

The National Conversation

Barriers and enablers to engage boys and men towards gender equality.

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Rationale

The objective of this research enquiry is to understand what the barriers and opportunities are to accelerate work with boys and men towards gender equality in India, And to initiate a national conversation towards the same goal. The research was conceived because Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies and Equal Community Foundation (ECF) identified a lack of publicly available information on how social sector organisations are working with boys and men towards gender equality, including what the barriers are and what the available opportunities are for supporting them.

This research is considered to be formative. We anticipate repeating similar research in the future. During the process of completing this research we identified improvements to the structure and content of the questionnaires and the use of language that we used, that will improve future iterations.

We are grateful to everyone who participated in the research, and for your feedback. We hope that the results are useful.

Please feel free to provide feedback for future research on [this link here](https://goo.gl/forms/UzG9k6LolevRg1dD2).
(<https://goo.gl/forms/UzG9k6LolevRg1dD2>)



Synopsis

ECF asked 663 organisations to complete a survey on the barriers and opportunities to engage boys and men towards gender equality. 101 organisations responded, including a majority of practitioners, with a limited number of intermediaries, advocacy organisations and donors.

90% of respondents agree that working with boys and men towards gender equality is important to reach their organisations primary goals. 57% report that they already work with boys and men towards gender equality.

56% respondents state that they work with boys and men with gender equality as a primary outcome. 29% of respondents work with boys and men at the intersection of adolescent rights, 34% at the intersection of child protection and 47% at the intersection of education. Organisations primarily work with boys and men in homes, communities, schools with further education and other institutions mentioned in isolated cases.

Different organisations approached working with boys in different and diverse ways. Some organisations made references to best practice approaches, however clear thematic trends were not identifiable.

Organisations use different language and vocabulary when describing their work. Few organisations (6 organisations) talked about transforming boys and men in their approach. Similar numbers framed their work in social norms, or boys and men’s knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours. Twice as many, yet still only ~10%, describe their work in the context of patriarchy or masculinities. Many organisations appear to employ established approaches to their work however organisations do not share or use a common language to describe their approaches.

Some organisations identify themselves as working with boys, yet they acknowledge that gender is not a primary objective. Such organisations highlight one challenge: “working with boys” does not always mean “working with boys and men on gender equality”. Future research will benefit from making this distinction explicit.

Organisations are clear about the barriers to starting and improving their practice. Organisation’s stated needs match their stated barriers. The first barrier is a lack of funding and fundraising capacity. The second, third and fourth barriers are team skills, programme materials, and M&E materials.

Organisations identified clear opportunities for starting or improving their practice with boys and men towards gender equality. The first opportunity is in capacity building. 50% of organisations identified capacity building to rectify the four primary barriers listed above as essential. Additional areas for capacity building included integrating with programmes for women, integrating a feminist voice, focussing on M&E and evidence building.

The second opportunity is to provide a collaborative platform for capacity building. Additional outcomes identified for the platform included networking, peer learning, and collaborative advocacy & policy work. 90% of organisations are interested in engaging in such a platform. Additional research is needed to understand what additional activities organisations would prioritise given there are many opportunities and limited resources.

This report did not set out to establish the extent of existing evidence or a comprehensive list of programmes that work with boys or men on gender equality. Whilst evidence and programmes certainly exist, their scope is limited, not least by the nascency of the field. There is a need to understand what work and evidence exists already. In order to improve programmes and build additional evidence, funding will be needed to build technical capacity and skills of the organisations who will then pilot innovative programmes and evaluate them.



Organisations will begin to seek funding for this work and this development should be welcomed by intermediaries and funders. Any proposals for programme innovation should demonstrate how they build upon existing work to improve on historic and current programmes. Any proposals for programme implementation should demonstrate how the proposed programme aligns to what is known to work, and they should also demonstrate how they meet these outcomes more effectively than precedent programmes.

In order to build capacity for innovation and implementation, standards will need to be established in language, theories of change, outcome frameworks, evaluation methodologies and programme design principles. These standardised components need to be developed in collaboration with other organisations so as to ensure they are owned collectively. Such standards should not dictate field programme methodologies. Instead they should guide field programme development, supporting an ecosystem of many diverse programmes from multiple practitioners. Such standards will also need to be developed and delivered using effective pedagogies and methodologies so as to maximise limited resources.

Funders and intermediaries will need to be proactively engaged so that as they commission research, piloting and implementation of programmes in line with these strategies.

Additional research is required to map organisations with methodologies that are not well documented in order to establish trends in their current work with boys and men. Research must also establish the outcomes that organisations expect in capacity building and what they hope to achieve with their new capacities. Finally, research on the priorities of a collaborative platform should seek to establish additional priority outcomes, beyond capacity building.



Summary of responses

On the 19th of September 2017 ECF sent out a questionnaire to 835 people from 663 organisations identified through desk research and online databases of social sector organisations, foundations, funders and intermediaries. The selection process was based on publicly available data and cannot therefore be assumed to be fully representative of the sector. In addition, those who responded to the call for information are likely to be specifically aware of or motivated by the specific topic. The selection process and the motivation to respond therefore limit the validity of this data set as a representative sample of the whole sector. By the 30th of November 2017, 101 had responded. ECF requested and received additional information from 17 organisations who had stated in the first request that they were already practicing with boys and men towards gender equality.

Profile of the organisations

Chart 1: Organisation's different roles (number of organisations)

The majority of organisations, 80, identified as practitioners. 20 identified as advocacy organisations, and approximately 10 identified as intermediaries and donors. Organisations reported budgets from 9 Lakhs to 80 Crores per annum.

Approximately 75% worked only in India, and 25% worked in India and at least one other country. One organisation worked in 45 other countries. The average number of countries worked in for those who worked in more than one was approximately 5 countries. Popular second countries for organisations included Bangladesh, Nepal, Uganda and Kenya.

Organisations had diverse primary objectives, including on Women Empowerment, Gender & Rights and Education.



Chart 2: Organization's different primary objectives (number of organisations)

Organisations delivered their primary objectives with diverse direct participants. The most common direct participants were girls and women.

Chart 3: Organisations work with diverse participants (number of organisations)

Work with boys and men

91 of organisations agreed that working with boys and men is important in achieving their mission. And 84 of organisations do work with boys and men on gender. There was no apparent correlation between not working with boys and men on gender and an organisation's budget. The most common ages worked with are boys and men between the age of 10 and 20. Only 40% of organisations work with men over 20 and 35% work with boys under 10.



There is a need to understand the different approaches employed by organisations when working with boys as compared with men, and if there is a need to continue to focus on boys aged 10-20 or if additional effort is needed on younger boys or men over 20.

Chart 4: Organisations work with boys and men of different ages (number of organisations)

47 organisations who work with boys and men, work with them primarily on gender equality. 39 organisations work on life skills and education. Others work with boys and men on adolescent health, child protection, livelihoods and sexual and reproductive health, albeit in smaller numbers.

Organisations did not provide details on their approach and programme methodologies in relation to their work with boys and men. This is an area for further research. Specifically, there is a need to understand the trends in design principles, theory of change, and logical frameworks, and to map the curricula and M&E frameworks that are available in the past, present and those that are in development.

Chart 5: Organisations work with boys and men on different issues (number of organisations)



Barriers to organisations already working with boys and men

Almost 50 organisations identified that a lack of technical knowledge on how to work with boys and men towards gender equality was the biggest barrier to furthering their work. 35 organisations identified that a lack of funding was a barrier. And 33 organisations and 29 organisations identified a lack of tools and skills respectively were barriers. A lack of tools and skills as a barrier contributes to a broader lack of technical knowledge.

The fact that more organisations identify technical knowledge as a barrier, and fewer identified funding is likely to be a result that they have enough resources to start working with boys. It may indicate they do not have enough resources to increase their technical knowledge and skills.

Chart 6: Barriers organisations face in existing work with boys and men (no. of organisations)

Barriers to starting to work with boys and men

For organisations who were not working with boys and men already, nearly 75% agree or somewhat agree that the barrier is that working with boys and men is not a priority. A similar number identify a lack of tools and programme resources as a barrier, and some 60% identify skills as a barrier. Additional barriers include technical knowledge, fundraising capacity and a lack of funds. Other barriers are considered to be less relevant.

20% of respondents identify that potential risks to existing work with women and girls as a barrier. This barrier was qualified in a number of comments as meaning both

- The risk of reduced resources available for women's and girls programmes, and
- The risk that work with boys and men reinforces or perpetuates inequitable gender norms, rather than transforming gender norms.



Chart 7: Barriers organisations face in starting to work with boys and men on gender equality. (% of organisations)

Going forward

90% of organisations want to start or improve existing work with boys and men towards gender equality.

Organisational needs

Four areas of capacity building were highlighted as essential by 50% of organisations, and nice to have by an additional 25% of organisations. These four areas are:

1. Fundraising Capacity
2. Team Capacity
3. Programme Materials
4. M&E Tools

Organisations also identified that contextualising programmes and support in programme design are important.

The research process did not identify the details of their needs, and specifically what capacities they expect to display after capacity building, and how this would be measured. This is an area for further research.



Chart 8: Organisation's needs to start or improve work with boys and men towards gender equality (%)

Defining the demand for formal support

98% of organisations said that they would be interested in joining a collaborative that provides formal support to organisations so that they can start or improve work with boys and men towards gender equality. One response noted that any collaborative platform should have defined outcomes and not just be a network or a discussion forum.

Organisations suggested ideas for developing the capacity building and the collaborative for working with boys and men towards gender equality. These ideas are listed below.

Goals for a collaborative¹

Organisations suggested that a collaborative should:

1. Provide tangible outcomes for members
2. Be collaborative, not hierarchical or one-sided
3. Provide networking opportunities to share, discuss and learn
4. Provide city / state / national collaborations
5. Provide membership for practitioners, intermediaries, researchers and funders
6. Provide opportunities for collaborative funding opportunities
7. Provide opportunities for engaging governments
8. Build the evidence base
9. Share related literature and programme materials
10. Actively seek to engage with marginalised communities and organisations
11. Take a long term view on this work

¹ These ideas were identified from individual organisation's responses. Not all organisations chose to identify characteristics of a successful collaborative. On that basis the list is not complete or unanimously agreed.



12. Think about this movement building

Goals for capacity building²

In building organisation's capacity to work with boys and men on gender equality, organisations want to consider approaches that:

1. Transform boys and men's gender attitudes and behaviours
2. Accommodate boys and men's needs
3. Constitute longitudinal programmes, not just short term interventions
4. Integrate with programmes for women and girls
5. Integrate a feminist perspective
6. Build robust and longitudinal evidence
7. Encourage participation of peers, families, communities and other stakeholders
8. Engage boys and men between communities, education and other institutions.
9. Engage marginalised communities, including children in care, LGBTQ, rural, and low income.

Practical Steps Forward

There is unambiguous demand for capacity building from organisations in India on fundraising capacity, team capacity, programme materials and M&E tools. There is near unanimous support for a collaborative platform for capacity building. Organisations also identified other potential roles for the collaborative and so it will be necessary to reconcile the potential list with the reality of limited resources, by prioritising them with collaborative members and managing members' expectations.

Specifically, the following questions would, amongst others, need to be answered:

For any collaborative platform

1. What are all of the potential outcomes of a collaborative?
2. What are the priority outcomes of a collaborative for members?
3. What is the role of different members in delivering the priority outcomes?
4. What is the methodology to best deliver on each of these priority outcomes?
5. What is the total investment required to deliver on these outcomes?
6. What are the risks to such a collaborative, and how can they be mitigated?

For any capacity building

1. What outcomes would we expect as a result of capacity building?
2. How would increased capacity lead to improved practice?
3. What is a common language to describe this work?
4. How would we measure progress in capacity building?
5. What pedagogy would deliver this capacity building best?
6. What delivery methodology would deliver this capacity building best?
7. What is the total investment required for this capacity building, and what investment would an organisation need to make?
8. What are the risks to such capacity programme, and how can they be mitigated?

² These ideas were identified from individual organisation's responses. Not all organisations chose to identify characteristics of a successful capacity building programme. On that basis the list is not complete or unanimously agreed.



Annex 1: List of contributing partners

The following organisations participated in this research, and agreed to be named. Other organisations participated, but chose to have their names kept private. We are grateful for everyone's contribution and support.

1. Aakar Social Ventures
2. Action Against Hunger
3. Aga Khan Foundation
4. ANANDI Area Networking and Networking initiatives
5. ANEW - Association for Nontraditional Employment for Women
6. Apnalaya
7. Apne Aap Women Worldwide
8. Apne Aap Women's Collective
9. Arpan
10. Atma: an accelerator for NGOs in education
11. Azad Foundation
12. Bachpan Bachao Andolan
13. Breakthrough Trust
14. Buzz India
15. Centre for Health and Social Justice
16. Centre for World Solidarity
17. Chaitanya Educational and Rural Development Society
18. Charkha - Development Communication Network
19. Christian Organization for social service
20. COMO Foundation
21. Cotiviti
22. CREA
23. CULP - Centre for Unfolding Learning Potentials
24. Dalyan
25. Dasra
26. Door Step school
27. Dream a Dream
28. EKTA



29. Elshaddai charitable trust
30. EMpower- The Emerging Markets Foundation
31. Enfold Proactive Health Trust
32. ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND MALNUTRITION RESEARCH FOUNDATION
33. ETASHA Society
34. Feminist Approach to technology
35. Foundation to Educate Girls Globally (Educate Girls)
36. Free a Girl
37. Girl Effect
38. Girls Not Brides
39. Gram Vaani, Legally registered as OnionDev Technologies Pvt. Ltd.
40. Gramin Shiksha Kendra
41. Harish and Bina Shah Foundation (HBS Foundation)
42. Healing Fields Foundation
43. Ibtada
44. ICRW
45. IDEAL -Centre for Social Justice
46. Impact India Foundation
47. Institute of Development Studies Kolkata
48. Institute of Health Management, Pachod
49. iPartner India
50. JANPATH
51. JAYAPRAKASH INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL CHANGE
52. Jeevika Development Society
53. Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences
54. Kherwadi Social Welfare Association
55. Kolkata Sanved
56. Lend A Hand India
57. Magic Bus India Foundation
58. Martha Farrell Foundation
59. Mentor Together
60. My Choices Foundation



61. Nav Bhartiya Nari Vikas Samiti
62. NEEDS
63. Oxfam India
64. Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)
65. Phia Foundation
66. Praajak
67. Preens bharti
68. Prerana
69. Pro Sport Development
70. Project KHEL
71. Quest Alliance
72. Rangoonwala Foundation (India) Trust
73. Rubaroo - Breaking Silences Foundation
74. SAHAS
75. Sanjog
76. Shakti Shalini
77. Shikshan Ane Samaj Kalyan Kendra
78. Social and Development Research and Action Group
79. SPANDAN SAMAJ SEVA SAMITI
80. Srijan Foundation
81. Students Relief Society
82. Study Hall Educational Foundation
83. SUTRA (The Society for Social Uplift Through Rural Action)
84. Swasti
85. Swayam
86. Swayam Shikshan Prayog
87. SWISSAID INDIA
88. Tathapi Trust
89. The ant
90. The Baale Mane Trust
91. The Global Fund for Children
92. The Hummingbird Foundation



93. The Kiawah Trust

94. VOICE 4 Girls

95. Yuva Gram Vikas Mandal



Annex 2: Research Activities

These are the activities that ECF undertook to complete this research.

1. Conduct desk based research to identify 40+ sector experts from two primary categories: Practitioners and funders.
2. These individuals/organisations will be those working in the space of either of the following issues:
 - a. Child rights and protection
 - b. Gender based violence prevention
 - c. Education
 - d. Gender and Rights
 - e. Sexual Reproductive Health
 - f. Livelihood
 - g. Prevention of trafficking
 - h. Working with youth on any of the above mentioned issues
 - i. Working with women and girls on any of the above mentioned issues
3. Draft an overview about the project that can be sent along with invitation to respondents
4. Share the surveys with shortlisted individuals / organisations
5. Conduct interviews over Skype or phone (Minimum 30)
6. Analyse the data
7. Draft the report and share it internally and with Nilekani Philanthropies for comments
8. Secure comments from all
9. Identify online platforms through which the report can be disseminated
10. Identify the list of individuals and organisations the report needs to be sent out to
11. Finalise the report
12. Agree on the objective and format of the workshops
13. Conduct 4 workshops in 4 cities
14. Submit an overview report to Nilekani Philanthropies on overall performance over the year



Annex 3: Future Research Questions

1. What language do organisations use?
2. What are the outcomes that organisations seek?
3. What is considered to be best practice approach?
4. What are the outcomes organisations expect from capacity building?
5. What are the pedagogies and methodologies for delivering such capacity building?
6. What are the additional outcomes required from a collaborative platform?
7. What are the pedagogies and methodologies for delivering such outcomes from the collaborative platform?
8. What programmes exist in India for boys and men towards gender equality?
9. What evidence exists in India to demonstrate outcomes for boys and men towards gender equality?
10. How can a bigger, more representative sample be surveyed in future research?
11. Is there a link between needs and size, geography, focus of organisation?

