

Case Study 8.6

The role of men and boys in ending violence against women

This case study gives examples of advocacy and awareness-raising activities that have engaged men and boys in ending violence against women.

Oxfam (2012) has supported both women’s organizations and organizations that focus on the role of men and boys in ending violence against women. Oxfam considers that to prevent violence, women and men must know about women’s human rights and treat each other as equals. To support changes in attitudes and social norms, Oxfam has encouraged its partners to:

- Build alliances that bring together men and women from many sectors of society.
- Convince traditional leaders and other opinion-makers to support work to end violence.
- Combine mass campaigning with person-to-person discussions.

Building social movements to prevent violence

The *We Can End All Violence against Women Campaign* in South Asia, replicated in several African, East Asian and developed countries, has encouraged millions of women and men, girls and boys, to become “change makers”. “Change makers” pledge to stop violence in their own lives and to convince their families, their colleagues and others to end inequality and violence. *Source: ‘We Can End All Violence against Women Campaign website: <http://www.wecanglobal.org>*

Violence prevention with youth

The El Salvador Campaign to Prevent Gender-Based Violence recognizes young women and men as important agents of change. In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the campaign organizes regular events at schools, such as discussion sessions and performances. Students and teachers reflect on the power relations between girls and boys, women and men, teachers and students, and how power is linked to violence. The campaign also conducts research and advocacy that reminds the government of its responsibility to protect women’s rights, and proposes concrete measures to prevent and address gender-based violence.

The White Ribbon Campaign: Men working to end violence against women

The White Ribbon Campaign is a global campaign by men to end gender-based violence against women and girls. The white ribbon symbolizes a man’s pledge to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and girls. Originally consisting of one week of awareness-raising every year, the White Ribbon Campaign has evolved into a year-round effort on every continent, in over 55 countries. It focuses on identifying policy questions, educating men and boys and raising public awareness, by challenging men directly on their actions, ideas and beliefs. The predominantly male Australian Mariners’ Union is one union that is active in the White Ribbon campaign, displaying white flags on sea-going vessels on White Ribbon Day. **For more information see:** www.whiteribbon.com

Break the Circle! – UNI affiliates in South Africa pledge to end violence

Male trade unionists in South Africa are making a pledge against violence, as part of the global union UNI’s “BE MAN ENOUGH. BE A LEADER AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE” initiative



Unions have drawn up a document whereby union members pledge to prevent and eliminate gender-based violence, with a specific focus on men's violence against women. It commits signatories to speak out against violence against women, to seek clear communication instead of assuming consent and to respect, listen and seek equality with every person they date and every person they know: NOT to look away, NOT to be bystanders and NOT to be silent. A commitment is made to play a role "in our personal, professional and leadership capacities" to end all forms of violence against women. **Source:** UNI Break the Circle Campaign website blog: <http://breakingthecircle.org/blog/en/pledge-against-violence-from-south-africa-join-in/>