

- enhance employee wellbeing
- deal with collective stress
- prevent retardation of company productivity and sustainability
- foster corporate social responsibility

Maintaining and retaining a healthy pool of human capital is recognized as one of the key reasons behind company's growth and success. In addition, a positive brand image works to prevent client aversion and boycotts. That said, to adopt and abide by gender sensitive policies is of interest to businesses.

The policy and programming guidelines for the private sector was facilitated by Professor Maithree Wickremasinghe, Head, Department of English and Founding Director of the Centre for Gender Studies at the University of Kelaniya, in collaboration with CARE International Sri Lanka.

Recommendations from Policy Briefs:

Although the list of recommendations is comprehensive, the need to utilize media, education and health were similarly recommended to address most of these issues throughout all policy briefs. Below are examples of some of those recommendations as proposed in the policy briefs. Please refer to the briefs for a more exhaustive and complete list of recommendations.

	Media	Education	Health
Child protection – including childhood experiences and their impact on violence perpetration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raise awareness through mass media, with a special consideration for sexual abuse against girls as well as boys. ■ Portray gender equitable scenarios and traits in men and women in media (TV, Radio, Cartoons, etc). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Integrate non-violent methods of conflict resolution into the school curriculum. ■ Offer parenting classes for young couples and parents in addendum to services related to antenatal care. ■ Incorporate protective education on child abuse in schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitate provisions of services related to therapy and counseling for children.
Youth Engagement for Reduction of SGBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lobby to fine-tune the media code of ethics guidelines of the Ministry of Information & Communications to strengthen the gender aspect. ■ Use interactive theatre to run awareness campaigns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Have school based programs on gender, gender roles and identity that deconstruct concepts of masculinities and patriarchy. ■ Offer mentoring programs for young boys and girls. ■ Promote sexual and reproductive health (SRH) education to young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with Ministry of Health on creating youth friendly spaces for accessing psychosocial, and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) related support and services.

Exploring Women's Attitudes and the Impact of GBV on their Mental and Physical Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analyse popular media to identify instances of gender inequality and instances that can be modified to promote gender equality. ■ Encourage media personnel to produce programmes that highlight adverse consequences of gender inequality to individuals, families and societies, and promote men who do not perpetrate violence as role models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analyse and modify current text books and curricula to identify materials that portray gender inequality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Integrate anti-GBV messages into on-going health behavior change communication campaigns Lobby to enhance the mental health services to address the needs of victims of GBV.
Addressing Men's Health as a means of Primary Prevention of GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with media to create awareness and to promote and use gender equitable, non-violent masculinities in the mass media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Incorporate men's health concerns to education and health related systems. ■ Facilitate and fund GOs and NGOs to conduct school-based and community based programs with boys and girls that encourage discussion of gender equality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Promote inclusion of concerns of men's health and psychosocial service provision to health policy. ■ Formulate policy document on men's health which include effects of masculinities on men's health and GBV (victimization and perpetration).
Private Sector Engagement and the role it can play in GBV reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Refrain from extending sponsorship / support to films, tele-dramas, and stage plays that exalt or exculpate SGBV. ■ Review advertisements and brand management to ensure that they do not demean women or promote poor stereotypes. ■ Sponsor media programs and other initiatives promoting gender equity/equality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Integrate sessions on gender equality/equity, gender-based violence, non-discriminatory employment into existing employee training modules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage all employees to take their maximum allocation of leave so as to maximize on employee wellbeing.

How to use this knowledge:

The next steps will ensure that all the policy and programming briefs are finalized and translated into Sinhala and Tamil for dissemination in districts where the survey was conducted. Furthermore, we hope that a wider network of actors and organizations beyond CARE International Sri Lanka will show interest in the uptake and implementation of these recommendations.

"Prepared by Aliya Firozvi"



Preventing Sexual and Gender-based Violence in Sri Lanka: Stakeholder Consultations

Introduction:

CARE International Sri Lanka is an international non-governmental organization that is committed to combatting poverty and securing the rights of people since the 1950s. In its concerted efforts to that end, CARE has come to recognize the strengthened rights and mobilization of women as fundamental elements for sustained change. As such, gender is an integral part of CARE's framework.

In October 2010, CARE Sri Lanka embarked on a pioneering initiative called E.M.E.R.G.E (Empowering Men to Engage and Redefine Gender Equality) that involves men and boys in the conversation about gender in order to effectively reduce and prevent gender-based violence. EMERGE aims to promote a discussion on gender issues that encourages exploration and deconstruction of dominant gender narratives, gender roles and masculinities, with the intent to bring about behavioral as well as structural

changes within various influencing institutions including the family unit, communities, and in society.

In order to better inform this endeavor by bridging knowledge gaps, CARE partnered with Partners for Prevention (a UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV regional joint program for gender-based violence prevention in Asia and the Pacific) to conduct a study titled *Broadening gender: why masculinities matter on men's knowledge, attitudes, and practices of masculinities, gender-based violence and gender equality*.¹ The study findings will contribute towards the Partners for Prevention Regional Study titled *The UN Multi Country Study on Men and Violence*.

The quantitative survey was conducted using a random sampling strategy representative of four districts: Colombo, Hambantota, Batticaloa and Nuwara Eliya.

The key research objectives of the study were:

- To obtain valid estimates of the prevalence and frequency of men's perpetration (and women's experiences) of different types of violence against women, as well as men's violence against other men, with a particular emphasis on intimate partner violence and sexual violence;
- To map men's own experiences of different types of violence, including violence as children;
- To map men's gender attitudes and practices and identify which factors may protect or put men at risk for perpetrating intimate partner violence and sexual violence; and
- To build evidence-based policy and programme responses to prevent gender-based violence in Sri Lanka.

¹ de Mel, Neloufer, Peiris, P and Gomez, S, Broadening Gender: Why Masculinities Matter: Attitudes, practices and gender-based violence in four districts in Sri Lanka. CARE International and Partners for Prevention, 2013. (<http://www.partners4prevention.org/resource/broadening-gender-why-masculinities-matter>)

This research revealed significant information that was categorized in to five thematic areas that call for attention to be considered critical sites of intervention:

1. Child protection – including childhood experiences and their impact on violence perpetration
2. Youth engagement for reduction of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)
3. Exploring women's attitudes and the impact of gender-based violence (GBV) on their mental and physical health
4. Addressing men's health as a means of primary prevention of GBV
5. Private sector engagement and the role they can play in GBV reduction

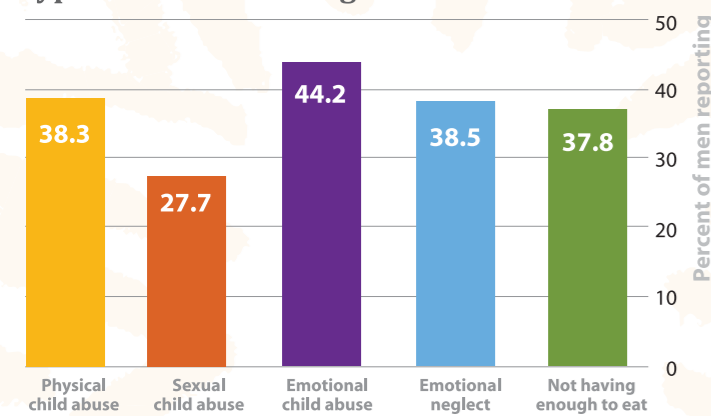
For each of the thematic areas, various organizations collaborated to produce five corresponding policy briefs that are further elaborated.

Introduction to the five thematic working groups:

01. Child protection – including childhood experiences and their impact on violence perpetration

A body of evidence now suggests that men who have experienced childhood trauma are likely to perpetrate violence against their partners. In other words, childhood abuse, characterized by neglect, sexual, physical and emotional abuse has been identified as one of the possible factors leading to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). An exacerbating factor for actions of violence could also be current notions and models of masculinity which promote feelings of sexual entitlements and liberties. Furthermore, experiencing child abuse has a negative impact on men's physical and mental health, which exacerbates the likelihood of perpetrating violence (See Figure 1). For example, men who experienced childhood physical, sexual or emotional abuse are 1.7 to 2 times more likely to perpetrate violence against their partners.

Percentage of men who experienced different types of abuse and neglect as children



The prevention and response to child abuse are best addressed in the places of occurrence including, home, communities, schools and juvenile centres.

That said, effective and comprehensive intervention towards children's protection would help curb cyclical actions of violence and trauma within family units.

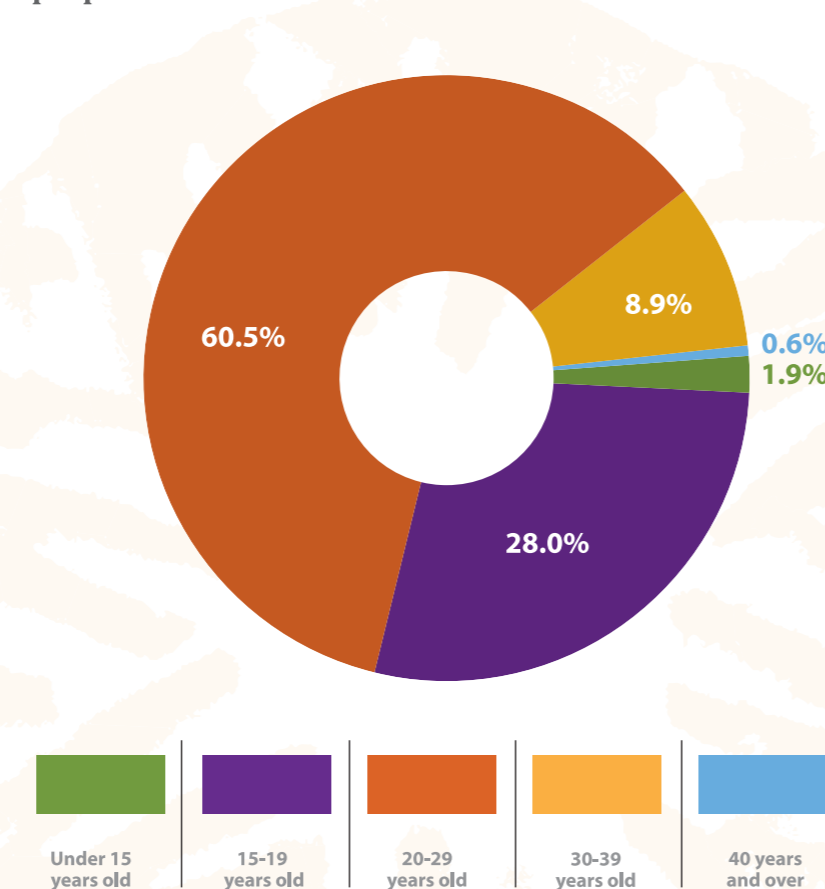
A more comprehensive list of recommendations is present in the brief that was facilitated by Dr. Hiranthi Wijemanne, elected an Expert Member of the Child Rights Monitoring by the UN General Assembly, in collaboration with UNICEF.

02. Youth Engagement for the reduction of SGBV

One of the most critical areas for effective change is working with the youth. There are many issues affecting young people that are complex and many times hidden from the public eye. In addition to childhood, experiences in young adult life are formative of personalities and expressions. Youth is prime impressionable time, where interests in some things can lead to risky and unhealthy behaviors. Hence, creating a safe space to talk about sex, sexuality, gender, and sexual and reproductive health is critical to ensuring prevention in perpetration of violence.

The study utilized the Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) scale to understand gender perceptions of young people. The results reveal inequitable notions of gender roles. In addition, it also revealed surprising statistics about perpetration of violence by youth, starting as young as age 15 (see Figure 2). Furthermore, the data set from the study reveals knowledge gaps in youth's self-awareness as well as a void in an opportunity to begin conversation and break the silence over taboo topics pertaining to growth and sexuality.

Age when first committed sexual violence, inclusive of rape, among men who reported perpetration of sexual violence



The brief suggests interventions fitting to the ecological model, whereby strategies are targeted at individual, relational, community and societal levels. It was facilitated by Prabu Deepan, a practitioner in the field of youth and development, and a fellow of International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP) 2011 on Youth Leadership in collaboration with the Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka.

03. Exploring women's attitudes and the impact of GBV on their mental and physical health

Women's health is undeniably a big component of gender-based violence. Violence, in obvious terms, leads to impact on women's health, both physically and mentally. It also leads to internalization of gender roles and notions of womanhood in which the woman is subservient to man. This is evident in the findings of the study whereby women display higher rates of gender inequitable attitudes compared to men. For example, 67% of the female sample, in contrast to 55% of the male sample, affirmed that "in any rape case, one would have to question whether the victim is promiscuous or has a bad reputation (See Figure 3). Such attitudes also lead to underreporting of violence against women. Thus, there is a need to not only ensure that women's physical and mental well-being is addressed, but also to focus on attitudes of women to display more positive self-image and identify their own agency.

Successful interventions would reduce underreporting of violence against women and help change women's attitudes about themselves and their roles.

Figure 3

Men's and women's attitudes toward gender relations

Perceptions about gender relations	Percentage of men who agree or strongly agree with the statement	Percentage of women who agree or strongly agree with the statement
I think that a woman should obey her husband	78.1	87.3
I think that men should share the work around the house with women such as doing dishes, cleaning and cooking	74.9	77.2
I think that a woman cannot refuse to have sex with her husband	58.2	67.4
I think that when a woman is raped, she is usually to blame for putting herself in that situation	29.8	31.9
I think that if a woman doesn't physically fight back, it's not rape	43.3	44.3
I think that some women ask to be raped by the way they dress and behave	79.1	75.1

This brief was facilitated by Dr. Nalika Gunawardena, Senior Lecturer in Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine of University of Colombo and Chairperson of Women's Health Committee of the Sri Lanka Medical Association in collaboration with CARE International Sri Lanka.

04. Addressing men's health as a means of primary prevention of GBV

One of the most significant revelations that came through this study is that there is a dire need to pay attention to men's health. Experiences of masculinity through childhood and youth are dictated by dominant notions of gender which can exert pressure on individuals, as well as marginalize those that do not fit the hegemonic masculine image. This is further exacerbated by the idea that men should not display their vulnerabilities or express their emotions. Needless to say, the lack of a healthy outlet for mental and physical well-being results in unhealthy manifestations of their emotions through anger and violence. For example, men who were emotionally or sexually abused as children are more than twice as likely to use sexual violence, including rape, against a non-partner. Furthermore, there is a significant percentage of men in Sri Lanka that display depressive symptoms (See Figure 4).

Figure 4

Male mental health: CES-D scale

Male survey	Rarely or none of the time Percentage	Some or a little of the time (1-2) days Percentage	Moderate amount of time (3-4 days) Percentage	Most or all of the time (5-7 days) Percentage
During the past week I did not feel like eating, my appetite was poor	74.8	21.3	3.1	0.8
During the past week I felt depressed	71.9	22.1	4.6	1.3
During the past week I thought my life had been a failure	80.3	15.6	2.9	1.2
During the past week I felt lonely	79.7	15.4	3.5	1.4

It is vital to address men's health to ensure a space for healing and wholeness. It would have a positive impact on women and their health as well, and can influence other identified themes of this study.

This brief was facilitated by Dr. Dayanath Ranathunga, Country Officer of UNAIDS and Kamani Jinadasa of CARE International, in collaboration with WHO and UNAIDS.

05. Private Sector Engagement – and the role it can play in GBV reduction

Private sector was identified as one of the key players to influence the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in the workplace and outside. There is pressing significance of SGBV on the private sector in terms of its effects on company productivity, work/life balance and brand image and reputation. If given attention, large and small businesses alike can benefit greatly by addressing the issue of sexual and gender-based violence so as to: