Ideas about what it means to be 'a real man' drive male violence against women and girls. Challenging and changing harmful masculinities can help to prevent such violence.
- 4 ▶ Men and boys benefit from changing harmful masculinities. It can lead to more personal freedom, improvements in their relationships and the lives of women and children around them, and better health, safety and economic outcomes for themselves, their family and the community.



AN OPPORTUNITY.

Some men are beginning to demonstrate a willingness to end violence against women, adolescent girls and children. We must seize this opportunity. With such positive expression of interest and momentum, there is no time to wait and be silent. It is now time to take action and provide a platform for male advocates who will make a difference to the lives of women and children of Papua New Guinea who continue to suffer violence from male aggressors.



Male advocates are accountable to and must always be guided by women's organisations.

MALE ADVOCATES WORKING FOR AND WITH WOMEN

Male advocates must understand and accept that their role is to work for and in partnership with women and women's organisations, this is because women have a better understanding of how male violence impacts them.

Male advocates must not regard themselves as women's 'protectors' but as working for and with women to achieve gender equality. Male advocates must also not use their role to enhance their own standing within their community or to set themselves up as trainers.

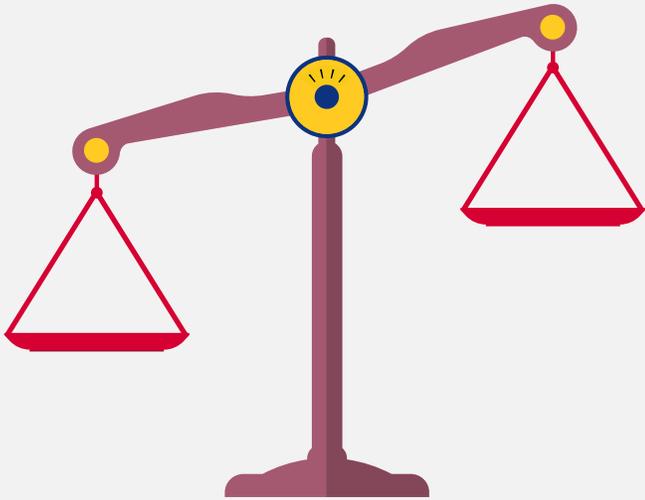
It must be recognised that women also play a role in perpetuating patriarchy and male violence against women and adolescent girls. Male advocates should seek to work with women and women's organisations who recognise the cause of this violence as power inequality, reject discriminatory attitudes and beliefs and seek to address and prevent violence.



What does being a male advocate involve?

- First, **challenge and change your own beliefs**, attitudes and behaviours towards gender-based violence and women's human rights and lead by example.
- **Act as a role model** for all young Papua New Guinean men and boys. Commit to not using violence or colluding with discrimination and violence against women and adolescent girls. Call out others who use, justify or sanction violence and discrimination.
- **Be accountable and open to feedback** from the women and women's organisations you seek to support.
- **Listen to and understand women's experiences** of violence and gender inequality. Respect that they are best placed to define their own needs and priorities.
- **Influence cultural and traditional practices** that are damaging and that promote gender-based violence and impede women's human rights.
- Make a **long-term commitment** to ending violence through tangible actions, including supporting women in campaigns and lobbying for policies and legislation, link survivors to essential services and participate in training and ongoing learning on gender-based violence.





Effective male advocacy is based on an understanding that **the root cause of violence against women and girls is power inequality.**

HOW CAN WE ADDRESS INEQUALITY?

- **Reimagine male and female roles:** Examine, question and change strict gender roles and the imbalances of power to create more equal relationships in homes, communities and society.
- **Promote accountability:** Support men to identify their complicity and/or participation in violence and gender inequality, and to make reparations for the damage and move forward in non-violent ways.
- **Partner with women:** Seek women's guidance in the design, implementation and assessment of male advocacy. This is essential, all male advocacy work should be under the guidance, support and in collaboration with women and women's groups.
- **Context matters:** Recognise the diversity and hierarchy amongst men and boys. Address men's experiences of changing gender dynamics in the home and community and the social and economic conditions affecting men's and boy's lives.



TAKE ACTION



- **Recognise** that male advocacy is only one way to address gender-based violence. It is most effective when complemented with other actions that advance gender equality.
- **Ensure** male advocacy isn't done at the expense of women's voices. Male advocates must create and hold space for women to articulate their own needs.

Policy makers



- **Lead by example.** Confront your own personal attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that discriminate and sanction violence against women and adolescent girls. Work with others including men and women, boys and girls to challenge and change harmful norms in order to stop this violence and achieve gender equality.

Boys & Men



- **Support male advocacy** work that is best practice and evidence-based. It must incorporate women.
- **Recognise** that social norm change is long-term. Consistent and multi-year funding is required.
- Do not compromise **resourcing of life-saving services** for survivors and women's empowerment.
- **Prioritise** the personal and professional development of staff leading male advocacy work.

International community

