Women's Probono Initiative

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AN INFORMATION BRIEF ON **MALE ENGAGEMENT** IN SRHR IN UGANDA

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
GBV	Gender-based violence
FGM	Female genital mutilation
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IRC	International Rescue Committee
LGAs	Local Government Authorities
MGAs	Male Action Groups
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MOH	Ministry of Health
PMTCT	Prevention of mother-to-child transmission
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
TB	Tuberculosis
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USG	United States Government
WPI	Women's Probono Onotiative

DEFINITIONS

Male engagement/ involvement

Male engagement/involvement refers to *'the promotion of the role of men and boys in confronting and transforming their own male privilege, power and status that perpetuates gender inequality'.*

This involves the following creative strategies:

- Creating opportunities for men and boys to examine and challenge gender socialisation as they transform beliefs and practices that they learnt from childhood.
- Giving positive reinforcement to men and boys who support gender equality.
- Mobilising men and boys to counter harmful practices and norms perpetuated by gender inequality.

Human rights-based approach

The human rights-based approach is a conceptual framework for human development that is normatively based on human rights standards and operationally directed to protecting human rights. (UN 2023 Agenda)

Patriarchy

Patriarchy is a system of relationships, beliefs, and values embedded in political, social, and economic systems that structure gender inequality between men and women. [International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography (2nd Edition)]

Feminism

Feminism is the belief that women and girls have the same value and worth as men and boys; and it is a commitment to take action to change inequitable social norms and reduce the structural inequalities which prevent the advancement of women's and girls' rights.

Evidence-based advocacy

It is process of how organizations generate and use evidence to influence decision making processes, strategies and policies.

Agency

It refers to the building of an individual's self-esteem, capacity, and confidence to promote gender equality and to recognize and report gender-based violence.

Feminist agenda

The feminist agenda is an approach that recognizes the role women play in their communities as the main producers, protectors and nurturers in society. It demands their equal representation in leadership and decision-making.

Gender-based violence (GBV)

GBV is violence that is directed at an individual, based on biological sex, gender identity, or perceived adherence to socially defined norms of masculinity and femininity. It includes physical, sexual, and psychological abuse; threats; coercion; arbitrary deprivation of liberty; and economic deprivation, whether occurring in public or private life. [*USG, 2012*]

Zero tolerance

It is a concept that highlights the support and encouragement provided by institutions against sexual harassment in private and public places and mandates institutions to take measures to break the culture of silence and impunity so that sexual harassment by anyone and anywhere in the country is unacceptable and unpardonable.

Safe space

In GBV prevention, a safe space is a space intentionally created for marginalized populations to convene and voice their concerns, get knowledge and information, grow their agency, receive psychosocial support and engage in collective action.

Sexual exploitation

Is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another [*UN*]

Sexual abuse

Means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. [*UN*]

CHAPTER 1:INTRODUCTION

ABOUT WOMEN'S PROBONO INITIATIVE

Vision

A just and equitable society where women and girls are free from ALL forms of discrimination and violence.

Mission

To advance gender justice through promoting autonomy, voice and influence of women and girls in legislation, policy and practice.

BACKGROUND

The Women's Probono Initiative (WPI) exists is to ensure that the most vulnerable women in our communities have a chance to speak out against injustices in society and claim their rights. This is done through direct legal representation of individuals, public interest litigation on behalf of groups of women and community mediation mechanisms where necessary. WPI also engages in research to inform advocacy initiatives for legal and policy reforms on women's and girls' issues.

WPI also aims at addressing the inequalities caused by; patriarchy[1] in our society and hence views the male engagement discourse yet another frontier for action against dismantling patriarchy.

The findings of this information brief fall in WPI's docket of evidence-based advocacy, and this information brief will go a long way in validating whether male involvement will indeed lead to the reduction of gender-based violence and improvement in access to sexual reproductive health services for women and girls.

1 According to the Charter of Feminist principles for African Feminists; "Patriarchy is a system of male authority which legitimizes the oppression of women through political, social, economic, legal, cultural, religious and military institutions".

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

STRUCTURE OF THE INFORMATION BRIEF

THIS information brief is divided into five sections detailed as follows:

a) The first section acknowledges and recognizes the intentions, efforts and strengths of the national male engagement strategies of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social development (MGLSD), and the Ministry of Health (MOH).
b) The second section identifies gaps and missed opportunities in the individual strategies.
c) The third section draws a comparative analysis of the two strategies.
d) The fourth section of the report proposes modalities of improving these strategies.
e) The 5th section highlights specific recommendations for the different stakeholders to enforce male engagement for SRHR as lessons learnt from similar efforts across the world.

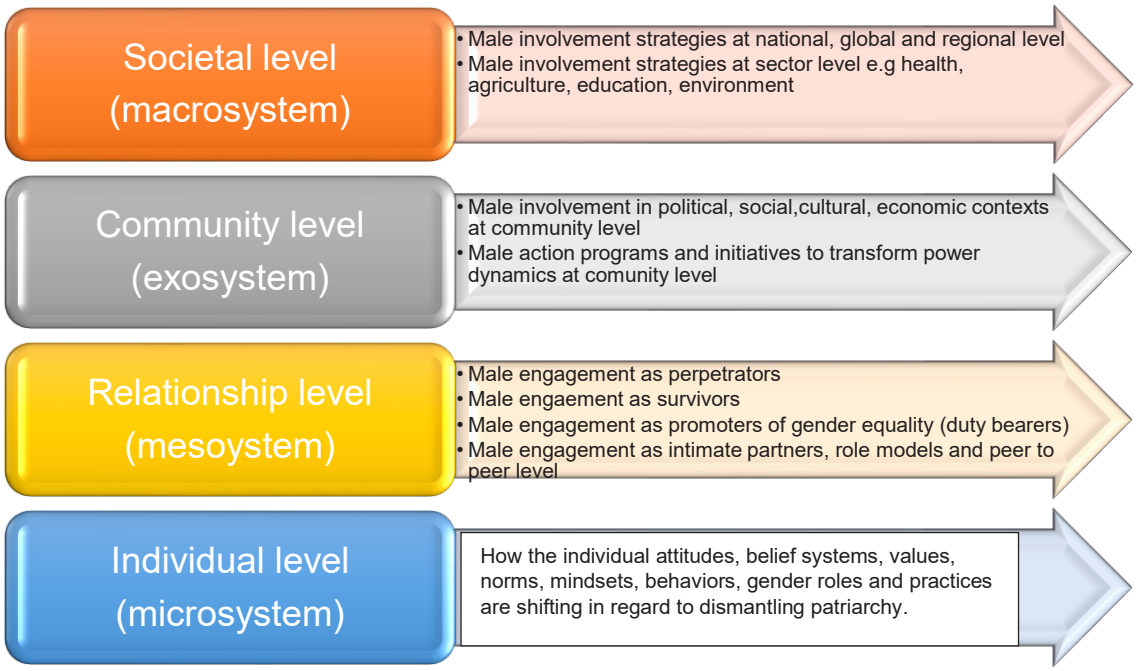
The findings will summarize the strategies, highlight the opportunities, gaps, and duties of stakeholders, and make recommendations for effective and more strategic male engagement. WPI also hopes to identify strategic interventions directed at specific actors to enhance the implementation of these strategies.

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

THIS information brief uses a socio-ecological feminist framework to critique the national male involvement strategies as seen in the illutration.

There are different types of feminist frameworks which include; the liberal feminist framework, the Marxist feminist framework, the radical feminist framework, the socialist feminist framework and the African feminist framework.

Uganda on the other hand already has a fairly gender sensitive enabling environment with a multiplicity of legal instruments and frameworks



as discussed in this paper. This enabling environment has produced remarkable levels of gender awareness, gender balance, gender sensitivity country wide and a move towards gender transformation.

It was because of this existing environment that a combination of the socio-ecological model and the feminist analysis is proposed to give us a multiplicity of parameters to interrogate and have a deeper analysis that would allow us to inform the review of these strategies.

A feminist analysis for example, interrogates questions and challenges the system, norms and practices of domination that make women inferior and exclude them from decision making processes, power sharing and benefit sharing processes.

A feminist analysis will also highlight the gaps inherent in the strategies. Since feminism aims at dismantling patriarchy and enhances equal power relations and access to power and resources, then a combination with the socio-ecological model would allow us to look at the gaps from a feminist angle and the socio determinants of patriarchy at the same time.

Therefore, the model that has been used for this analysis is the socio-ecological feminist analytical model.

WHY THE SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL FEMINIST MODEL?

THE socio-ecological feminist model has been used because it allows us to understand and map the ecosystem of patriarchy and its drivers. It also helps us to understand how and where patriarchy manifests, under what conditions it tends to thrive, and who the perpetrators and victims are.

The socio-ecological feminist model also highlights the intersectionality and complexity of patriarchy and how it is deeply entrenched in our socio-cultural systems (norms, beliefs, behaviours, practices) and institutions (cultural institutions, schools, religious bodies, civil service) and extends in both the public and private spaces. It is this complexity that sustains patriarchy.

It becomes a system that is not only perpetuated by men and affects them at the same time, but is intersectional, inter-generational and intimate at the same time. It is passed on from age to age, family to family, group to group and across groups and relationships. That is why it even makes some women become *"perpetrators of patriarchy"* and hence becoming their own

enemies largely due of the social system they have been socialized in.

The socio ecological feminist model also allows for the exploration of complex social determinants to patriarchy such as employment, income levels, ethnic differences, geographical location, education levels which underpin patriarchy.

It also allows us to explore systemic influences across the different spheres i.e. from personal and intimate relationships (private spaces) and how that influences the community and societal levels (public spaces) such as in the making of bylaws, customs, taboos, policies and strategies.

It also identifies the intervention points where agency needs to be built and where transformative change can be attained at the different levels, e.g. from individual levels up to societal levels.

In short, it confirms the fact that the mindset, values, beliefs at personal level influence the kind of laws, policies and calibre of leaders we have in place within public spaces. Since patriarchy is a deeply entrenched concept in our socio-cultural norms and manifested through individual attitudes, behaviours, choices, relationships and societal systems - it is important that the strategies aimed at tackling it address all the levels, from individual, to relationship, community to societal levels. Only then will patriarchy be dismantled.

The socio-ecological feminist model has been applied successfully in various contexts and sectors in addressing systemic challenges inherent in power dynamics and power relations between women and men by various actors. These achievements include; affirmative action, gender sensitive budgets, male action groups, political suffrage for women and institutionalization of women shelters.

LIMITATIONS OF THE METHODOLOGY

THE socio-ecological feminist model tends to present a wide range of variables to interrogate hence making it unclear which parameter to focus on since most parameters are interconnected.

Changing lifestyles and mindsets require long term interventions and quite often government interventions are short term and project based because of the donor conditions that surround them.

The feminist agenda is a political agenda, it involves building agency. Building agency entails building capacity to challenge, interrogate, develop accountability and tracking mechanisms, reframe and develop new norms, new language, values and systems, build evidence, lobby, advocate and form collaborative efforts to grow movements that will dismantle patriarchy in the long run.

Building the agency of right holders and duty bearers is critical in this endeavour. Like all changes – grooming leaders who will lead the feminist agenda across all levels is inevitable. And often will include building the agency of the survivors and perpetrators as well as political, economic, cultural and religious leaders to shape a feminist oriented transformative societal agenda. This takes both a carrot and stick approach.

In as much as the model is instrumental in highlighting the hotspots for action the interconnectedness of the drivers of patriarchy can present a complex plan of action.

As we can see in Uganda the wide range of legal instruments so far has not abated gender-based violence. This means that the legal instruments alone cannot yield the expected results without the political will, and agency to catapult the transformation.

Generating motivation for change, especially at personal level, is not easy, since most people tend to live in denial of how much power they have and how it affects them and their environment.

ADDRESSING THE LIMITATIONS

The first level of addressing the limitations is awareness. The multiplicity of parameters for action can be numerous.

This means that to stay focused we shall rank the interventions and select those interventions that directly align with WPI's key priorities.

CHAPTER 3: GENESIS OF MALE INVOLVEMENT IN DISMANTLING PATRIARCHY IN UGANDA

DRAWING on its mandate, MGLSD has taken on the enormous task of spearheading the nationwide engagement of men and boys in the ongoing efforts to dismantle patriarchy and eliminate GBV. The development of the national strategy was funded by UNFPA.

In addition Uganda is mandated by international and regional human rights instruments that promote for the roles of men and boys in prevention and response to GBV.

These include:

a) The UN International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD),1994
b) The 4th World Conference on Women, 1995
c) The UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) (2004) which became the first United Nations inter-governmental body to openly address male engagement and responsibility of men and boys in achieving gender equality.

Some of the regional instruments at the African and East African Community (EAC) level are:

d) African Charter on Human and People's Rights
e) Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.
f) The Guidelines to Combating Sexual Violence and its Consequences in Africa.
g) African Union Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
h) African Union Gender Policy
i) Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community
j) East African Community Gender Policy

The other legal instruments are summarised in the table below.

international and regional instruments	National legal and Policy Environment	GBV response and prevention frameworks	Other GBV related frameworks	
1. The Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979), 2. Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC, 1989), 3. the Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW, 1993), 4. the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, 5. UN SCR 1820 on Sexual Violence in situations of armed conflict 6. the Kampala Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the member states of the International Conference on Great Lakes Region Protocol (ICGLR, 2003).	1. Constitution of Uganda, 1995. Article 21(1) 2. Uganda Gender Policy 2007 3. The Domestic Violence Act 2010 and its Regulations 2011 4. The Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation 2010 and its regulations 2013 5. The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2009 6. The Penal Code Act, 2007. 7. The Employment Act 2006 8. The Prohibition of Sexual Harassment Regulations (2012)	1. The National Policy on Elimination of Gender Based Violence for Uganda (2016); 2. The National Action Plan on Elimination of Gender-Based Violence 2016-2021; 3. The National Action Plan on Women (2008); 4. National Referral Pathway for Prevention and Response to Gender Based Violence Cases in Uganda (2013); 5. National Guidelines on Establishment and Management of GBV Shelters in Uganda 6. The National Action Plan on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, 1820 and Goma Declaration(2008).	1. The National Implementation guidelines for Male involvement in Sexual and Reproductive health and rights, 2. The Child Health including HIV/AIDS in the Health Sector (2013) 3. The services standards for sexual and reproductive health and rights (2012).	**LEADING TO MALE INVOLVEMENT** as a strategy to enhance community participation in prevention and response to GBV

MGLSD did this by developing a national strategy to provide guidance to all stakeholders on how to involve men and boys as active participants in preventing and responding to gender-based violence. It is worth noting that the national strategy did not have a specific timeframe in which to execute and achieve this challenge. However, the major task of this report is to review what has happened seven years down the road since this strategy was put in place.

Around this time the World Health Organization (WHO) had described violence against women and girls as “a global public health pandemic, with 1 in 3 women around the world experiencing physical or sexual violence in their lifetime”. The situation in Uganda was not any different. Statistics show that in 2006, the UDHS indicated that most Ugandans had experienced inter-personal violence in their lives whether of physical, sexual or emotional nature.

The 2016 UDHS report reported that half of women (51%) and men (52%) age 15-49 have experienced physical violence since age 15, and 1 in 5 experienced physical violence in the 12 months preceding the survey. Twenty-two percent of women and 8% of men have ever experienced sexual violence.

The Uganda Police Annual Crime report of 2014 indicated an increase in incidents of violent crimes against persons, such as homicides, defilements, robberies and child-related crimes, domestic violence and threatening violence among others.

Therefore, the MLGSD was tackling a problem that had become a societal catastrophe and a largely accepted one at that.

Currently, Uganda has two national strategies aimed at mobilizing men and boys to actively get involved in addressing the systemic causes and consequences of patriarchy; reducing GBV; improving SRHR; and promoting economic empowerment. .

These are:

1) The Male Involvement Strategy for the Prevention and Response to GBV in Uganda [2017]
2) The National Strategy for Male Involvement/ Participation in Reproductive Health, Maternal Health, Child, Adolescent Health and Rights – Nutrition, including HIV/TB [2019]

However, in spite of these strategies, GBV continues almost unabated.

In this information brief, WPI interrogates the status-quo and the inability to change for the better. The review subjects the national male engagement strategies that Uganda has on the response and prevention of GBV, and on SRHR; maternal, child and adolescent health and rights; and nutrition, including HIV/TB prevention, to a socio-ecological model with a feminist lens.

CHAPTER 4: INTRODUCING THE STRATEGIES

IN 2017 MGLSD took the initiative to develop an overarching national framework on male involvement. It was the first of its kind and a ground-breaking initiative.

Government agencies and ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) were supposed to use this as a guiding framework to inform their individual strategies and plans on enhancing male engagement. To date only the Ministry of Health (MOH) has taken significant steps to develop a national strategy for male involvement/participation in reproductive health, maternal health, child, adolescent health and rights – nutrition including HIV/TB [2019].

The Ministry of Health furthermore developed policy guidelines to Male Involvement in Sexual and Reproductive Health Service delivery as an addendum to Uganda National Policy Guidelines and Service Standards for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (2019). Other Ministry of Health-related efforts include the family planning efforts such as the Foundation for Male Engagement Uganda that commits to working with the Government and other stakeholders through a multi-sectoral approach to develop and implement a Family Planning Male Engagement Strategy. This is part of the FP2030 global initiative.

We notice that apart from the Ministry of health no other ministry adopted the male involvement strategy. As a result this presents a very limited view of male engagement limiting it to reproduction while ignoring the economic, social, and political spheres of life where women still participate under the oppressive system of the patriarchy. The question, therefore is why the other Ministries such as Agriculture, Animal, Industry

and Fisheries, Education and Sports, Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Energy and Minerals Development, where women and girls are the main contributors have not developed male engagement strategies to enhance equitable development and equality.

STRATEGY 1:

THE NATIONAL MALE INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN UGANDA [2017]

THE Male Involvement Strategy for the Prevention and Response to GBV in Uganda [2017] is the overarching national framework for engaging men and boys to become change agents in their communities and workplaces, promoting peace and security, mitigating conflicts, protecting the rights of women and girls, sensitizing their peers and ensuring victims/survivors receive appropriate services.

It was meant to support the other Government agencies such as the MDAs and the LGAs to develop male engagement action plans at sector level, district, parish, village and household levels.

STRENGTHS OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy is premised on international and regional human rights instruments on the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against women (see table on legal instruments in the preceeding section). It is against these instruments that the Government of Uganda ratified several conventions, and MGLSD derived its mandate to develop the male involvement strategy for the prevention and response to gender-based violence in Uganda [2017].

The strategy has a section on the rationale and clearly spells out the double jeopardy and complex situation men and boys are in. It recognizes their role as drivers of patriarchy on one hand and on the other hand the violence inflicted upon them by women and in some cases causing fatalities like death.

The situation analysis shows that the process leading to the development of this strategy was consultative. It spells out the stakeholders from the MDAs, civil society, UN agencies, and private sector that were consulted. It also highlights their involvement in the male engagement discourse as well as milestones

they have achieved so far. It has an overall goal, objectives, guiding principles and priority areas of action and an implementation framework.

It also has a section on budget estimates based on a five-year projection period. This is presented in broad indicative figures. It is not clear what informed these broad figures since the framework is not broken down into clear outcomes. It totals up to an indicative budget of about UGX 3.3 billion.

WEAKNESSES OF THE STRATEGY

a) Unclear duration

Launched in 2017, the Strategy does not state a clear timeframe or duration for implementation. However, from the five-year budget matrix, it can be deduced that it is a five-year Strategy. If it was meant to be open-ended, then this was an anomaly. An authentic and agile strategy ought to have a time limit because of changing trends, and for purposes of spelling out measurable milestones. The absence of a clear implementation timeline makes it difficult to have a baseline against which to measure impact. For instance, it is not clear under which global development blueprint to assess the Strategy against since it was developed at the conclusion of the MDGs (2000-2015) and advent of the SDGs (2015-2030).

b) Absence of periodic reviews

The strategy does not have an inbuilt review and accountability mechanism. Since it was developed through a series of consultations from various stakeholders it ought to also have instituted a mechanism for coordination, review, learning and iteration. It was not clear who the ministry was accountable to and the point at which the strategy would be reviewed.

c) Absence of a rights-based feminist agenda

Even though the strategy is premised in the human rights-based framework, when subjected to a socio-ecological feminist analysis the implementation of the strategy, overall goals and the objectives lack a politicized feminist agenda. The strategy does not depict the MGLSD as a leader in the male engagement discourse and providing oversight for any Government interventions. Neither do we see its past legacy, nor future ambition in doing this, and hence the confidence that it could do it. This oversight risks having the policy be used to entrench patriarchal norms instead of dismantling them.

d) Lack of a compelling vision

The Strategy lacks a compelling vision that depicts a zero tolerance to patriarchy, and a sense of urgency to deliver it. A politicized feminist agenda is intentional and stands out. The Ministry has done well to reaffirm past commitments but it has not spelt out any bold transformative steps to achieve gender equality. It would for example, be important for the Ministry to commit to supporting feminist movements and adopt a bold and forward-looking agenda that addresses the multiple and intersecting challenges faced by all women and girls. Instead of addressing the intersections between GBV and "the climate crisis and gender equality; sexual and reproductive rights and bodily autonomy; and the role of women's human rights defenders and feminist movements, who are the key to driving long-term change"[2] and dismantling patriarchy, it seeks to facilitate women to work inside the latter (patriarchy).

e) The overall goal and objectives

The objectives are too generic and could pass for any organization. MGLSD needed to stand out as the authority when it comes to providing oversight on male engagement and involvement. For instance, in addition to providing principles it could have also provided some male engagement tools in the appendix. It does not spell out its own internal structure of implementation and does not clearly spell out responsibilities in rolling out the Strategy.

If the MGLSD had conducted a comprehensive SWOT analysis it would have identified its niche as well as premised the strategy on its strengths and opportunities and this would have helped form a politicized agenda. It would have known what has worked before, what has failed and the unique pathway and preposition for change. In the same spirit, this strategy lacks a theory of change hence making it unclear what change for the MGLSD would look like at the end of the

2 A Bold Feminist Vision For Beijing+25: The Women's Rights Caucus Feminist Declaration; https://www.peacewomen.org/e-news/article/bold-feminist-vision-beijing25-womens-rights-caucus-feminist-declaration

day.

The goals and objectives are largely qualitative. There is hardly any quantification which then questions what the budget was based on.

There is misalignment and inconsistency between with the objectives in the narrative and the objectives in the matrix. Some objectives look like activities/actions and vice versa. Secondly, there are objectives in the matrix which are not in the narrative section. Then there are objectives that are mixed up with activities. For instance, one objective that states like an action is, *"To provide friendly services to male victims of GBV"*. There is an action that states, "*Promote implementation of cultural institutions action plans, policy briefs and commitments on GBV"*; another, "*Strengthen the existing GBV coordination mechanisms at different levels and integrate male involvement activities therein."*

Another example of misalignment or non-specificity, *"To raise awareness among male GBV duty bearers to provide gender sensitive GBV services in the matrix it states differently; To raise awareness among duty bearers to provide gender sensitive GBV services as mandated by national policy on elimination of GBV.* Raising awareness is broad objective and quite needs to be split into an actual activity. There are many ways of raising awareness.

f) Actors

The actors mentioned in the strategy are too few considering the other actors involved in the Gender Equality portfolio. The biggest concentration was mostly on MDAs. There are a few CSO's mentioned such as CARE International, Raising Voices, Center for Domestic Violence Prevention; so the process excluded several non-conventional actors who could have made a significant contribution such as the academia. Apart from the mention of the media, the private sector is totally missing among the actors.

Yet the commoditization of women happens most in the private sector, such as [3]in the women's labour migration industry to the Arab region (ref. women working as domestic workers), music and entertainment industry, arts and advertising, and sales and marketing. Private companies play a key role of misinforming and dis-informing the public and promoting women's bodies as commodities for sale.

According to the [4]Femmagazine manufacturers strategically market products toward women for the purpose of selling into, and exploiting, their femininity and domesticity.

g) Target populations

The Strategy generalizes the Ugandan population, even when it acknowledges on p.22 part (4) that *"Uganda has diverse cultures, customs and taboos that define men's status and expectations in different ways".* The interventions proposed in the Strategy are not disaggregated in line with this diversity. The Strategy ought to have clearly spelt out unique contexts and populations and how GBV manifests there. The drivers of GBV differ across populations, regions and cutures. They differ between refugee, displaced, conflict-prone, and cross-border communities on one hand, and in stable communities on the other. They differ between urban and rural communities. For instance, in urban populations, the drivers of GBV are related to substance abuse, mobility, inadequate housing, social media, unemployment and education, whereas in the rural communities it is poverty, benefit-sharing, polygamy, unwanted or forced marriages, teenage pregnancies, and harmful practices, such as female circumcision, incest, dowry and bride price.

There was also need to disaggregate interventions by age group, since GBV tends to be more prevalent in certain ages than others. Likewise, forms and trends of GBV are continuously evolving. For instance, with the onset of social media, cyber bullying, online sexual violence and suicide are on the rise among young populations. The strategy does not address this reality.

h) The role of social media and technology

In the strategy, the role of social media (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, X, TikTok, Snapchat) and technology (smart phones and computers)

3 Uganda Country Report; Women's labour migration on the Africa-middle east corridor: experiences of migrant workers from Uganda; 2019

4 Feminism 101: What is the Commodification of Femininity? December (17. 2016)

is grossly underplayed. With the increased accessibility and influence of social media new drivers of GBV especially commoditization and objectification of women's bodies are on the rise and these include; pornography, child and human trafficking, drug and substance abuse and organ harvesting, and online sexual exploitation and abuse.

i) Mental health, wellness and emotional health

The strategy is silent about the stigma and role of mental and emotional ill health in promoting GBV and especially among men. The absence of a self-care culture and poor mental health care system across the country makes it difficult for the prevention of GBV. Most survivors and perpetrators do not receive timely diagnosis, treatment, support and recovery to address mental health challenges they may be facing. Women tend to have better self-care support mechanisms in the communities than men. For instance, women have circle groups of various kinds where they can meet, vent and tap into group therapy and counsel. Yet men on the other hand do not seem to have similar arrangements for self-care. They tend to resort to drugs, drinking and alcoholism which are negative coping strategies that tend to escalate GBV.

j) Institutionalized GBV

The strategy did not come out clearly on how institutionalized GBV would be addressed. This includes; bullying and teasing in schools, sexual exploitation, sexual assault and sexual abuse in prisons, in police cells, in police training institutions, in safe houses, in professional bodies and associations and in the army. There have been several human rights reports e.g. by the Uganda human rights commission (UHRC) that have pointed to the fact that these institutions that have a role in combating GBV also in some cases tend to perpetuate it. For instance, until 2019 when the Uganda Police developed a gender police. It was reported that 5"*for years, women in the Uganda Police Force have been champions in promoting the rights of other women. However, women in the Uganda Police Force have also faced issues of gender-based violence and discrimination at their places of work. This is often in the form of sexual harassment, not being granted promotions, discrimination within different laws, and much more*".

k) Implementation plan and coordination body

The implementation plan is stated in such general terms that it is difficult to hold anyone to account. The Strategy does not have any indicators of male involvement. It did not provide any tools to guide implementation, such as assessment tools for male participation; criteria for inclusion and male engagement; selection criteria for male champions; Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on male involvement and minimum standards as well as bench-marking, ranking and grading tools and other resources for guidance.

Secondly, the Strategy is silent on a coordination mechanism for its roll-out and implementation, terms of reference and mandates.

l) Absence of M&E framework

The strategy lacked a monitoring and evaluation framework. It was not clear how the strategy would be monitored. It is important to have milestones clearly spelt out and expected results highlighted to ease the tracing of effect and impact.

m) Absence of a risk analysis

For this kind of strategy, it was important to conduct a risk analysis and highlight the risk factors underpinning it. Failure to do this shows that the strategy was blind to its limitations, and it was also not clear what assumptions it was basing its actions. A risk analysis is imperative for a GBV agenda to ensure that there are mitigation strategies in place. GBV interventions often face backlash from the community. Without a mechanism to address backlash, the male champions, actors and leaders are likely to abandon the plan of action.

n) Absence of a sustainability framework

Since this was a national strategy, it was important have a sustainability framework. This would help in developing systems, a culture and structures for continuity and working on ensuring that the MDA's do the same.

o) Absence of a resource mobilization framework

Although the Strategy has an indicative budget of UGX 3.3 billion over a period of five years. it lacks a resource mobilization plan and funding framework. It is not clear where and how the MGLSD intends to raise funding to roll-out the Strategy. A funding map is necessary to show who will fund what and how. The Strategy focuses more on MDAs and pays little attention to LGAs and the capacities they need to play their roles.

PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

There is a need for MGLSD to address the existing gaps in the Strategy during its mid-term-term review, which should have happened in 2022 (assuming it is a five-year Strategy). The review should consider:

1. Progress on male involvement across MDAs, LGAs, and communities.
2. The role MGLSD has so far played in integrating male involvement across the country.
3. How many male involvement strategies have been developed since 2017 by the various MDAs and LGAs.
4. Integrating all the elements that are missing, e.g. the role of private sector, the M&E framework, the risk management, and sustainability frameworks.

STRATEGY 2:

THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR MALE INVOLVEMENT/PARTICIPATION IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, MATERNAL HEALTH, CHILD, ADOLESCENT HEALTH AND RIGHTS – NUTRITION INCLUDING HIV/TB [2019]

THE national strategy for male involvement/ participation in reproductive health, maternal health, child, adolescent health and rights – nutrition including HIV/TB [2019].

STRENGTHS OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy is comprehensive, ambitious, well structured, pictorial and aligns with the requirements of a strategy. It has a SWOT analysis, vision, mission, goal, objectives, guiding principles, target groups, priority areas and components and strategic directions. It derives its mandate from the male involvement strategy of the MGLSD of 2017 and from all the health related and male involvement global, regional and national instruments.

It highlights the importance of enabling men to become aware of their role and involvement in promoting sexual reproductive health. It clearly spells out the myths, socio-cultural norms that underpin the disengagement of men in the full cycle of sexual reproductive health leaving the women to bear the brunt of the burden.

It has a strongly engendered and feminist tone which is evidenced in the pictures, and examples given to show the current and desired impact on society.

It has a comprehensive list of persons who were involved in the Strategy's development, demonstrating the high level of significance that MOH attaches to the Strategy.

It has a detailed implementation plan with clear targets, lead agency, timeframes, indicators, and sources of funding. It also clearly spells out the role of other sectors, which makes it easy to know what to hold MOH accountable for. It also spells out the role of a national working group that will oversee the implementation. This also acted as an accountability mechanism.

a) Internal patriarchal stereotypes in the health sector

The Strategy does not show how it will tackle the gender biases and stigma inherent in the health system especially among male and female health practitioners towards the male involvement model. For instance, midwives find it hard to admit men in the labour ward to support their wives during delivery. If the men attempt to accompany their wives to the labour ward and they are shunned, belittled or laughed at this could cause a backlash in the campaign to involve more men. The strategy does not show how these internal patriarchal stereotypes will be dealt with.

b) Lacks a clear strategy on engaging private sector actors

Apart from mentioning media and the transport

sector like *boda boda* riders; it misses out on the critical actors in the formal and informal private sector; such as the pharmaceutical industry and herbalists who play a big role in influencing the participation of men.

For instance, there is need to address the gender inequalities in family planning approaches. 90% of the family planning and contraceptive approaches are skewed towards women and this means the role of men will continue to be minimal. The herbalists are part of the custodians of the socio-cultural norms in society and hence important to involve in the promotion of male engagement in SRH.

c) Integration of male engagement in the medical and health practitioners training curriculum

There is need to demystify gender variations regarding education on aspects of safe motherhood, menstrual health and PMTCT. There needs to be a male involvement training program that focuses on these elements and hence promoting the added value of having men involved.

d) Absence of critical implementation frameworks

The strategy did not have a monitoring and evaluation framework, risk management framework and sustainability framework. A financial projection and funding plan is missing in this strategy even if it mentions in the implementation matrix that the Government will fund the plan.

PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

The MOH's strategy was well written, structured and well organized. The broad parameters for measurement were clear, the working group had clear terms of reference. It will be interesting to see what it has achieved so far. The strategy was launched in 2019 and should be due for review this year.

In reviewing the strategy, the MOH will need to consider some of the missing elements such as the monitoring and evaluation framework, risk management framework and sustainability framework.

COMPARISON OF THE TWO STRATEGIES

In looking at the two Strategies – the overarching strategy from MGLSD was not as comprehensive as it ought to have been. It was difficult to see how it could be implemented. It lacked in several areas as mentioned in the weaknesses. The Ministry of Health strategy on the other hand was quite elaborate with clear implementation modalities and thus easy to see how it would be easy to implement.

Both strategies do not show how agency was to be built and how patriarchy was going to be dismantled. They concentrated more on institutional integration, capacity building yet at the end of the day it is the human beings and the systems they put in place that will dismantle patriarchy.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

IN conclusion, having subjected the two strategies to a socio-ecological feminist analysis, it is worth mentioning that although some aspects of the model were touched, more consistency is needed to ensure that patriarchy is being dismantled at all levels. The Ministry of Health strategy seemed to concentrate more at the national level. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development model seemed to focus on a few institutions. There is an urgent need to re-launch and ignite the male engagement discourse with a socio-ecological feminist approach in the entire country and integrate it into current ongoing development initiatives such as the Parish development model (PDM). And also create an accountability mechanism where all ministries are held accountable for adopting the male involvement roadmap. Hence the need to get the ministries to adopt the model as follows;

ACTOR SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

INSTITUTION	ISSUE
Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development; Ministry of Health	1) Conduct a study to assess the impact of the National Strategy on Male Involvement on the prevention of, and response to, GBV [2017]; and national strategy for male involvement/participation in reproductive health, maternal health, child, adolescent health and rights – nutrition including HIV/TB [2019]. 2) Constitute a comprehensive team of experts to lead the reviewing of the current strategies and develop revised strategies 3) Source adequate funding to review and implement the new strategies 4) Adopt a socio-ecological feminist model when updating the national strategy on male involvement in the prevention and response to gender-based violence in Uganda [2017]. 5) Conduct a SWOT analysis of MGLSD in promoting male involvement 6) Establish safe spaces for men such as male shelters to help men get specialized psychosocial support, counselling, diagnosis, treatment and recovery from GBV. 7) Adopt a holistic approach towards incorporating male engagement and not limiting it to sexual reproductive health only.
Parliamentary committees	1) Ensure funding is allocated to roll out the national strategy on male involvement in the prevention and response to gender-based violence in Uganda. 2) Hold the whole of Government & MDAs accountable to the male involvement agenda. 3) Integrate the male involvement agenda in the parish development model. 4) Launch investigations in institutionalized GBV in prisons, police, army and schools. 5) Become the national role models of Male Involvement by instituting male action groups (MAGs) at Parliamentary level.
Donors	1) Establish a donor group to buy into – the concept of long-term interventions on male involvement. The donor group should provide a funding basket to roll out a long term (preferably 10-years) continuous, widespread, nationwide campaign on male involvement in order to achieve significant and sustainable impact. 2) Link MGSLD & MOH and other MDAs to likeminded partners/donors who are piloting the integration of male involvement, so that they can become the learning models for the rest of the MDAs.
Private sector	1) Conduct a study to establish the negative impact of private sector in indirectly promoting GBV and patriarchy the entertainment and music industry. 2) Establish a national private sector led male involvement working group comprising of members from the Uganda manufacturers association, Uganda investment authority and the Private sector foundation to provide minimum standards on male involvement and standard operating procedures for adoption by various companies.
Civil society actors	Hold the whole of Government accountable for the male involvement agenda across the key sectors where women are the main producers for example Agricultural sector, education sector, mineral industry and the Environment sector.
Media	Ensure the Executive Directors of the media industry understand and embrace the male involvement feminist agenda. Various trainings need to be done for the Media Industry to buy into the male involvement agenda.
Local Government Authorities	1) Implement the SOPs in male involvement across the sectors. 2) Build capacities across the LGA's to integrate and promote male involvement in all sectors including in the Parish Development Model [PDM]

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