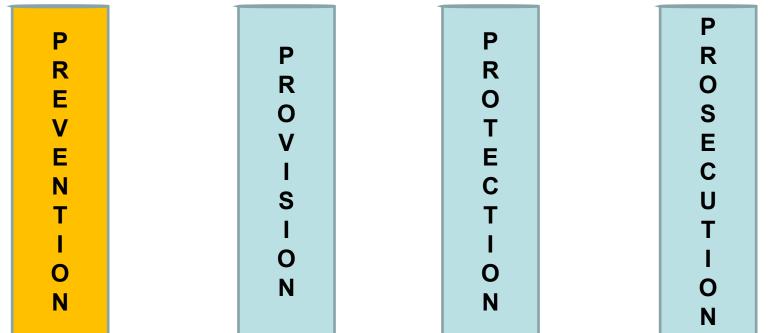# Preventing gender-based violence: good practice examples

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ISTANBUL CONVENTION

Four core pillars of comprehensive approach to violence against women

PREVENTION

PROVISION

PROTECTION

PROSECUTION

Istanbul Convention

- Prevention is one of four core pillars of the comprehensive approach to violence against women
- Firmly grounded in the understanding that gender inequality is a cause and consequence of violence against women

The purpose of Article 12

 ...to reach the hearts and minds of individuals to ensure changes in mind-sets, attitudes and beliefs towards women, their role and status in society, their sexuality, as well as women's agency.

 The ultimate aim is to change the behaviour of men and women, boys and girls, that is currently all too often influenced by prejudice, gender stereotypes or gender-biased customs and traditions, and that helps to perpetrate or condone violence against women

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- **Theoretical model – holistic & ecological**

- Gender-based violence against women is rooted in gender inequality and unequal power relations… with multiple risk factors and influences.

prevention strategy – *the disruption of means, pathways and mechanisms of gender inequality* (Hagemann-White 2010)

LEVEL — Overall structures in the social order (Macro)

FACTORS

Devaluing women
– Gender inequality, unequal power relations between women and men and the subordination of women

Masculinity
– Normative heterosexual masculinity

Media violence
– Glorification of violence and sexualisation of women and girls

Impunity
– Weak or limited laws against violence

Children's status
– Lack of respect for children's and especially girl's rights

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Interventions needed at a structural level to:

- Achieve formal and substantive gender equality
- Promote alternative models of masculinity
- Regulate violence in the media
- Regulate the sexualisation of women and girls in the media
- Strengthen laws against violence
- Promote children's/girl's rights

LEVEL — Social norms and practices that regulate daily life (Meso)

FACTORS

Entitlement
– Male entitlement to sex and services from women

Failed sanctions
– Failure of criminal justice system to respond, poor implementation of law resulting in no sanctions for perpetrators

Discrimination
– Discrimination against women and girls in society e.g. workplace and education

'Honour' codes
– Enforcement of 'honour' and shame around violence against women

Poverty pockets
– High concentrations of poverty, discrimination and social exclusion resulting in very low access to material resources, education and regular employment

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Interventions at a societal level needed to:

- Challenge the idea of male entitlement
- Improve implementation of laws and increase conviction rates of /sanctions on perpetrators
- Eliminate discrimination against women and girls
- Challenge codes of 'honour' and shame
- Improve access to resources for socially excluded and disadvantaged communities

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LEVEL — Day to day interactions in the immediate environment (Micro)

FACTORS

Peer approval
– Peer-groups support, valorise and reinforce VAWG

Stereotypes
– Rigid constructions of what is 'normal' for a man/boy/woman/girl

Myths
– Persistent stereotypes and misunderstandings about VAWG

Rewards
– Real or perceived rewards for violence

Opportunity
– Conditions that facilitate perpetration of VAWG

Family stress
– When pressures such as unemployment, social isolation and other stressors come together

Obedience code
– Different expectations of daughters

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Interventions needed in the immediate environment needed to:

- Challenge peer support for violence
- Establish active peer disapproval of VAWG
- Transform gender stereotypes through education and public awareness
- Challenge myths about VAWG
- Ensure all schools and workplaces have effective policies, sanctions and redress for all forms of violence against women and girls
- Improve access to resources, education and support for families living in poverty, especially women and children
- Re-value daughters

LEVEL — Individual life history (Ontogenetic)

FACTORS

Masculine Self
– Hostile towards women and approving of violence against women, need to prove self as 'real man'

Emotional and cognitive deficits
– Lack of empathy and respect for women and girls

Growing up in families unable to provide basic care

Depersonalised sex
– Sexual socialisation oriented to power and control

Stimulus abuse
– Abuse of pornography, alcohol and drugs

Early trauma
– Early exposure to violence in the home or abuse of trust

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Interventions needed at a personal and family level to

- Promote alternative secure masculine identities that do not devalue women
- Expand perceptions of women and children, especially where they are seen/treated as property
- Increase family support and parenting programmes which address gender
- Promote sexual ethics and ethics of care through education
- Enable young men to critically assess pornography
- Ensure drug and alcohol abuse services are informed by understandings of VAWG
- Ensure that mental health care informed by understandings of VAWG
- Ensure support for children who have been abused

Factors contributing to violence against women and girls (adapted from 'Factors at play in the perpetration of violence against women, violence against children and sexual orientation violence', developed by Hagemann-White et al in 2010)

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- **Preventive measures taken in Council of Europe member states**

Prevention measures for tackling violence against women largely take the form of:

- awareness raising,

- education,

- training and

- community intervention programmes

- **The evidence base**
- General lack of robust evaluation -–instead uses work considered as '*promising*', that is:
    - uses a gendered and human rights approach
    - provides a local evidence-base
    - is sustainable and replicable
    - enables excluded sectors of society
    - includes community ownership
    - includes partnerships.

Challenging Gender Stereotypes

- **Legislation and policy reform**
  - *Spanish* Law on Integrated Protection Measures against Gender Violence 2004
- **Campaigns**
  - *Croatia* 'Silence is not Gold', national media and education campaign
- **Collaboration with media organisations**
  - *Hurriyet media organisation* in Turkey promoting responsible reporting
- **Working with the education sector**
  - *MIGS* Youth4Youth: *Empowering Young People in Preventing Gender-based Violence through Peer Education*

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- **Addressing vulnerable groups**
- *NETHERLANDS* The Chain Approach (Ketenaanpak) on FGM

- **Involving men and boys**
- **Transforming unequal power relations between women and men**
- **Challenging resistance**
  - *WESTERN BALKANS* **The Young Men Initiative**
  - **TURKEY Integrating reproductive health and gender issues into the military curriculum**

- **Empowering women**
- **The centrality of women's empowerment for preventing violence against women**

- **How women's empowerment works to prevent violence against women**

  - **Economic empowerment**
  - **Political empowerment**

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