

# **Men, Masculinities, Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Violence**

## ***A Literature Review and Call for Action***

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**MenEngage Alliance**

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## **Why this paper?**

This paper explores possible linkages between masculinities and different forms of sexual exploitation and sexual violence. Specifically, it seeks to answer the question: How do prevailing norms and views of manhood, or masculinities, contribute to some men's use of sexual violence, and the "demand-side" of sexual exploitation? We critically review existing literature on the topic, with a particular focus on recommendations for action. *From what we know about how prevailing gender norms contribute to some men's use of sexual violence and sexually exploitative practices, what can we propose to reduce sexual exploitation by working with men and boys to question salient gender norms that drive the demand?* In terms of programs to reach men and boys on this issue there are a few examples – some which address sexual exploitation specifically, others which address questions of masculinities and gender equality more broadly. However, most of these projects have been small-scale, and with little impact evaluation to date. There are also examples of policies that have incorporated an understanding of the demand side of sexual exploitation and the need to move beyond a mostly punitive model toward a more comprehensive one that includes sanctions as well as preventive approaches, such as engaging men and boys with messages that question sexual exploitation and the "commodification" of women and girls (and boys and men). Overall, we affirm the need to increase attention and action to engage men and boys in questioning and overcoming gender norms that contribute to sexual violence and exploitation.

## **Who we are**

**MenEngage** is a global alliance that seeks to engage boys and men to achieve gender equality. The Alliance came together in 2004 with the goal of working in partnership to promote the engagement of men and boys in achieving gender equality, promoting health and reducing violence at the global level, including questioning the structural barriers to gender inequalities. The MenEngage partners work collectively and individually toward the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those components that focus on achieving gender equality. The Alliance's work is informed by and seeks to achieve the goals set out in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Activities of the alliance include information-sharing, joint training activities and national level and international level advocacy. Steering Committee Members and international members include Promundo (co-chair), EngenderHealth (co-chair), the International Planned Parenthood Federation, Family Violence Prevention Fund, International Center for Research on Women, WHO, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNDP, Sonke Gender Justice Project, Save the Children-Sweden, Salud y Género, Men for Gender Equality (Sweden), Men's Resources International, Sahoyog, and the White Ribbon Campaign. For more information, see [www.menengage.org](http://www.menengage.org).

**Promundo** is a Brazilian NGO with international reach that seeks to promote gender equality, achieve sexual and reproductive rights and reduce violence against women, children and youth. Promundo works to: (1) research innovative ideas that have the potential to achieve positive social change; (2) apply these ideas in pilot initiatives in partnership with community groups; and (3) disseminate the results of applied research to organizations, governments and multilateral institutions that are well-placed to continue, expand and replicate these initiatives in the long-term. For more information, see [www.promundo.org.br](http://www.promundo.org.br).

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### *What does gender have to do with it?*

Sexual exploitation and sexual violence are widely recognized as gender issues. In their different forms and contexts, sexual exploitation and sexual violence disproportionately involve men as perpetrators, and girls and women as victims and are driven by social norms related to gender and sexuality and the unequal power dynamics between men and women that these norms create and reinforce. ***Historically, however, research, programs and policies related to sexual exploitation and sexual violence have focused mainly on protecting and assisting girls and women<sup>1</sup>. Relatively little attention has been given to the importance or possibilities of addressing men (and women) to prevent such behaviors***, and even less to contexts in which men and boys themselves are victims of sexual exploitation and sexual violence.

The last 20 years have witnessed a growing consensus on the need to engage men in achieving gender equality and, within this consensus, an increase in research and discussion on the specific issue of men, masculinities, sexual exploitation and sexual violence. ***It is now more widely recognized that sex work, exploitative forms of pornography and other forms of sexual exploitation are often more about masculinities and “men’s sexuality, not women’s” in that they are driven or motivated by men’s sexuality and sexual behavior (Månsson nd).*** Around the world, boys and men are frequently raised to believe that to be “real” men they need to be strong and in control, particularly in their intimate and sexual relationships. Sexual experience, frequently associated with initiation into manhood, may be viewed by men and boys as displays of sexual competence or accomplishment, rather than acts of intimacy (Marsiglio 1988; Nzioka, 2001). Indeed, many men construct their identities and understand and affirm their masculinity through their sexuality and sexual experiences.

***In many settings, men continue to be praised for their sexual prowess and their sexual desire is often believed to be impulsive and uncontrollable. At the same time, women are often expected to be demure and restrained in their sexual experiences and desire.*** In different settings, women and girls’ sexuality and sexual activity may be repressed and controlled “through such customs as placing a premium on girls’ virginity, basing family honor on the sexual control of daughters and wives, exacting severe punishment on women for adultery, preventing equal access to divorce, and segregating girls and women from boys and men” (Hughes 2000). In addition to these customs and norms which deny women full citizenship, as well as sexual agency, there is the nearly global practice of using women’s bodies to market consumer products and services. This commodification, or objectification, of women’s bodies reinforces perceptions that women’s and girls’ bodies are things to be “admired and consumed” by men. Some researchers also report a growing “eroticization of young girls” by the fashion industry in which younger and younger models (12-13 years old, for example) are presented as if they were adult women. While research is limited, clearly this commodification of a simultaneously virginal and sexualized model of young femininity can in turn reinforce certain standards regarding what men (and women) find attractive in women’s bodies. It is important to acknowledge that there is also an increased commodification and sexualization of the bodies of boys and men, although probably not as pervasive as with girls and women.

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to acknowledge however, that there have also been many practices and policies which have criminalized those individuals who suffer sexual exploitation, including for example, women who have been trafficked.

The contrasting norms and perceptions of men's and women's rights and sexuality create unequal power dynamics in intimate heterosexual relationships and also frame the contexts of sexual exploitation and sexual violence. As discussed in this paper, there is a body of research that indicates that adherence to non-equitable and violent hypermasculine attitudes and behaviors are linked to the perpetration of sexually exploitative acts and sexual violence. However, as will be discussed, this linkage is neither simple nor straightforward. Further, most of the available research has been carried out in the U.S and other Global North contexts with limited and non-representative samples of men. Indeed, ***there is relatively little understanding of how sexual exploitation and sexual violence are understood and/or perpetuated in different cultural contexts and their intersections with other social norms and power dynamics, including those related to age, race, class, and culture, which in turn are related to masculinities.***

In highlighting the influence of social norms on men's use of sexual exploitation and sexual violence, our intention is not to disassociate men from their individual responsibility but rather to contextualize their attitudes and behaviors so that these behaviors can be better understood and addressed. Cultural norms and the resulting gender roles and privileges they perpetuate play important roles in determining how people, behaviors, and ideas are perceived and valued. However, individuals do not respond to these norms and roles in the same ways; to different degrees, individuals have some choice in how they adhere to norms or not. ***It is important to remember, for example, that most men oppose sexual exploitation and sexual violence and that many of those men who do hold sexist attitudes or live in sexist societies do not necessarily use violence against women; rather, some men are much more likely than others to express the sexist values of their culture and to use violence against women*** (Forbes 2004). ***Furthermore, the fact that the majority of men do not use violence against women needs to be emphasized and explored*** - understanding the individual and socio-cultural factors that inhibit most men (including those with sexist attitudes) from acting in aggressive or violent ways toward women and girls is a compelling question for future research and program development related to men, masculinities and sexual exploitation and violence.

The issue of understanding men's and boys' motivations for the use of sexual violence is also complicated by the fact that the issue is often divided into two sectors -- those working to end sexual violence and exploitation against children (using the UN definition of being under age 18) and those working to end violence against women (18 and over), who sometimes also include "women and girls" (generally excluding sexual violence and exploitation of boys and men). We have in this paper generally avoided this distinction. We have sought to examine different factors associated with men's use of sexual violence against persons under age 18 but found little literature or research on men and masculinities that have divided the issue by under 18 versus over 18. From the point of view of an alliance of organizations working to promote gender equality and end violence against women, children and between men, we have sought to examine literature on all forms of sexual violence and exploitation carried out by men, differentiating by the age of victim when we found this distinction in the literature.

While the focus of this paper is how prevailing norms about manhood are among the central factors underlying sexual exploitation and sexual violence, we want to recognize that other factors, including broader gender inequalities, national and international policies and economics, globalization, poverty, organized crime, war and conflict, media, and racial and ethnic stereotypes, also contribute to the risks for sexual exploitation and sexual violence (Jõe-Canon 2006). ***Moreover, there are some situations and forms of sexual exploitation and violence that have more pathological roots and go beyond the sphere of social influences and discussions of masculinities while also interacting with these social influences.***

Pedophilia, in particular, is defined as a clinical disorder in which adults are primarily sexually attracted to pre-pubertal children. This terminology is often misused, however, to also include men who are situational abusers; that is, men who sexually exploit a child because the child is easily available to them, most commonly through commercial sexual exploitation or within the family (ECPAT nd). As described on the ECPAT<sup>2</sup> website, “the situational abuser does not usually have a specific sexual preference for children. Situational abusers are generally regarded as opportunistic and indiscriminate, though it may nevertheless be the case that they prefer as a sexual partner someone who fulfils socially defined ideals of beauty and sexuality, such as looking young and/or physically immature. Public perceptions of those labeled pedophiles as a marginal group of people who seek sex with children may, in fact, deflect attention from the increasing sexualization of children, especially girls, in various cultures (and in the media), as well as the prevalence of sexual abuse and exploitation among the general population” (ECPACT nd).

In the next few sections, we explore the research and conceptual understandings of possible linkages between masculinities and different forms of sexual exploitation and sexual violence. This discussion is followed by a reflection on promising programs and policies – some of which have addressed sexual exploitation and sexual violence specifically, others which have addressed questions of masculinities and gender equality more broadly. However, most of these efforts have been small in scale. We conclude this paper with specific recommendations for increased attention and action in research, policies and programs to engage men in questioning and overcoming gender norms that contribute to sexual exploitation and sexual violence.

### **BOX 1–What is Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Violence?**

**Sexual exploitation** can be defined as “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 use of another (UN Secretariat 2003), including the participation of a person in sex work, sexual servitude, forced marriage, or the production of pornographic materials. Even in the absence of any of these factors, where the person participating in commercial sex work, sexual servitude or the production of pornographic materials is under the age of 18, sexual exploitation shall be deemed to exist” (Prostitutes’ Education Network nd). Sexual violence or abuse, on the other hand, can be defined as the “actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under equal or coercive conditions” (UN Secretariat 2003).

Sexual exploitation and sexual violence against women and children have been addressed in several international documents, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

#### **CEDAW – Article 6**

State Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women

#### **CRC - Article 19**

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ECPAT stands for “End Child Prostitution Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes”

State parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child

#### **Article 34**

State Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral, and multilateral measures to prevent:

- a. the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
- b. the exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;
- c. the exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

#### **Article 35**

State Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

#### **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography**

... the elimination of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography will be facilitated by adopting a holistic approach, addressing the contributing factors, including underdevelopment, poverty, economic disparities, inequitable socio-economic structure, dysfunctioning families, lack of education, urban-rural migration, gender discrimination, irresponsible adult sexual behaviour, harmful traditional practices, armed conflicts and trafficking in children. . .

...also. . . efforts to raise public awareness are needed to reduce consumer demand for the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. . . .

Other international documents that have addressed the sexual exploitation of girls and women include: The Resolution of the Eleventh General Assembly of WTO (Cairo) on the prevention of organized sex tourism of 22 October 1995; Stockholm Declaration of 28 August 1996 against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children; and the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime was the first UN instrument to address demand in the context of prevention of trafficking, generally calling on countries to take or strengthen legislative or other measures to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of women and children (Raymond 2004; United Nations 2000).

#### **BOX 2: MEN, GENDER AND MASCULINITIES**

In the past 20 years, researchers have helped build an understanding of how gender – embedded in social norms and in social institutions and social practices – creates and perpetuates power imbalances. Research has also helped make visible how norms related to masculinities are socially constructed and the implications of salient versions of views about manhood for the lives of men and women. Before discussing how it is that masculinities influence and drive men’s behaviors related to sex work and other forms of sexual exploitation and sexual violence, it is useful to offer some definitions.

*Gender* as we use it here refers to the social roles, expectations and definitions of what it means to be men and women in a given context (in contrast to *sex* which refers to the

biological fact of being born male or female). *Male gender norms* are the specific social expectations and roles assigned to men and boys in relation to women and girls. These often include ideas that men should take risks, endure pain, be tough or stoic, or should have multiple sexual partners – sometimes including paying for sex -- to prove that they are “real men.” *Masculinities* refers to the multiple ways that manhood is socially defined across historical and cultural contexts and the power differences which exist between different versions of manhood (Connell 1994). For example, a version of manhood associated with the dominant social class or ethnic group in a given setting may have greater power and salience, just as heterosexual masculinities often hold more power than homosexual or bisexual masculinities. *Patriarchy* refers to historical power imbalances and cultural practices and systems that accord men on aggregate more power in society, and offer men material benefits, such as higher incomes and informal benefits including care and domestic service from women and girls in the family (UN Division for the Advancement of Women 2003).

The conceptual framework that has guided many interventions with men and boys from a gender perspective is a *social constructionist perspective* (Connell 1987 & 1994; Kimmel 2000). This approach affirms that masculinities and gender norms are: (1) socially constructed (rather than being biologically driven), (2) vary across historical and local contexts and (3) interact with other factors such as poverty and globalization. In a social constructionist perspective, gender norms emerge from prevailing patterns of hegemony and patriarchy and are in turn reinforced and reconstructed by families, communities and social institutions. Boys learn what manhood means by observing their families, where they often see women and girls providing care-giving for children, while men are often outside the family setting working. They also observe and internalize broader social norms, including messages from television, mass media and from which toys or games are considered appropriate for boys or girls. They also learn such norms in schools and other social institutions and from their peer groups, which may encourage risk-taking behavior, competition and violence, and may ridicule boys who do not live to these social expectations. These social meanings of manhood are also constructed in relation to prevailing social norms about what it means to be a woman or girl. In turn, girls and women also help to construct and reinforce norms about what it means to be a man, including in some cases those which promote unequal power relations between men and women. It is important to emphasize, however that individuals (boys and men and girls and women) learn and internalize norms about what it means to be men and women – including norms that promote the commodification of sex and sexual prowess -- but can also react to these norms and can and do question them.

At the same time, ***norms about manhood are constructed against the backdrop of other power hierarchies and income inequalities*** that give greater power to some men (such as middle class or professional men, men from certain ethnic groups, or older men) and exclude or dominate others (younger boys, and men from minority or disempowered ethnic groups and lower income men, for example). In this way a social constructionist perspective calls attention to the variations among men and boys – their multiple realities and individual differences – and contextualizes gender norms or social definitions of manhood within other power dimensions and social realities, including income inequalities.

## **II. MEN, MASCULINITIES, SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEX WORK**

One of the most common and recognized forms of sexual exploitation is prostitution, or sex work (see BOX 3). Indeed, in the last two decades, there has been a reported rapid expansion and significant diversification of opportunities to buy sexual services, or at the very least such opportunities have become more visible (Anderson and O’Connell Davidson 2003). The

demand side, however, that is the motivations or factors related to men's purchasing of sex has long been invisible or ignored<sup>3</sup>. Nonetheless, we know that stereotypes about masculinity and men's sexuality have often reinforced or perpetuated norms that lend to the broader social rationalization of men's purchase of sex, and in some cases, support or encourage compliance for these behaviors (Jõe-Canon 2006). These stereotypes include:

- “They are basically decent men looking for a bit of harmless fun;”
- “Boys will be boys;”
- “It's the inevitable result of natural male instincts;”
- “Prostitution protects ‘good’ women against rape;”
- “Men need to release tension;”
- “Male biology is different from female biology and requires multiple women for sexual satisfaction;”
- “It's a way of initiating boys and men into sexual activity;”
- “Men are giving these women the means to make a living;”
- “They are not hurting anyone;” and
- “Everyone does it, don't they?”

(Durchslag 2008; Jõe-Canon 2006; MacLeod 2008)

In this section, we aim to move beyond these stereotypes and explore some of the various individual and social factors underlying men's purchase or utilization of sex work, as well as some linkages between the use of sex work and other forms of exploitation and violence. It is important, however, to first recognize the debate around what entails sex work, and to distinguish between sex work of children which is always sexual exploitation and sex work of adults which may be, depending on the circumstances, sexual exploitation. This debate is explored in Box 3.

### **BOX 3: PROSTITUTION OR SEX WORK?**

Prostitution can be defined as “any consensual sexual activity among or between adults where money or any other material compensation is involved”. It does *not* include “nonconsensual sex acts, whether perpetrated by fraud, threat of force, or force, or any sex acts perpetrated against minors” (FFE nd). Sex worker, on the other hand, is a term “coined by sex workers themselves to redefine commercial sex...as an income-generating activity of form of employment for women and men” (Bindman and Doezema 1997 in Altman 2001). The term is intended as an alternative to the pejorative connotations associated with prostitution. At the same time, however, it can also be argued that the term “sex work” implies a “form of equality in economic and negotiating power” which is rarely the case for individuals involved in commercial sex (Altman 2001)<sup>4</sup> – particularly when one considers how poverty and other structural factors influence women's (and men's) entry into sex work or trafficking and their abilities to exercise power over their lives and interactions with “clients.” The impact of poverty and limited economic opportunities on women's entry into sex work and trafficking cannot be underestimated. Research in diverse settings, for example, has found that sex work often offers “significantly higher earnings than other forms of unskilled labour” (Gould and Fick 2008). Other structural factors which can influence women's entry into sex work and

<sup>3</sup> It is important to acknowledge that the demand side is not limited to the men who buy sex. It also includes the individuals (often men but also women) who profit from the industry surrounding men's buying of sex. Since the motivations of these individuals are more often based on economic factors than social norms and masculinities, we will not focus our discussion on them.

<sup>4</sup> Despite this ongoing debate regarding the term, however, we have opted to use “sex worker” instead of “prostitute” in this paper as it is generally the preferred term of those who advocate for the rights and dignity of individuals involved in commercial sex.

trafficking and ability to control their behaviors and interactions range from the presence of conflict, military or peacekeepers in a country to the legal status of sex work (Raymond 2003).

There is also an ongoing debate between those who argue that sex work is intrinsically a violation of human rights and should be abolished completely and those who argue that adults should have the right to use their bodies to make money, that sex work should be considered a legitimate labor, and that human rights implies ensuring that sex workers are protected from exploitation and danger (Altman 2001). Much of this debate grew out of the context of the HIV epidemic in the 1980's and 1990's when arguments were made that sex work needed to be legalized or at least recognized so that harm minimization could be promoted in the form of condoms (Jeffreys 2002). In 1998, the International Labour Organization (ILO) published a report which recognized sex work as work and recommended that governments extend labor rights and protection to those involved in sex work (Lim 1998).

To be sure, the debate on women and sex work is a complicated one. Is sex work a form of work which individuals have the right to choose or is it invariably a violation of human rights? Can it be said that if we do not accept the idea that women can choose sex work as an occupation, are we in effect denying them sexual agency? While it is clearly important to assess the extent to which a woman's (or a man's) involvement in sex work is a free choice or the result of structural inequities and limited opportunities, how do we interpret those examples of middle-class or upper-class women who also sell sex? Similarly, in terms of trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation, there are some activists who argue that physical coercion is certainly forced trafficking, but that some calculations of "trafficked" women includes women who had some degree of choice in seeking an economic opportunity. Such issues are open to tremendous debate. While we think it is important to acknowledge this debate and its various complexities, our intention here is not to establish a position regarding women, rights and sex work but rather to explore the linkages between prevailing norms and views of manhood and men's use of sex work and how these perpetuate a demand for sex work and trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Finally, it is important to assert that there are areas of sex work that are not ambiguous in legal nor moral terms, including child sexual exploitation, trafficking of women, and men's (or women's) use of violence in the act of commercial sex. For example, while there is the ongoing debate mentioned above on whether choosing to do sex work can be considered a right, in the case of children sex work is invariably sexual exploitation. It is generally recognized that children younger than 12 are never able to consent to sexual activity and that youth between the ages of 12 and 18 are unable to consent to sexual acts except under specific circumstances involving sexual activity with same-age peers<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, youth, or adults for that matter, are *not* able to give consent if they are living in a climate of abuse, sexual exploitation, coercion or violence, nor are youth under eighteen able to provide consent for any sexual activity with older persons in positions of authority.

### **How many men are we talking about?**

There is relatively little research on how many men or what percentage of the male population in a given context purchases sex acts. It is often difficult to compare available research and statistics from one country to another or from one survey to the next because of different methods and definitions used. Nonetheless, a recent review of household surveys, behavioral surveillance surveys and existing research from around the world calculated a median

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<sup>5</sup> The legal age of consent for sexual activity, however, ranges across countries and is generally between 12 and 16.

percentage of men who reported paying for sex in the last 12 months. ***The global percentage of men who purchased sex in the last 12 months was estimated at 9–10 percent***, with estimates of 13 percent to 15 percent in the Central African region, and 5–7 percent in Asia and Latin America, while a study in Western Europe found the average there to be around 3 percent (Carael 2006). Clearly, the percentage of men who buy sex varies widely among countries and cultures, ranging from just a few percent in some locations to 40 percent in others (Jõe-Canon 2006; Månsson nd). In this regard, a global percentage is much less useful than trying to understand variations by context.

### **Which men buy sex?**

Early research on men and sex work tended to emphasize the psychopathological characteristics of men who buy sex. However, ***by emphasizing personal deficiencies or negative qualities, this body of research often ignores both the cultural and situational factors that may influence a men's decision to buy sex, and the broader social norms, particularly those related to gender, that condone such behavior by some men even if the majority of men do not buy sex*** (Monto 2005). More recent sociological theory and ethnographic research has shifted away from the pathologization of men who buy sex and towards a perspective which considers the interaction between individual factors and socio-cultural norms related to masculinity and men's sexuality (Busch 2002).

***Research from around the world has shown that men who purchase sex are not a homogenous group; they represent all ages, nationalities, races, and social classes*** (Jõe - Canon 2006; Hughes 2004). One of the most robust studies to date on the characteristics of men who seek sex work was a comparison study carried out in the U.S. which compared a large sample of men arrested for trying to hire a street sex worker (n=1672) with nationally representative samples of men. The study found that the male clients were less likely to be married, less likely to be happily married if married and more likely to report being unhappy in general than men in the national samples (Monto 2005). The study also found that these men were less likely to find a variety of somewhat controversial sexual activities wrong than were other men, and were much more likely to participate in other aspects of the sex industry (e.g. pornography) than are men in general. Although these findings indicate that men who seek sex workers (at least in the specific context of the US) may differ in meaningful ways from men in general, some researchers believe that the differences between men who buy sex and men who do not buy sex are more a matter of degree than quality (Monto 2000).

Finally, although some men of all ages seek sex workers, ***research suggests that many men who buy sex are young when they do so for the first time***. Data from a pilot multi-country study carried out with approximately 180 clients of sex workers in Denmark, Sweden, Japan Thailand, India and Italy reveal that around 78 per cent had first gone to a sex worker when aged 21 or below, and about 18 per cent were aged under 18 (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2003). In Latin America, up to 11.6 per cent of men have reported that their first sexual relationship was with a sex worker (UNFPA 2001). These young men are often copying older men's behaviors and may be encouraged - sometimes to the point of coercion - to buy sex to mark their passage into manhood (Barker 2005; Canon 2006; Hughes 2004). Such social pressures experienced while young have lasting effects on behaviors; it is interesting to note, for example, that in the multi-country study mentioned above, the older a person was when buying sex for the first time, the less likely he was to have continued to do so. A study in Scotland found that if a man had not paid for sex by the age of 25, he was less likely to do so in the future (MacLeod et al. 2008). ***These findings would suggest, then, that efforts to reduce the demand for sex work should concentrate on educational and preventive work with boys and young men*** (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2003).

### **What are men looking for when they buy sex?**

While much of the discussion about men's sexuality is reduced to biological factors, men's motivations for sex and for buying for sex are a complex interplay between individual desires and intentions, specific cultural and historical norms surrounding masculinity and sexuality, and the social meanings attached to sex and to buying sex (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2003; Månsson nd). In Thailand and Vietnam, for example, research suggests that buying sex can be part of a rite of passage, as well as a ritual to consolidate relationships with male friends or colleagues in a specific phase of life or social setting, for example while carrying out military duty or with a group of same-age peers on holiday or away from home (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2003; Hoa Duc 2006). On the other hand, research with Danish and Scandinavian men found that they had never experienced social pressure to buy sex and rejected the idea that buying sex could be viewed as a public mark of virility or masculinity (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2003). Indeed, for some men, paying for sex may not fit with the stereotypical masculine sexual identity; going to sex workers can be interpreted by some men in some settings as meaning that one is not virile or "man" enough to access sex otherwise. It is important to also acknowledge the fluidity which exists between individuals and local norms and settings – that is, some men who would never consider buying sex in their own local setting because it is not socially accepted there, may buy sex when they travel to another setting because it is more locally accepted or normalized or because they feel temporarily detached or unaccountable to the norms of their own local setting. The mere availability of paid sex, in fact, may be a motivational factor for some men to purchase sex.

Peers play a particularly important role in the perpetuation of norms and ideals of masculinity which may influence men's decision to buy sex. For example, in a pilot multi-country study in Denmark, Sweden, Japan, Thailand, India and Italy, a man's experience in buying sex was more likely to have been arranged by a friend or colleague than the result of an independent decision. ***In other words, for the majority of men who buy sex as confirmed in these studies, the initial decision to do so may be as much a "public and social matter as a private and personal affair", that is, the "performance" or public presentation of a specific kind of masculinity before male peers*** (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2003).

There is also a body of research indicating that men may seek sex workers to experience certain models of gender relations and submissive femininities and reinforce their own feelings of masculinity and power and control in relationships (Månsson nd; O'Connell Davidson 2001; Yokoto 2006). Indeed, some researchers argue that there has been an increase in sex work in recent decades and that this rise can be contextualized within men's attempts to compensate for changing gender roles in the Western world and the reduction of masculine and sexual power in their own everyday relationships (Månsson nd; O'Connell Davidson 2001). In the case of trafficking and sex tourism, these attempts to experience certain conceptualizations of dominant masculinities and submissive or easily sexually available femininities may often also be intertwined with stereotypes of women from certain racial or ethnic groups (Månsson nd; O'Connell Davidson 2001; Piscitelli nd).

The opportunity to have sex with a young or youthful woman is another reason why men may buy sex; in a multi-country study of male clients, over three-quarters expressed a preference for women aged 25 or under and 22 per cent preferred those aged 18 or below (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2003). In a study of 113 men in Chicago (US) who buy sex, 80 percent believed that most men preferred young sex workers (Durchslag and Goswami 2008). This preference is largely shaped by socio-cultural factors, including those which lead men to seek to affirm certain masculine sexual identities of vitality and dominance (ECPAT

International 2005; Save the Children Sweden 2004). As one man in a study in Peru expressed, “It’s easier to dominate a younger women” (Save the Children Sweden 2004). Many men may also attach greater sexual value and pleasure to youthful bodies – an aesthetic preference certainly influenced by socio-cultural standards of beauty and women’s bodies and the increasing media barrage of images of very young models (Save the Children Sweden 2004). Moreover, research has also revealed that men who seek girls under 18 often do not regard sex with underage girls as “prohibited” – rather, they may view these girls and young women as capable of consent and/or believe that the commercial transaction legitimizes their right to have sexual relations with them (Anderson and O’Connell Davidson 2003; Save the Children Sweden 2004).

Men may also seek sex workers because they may not think they are attractive enough to find partners otherwise, they do not have regular access to other partners and/or want to satisfy different sexual demands. In settings with rigid gender segregation and/or taboos on premarital sex, for example, men, particularly young men, may still be expected to have sexual experience and may seek sex workers as a means to gaining such. In some cultures, men who are married may, in turn, seek sex workers for certain types of sexual experiences that they believe their partners might find objectionable (Durchslag and Goswami 2008). Indeed, some men may believe in a stereotypical categorization of women as “good women/bad women” or, more specifically, women who are perceived as suitable for longer-term relationships, such as marriage, and women who are perceived as only suitable for shorter-term and often purely sexual relationships (Barker 2005; Wilkinson 2005). Sex workers are generally seen as the latter type of women and many men (and sometimes the broader community and society) may, as a result, see them as having fewer rights and dignity than other women.

There is also some evidence that demand for sex work is on the increase in regions or parts of China and India as a result of the relative “shortage” of marriageable women in these settings. As a generation of boys and young men has entered sexual maturity, there is a relative shortage of girls and women of the same age range who would be normally be their sexual partners (whether within or outside marriage or formal unions). These skewed sex ratios are an artifact of son preference, and the subsequent use of sex-selective abortion and neglect of girl infants that has resulted in the much publicized “missing girls” of South Asia. In China, these young men are called “*guang gun-er* or 'bare branches' because they are branches of the family tree that will never bear fruit” (Hudson and Den Boer 2004). It is estimated that by 2020 up to 15 percent of the young adult male populations in China and India will be part of this subclass of men who will not marry – with most of these young men coming from the lowest socioeconomic tiers (Hudson and Den Boer 2004). One of the proposed results of these distorted demographics is an increased demand for sex work and trafficking networks (Guilmoto nd) as well as other forms of sexual exploitation and violence such as the kidnapping and selling of women to provide brides (Hudson and Den Boer 2004).

Finally, there is a growing body of research on the specific versions of manhood that have emerged among particular groups of men, such as mine workers, truck drivers, and other groups of men who migrate or are highly mobile in their work, and the links to these men’s demand for sex work. For example, ethnographic research with mine workers in South Africa has shown how men craft a particular notion of manhood to help them deal with the fears and struggles of their daily lives which combines concepts of bravery and persistence with insatiable sexuality and a need for multiple partners (Campbell 2001). To fulfill this notion of manhood, these men, who often spend long periods of time away from their spouses or regular partners, may engage in high levels of sexual activity, very often with sex workers. Moreover, much of this sexual activity may be unprotected as “flesh-to-flesh” sexual contact can

symbolize a form of emotional intimacy these men may not have access to in their daily lives. In addition to the implications for human rights violations, these trends are particularly troubling in the context of the HIV epidemic in the region.

**BOX 4: THE SUGAR DADDY PHENOMENON: MASCULINITIES AND CROSS-GENERATIONAL AND TRANSACTIONAL SEX**

There are many young women who may not see themselves as involved in sex work but whose sexual relations may include an explicit transactional dimension. These types of sexual relations have been most widely researched and discussed in the context of sub-Saharan Africa and are usually with older men, or so-called sugar daddies, in exchange for food, school, fees, and support for families.<sup>6</sup> Estimates of the frequency of these relationships vary widely by location and study; in Cameroon, for example, only 5 percent of adolescent girls reported ever engaging in a sexual relationship in exchange for money or gifts, compared to 66 percent of adolescent girls in Malawi ((Luke and Kurz 2002). As they are most often associated with both age and economic asymmetries and a lack of alternative options for income, these relationships are often also comprised of various degrees of sexual coercion. At the same time, the young women involved in these relationships frequently face a double standard in terms of social criticism. A qualitative study in Namibia and South Africa found that although society in general did not condone these relationships, “in most cases the girl will be criticized more (than the man),” as was explained by one informant (Jewkes et al. 2005). While there is a relatively broad literature about what motivates girls to become engaged in cross-generational or sugar daddy relationships, there is limited research on the men’s specific motivations (Hope 2007). Some reasons why men may engage in relations with young women include the belief that young women are less likely to be infected with HIV infection and the prestige and self-esteem that may be associated with men having multiple young partners and demonstrating that they are able to “conquer” and maintain many women (Luke and Kurtz 2002).

***What are men’s attitudes about the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation?***

Despite the tremendous amount of research, programming and advocacy dedicated to ending the trafficking of women, there has been little reflection or research on men’s attitudes about the issue, particularly as it links to trafficking for sexual exploitation. One of the few studies which have examined men’s attitudes was the multi-country study in Denmark, Sweden, Japan, Thailand, India and Italy with clients of sex workers, mentioned above. A quarter of the men interviewed said that if a client met a sex worker whom they believed to be a victim of trafficking, they should report the case to the authorities (Anderson and O’Connell Davidson 2003). Indeed there are examples of clients who have helped to “rescue” girls and women after they learn that they were trafficked. At the same time, the study above also found that clients who knowingly used trafficked or “unfree” sex workers often did not perceive them as consenting subjects, but, in fact, as objects or commodities who could be bought and temporarily possessed by the client. In the words of one client interviewed:

“ . . . I understand that the prostitute is there in the first place because she has no choice or is forced there. I feel bad about this, especially if she is forced or sold. But the fact is that she is in the flesh market. . . she is a commodity offering a service and she should accept that. (Indian civil servant, married, aged 39 – Anderson and O’Connell Davidson 2003).

<sup>6</sup> There are also reports of young men being involved in transactional sex with older and married women, known as “sugar mummies”. These relationships are often propelled by economic need, as in the case of young women, as well as for status among peers (Mataure et al. 2000 in Barker and Ricardo 2005).

***Indeed, men purchasing sex often do not perceive consent as an issue for women in sex work and may thus not distinguish between victims of trafficking and those that are not (Hughes 2004).*** The study above found that some male clients even appeared to associate the trafficking of women with benefits for clients. For example, a 21-year-old Indian businessman commented that Nepali girls who had been sold into brothels are especially nice when they are new: “They don’t talk too much and are more helpful to the client. You can control them.” Other clients interviewed, however, said that they were repulsed by the idea of buying sex from women who had been forced into sex work. Their repulsion though was not always or exclusively rooted in moral principles -- nearly all of them also referenced the idea that it would be a “sexual turn-off” to be with a sex worker whom they could not imagine to have freely chosen sex work. There was also a sense that to express their repulsion was to claim a particular social status in which they would not “need” to buy sex from women who were “unfree” or who had been forced into sex work. Nonetheless, ***some of the clients who reported feeling either morally outraged or sexually turned off (or both) by the idea of having sex with a sex worker who was “unfree” had bought sex from workers who may have been unfree or trafficked.*** Even so, some of these men justified their buying of sex with trafficked women either because they, the client, had been drunk, could not afford to patronize more expensive sex workers, and/or because the sex worker concerned happened to be the most immediately available (Anderson and O’Connell Davidson 2003).

#### **Are many male clients violent toward sex workers?**

There is considerable evidence that women involved in sex work are frequently victims of other forms of violence, including battering, rape and murder (Busch 2002). ***However, there is no indication that more than a small minority of male customers are physically violent toward sex workers*** and there is a need for further research to identify if and why some men who buy sex work are more inclined to use violence against sex workers (Busch 2002). A study with sex workers in Cape Town found that a common trigger for a client’s use of violence was the refusal of the sex worker to comply with a demand, particularly for anal sex or unprotected sex. The authors of the study related this violent response with social norms which associate masculinity with men having control of decisions about sex in relationships (Gould and Fick 2008).

In addition to the issue of men’s use of physical or sexual violence against sex workers, there is also the broader question of when and how the purchase of sex may in and of itself be considered an act of violence. Violence can be defined as the threat of or use of any type of force (e.g. emotional/psychological, physical, and economic) against others to establish and/or reinforce power asymmetries. In this sense, the purchase of sex acts, often embedded in gender and socio-economic asymmetries can thus be considered a form of violence which (mostly) men commit against (mostly) women. Moreover, girls and women who suffer from sexual exploitation and sexual violence may often also experience additional victimization from legal and social institutions including the police and health services. Research in Sri Lanka, for example found that police harassment of female sex workers actually increased the women’s risk of violence because they had no recourse when they did experience in violence and male clients were often aware of this (Miller 2002). Indeed, in Sri Lanka and other settings where selling sex is criminalized, women are often forced to perform their work clandestinely, thus creating situations of vulnerability to violence and coercion. On the other hand, the decriminalization of sex work is not sufficient if it is not accompanied by awareness-building and others efforts to change the mindsets of those who enforce and protect the law. In Sweden, for example, where legislation is intended to protect women involved in sex work by

criminalize the purchase of sex, research has found that the police are actually far more likely to protect the men who buy sex than to uphold the law (Jacobson 2002).

**Does pornography contribute to men's buying of sex?**

There has been a significant body of research exploring the significance of men's consumption or use of pornography in private, individually and within the context of male bonding or social networking with other men and boys (homosociality) and in the social construction of hegemonic masculinity (Johansson 2007). Research in Cambodia, for example, has shown that boys use pornography as a tool to assert masculine dominance by boasting loudly among themselves of the things they have seen with the intention that girls will hear them (Fordham 2006).

***Some researchers (mostly in the U.S.) have also studied the link between men's consumption of pornography and their use of sex work.*** One study of men who paid for sex found that those who were younger and patronized sex workers more frequently were significantly more likely to be frequent users of pornography (Tewksbury and Golder 2005). Another study in the U.S. found that pornography use was more common among men who seek sex workers than among a nationally representative sample (Monto and McRee 2005). However, close to half of the men who had patronized sex workers never looked at porn magazines or watched porn videos (Monto and McRee 2005). While these results suggest that the link between pornography and purchasing of sex may not be direct or causal, it is clear that the sexual and gender dynamics most often presented in pornography may contribute to men's notions that women are sex objects for their consumption.

Finally, there is very little discussion in the research on which specific forms of pornography are harmful or contribute to the buying of sex or use of sexual violence. Many consenting couples and non-violent, non-sexist individuals, for example, use and enjoy some forms of sexually explicit material that some would consider pornography. Because of taboos about the issue and discomfort in discussing sexuality, however, this challenging issue – of harmful and sexist pornography versus other non-violent, non-sexist forms of sexually explicit material - is often ignored and rarely openly debated.

**BOX 5: MASCULINITIES AND THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF BOYS**

As with the exploitation of girls, the underlying factors in the commercial sexual exploitation of boys are most often unequal power and economic relations between children and adults (Atikin nd). In the cases of boys, however, the issue of sexual exploitation is often a more hidden one, surrounded by the stigma of same-sex sexual relations and stereotyped gender constructions about male roles (Atikin nd; Altamura 2007; Masud Ali 2006). Gender norms which uphold that boys should be tough and able to defend themselves can lead to “barriers and . . . inadequate protection of boy children including a social blindness in relation to their experiences of sexual exploitation and sexual violence” (Masud Ali 2006). Likewise, boys may not report experiences of sexual exploitation and sexual violence for fear of showing any sign of weakness, or because of confusing feelings about sexual attraction and social sanctions related to homosexual behavior.

Although the problem of sexual exploitation of boys is often considered to be small in magnitude compared to that of girls, it is a problem that thrives in many countries and takes place in diverse locales from streets and bus terminals to hotels and restaurants. Poverty, migration status, experience of sexual abuse and family crisis are some of the factors that most

contribute to the vulnerability of boys to sexual exploitation (Masud Ali 2006; Muhammed 2006). Moreover, the sexual exploitation of boys occurs across different social and cultural contexts. To name a few:

- in Port au Prince, Haiti, boys, particularly street children, are sexual exploited by American and European tourists and members of the Haitian elite (ECPACT 2001);
- in Estonia, around 70 percent of street boys have been, or are, involved in sex work as a means of survival (ECPAT 2001);
- in the Democratic Republic of Congo, “Kamuke” or “Petit Poussins” refers to adolescent boys who are offered money and luxury goods by older businesswomen in exchange for sex (ECPAT 2001);
- in India, young gender variant boys who join dance troops (Luanda dancers) are often forced into sex work and face brutal violence (Lahiri 2007);
- in Britain, the commercial sexual exploitation of boys has been cited as one of “the most hidden form of child abuse...the one about which least is known” (Hill 2001); and
- in New York City, research has found that there might be more boys than girls in commercial sexual exploitation (ECPAT 2001).

***A common misconception regarding the sexual exploitation of boys is that is an issue related solely to homosexuality or same sex attraction; that is, that boys involved in selling sex are homosexual and that the men buying sex are as well (Altamura 2007; Atikin nd; Masud Ali 2006). In fact, sexually exploited boys are a heterogeneous group of individuals with diverse and emerging sexual identities and orientations (Liabo 2000; Masud-Ali 2006).*** They may identify themselves as homosexual, heterosexual or bi-sexual and they may have different perceptions of their activities (Liabo 2000). Likewise, the sexual exploitation of boys is not perpetrated only by men who identify themselves as homosexual. Indeed, many perpetrators are heterosexual men – or would at least identify themselves as such -- and contrary to popular belief, research has shown that these men are usually from the same communities as the boys who are sexually exploited, rather than being tourists (Masud-Ali 2006; Muhammed 2006).

***For some heterosexual men, buying sex from another man may be a question of convenience and access.*** This may be particularly true in settings with rigid gender-based segregation of social spaces, as demonstrated in research carried out in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan where many men may have sex with men (or boys) because they do not have access to female sex partners (Altamura 2007). When these men’s behaviors are further conceptualized in a *passive* (those who are penetrated) and *active* (those who penetrate) framework, it appears that the concept of men who have sex with men also reflects the same gendered framework that is similar to the heterosexual model, in which there is an uneven power relationship (Masud-Ali 2006; Parker 1999). This specific gender construction perhaps better explains the high desirability of boys in commercial sex exploitation, since boys may be considered more “feminine,” i.e. less powerful and easier to put in sexually passive roles (Masud-Ali 2006; Muhammed 2006). Their less developed or less muscular bodies may also appear, to some men, to be feminine and therefore more attractive. In these ways, gender segregation can increase vulnerability for boys (and girls) as there is often little public scrutiny of these spaces and children can be easily accessed and targeted by exploiters (Masud-Ali 2006; Muhammed 2006).

## **BOX 6: MEN, COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY, AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

The last few decades have seen a rapid expansion in media and communication technologies and, as a result, increased access to tools and spaces for sexual exploitation. The introduction of the computer and Internet, in particular, have led to a dramatic increase in the circulation and consumption of pornography (Johansson 2007; Månsson 2004) and availability of sex for money – although there is little knowledge on how exactly this has affected or maybe even changed the content and structure of demand (Månsson 2004). However, as Donna Hughes argues: “Men are usually secretive about their exploitation of women and children and one of the factors in the success of the online sex industry has been men’s ability to download pornography or engage in online prostitution from the privacy of their homes and offices” (Hughes 2000). There is also some evidence on how the Internet has fostered the tightening of homosocial bonds among male clients, a phenomenon that can be observed through the rising number of on-line communities where men come together to share information about their experiences with sex workers, or at the very least offered a “safe space”, free from social sanctions, where men can talk about these experiences with other men (Månsson 2004; Williams et al. 2008).

### III. MEN, MASCULINITIES AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Although there is a growing body of information on men’s use of physical violence against women, less is known about men’s use of sexual coercion and sexual violence. Existing sample survey data collected from men is mostly from North America and with small samples of college students or incarcerated rapists, and in a few other countries where it is been the attention of research, such as South Africa (Bergen 2006; Jewkes et al. 2006). ***The recent WHO multi-country study on violence against women carried out with large samples of women therefore provides one of the most robust sources of information on the extent of men’s use of sexual coercion and rape as reported by women.*** The study found that the percentage of women who reported sexual violence by a partner ranged widely from 6 percent to 59 percent, with the majority of settings falling between 10 percent and 50 percent<sup>7</sup>. In most settings, about half of sexual violence was a result of actual physical force rather than fear of violence that might result from denying sexual advances of perpetrators (WHO 2005). The same study found that up to 12 percent of women reported have suffered sexual violence (after the age of 15) at the hands of a non-partner, including strangers, male family members (not including fathers) or male friends of the family.

***For some girls and women, coerced sex and sexual violence may be a common childhood experience.*** In 10 of the 15 settings included in the WHO multi-country study, more than 5 percent of women who had ever had sex reported their first sexual experience as forced (WHO 2005). The study also found that, in all settings except Ethiopia, the younger a woman was at the time of her first experience of sexual intercourse, the greater the likelihood that she had been forced - over 30 percent of women in more than half the settings who reported first sex before the age of 15 years described that sexual experience as forced. A review of studies from 20 countries, including ten national representative surveys, showed rates of childhood sexual abuse ranging from 7–36 percent for girls (compared with 3–29 percent for boys), with most studies reporting up to three times more sexual violence against girls than boys (Finkelhor 1994). Given the huge variation in rates of reported sexual violence, we call attention again

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<sup>7</sup> The wide variations between settings in prevalence of reported sexual violence highlights the fact that violence is not an inherent or inevitable feature of intimate relationships. Rather, it is rooted in a combination of contextual factors, such as the social norms regarding men’s and women’s behaviors, the social acceptability of violence and individual and psychological factors such as the degree to which one accepts certain norms about gender, relationships, and violence (WHO 2002).

to the need to understand the local contextual factors that may explain these variations – and that given us insights on preventing such violence.

**What is the context of men’s use of sexual violence against women?**

As with other types of violence against women, sexual violence is most often a manifestation of rigid gender norms and power imbalances between women and men. These rigid gender norms include those which espouse men’s superiority and dominance over women and women’s submissiveness, as well as those which associate the affirmation of a man’s identity with the extent and frequency of his (hetero) sexual experiences. Research in South Africa has found that young men may construct and assess “successful masculinity” through “on-going acts of competition in relation to male peers, with sexual conquest being regarded as a sign of status, whether achieved by wooing, begging, trickery, or, ultimately, the use of force” (Jewkes 2005 & Wood and Jewkes 2001 in Jewkes et al. 2006). In a study in Kenya, adolescent boys said that they resorted to pressuring girls to have sex because they feared that they would be defined as ‘not man enough’ or impotent if they did not have sex (Njue et al. 2005). Likewise, research in Cambodia about youth and *bauk*, or gang rape, found that young men associated participation in *bauk* as an affirmation of their masculinity or as one young men explained, “He wouldn’t be a man if he was unable to rape her” (Wilkinson et al. 2005). Research in these different settings also found that much of the discourse which associates men’s sexual experiences with the affirmation of their masculinity is reinforced by norms which present men’s sexual needs and desires as uncontrollable and that once aroused, require immediate satisfaction (Cáceres 2005; Jejeebhoy 2005; Wilkinson et al. 2005).

***It is important to emphasize, however, that the norms and social meanings of masculinity and sexual violence vary tremendously by context.*** The link between masculinity and sexual behavior is not always understood to include or condone an element of force or coercion. In another study in South Africa, most men prided themselves on their persuasive abilities and regarded the use of force to get sex as ‘unmanly’ (Wood and Jewkes 2001 in Jewkes 2006). In Brazil, research with young men in low income urban contexts found that although physical violence against partners was considered acceptable in some circumstances and practiced by as many as a fourth of youth men in their current or most recent intimate relationships, sexual violence was generally not condoned. The young men did not report proving their manhood through violent sex, but through mostly consensual sexual encounters (Promundo and Noos, 2002). Forcing a partner to have sex was only permitted if the woman or girl in question had accepted going to a motel or other setting in which consent for sex was considered implicit, and the woman changed her mind after arriving in this space (Promundo and Noos 2002).

***Research in various settings would also suggest a sometimes opportunistic nature of men’s sexual behavior when it comes to sexual violence, and likewise, a heightened vulnerability for certain groups of women.*** That is, men may be more likely to use sexual violence when and with whom they believe they can get away with it, or when they perceive that there will be few social or legal sanctions (or indeed when such violence is sanctioned). In formative research in India, for example, men reported that they might carry out violence against low caste and street based women because they thought that they would be able to do so with impunity (Verma et al. 2007). Those groups of girls and women who are especially vulnerable to being victims of these “opportunistic” types of sexual violence most often include women who in one form or another are socially isolated or excluded, such as girls in live-in domestic work settings, neglected, homeless or street girls and women who are seen as not having “male” protection, girls and women with disabilities, aboriginal girls and women, immigrant

and refugee girls and women, girls and women living in conflict and post-conflict settings, and women working in mostly male professions (e.g. miners, soldiers) who are far from home with those men (Amnesty 2004; Abraham 1999; Save the Children Sweden 2004; Jewkes et al. 2005).

***Understandings of sexual violence are particularly complicated in the context of intimate relationships where perceptions of women's consent and men's entitlement are often confused or unclear, on the part of both men and women (and in many national laws).*** A study with young people in Nigeria found that both young men and young women believed that "once a girl agrees to be a girlfriend she should be available for sex" (Ajuwon 2005). Likewise, research has found that girls may tolerate non-consensual sex in intimate partner relationships as a mark of commitment and love in a relationship and/or for fear that if sex was refused, the partner would lose interest (Sodhi and Verma 2003 & Wood and Jewkes 1997 in Jejeebhoy and Bott 2005). As will be discussed shortly, social norms about gender roles and sexuality in the context of marriage can also often diminish a woman's "right" and ability to say no to her husband. While consent is always a core issue in the definition of rape, it is a particularly complex one in the context of marriage, where "*I do* has historically been regarded as a permanent consent decree" (Yllo 1999). Such beliefs about marriage and a wife's consent to sex exist to different degrees in different settings. The WHO multi-country study cited above found that in several settings, for example, particularly provincial ones, between 10 and 20 percent of women felt that a wife did not have the right to refuse her husband sex, even if she did not want to have sex, was sick, or if he were drunk or mistreating her (WHO 2005).

***There is also evidence from around the world that men's use of sexual violence, specifically in intimate relationships, is associated with other forms of interpersonal violence*** (Jewkes et al. 2006). As cited above, 30 to 56 percent of women in several countries have reported experiencing both physical and sexual violence by an intimate partner (WHO 2005). A study in the U.S. of men (n=229) who had used physical or emotional violence against their partners found that 53 percent had also sexually assaulted their partner at least once and that these men were more likely to engage in severe acts of violence (Bergen and Bukovec 2006). Likewise, a study in South Africa of young men (n=1,370) found that previous use of physical intimate partner violence was very strongly associated with both partner and non-partner rape (Jewkes et al. 2006). These findings emphasize how sexual violence is ultimately an expression of power over women and may often form part of a constellation of controlling and violent behaviors on the part of some men.

Despite the proliferation of research on various forms of men's violence against women, including even physical and psychological violence, in the context of marriage, ***there continues to be a dearth of information on sexual violence within marriage*** (Yllo 1999; Bergen and Bukovec 2006). To date, the greatest insight into the behavior and characteristics of husbands who use sexual violence against their wives has been drawn from studies with women who have experienced marital rape (Bergen and Bukovec 2006). For these women, the motivating factors of the men who raped them were power and control and a need to prove their manhood (Friez 1983 and Bergen 1996 in Bergen and Bukovec 2006). While these types of testimonies from partners may help provide important insights into the dynamics of sexual violence in marriage, they are not sufficient for understanding the complexities and nuances of why men are sexually abusive in marriages (Bergen and Bukovec 2006).

Other studies with women have provided insights into common patterns surrounding sexual violence in marriage. As mentioned above, the WHO multi-country study on violence against women provided an indicator of the extent to which physical and sexual violence coexist – the

study found that in most settings, between 30 percent and 56 percent of women who had experienced any violence by an intimate partner reported both physical and sexual violence (WHO 2005). Additionally, an analysis of data from the National Crime Victimization Survey in the United States found that rape in marriage is often an ongoing aspect of the relationship (rather than a one-time occurrence) and that women who experience rape in marriage are less likely to seek help than women who experience acquaintance or stranger rape (Mahoney 1999). It is highly likely that these findings on the chronic nature of marital rape and low help-seeking among the women who experience it are true in various other settings as well.

Finally, *it is worth highlighting the influence of broader forces, including globalization and changing family structures, on men's use of sexual violence.* For men in most cultures, work and producing income are integral to their identity as a man and, in particular, a husband and head of the household. Increasingly, however, for many men work has become hard and harder to come by. Research in rural and urban East Africa, for example, has found that this *economic disempowerment which keeps men from fulfilling their male roles as head of household and breadwinner can lead to an increase in men's use of violence against women as a means to compensate and reconfirm their sense of male identity and masculinity* (Silberschmidt 2001). Likewise, studies have found that male immigrants may often experience “status incompatibility” in their new settings – that is, they may perceive themselves as the necessary heads of household yet their wives may have equal and or greater job opportunities than them and/or economic circumstances might require a two-headed household (see references in Abraham 1999). As a result of the frustration and despair at not being able to realize or sustain their role as head of the household, these men may also resort to violence against their wives as an alternative measure for asserting their authority and control in the home. Additionally, some immigrant husbands may also use violence in an attempt to control their wives' sexuality in what they may perceive as sexually permissive local cultures (Abraham 1999).

#### **BOX 7: MEN, MASCULINITIES AND CHILD RAPE**

The rape of children and young women and young men under the age of 18 – also referred to as child rape – is most often attributed to deviant “others” (ECPAT nd; Jewkes et al. 2005): men who are psychopathologically disturbed, “degenerates”, “perverts” and alcoholics. Yet the statistics and scale of the problem indicate that “child rape is not a fringe activity of a small number of psychologically disturbed men or (men who could be clinically diagnosed as) pedophiles” but that there are important underlying social factors “that, if not legitimating, at least provide space for, these activities” (Jewkes et al. 2005). In particular, the complex dynamics of power, status and gender socialization are rarely included in analyses of the issue, nor are the ways these forces intersect with individual psychology and structural factors such as poverty to create conditions of risk for child rape. A qualitative study carried out in Namibia and South Africa found that gender and age hierarchies made girls particularly vulnerable to rape; men's elevated status in the community reduced girls' ability to refuse sexual advances and perpetuated expectations of male control over women and children. (Jewkes et al 2005).

The same study found that although most people found the idea of an adult man desiring a child to be unthinkable, adolescent girls were not thought of as children in this respect and their bodies were seen as “highly sensual and a ‘natural’ object of male desire” (Jewkes et al. 2005). Furthermore, there was a perception that men's sexual desire was uncontrollable, particularly when ‘provoked’ by girls and women, a common example being when girls and women were dressed in ways seen as sexually provocative. Respondents (which included adult men and

women and girls themselves) thought that “girls should know these dangers” and avoid them – in effect, shifting the responsibility for controlling men’s sexual desires, and any ensuing act of molestation or rape, to girls and women (Jewkes et al. 2005). Research in Kenya found that men may justify their use of sexual violence against daughters by blaming the girls themselves, for being “tempting,” or by blaming mothers who “failed” in their familial and sexual responsibilities and left the men with “no alternative but to be attracted to daughters” (Njue et al. 2005). Indeed, the research in Namibia and South Africa also found this feminization of blame for rape – in addition to the girls themselves being blamed, as described above, respondents pointed to maternal absence and neglect as a primary factor behind incidents of rape. Interestingly, however, none of the respondents mentioned the issue of paternal absence or presence as a risk factor for child abuse, or the idea of fathers as protectors of their daughters, or role models for sons (Jewkes et al. 2005).

Some of the respondents also explained that a man might have sex with a child even when aroused by adult women or when he normally prefers sex with an adult woman because of the “convenience” of children since they were either too young to talk, or could be ‘bribed not to talk’, by men who just wanted to “satisfy themselves”. Thus, child abuse often seemed to happen “not because the abuser was attracted to children in the classic sense, but just because at that moment they were available, and a consenting adult was not” (Jewkes et al. 2005).

#### **Box 8: Early and forced marriage: a sanctioned form of sexual violence**

Worldwide, early and forced marriage probably represents the most prevalent and sanctioned form of sexual exploitation and violence against girls and young women (Forum on Marriage 2001). Early marriage is defined as one which takes place before a child has reached the age of adulthood, commonly understood to be 18 years old, although some countries may recognize adulthood at a younger age (Forum on Marriage 2001). Early marriage exists in all regions, but is most pronounced in South Asia and West Africa (Haberland et al. 2005). In Bangladesh, India, Mali, and Nepal, at least half of all women currently ages 20 to 24 were married by age 18, according to Demographic and Health Survey data. In certain regions of Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, and Nigeria, at least 40 percent of these women were married before age 15 (Haberland et al. 2005).

In the arrangement of early marriages, there is often an element of coercion involved: for a variety of cultural and socio-economic motives, parents, guardians or families may pressure or force girls and young women into marriage (IPPF 2006). The forced marriage in turn often brings forced sexual initiation and/or ongoing unwanted sexual experiences for girls and young women. The multi-country WHO study on women and violence found that in some countries (notably Bangladesh and Ethiopia) high levels of forced first sex were likely to be related to early sexual initiation in the context of early marriage, rather than to violence by acquaintances or strangers (WHO 2005). There are also numerous studies which have shown that married adolescent girls are especially vulnerable to sexual violence within marriage (Jejeebhoy and Bott 2005). Due to cultural norms about women’s sexuality, girls and young women are often kept unaware or unprepared for sexual life and thus unable to communicate or negotiate with their partners about their sexual desires and concerns. Moreover, girls and young women may also be socialized to believe that it is their duty as wives to accept the sexual advances of their husbands, even when unwanted or forced (Jejeebhoy and Bott 2005). A study among 1,664 married young women in Gujarat and West Bengal, India found that 12 percent of married young women experienced unwanted sex frequently and 32 percent experienced it occasionally. The risk of experiencing unwanted sex was lower among women who knew their

husband fairly well at the time of marriage, regularly received support from their husband in conflicts with other family members or lived in economically better-off households (Santhya 2007).

### ***What factors are linked to men's use of sexual violence?***

***Research, mainly U.S.-based and with college students and sexual offenders, has found strong links between men's hostile or violent attitudes toward women and their use of sexual aggression and coercion*** (Carr 2002). A meta-analysis of 39 studies, again, most of which were with white, middle-class college men in the US, found that, of different measures of masculine ideology, those constructs of "hostile masculinity" and "hyper-masculinity" which included acceptance of aggression against women and negative, hostile beliefs about women, had the largest associations with sexual aggression (Murnen 2002). Other measures, including those of general gender-role adherence (e.g. men should be dominant and self-sufficient) were not strong predictors of sexual aggression. The conclusion of the meta-analysis was that the largest effect sizes were measures that combined various aspects of masculine ideology, including acceptance of violence in relationships, beliefs that women deserve violence and it is men's place to be dominant (e.g., dominance/power ideology)<sup>8</sup>. To the extent that men hold all of these types of attitudes and beliefs, they were more likely to report sexual aggression. Likewise, a small qualitative research study carried out with 30 young men in Canada who were gang members or belonged to violent male peer groups also found that those young men who rigidly adhered to a patriarchal-authoritarian model of family and gender (as indicated by adherence to familial patriarchal beliefs and attitudes supporting physical girlfriend abuse) were the most likely to use the most severe types of violence, and to use all three forms of abuse against their girlfriends (physical, sexual, and emotional) (Totten 2003). Another small study carried out with 60 university students in Zimbabwe found a significant relationship between hostile sexism and rape proclivity for acquaintance rape but not stranger rape, suggesting that men with hostile sexist beliefs are more likely to express their hostility toward women with whom they are in intimate relationships where such behavior might be perceived as acceptable because of cultural and social norms about men's and women's roles in relationships (Viki 2006). Other studies which looked specifically at sexual harassment have also found significant associations between hostile sexism and the likelihood of engaging in and tolerance of sexual harassment (Begany 2002; Russell 2004). Interestingly enough, one of these studies included both men and women respondents and found that hostile sexist attitudes were more predictive of tolerance of sexual harassment than the sex of the respondent (Russell 2004).

***Other factors that have been associated with men's use of sexual violence against women are number of sexual partners and alcohol consumption***, as found in research from North America, South Africa and India (Jewkes et al. 2006). It has been suggested that men who develop a relatively high emphasis on sexual conquest, particularly those who perceive sexual conquest as a source of peer status and self-esteem and may have many partners, may use various means, including coercion, to induce girls and women into sex (Malamuth et al. 1991 in Jewkes et al. 2006). Likewise, alcohol use is often seen as a marker of manhood and may

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The same meta-analysis also found that rape myth acceptance did not show as strong an association with sexual aggression as had been expected. It has been hypothesized that rape-supportive attitudes and beliefs create the potential to rape that is reinforced by personality factors and early sexual experiences (Berkowitz 1992 in Carr 2004). As a measure, rape myth acceptance has been of great interest to researchers as indicated by the fact that over half of the studies compiled for the meta-analysis examined the association between rape myth acceptance and sexual aggression. Although the scale measures misconceptions about rape that can in turn serve to justify rape, it does not ask men about their hostile attitudes toward women or beliefs that sex should be used to dominate women which as found in the meta-analysis have the strongest associations with men's use of sexual aggression (Murnen 2002).

be a prominent feature of men's social and sexual relations. Research has found that the relationship between alcohol and rape is multifaceted, and that alcohol may be both a precipitant of and an excuse for sexually aggressive behavior by men – although it should not be considered in and of itself an underlying cause of sexual aggression (Carr 2004; Jewkes et al. 2005). In a study with 99 university men in the U.S., 15 percent acknowledged using some form of alcohol-related sexual coercion, 35 percent of the men reported that their friends approved of getting a woman drunk to have sex with her, and 20 percent acknowledged having friends who have gotten a woman drunk or high to have sex (Carr 2004). A study with young, rural South African men also found that both partner and non-partner rapes were associated with heavy alcohol consumption (Jewkes et al. 2006).

There have also been a number of studies which have explored possible associations between men's use of pornography and men's use of sexual violence. Some forms of pornography promote images of non-consensual sex with women (and sometimes sex with other men and with children) and the hypothesis is that these images may contribute to societal attitudes about such behaviors, as well as the men's tendency to carry out such behaviors. Indeed, some studies have found an association between viewing pornography and men's misogynistic views and negative attitudes regarding intimate relationships (Simmons et al. 2008). ***Considerable evidence from specific contexts (mostly the US) shows that men who view pornography are more likely to be sexually aggressive than men who do not, although a direct causal relationship between pornography and violence against women has yet to be firmly established*** (Simmons et al. 2008). There is also research from the U.S. which has shown that men who use physical violence against their partners and also consume products of the sex industry are both more controlling and use more sexual violence than men who use physical violence but do not consume products of the sex industry (Simmons et al. 2008).

***As in the case of men's use of sex work, there is also evidence that men who commit sexual violence usually commit their first act during adolescence.*** Available data (mainly from North America) indicates that a significant proportion of male sex offenses are committed by persons under age 18 and that approximately 25 percent of adult male sex offenders report that their first sexual offense occurred during adolescence (cited in Messerschmidt 2000). Likewise, the study with young rural South African men also found that, among those who had reporting having raped a partner or non-partner, the mean age of first rape perpetrated was 17 years old (Jewkes 2006).

***Finally, numerous studies have also explored the link between early risk factors, including exposure to domestic violence in childhood and physical and sexual abuse during childhood to men's use of sexual violence*** (Carr 2002). The evidence, however, is still inconclusive. For example, whereas there is research which has found an association between witnessing domestic violence perpetrated by fathers and use of sexual aggression (Ouimette and Riggs 1998) there is also research which has only found an association with use of physical aggression (Carr 2002). Likewise, there is research which has found associations between experience of abuse in childhood and use of sexual aggression (Widom 1989 in Carr 2002; Jewkes 2006) and other research which has not found a significant correlation between the two (Carr 2002; Foubert 2000 in Carr 2004).

#### **BOX 9: Is Biology Involved? The Possible Link of Genetics to Sexual Violence**

For the last decade there has been a growing interest in the possible role of genetics or biology in men's and young men's use of violence, including sexual violence, and particularly the interaction between environment (social factors) and genetics (biological factors associated

with violence). In terms of violence in general, a significant body of research has examined the biological or genetic basis for violence, with results suggesting a bi-directional, complex relationship. For example, higher levels of testosterone (found in both males and females but generally at much higher rates in males) have been linked to higher rates of aggression in men and boys, but the results are relatively inconclusive and bi-directional (Renfrew, 1997; Kimmel, 2000). At most testosterone may act to trigger aggressive tendencies that already exist. Furthermore, stress, violence and experiencing feelings of domination cause testosterone levels to rise, confirming that biological factors in aggressive behaviors are reactive to the social environment. In sum, the research suggests that at most testosterone may trigger violent or aggressive tendencies that already exist in a given individual and that experiencing violence in turn leads to higher levels of testosterone.

Brain research has also examined genetic differences in male and female styles of communication and reasoning, including traits or deficiencies that might be associated with aggression and violence, and reached similar conclusions. The bulk of this research would suggest that there are greater differences among each sex than there are aggregate differences between the sexes (Kimmel, 2000). Furthermore, most researchers conclude that even if there is a biological or genetic basis for aggression and violence in males, including sexual violence, this propensity is mediated through the social environment and through higher cognitive functions. Some brain research confirms that neocortex functions and other higher brain structures are involved in reducing aggression (Renfrew, 1997), providing some neurological basis for confirming what had already been confirmed in psychology, namely that humans can control their aggressive tendencies through more complex levels of cognition (what psychologists might call subjectivity).

In the area of rape perpetration, the areas in which there are plausible genetic factors which may be relevant are in those genes governing hormones and neurotransmitters. Research with both mice and humans has shown that genetic deficiencies in monoamine oxidase A (MAOA) are linked with aggression. The studies with humans confirm that such genetic deficiencies interact with social conditions – the individuals most prone to use aggressive behaviour are those who both have a genetic deficiency for MAOA and were subject to abuse or violence as children (Jewkes, 2008).

Summing up, what the biological-based research would suggest is that complex human behaviors, including violence, are invariably multi-causal and that any biological propensity or predisposition toward violence or aggression in males, including sexual violence, is mediated by the social context and other individual factors.

### **How does poverty contribute to men's use of sexual violence?**

As mentioned earlier, some research suggests that lower income men – by being unemployed or underemployed and thus denied the opportunity to achieve a “successful” masculinity – may be more likely to compensate for this perceived loss of “manhood” by having more sexual partners, or by using violence, perhaps including sexual violence (see, for example, Silberschmidt 2001). On the other hand, there is also research (although limited) to suggest the opposite; that is, that more socially “advantaged” men are more likely to use sexual violence against women. The study with young, rural South African men found that more “advantaged” men, defined through maternal education, earning power and wealth, were more likely to have raped, particularly non-partners. There are similar findings from India in which men with higher education and socio-economic status were also more likely to have forced sex on intimate partners (Duvvury et al. 2002 in Jewkes et al. 2006). These examples of associations between higher socioeconomic status and use of sexual violence, although not conclusive, fit

with an analysis of rape as a masculine expression of power and entitlement over women, in that men who are more “advantaged” may feel both more powerful and more entitled to sex. While *the research is unclear on the impact of poverty on men’s use of sexual violence, it is clear that poverty increases girls’ and women’s vulnerability to trafficking and sexual exploitation* (Jewkes et al. 2005). Young and adult women living in poverty may be forced to engage in transactional sex as a survival strategy and families living in poverty may be forced to sell their children into certain forms of work, such as housekeeping, which may in turn leave the children vulnerable to sexual exploitation and sexual violence.

### **What about sexual violence in schools?**

Many girls and young women experience incidents of sexual violence and harassment in schools settings, perpetrated by both authority figures such as teachers and administrators as well as male classmates (Leach and Mitchell 2006). While there is still a lack of data on the incidence of this type of sexual violence, there has been a growing attention in recent years to the issue, particularly in the context of Africa (Leach and Mitchell 2006). Studies have found that *in some contexts, particularly in some parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, sexual violence against girls in schools often is downplayed or normalized by pupils and students because it is such an everyday occurrence and because it conforms with local gender norms* (Leach and Mitchell 2006). Indeed, there may be significant peer pressure among boys and young men to engage in the sexual harassment of their female peers as a demonstration of their masculinity (Morrell and Makhaye 2006). This may be particularly true for male students whose behaviors are perceived to be different in some way from the norm and who may act out certain heterosexualized or “masculine” behaviors, such as harassment or violence, in order to avoid being labeled as weak or gay (Meyer 2006).

### **BOX 10: MEN, MASCULINITIES, AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

South Africa has one of the highest reported rates of rape in the world and the reasons for this have been the focus of much discussion and debate. As with sexual violence in any context, there is no single factor behind the rates in South Africa, but rather a combination of factors, including socio-economic, cultural and historical aspects of South African society, as well as their interaction with individual psychopathologies. Among these factors, however, gender and gender relations play a prominent role. One researcher has in fact described the roots of the problem as the contrast “between male expectation and attempts to control women and women’s resistance to this” (Jewkes 2005). Furthermore, in the South African context of extreme unemployment and social inequalities, men are often “denied access to a prescribed and uncontested source of power” and some may seek to resolve this through “extreme acts of performed masculinity” such as sexual violence (Jewkes 2005).

Other influences that may promote high levels of sexual violence include the commodification of sex in the context of poverty, clearly not unique to South Africa. Qualitative research in South Africa has found that socio-economic inequalities contributed to rape supportive attitudes among those adolescent boys who were not seen as suitable partners because they lacked money (Petersen et al. 2005). This is a clear example of how structural factors such as poverty intersect with prevailing gender norms and social expectations of what men must do or achieve to be socially recognized as men.

#### IV. MEN, MASCULINITIES AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF WAR AND CONFLICT

Despite significant attention to the widespread rape of women during the wars in Bosnia, Rwanda and the Congo, wartime rape has never been limited to a particular era or part of the world. It has, however, often been “mischaracterized and dismissed by military and political leaders as a private crime or a sexual act, the ignoble conduct of occasional soldiers, or, worse still, it has been accepted precisely because it is so commonplace” (Thomas and Ralph 1994). In fact, *rape has historically and routinely been used as a strategy or weapon of war*, being intentionally committed by specific men against specific women (and men) – namely “enemy” women (and men). Martin van Creveld goes so far as to assert that “protecting women against rape has always been one of the most important reasons why men fought” and that, since rape of enemy women is used to symbolically demonstrate victory over enemy men who have failed to protect “their” women, “rape is what war is all about” (quoted in Alison 2007).

In a discussion of masculinities and sexual violence in the context of war and conflict, it is necessary to start with a brief reflection on perceptions of masculinities and sexual behaviors in relation to militaries or armed forces. Ideas about hyper-masculine cultures within militaries and the degree to which these cultures serve as an excuse or tolerance for extreme behaviors such as sexual exploitation and abuse are evident in attitudes such as “What do you think is going to happen when you have thousands of men away from home?” or “Boys will be boys” (Martin 2005). However, as has been discussed throughout this paper and as is increasingly recognized in the context of militaries and conflict, sexual exploitation and sexual violence are “primarily problems of abuse of power” and rigid ideas of gender roles, and “only secondarily problems of sexual behavior” (Martin 2005). Moreover, although sexual violence by soldiers is most often attributed to “military” masculinities, it is not necessary to separate these men from their broader social settings to understand their violent behaviors – indeed, it is possible to identify similarities between these men’s behaviors across different settings as well as between military and nonmilitary men (Higate 2007). As discussed below, the intersection of gender with ethno-national and socioeconomic contexts may offer more complete and persuasive explanations of sexual violence in conflict settings, in fact, than those narrowly based on what military men “are like” (Alison 2007; Higate 2007). Moreover, it can be interesting to pose the counterfactual- that is, “how might we explain military men—even those associated with the more extreme elements of hyper-masculinity in the combat arms—who have never been involved in the sexual exploitation of others?” (Higate 2007).

*Conflict and war can bring about drastic changes in the socially acceptable ways of being a man* (Tosh 2004 in Alison 2007). In particular, carrying out sexual violence – at least against the ‘enemy’ – can become seen as an acceptable feature of militarized masculinities (Alison 2007). Since soldiers continually have to wrestle with feelings of fear and powerlessness, for example, rape can be understood as a means to help them regain their feelings of power and control (Wesemann nd). Moreover, *rape may be used as a strategy of war to subjugate and inflict shame upon the “conquered” -- not just individuals but also families and communities* (Thomas and Ralph 1994). Since men, families and communities across many different cultures often define themselves relative to their ability to protect and control women’s sexuality, the rape of an individual woman can symbolize an assault upon her entire family and community (Thomas and Ralph 1994). Because of the biological and social role that women play in the continuation of national, ethnic and cultural groups, they can be seen as symbolic and strategic targets in attempts to destroy or dominate a particular group (Alison 2007). In this sense, the rape of women in times of war and conflict can also be interpreted as a “measure of victory” and a vehicle of communication between dominant and subordinate masculinities

and nationalities (or ethnicities, religions, etc.) (Alison 2007). During the Serbian-Albanian conflict over Kosovo, for example, Serbian laws made “nationalist” rape (sexual violence committed across national lines) a more severe offense than “ordinary” rape (committed within national lines). That is, it was a greater offense for a man to rape a woman of a different nationality (e.g. for an Albanian man to rape a Serbian woman or for a Serbian man to rape an Albanian woman) than to rape a woman of the same nationality. This discourse on “nationalist” rape transformed women into emblems of male and national honor, and essentially reinforced the idea that the rape of women can serve as a means for men to assert superiority of one national identity over another (Alison 2007; Bracewell 2000). This objectification of women as symbols of “conquered territory” is also evident in cases where husbands and fathers have been forced to watch their wives and daughters being raped (Alcaraz and Suarez 2006; Dolan 2002).

***It is also important to recognize that male-to-male wartime sexual violence is no less gendered than male-to-female violence*** (Alison 2007). In the last decade, sexualized violence against men and boys – including rape, sexual torture, genital mutilation, sexual humiliation, sexual enslavement, forced incest and forced rape – has been reported in 25 armed conflicts across the world (Human Security Centre 2005 in Russell nd). As with sexual violence against women, sexual violence is rooted in power and humiliation and is a mechanism by which men are placed or kept in a position subordinate to other men and is in its essence, can be described as an act which “strengthens the perpetrator’s masculinity through weakening that of the victim” (Dolan 2002; Russel nd). The purposes for sexualized violence against men and boys can range from torture, initiation and integration into armed forces to a strategy to terrify, demoralize and destroy families and communities (Russel nd). In the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, forced conscription of boys was common and the armed forces used sexual violence to brutalize recruits and break the bonds between families; for example, conscripts (often child combatants) were forced to rape their mothers and sisters (Martin 2005). In Bosnia, there were cases of male prisoners who were forced to rape other male prisoners (Bassiouni 1994 in Carpenter 2006). Research has also found that the rape of men, although less common than the rape of women, has an even higher level of stigma – such that it is difficult for male victims to discuss it at all. In the words of one respondent from research in northern Uganda, ‘when a man is raped it takes away his manhood’ (ACORD 2000 in Dolan 2002). It is often also difficult for society in general to recognize sexual violence against men as such – for example, reports of sexual mutilation of men in Bosnian concentration camps were prosecuted as torture and degrading treatment rather than sexual violence (Jones and del Zotto 2002 in Carpenter 2006).

***Within the discussion of sexual violence during conflict, it is also important to consider the increased risk of sexual violence in post-conflict contexts and the increased vulnerability that comes from the breakdown of social structures, from families to police.*** There is, for example, significant documentation of peacekeepers’ (and also emerging research on humanitarian workers’) exploitation of girls and women in post-conflict settings, most commonly through the exchange of food for sex or other resources (Higate 2007; Martin 2005). Interestingly enough, ***research with peacekeepers and others in DRC and Sierra Leone found that these relationships or exchanges are framed as situations in which women and girls “exploited” the men’s “biological needs” in exchange for goods or services.*** This reconfiguration of traditional gender power relations is an indicator of the extent to which the vulnerabilities of girls and women in these situations are starkly overlooked (Higate 2007).

***In conflict as well as post-conflict settings, girls and women in refugee camps are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation and sexual violence.*** On one hand, they may be

forced to have sex with men, including soldiers and peacekeepers, because of a lack of livelihood opportunities or for security purposes (Oyaro 2008). There is also evidence from places such as the camps in Northern Uganda that women may be pressured into sex because of a demand (mainly on the part of their husbands and community leaders) to “replace” those children who were lost through conflict (Oyaro 2008). Sexual violence can also be seen as a manifestation of a sense of despair that men living in refugee camps may feel. Young Somali male refugees interviewed in camps in Kenya, for example, said that because they could not get married, they would use sexual violence against women. This is a serious issue in cultural groups in which premarital sexual activity is highly sanctioned and marriage is delayed because young men cannot achieve the conditions for marriage in refugee camps (Sommers 2001).

***Finally, very little is known about sexual violence between men in militaries around the world.*** One of the few existing studies on the issue is a recent one carried out among men in the military in South Korea (Kwon 2007). The study found that sexual violence was committed primarily by higher ranking soldiers against lower ranking soldiers, very much mirroring the common themes of power, control and hierarchy involved in men’s use of sexual violence against women. However, although the extent and frequency of male-to-male sexual violence in the military appeared serious, the soldiers tended to minimize the issue, often even criticizing or ignoring the victims (Kwon 2007). This type of response is an example of the silence and denial which often surrounds men’s use of sexual violence against other men, as will be discussed in the next section.

## **V. MASCULINITIES AND THE USE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST BOYS AND MEN**

As discussed earlier in the context of war and conflict, ***sexual violence against men and boys is no less a gendered issue than sexual violence against women and girls*** (Alison 2007). There is a consensus in the UK and US male rape literature that the sexual victimization of men is a serious, yet largely ‘invisible’ problem and some evidence that men report sexual victimization even less than women do (Isely 1998; Pino and Meier, 1999 in Doherty and Anderson 2004). Indeed, although women are the victims of sexual violence far more often than men, most experts believe that official statistics vastly under-represent the number of male rape victims and that men are less likely than women to report rape (by a male perpetrator) (Doherty and Anderson 2004; Pino and Meier 1999; WHO 2002). There are a variety of reasons why male rape is underreported, including shame, guilt, fear of not being believed or of being denounced for what has occurred, and strong prejudices surrounding male sexuality which discourage men from coming forward (Doherty and Anderson 2004; Pino & Meier, 1999; WHO 2002). Some male victims may remain silent rather than risk being labeled as a ‘closet homosexual’, bi-sexual, or for fear of being ridiculed as weak or inadequate (Scarce 1997; Ussher 1997; West 2000 in Doherty and Anderson 2004). The social stigmatization that male victims of rape may experience has been described as a form of ‘secondary victimization’ and has been associated with the under-reporting of rape (Williams 1984 in Doherty and Anderson 2004). Indeed, this social stigmatization of male rape victims is directly linked to perceptions of gender, masculinity and sexuality. A study with university men and women in the U.K. (n=60), for example, found that male rape victims identified as heterosexual were likely to be treated more sympathetically than female victims or male rape victims identified as gay – that is, the rape act is perceived as worse for ‘heterosexual’ men because it is seen as deviating from their normal heterosexual practice. This finding highlights how rape is often (and mistakenly) understood as primarily a sexual act (Doherty and Anderson 2004).

Respondents in the same study also described how male sexual victims are often perceived as less masculine, as cultural expectations link masculinity with strength, autonomy and sexual aggression; a “manly” man, therefore, would not have “allowed” himself to be victimized (Connell 1995 in Doherty and Anderson 2004). Likewise, some young people in a study in Peru expressed the view that if a boy or man is raped by another man, he risks “losing his masculinity and becoming a homosexual” (Cáceres 2005).

***Finally, contrary to the popular belief that mostly homosexual men commit male-to-male sexual violence, the perpetrators of male sexual assault are overwhelmingly men who identify as heterosexual.*** As with the rape of girls and women, the rape of men and boys is most often an act of power intended to reinforce the dominant status of the perpetrator. Male rape in particular can also have the function of negating the masculinity of the victim and affirming the masculinity of the perpetrator (Gear 2007). In this context, those males already perceived as powerless, such as boys, adolescents and men in institutions and with disabilities, are often the most vulnerable to sexual violence (Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence nd).

#### **BOX 11: SEXUAL ABUSE OF BOYS AND MEN IN PRISON**

Sexual violence in prison is widely reported in many countries (Gear 2007; WHO 2002). Such violence may take the form of prisoners being forced to have sex with other prisoners or officers or officials in command. The subject of rape in prison, however, is often surrounded by taboo and stigma (Gear 2007). Any suggestion of sexual activity behind bars elicits from the public anxious pronouncements and denouncements which blur the distinction between consensual male–male sex and male rape and produce a conflation of male rape with homosexuality (Donaldson 2001; Gear 2007; Scarce 1997; Wooden and Parker 1982).

In fact, the rape of another man is an offense that ‘virtually no incarcerated homosexuals commit’ (Donaldson 2001). In contrast, rape in prison settings (and non-prison settings) is often committed by men who identify as heterosexual and is used as a tool to establish and maintain hierarchies and power and control over other men (Gear 2007; Michigan Resource Center nd; WHO 2002). Qualitative research into sex and sexual violence in men’s prisons in South Africa found that male victims are not acknowledged as such, but rather as ‘women’ and that this sense of demolished masculinity and imposed ‘womanhood’ is central to the immense stigma and shame that keeps most victims suffering in silence (Gear 2007). Elsewhere, men who have sex with other men may be ‘punished’, by rape, for their behavior which is perceived to transgress social norms (WHO 2002).

## **VI. FROM RESEARCH TO ACTION**

This review has discussed a range of research on the complex relationships between social constructions of masculinities and men's attitudes and practices related to sexual exploitation and violence, as well as individual factors associated with men’s use of sexual violence and buying of sex. Given the interplay between broader social issues – particularly globalization and poverty – and the prevailing social constructions of gender and masculinities, as well as individual factors, there are no easy and obvious answers to how to engage men and boys in reducing the demand for sexual exploitation or preventing sexual violence. Nonetheless, this literature reviewed provides some insights for action:

- While there are key individual factors (and sometimes individual psychopathologies) associated with men’s use of certain forms of sexual violence, ***men’s use of sexual***

*violence is clearly tied to broader social norms related to manhood. This suggests then, that any efforts to seriously reduce men's buying of sex and sexual violence requires not just reaching a few men, but changes in how societies and cultures view men's roles.*

- Men who adhere or believe in attitudes that give men dominance, or believe that women should be subservient to them, are often more likely to buy sex.
- Objectification and commodification of women and sex normalizes a broader spectrum of sexual behaviors, including more violent and coercive ones.
- Perhaps one in ten men worldwide buys sex annually, with tremendous variation worldwide, suggesting that while not a universal behavior, it is sanctioned or accepted by a sizeable minority of men. The tremendous variations across cultures and settings means that we need to understand more about context-specific factors that explain this variation.
- Relatively little research has found or examined differences between men who purchase sex from adult women, or under-age girls. Existing research suggests that some men who purchase sex may like girls or younger women because of their subservience rather than a strictly aesthetic preference for younger women and girls.
- Many men who purchase sex are younger and go with groups of friends, as a public “performance” of a specific form of masculinity. By engaging in these behaviors, these men may be trying to live up to expected social norms of manhood.
- Men's patterns of use of sex work and sexual violence often begin when men are young, precisely when they may be most likely to want to live up to these expected norms of manhood to “fit in” with their peer group.
- Men's use of sexual violence in war, conflict and post-conflict settings is well-documented and tied to reduced social control, specific versions (often ethnic-based) of manhood and constitute a specific tactic of war and domination.
- Pornography seems to be becoming increasingly available, and is increasingly a part of the socialization of boys (and girls). Whether pornography causes sexual violence or causes men to seek paid sex is unclear; at most we can conclude that some forms of pornography contribute to societal beliefs about women as submissive and sexually available, and perhaps also to rape myths.
- While the incidence of sexual exploitation and sexual violence is alarming, it is carried out in most settings by a minority of men. The vast majority of men do not use nor condone such violence, although they are subject to similar socialization around gender norms which may cause them, in some circumstances, to condone or at least accept such behaviors. As we look toward prevention, it is important to understand this majority of men – particularly those in settings where sexual violence and sexual exploitation are prevalent – and the forces and factors that encourage and support their non-violence.

With these general conclusions, this section provides a series of recommendations for action. First we discuss the research gaps and then promising program and policy examples.

### **What research do we need?**

There is a need for additional research on the nature and extent of men's perceptions and use of sexual exploitation and violence in various contexts. Additional research is also needed to identify potential protective contextual factors that can be tapped to reduce men's use of sexual exploitation and violence. Specific research questions that have been identified include:

- What are the *approximate number and proportion of boys and men in different settings who carry out different forms of sexual exploitation and sexual violence* against girls and women in various settings? What are their views on gender and gender relations, their social backgrounds and corollary sexual behaviors and activities? (DeKeseredy 2007; Hughes 2004; Tewksbury 2005) What attitudes, individual factors, childhood experiences,

and social and economical contexts contribute to men's use of sexual exploitation and sexual violence?

- Current research suggests that hostile and dominant masculine ideologies are an important predictor of men's use of sexual exploitation and sexual violence. *How do these types of ideologies develop among boys and men across different contexts and how are they maintained? What is the influence of peers and the media (particularly pornography) on the development of hostile masculine ideologies in boys and men?* (Murnen 2002) What else can help men and boys question hostile masculine ideologies?
- In addition to hostile and dominant masculine ideologies, *what are the other risk influences for men becoming perpetrators of sexual exploitation and sexual violence?* (Petersen et al. 2005)
- *How do the adaptation to new economic realities and changing family structures (e.g. through migration) influence boys and men's attitudes and behaviors relating to sexual exploitation and sexual violence?* (Sherer 2005)
- *What are the factors that inhibit boys and men from carrying out sexual exploitation or sexual violence?* (Hughes 2004; Maletzky 2000 in Carr 2004) How can these factors be used as entry-points to mobilize men to speak and act out against sexual exploitation and sexual violence? In settings where men seem to more frequently buy sex (men who migrate, men in the military) or use other forms of sexual exploitation and sexual violence, what do we know about the men in these settings who do not buy sex? What combination of factors need to be in place to reduce the likelihood of men and boys carrying out sexual exploitation and sexual violence?
- *How do laws and policies which criminalize the buying of sex impact the attitudes and practices of men and boys?*
- *Besides sex workers and customers, who else is involved in the perpetration of sexual exploitation and sexual violence (e.g. people who organize trafficking networks and families who sell their daughters to these networks)?* What are the characteristics of these individuals and what factors lead them to become involved in these networks and situations?
- *How do women's and girls' own gender-based attitudes influence their understanding and experience of sexual abuse and exploitation?* How do women and girls experience or understand and describe the men and boys who buy sex from them? What are the mechanisms by which they are encouraged to blame themselves rather than the men? (Murnen 2002) What are the attitudes among women and girls in general regarding sex work, sexual exploitation and sexual violence?

#### **BOX 12: CARRYING OUT RESEARCH WITH MEN ON SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

There are numerous challenges involved in carrying out research with men on sexual exploitation and sexual violence. Most notably, there are often subjective/culturally-driven differences in how men understand or define sexual exploitation and sexual violence. For example, the ways in which men and women may report and probably experience sexual exploitation and sexual violence are often more influenced by how close the circumstances of a

sexual encounter or relationship match socially accepted norms than to whether or not coercion or violence was involved (Marston 2005). It is generally therefore not effective to only ask directly if they have raped or used physical violence to obtain sex, but rather, to also ask about a range of different circumstances that may surround their past or on-going sexual encounters (Jewkes 2006). For example, a study with college men in the U.S. found that few acknowledged using physical force to obtain sex, whereas more men acknowledged using some form of sexual coercion such as pressuring women and saying things they did not mean to obtain sex, using alcohol to obtain sex, and having sex with a woman even when she wanted to stop (Carr 2004). In another U.S. study, this one with men who were abusive, fewer than 8 percent of the men in this sample answered affirmatively to questions that asked, “Have you ever sexually abused your partner?” however the majority of the men answered affirmatively to questions about activities that are legally defined as sexual assault or rape within the state where the data were collected. This included threatening physical harm if their partner did not have sex, having sex with their partner when she was unable to consent, physically forcing their partner to have sex against her will, and so forth (Bergen and Bukovec 2006). Similar methodological issues applies to research with women – they might not categorize experiences of sexual coercion and rape as such so it is often necessary to ask about specific circumstances of sexual experiences (Jewkes 2006).

Men might also be more comfortable discussing their attitudes about sexual exploitation and sexual violence rather than their specific behaviors. A study in South Africa, as part of the process of refining a questionnaire for a large survey, asked men 18-49 years to comment on questions that asked about attitudes towards and practices of non-consensual sex with women (Sikweyiya et al 2007). In terms of the attitudes about non-consensual sex, the men were divided in their views but most expressed fairly traditional rape-supportive attitudes and none expressed discomfort in responding to the attitude questions. In contrast, the men demonstrated discomfort in answering the questions about their own behaviors. Despite such discomfort, however, the men were able to speak honestly about rape where their anonymity was guaranteed.

### **What programs have been tried, and what seems to work?**

The last 20 years have witnessed a significant increase in attention to engaging men and boys in efforts to improve women’s and men’s health and, more broadly, to promote greater gender equality. This response is largely the result of a better understanding of men’s roles in determining women’s health and well-being, and the realization that many health development efforts for women and girls do not address gender-based values and norms. ***Indeed, evidence from around the world confirms that men and boys can and do change attitudes and behaviors related to health as a result of well-designed interventions and that those interventions which incorporate a gender perspective are particularly more effective.*** In particular, programs with men and boys that include deliberate discussions of gender and masculinity and clear efforts to transform such gender norms seem to be more effective than programs that merely acknowledge or mention gender norms and roles (Barker et.al. 2007).

In this context, it is necessary that efforts to prevent sexual exploitation and sexual violence encourage men and boys (and women and girls) to critically reflect about, question or change social norms that create and reinforce gender inequality and vulnerability for men and women. It is not sufficient to engage men in narrow discussions on sexual exploitation and violence, for example by merely informing or “warning” men about legal sanctions. Rather, there is a need for extensive and long-term efforts to raise social awareness about and a fundamental re-visioning of sexuality, masculinity and gender relations (Anderson & O’Connell Davidson 2003 in Månsson nd). These efforts should seek to target girls and boys and young people in

particular (Anderson & O’Connell Davidson 2003 in Månsson nd). Age-appropriate sexual education should be provided for girls and boys and should include opportunities to discuss and reflect on gender issues within the context of sexuality as well as day to day lives.

***Indeed, the research finding that boys (and girls) are increasingly exposed to pornography (from apparently earlier ages) and that many acts of sexual violence and buying of sex happen at early ages (and may repeat over the lifespan), reinforce the need to start interventions using a gender transformational approach from an early age. Moreover, sexual violence prevention programs should also take into account the needs and contexts of specific groups of men and boys – including social class and ethnicity, among other factors.*** Such programs must also question their own beliefs and stereotypes about men themselves – specifically their sometimes unstated but implicit views that certain groups of men are inherently more violent than others.

***An effective starting point for gender transformative work is to help men understand how gender norms affect them; that is, how prevailing norms about what it means to be men are harmful to women but also to men and boys themselves*** (Barker et al. 2004; Truman 1996). Research also confirms the specific need to address the sexual entitlement that many men may feel toward their intimate partners and help them challenge their understanding of the “normalcy” of sexual violence in intimate relationships, as well as the broad spectrum behaviors which can be considered sexual violence (Bergen 2006). Impact evaluation studies of the kind carried out for Stepping Stones in South Africa and Program H in Brazil and India have affirmed that young and adult men can indeed be engaged in a questioning of gender norms and privileges and that they have changed their behavior as a result. Indeed, ***it may be more effective to promote men’s empathy toward women and girls, to build on their potential to treat women with respect and to question hostile attitudes toward women than to focus on sexual violence per se or on telling men what not to do or focusing on guilt and shame*** (Forbes 2004; Dean and Malamuth 1997). In other words, appealing to a sense of empathy and to men’s potential to treat women as equals and with respect seem to be more effective strategies than simply telling men not to use sexual aggression or sexual violence (Lonsway 1996 in Forbes 2004).

In addition to promoting empathy and more equitable attitudes, it is also necessary that ***men and boys have the opportunity to build the communication and negotiation skills necessary to change behaviors.*** Research and program findings have affirmed the need to engage boys and men with a sense of self-efficacy to question prevailing gender norms and act in more gender equitable ways, including the ability to negotiate with partners, question peer groups and seek services – that is to question misogynistic and hostile attitudes toward women and girls or the prevailing view that men can never turn down sex (Ricardo et al. 2006; Tierney and McCabe 2002 in Petersen 2005).

***On a broader level, it is also important to seek to change the social environment and engage peer groups, social groups, and entire communities in the questioning, criticism and reconstruction of norms related to masculinity, sexuality and gender relations.*** Such efforts can range from community-level mobilization and campaigns to advocacy to change structural and other environmental factors. For example, it can be particularly effective to engage community leaders or specifically “male” leaders (coaches, male religious leaders, men in managerial positions in the workplace or in the command structure in militaries) in the questioning taken-for-granted views about men and sexual exploitation and sexual violence, as they in turn can that serve as important influences on other men. It is important to remember that women and girls should also be engaged in community-level efforts, as they also contribute to and reinforce norms related to masculinity and sexual exploitation and sexual

violence. Moreover, both face-to-face sensitization and education efforts, as well as community-level ones, should involve beneficiaries and other stakeholders in the development and evaluation phases in order to ensure that messages and strategies reflect local needs and contexts. Collaborations with organizations whose focus is broader than the prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual violence are also important (Clinton-Sherrod et.al. 2008).

**Box 13: Engaging boys and men in the prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual violence: Program Examples**

There are numerous examples of programs that aim to engage boys and men in the prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual violence, some which address the issues specifically and others which address the issues within broader reflections on masculinities, gender equality, and health. Most of these programs have included a combination of group education activities with boys and men with community-based campaigns or activism. Some of the more well-known examples of programs that have addressed gender and masculinities more broadly are Men as Partners, Program H and Stepping Stones (Barker et al 2004; Mehta et al 2004; White et al. 2003). These programs address different health issues, including violence against women, and explicitly discuss gender norms and masculinities as they relate to these health issues. Impact evaluation studies have shown that participation in these programs leads to positive changes in men and boys' attitudes about violence against women, including sexual violence, as well as decreases in use (self-reported) of violence. These programs therefore offer strategic entry-points for discussions about other forms of sexual exploitation and sexual violence, such as the buying of sex.

There are also examples of programs in which issues of sexual exploitation and sexual violence are central. These include an innovative project in the Philippines led by CATW (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women) which targets boys and young men in schools and communities where sex work is prevalent (Raymond 2004). The project specifically targets the sexual attitudes and practices of boys and young men through educational materials and workshops which promote awareness of the harms and consequences of sex work and trafficking for sexual exploitation, men's roles in perpetuating sexual exploitation and their potential for being "catalysts for change" (Raymond 2004).

Another example of an effort to engage men in addressing sexual violence is Men Can Stop Rape in the U.S. which employs different media and community outreach and mobilization strategies to engage young men in more positive and equitable behaviors, including as allies in the prevention of dating violence. The campaign's media initiative is organized around the slogan "My Strength Is Not for Hurting," and strives to refocus the traditional perception of male strength as respect and communication, not force and domination. In addition to the media and community efforts, the Strength Campaign also includes an educational component in which young men participate in a series of sessions intended to raise their awareness of the importance of male involvement in rape prevention and mobilize them as active allies in preventing men's violence against women and girls.

There are also various examples of rape prevention education programs at high schools and colleges in the U.S. which have demonstrated positive changes in young men's attitudes and behaviors in relation to dating violence (Avery-Leaf et al. 1996; Crooks 2007; Foshee et al. 1998; Foubert 2000; Heppner et al. 1999; Hong 2003; Rosenthal et al. 1995). These programs have incorporated, to different degrees, a questioning of masculinities and social norms related

to gender relations and sexuality. The Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Program in the U.S. trains young male and female high school and university students to work together to be “empowered bystanders” who can confront peers who use violence. The Fraternity Anti-Violence Education Project in the U.S. uses small-group discussion, role-plays, videos and various interactive activities as well as long-term mentoring to: educate college-aged men (in fraternities or on campus) about violence against women; create an open atmosphere for ongoing dialogue among men on the issue and its connections with unequal gender norms and relations and; equip men with the leadership skills necessary to work as allies in promoting women’s rights. Self-reported changes among participants have included greater likelihood to discuss dating violence with peers and family (Clinton-Sherrod et.al. 2008). There also examples of efforts which have targeted specific groups of men such as the armed forces and peacekeepers with messages related to the prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual violence (Hughes 2004).

Among the most recognized examples of mobilization and mass-media campaigns that seek to change the social environment and norms related to gender, masculinities and violence are Coaching Boys into Men in the U.S., Cambodia Men’s Network, MASVAW (Men’s Action for Stopping Violence Against Women) in India, and the White Ribbon Campaign which is active worldwide. These campaigns entail a variety of strategies, from sensitization of traditional leaders and key male role models to marches, demonstrations, and media outreach such as radio and television. Likewise, Stop Rape in War is an example of a global initiative which seeks to engage governments, UN agencies, and communities to reduce the incidence and tolerance of rape in war through interventions that address social norms, attitudes and behaviors related to gender equality. The UN also recently launched a multi-year campaign to mobilize political will, resources and public opinion to end violence against women and girls – the campaign includes a specific focus on the engagement of men leaders and men and boys.

**Box 14: Working with male perpetrators of sexual exploitation and sexual violence**

There is limited program experience that has been carried out directly with boys and men who use or have used sexual exploitation and sexual violence. Most of the attention to these boys and men has been focused on the implementation of punitive measures as a strategy for inhibiting, if not changing, their behaviors and practices. One example of work that has tried to expand beyond the strictly-punitive model is the “John Schools” which operate in different settings in North America. These schools range in their approaches but in general include educational activities with men convicted of seeking sex work. One of the most notable examples was the Sexual Exploitation Education Project (SEEP) in Portland, Oregon which framed sex work as a form of violence against women and engaged men in discussions about how their socialization and norms about male sexuality lead to their propensity to carry out sexual exploitation and sexual violence (Hughes 2004; Monto 2001). In the state of Arizona, in the US, a *restorative justice process* was used by which men who used sexual violence were able to forgo prison sentences for publicly acknowledging their violence (before the victim and a group of persons chosen by him/her) and participation in relevant individual and/or group therapy (Koss 2008). The intervention showed a high rate of success as measured by the recidivism rates.

**What are the programming gaps?**

***Among the most salient programming gaps are the need to ensure that programs which target boys and men in the prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual violence consistently incorporate broader messages and reflections about masculinities and gender inequalities***

***and, further, that they undergo impact evaluations to assess their effectiveness in changing attitudes and behaviors.*** Likewise, programs that work with men on other issues, including sexual and reproductive health and maternal and child health should also be sure to address links to gender based violence, including sexual exploitation and sexual violence. As discussed above, it is also important that programs for men and boys are accompanied by efforts to transform norms about masculinities and gender at broader levels, particularly among the primary socialization institutions of family and the education system. Finally, programs need to consistently strive to develop and/or improve evaluation efforts, particularly in terms of behavioral outcomes (Barker et al 2007; Clinton-Sherrod et al. 2008). There is a significant body of evidence linking programs to positive changes in men's and boys' awareness of and attitudes toward sexual violence, however, there less evidence linking such programs to behavior change or reduced incidence of sexual exploitation and sexual violence.

The perspective of most of the existing programs has been to focus on boys and men who are perpetrators or potential perpetrators of sexual exploitation and sexual violence. It is ***necessary, however, to also reach those men, such as the police and military commanders or officials, for example, who may not necessarily be perpetrators but who may play strategic roles in the prevention or perpetuation of sexual exploitation and sexual violence.*** Along similar lines, it is also important that programs do not assume that men are always and only the perpetrators of sexual exploitation and sexual violence; there should be spaces and resources for male victims as well as efforts to address the factors and circumstances which make them vulnerable.

Finally, in addition to including a more comprehensive gender approach to programs with boys and men, there is also a ***need for distilling methodologies and lessons learned from successful programs that could be adapted and applied in other contexts*** and with diverse groups of boys and men (and other stakeholders). In particular, if we seek to have a significant impact on rates of sexual exploitation and sexual violence, it is ***necessary to move beyond a few small-scale interventions identify possibilities for scaling-up successful programs and campaigns.***

#### **What types of policies are necessary?**

As in the case of programs, there is a ***need for policies to also balance their approaches in terms of preventive and punitive measures.*** For example, the male participants in SEEP (see BOX 11) were men who had been convicted of seeking sex work and who were required to participate in the program as a condition of probation or invited to participate in exchange for receiving a reduced fine (Monto 2001). This combination of punitive measures with efforts to “rehabilitate” perpetrators, or prevent future use of sexual exploitation and sexual violence is essential for longer-term changes in the rates of sexual exploitation and sexual violence.

***There also continues to be a need for policies to recognize the diverse forms and contexts in which sexual exploitation and sexual violence occur.*** The South African Criminal Law Amendment Bill of 2003, for example, expanded the legal understanding of rape to include “non-consensual behaviors that are not strictly penile-vaginal...that are perpetrated by means other than the use of actual force, for example, by threats and abuse of authority...and that (include) both males and females...as victims” (Ngwena 2005 in Jeejebhoy et al 2005). These are important dimensions to sexual exploitation and sexual violence which have been too often overlooked in policies (as well as programs). It is also only recently and in a limited number of countries that rape within marriage has been recognized as an offense (Altman 2001). One area of policy related to sexual exploitation and sexual violence, however, which remains controversial, is how to address sex work. The controversy is, in broad terms, whether policies

should be based on decriminalization or penalization (see BOX 3). In 1999, Sweden introduced a law which recognizes sex work as a form of male violence against women and children. The law has generated much debate between those who see sex work as an invariable expression of men's sexual exploitation and violence against women and identify the law as a major breakthrough and those who argue that such a law diminishes the agency of those women who may choose to be involved in sex work (Altman 2001; Månsson nd).

*At the level of international law*, on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1820 which recognizes that “rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity or a constitutive act with respect to genocide” and that women and girls are particularly targeted by the use of sexual violence, including in some cases as “a tactic of war to humiliate, dominate, instill fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate civilian members of a community or ethnic group”. Among the various measures called for are appropriate military training and efforts to debunk myths that fuel sexual violence.

### Conclusion

There is an urgent need for a public questioning and for open, honest and public debates about male sexuality – in schools, community organizations, homes, and religious institutions – and for broader understandings of the contexts and factors that lead to the use of sexual exploitation and sexual violence. Moreover, in programs as well as policies, there is a need for men who do not condone sexual violence and sexual exploitation to question other men and to take a public stand against these actions. The White Ribbon Campaign – now active in some 60 countries worldwide – is an example of men (in still too small numbers) speaking out about violence against women. Many contexts where sexual violence takes place – from conflicts and war to prisons and schools – are spaces where power hierarchies and threats of violence often make it difficult for men to be able to speak out against other men. Clearly any meaningful intervention will also have to question these power hierarchies. But the act of speaking out, or men holding other men accountable, is key if we are to shift cultures of masculinities and cultures of impunity that make it possible and acceptable for men (and some women) to use sexual exploitation and sexual violence against others.

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