

Men As Partners[®] in Reproductive Health

The Challenge

Women are typically the focus of reproductive health interventions, yet men are central to sexual and reproductive health decision making. Traditional gender roles often prevent women from making their own reproductive health choices. In addition, the health of both men and women is compromised by risky male behaviors such as violence and seeking multiple sexual partners.

EngenderHealth's Response

Through its groundbreaking work, EngenderHealth works with men to play constructive roles in promoting gender equity and health in their families and communities. EngenderHealth works with individuals, communities, health care providers, and national health systems to:

- Enhance men's awareness and support for their partners' reproductive health choices
- Increase men's access to comprehensive reproductive health services
- Mobilize men to take an active stand for gender equity and against gender-based violence

Impact

Clients and program participants benefit from:

- Transformed gender attitudes and the ability to play more positive roles in their families and communities
- Access to reproductive health services, such as family planning
- Increased utilization of HIV/AIDS and STI services, including prevention, testing, care, support, and treatment
- Education about how men can be supportive partners in reproductive health care



Photo: C. Svingen/EngenderHealth

Health care providers are empowered to:

- Improve the quality of health services for men
- Work with communities to increase use of health services for men, their partners, and children

Communities are transformed by:

- Improved health-promoting behaviors and attitudes
- Reductions in gender-based violence
- The availability of reproductive health services that address men's needs
- Growing organizational networks that tackle social and health concerns

How We Work

With more than 60 years' experience in promoting reproductive health, EngenderHealth has developed approaches, methods, and tools for improving clinical practice and community education to improve health services and transform attitudes regarding gender roles and responsibilities in reproductive health.

EngenderHealth provides technical assistance and training to health clinics, local nongovernmental organizations and governments, and advocates for positive male engagement in the international development field. The Men As Partners program mobilizes communities and educates men about a variety of issues, including the HIV pandemic and gender-based violence. Through workshops and community coalition-building efforts that emphasize group participation, EngenderHealth transforms the traditional attitudes, behaviors, and social norms that exacerbate violence, gender inequalities, and negative health behaviors.

Men As Partners: In Action

Addressing Gender-Based Violence and HIV/AIDS in South Africa

EngenderHealth's Men As Partners program in South Africa is a multifaceted program designed to engage men in reducing gender-based violence and to promote men's role in HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and support activities. Through a partnership of civil society organizations and governmental and academic institutions, the program transforms the behaviors of men and challenges the norms of masculinity. Strategies include: organizing community-based workshops to encourage men's involvement with their communities; collaborating with government clinics to increase men's use of HIV services; working with the media to promote changes in social attitudes; and advocating for increased governmental support for the promotion of positive male involvement.

Mobilizing Men to Support Safer Motherhood in Nepal

EngenderHealth is partnering with Nepal's Ministry of Health to reach men in rural communities by training health providers and building a peer educator network. To address high rates of maternal mortality in Nepal, men are trained to educate their peers on how to recognize pregnancy complications so they can help women access emergency obstetric care, if needed. The project has been very successful to date: Communities have shown an increase in contraceptive use, an increase in the number of men who have accompanied their wives to clinic appointments, and an improvement in men's knowledge of and attitudes toward their pregnant wives' health needs.



Photo: Staff/EngenderHealth

Promoting Gender Equity with the Next Generation: Youth in Kenya

EngenderHealth provides training and technical assistance to Kenya's National Youth Service, a governmental organization working with young men and women to provide social and development services to improve Kenyan society. The Kenya Men As Partners Program reaches thousands of young men and women in the National Youth Service with education about gender relations, sexuality, HIV/AIDS, family planning, and gender-based violence.

MenEngage: Building a Global Alliance to Promote Gender Equality and End Violence

EngenderHealth is an organizing member of MenEngage, an alliance of international nongovernmental organizations committed to research, interventions, and policy initiatives that engage men and boys to reduce gender inequities and promote the health and well-being of women, men, and children. Other organizers of MenEngage include Instituto Promundo (Brazil), Save the Children (Sweden), Sahayog (India), and the Family Violence Prevention Fund (USA).

Selected MAP Materials from EngenderHealth

Men's Reproductive Health Curriculum

- Section 1: Introduction to Men's Reproductive Health Services, Revised Edition (2006);
- Section 2: Counseling and Communicating with Men (2003);
- Section 3: Management of Men's Reproductive Health Problems (2003)

Men As Partners® Digital Stories: South Africans Respond to HIV/AIDS and Violence Against Women (DVD, 2005)

No-Scalpel Vasectomy: An Illustrated Guide for Surgeons, Third Edition (2003)

Youth-Friendly Services: A Manual for Service Providers (2002)

Men As Partners®: A Program for Supplementing the Training of Life Skills Educators, Second Edition (2001)

For More Information

Please visit www.engenderhealth.org, or contact the Communications & Marketing Department at: 212-561-8399 or info@engenderhealth.org.