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# MALE ENGAGEMENT LEARNING BRIEF BIKITA

Engaging men as partners and allies in preventing violence against women and girls — lessons from SASA! Faith implementation with UDACIZA in Bikita District, Zimbabwe.



*Male engagement session under the tree, Ward 13, Bikita District.*

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## ABOUT THIS BRIEF

## Background to the Learning Brief

This learning brief is a result of the Ireland Civil Society Partnership (ICSP) Social Norms Learning Initiative, funded through Trócaire and implemented across four countries: Zimbabwe, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Rwanda. The Initiative rests on a single proposition — that violence against women and girls is held in place by social norms, and that norms shift only when communities themselves do the changing. Its purpose is not simply to deliver activities, but to learn, in real time and across contexts, what actually moves those norms.

In Zimbabwe, the learning began in 2024 with only one partner organisation, Youth Alive Zimbabwe, implementing in Mutasa District. After seeing the progress achieved in Mutasa, the learning was then scaled up to Bikita and Insiza districts, where repeated sessions are being conducted with men using the SASA! Faith approach. This brief documents that scaled-up phase, covering the period January 2026 to August 2026.

## THE LEARNING JOURNEY IN ZIMBABWE

**2024****Mutasa District**

Learning begins with one partner — Youth Alive Zimbabwe — testing social norms approaches in a single district.

**2026****Bikita District**

Scale-up to UDACIZA, using SASA! Faith and the Men in Action process across Wards 13, 19, 21 and 32.

**2026****Insiza District**

Scale-up to EWF, using SASA! Faith and the Men in Action process across Wards 1, 2, 19 and 21

Scaling up in this way was a deliberate learning decision rather than an administrative one. Rather than replicating a fixed package, each new district has been treated as a further opportunity to test what holds true across contexts and what must be adapted — an approach consistent with international evidence that male engagement works best when it is contextualised, repeated and locally owned, rather than delivered as a one-off curriculum.

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# SNAPSHOT

## At a Glance

|                                      |                             |                                |                                        |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>3</b><br>DISTRICTS IN<br>ZIMBABWE | <b>4</b><br>WARDS IN BIKITA | <b>8</b><br>SESSIONS PER CYCLE | <b>4</b><br>ICSP LEARNING<br>COUNTRIES |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|

|                       |                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Approach</b>       | Delivered through the structured Men in Action Handbook and guided by SASA! Faith values of Justice, Peace and Dignity.                              |
| <b>Location</b>       | Bikita District, Masvingo Province — Wards 13, 19, 21 and 32.                                                                                        |
| <b>Facilitation</b>   | Led by a male representative of the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MWACSMED), supported by UDACIZA. |
| <b>Period covered</b> | January – August 2026.                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Men reached</b>    | 156 confirmed from session attendance registers.                                                                                                     |
| <b>Funding</b>        | Ireland Civil Society Partnership through Trócaire                                                                                                   |

## The Case for Engaging Men

Violence against women and girls remains one of the world's most persistent and most under-funded human rights crises. Globally, nearly one in three women — an estimated 840 million — have experienced intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime, a figure that has barely moved since 2000. Over two decades, intimate partner violence has declined by an average of just 0.2 per cent a year.

|                                          |                                                 |                                                     |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1 in 3</b><br>WOMEN GLOBALLY AFFECTED | <b>0.2%</b><br>AVERAGE ANNUAL DECLINE IN<br>IPV | <b>0.2%</b><br>OF GLOBAL AID SPENT ON<br>PREVENTION |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|

Source: WHO (2025), Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2023.<sup>1</sup>

The gap is not one of evidence but of investment: in 2022 only 0.2 per cent of global development assistance was directed to preventing violence against women, and that share has fallen further since.

<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization (2025). Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2023: global, regional and national prevalence estimates for intimate partner violence against women and non-partner sexual violence against women. Geneva: WHO, on behalf of the UN Inter-Agency Working Group on Violence Against Women Estimation and Data. ISBN 978-92-4-011696-2.

## The picture in Zimbabwe

National data confirm that this is not an abstract global concern. The 2023–24 Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey found that 27 per cent of women aged 15–49 had experienced physical violence since the age of 15, and 13 per cent in the twelve months preceding the survey. Nine per cent reported experiencing sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. Critically, only 44 per cent of women who had ever experienced physical or sexual violence had sought help of any kind — a silence that community-level prevention work is specifically designed to break.

Source: ZIMSTAT and ICF (2025), *Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey 2023–24*.<sup>2</sup>

## Why men, and why like this

Gender-based violence, particularly violence against women and girls, remains strongly influenced by unequal power relations, harmful gender norms and expectations around masculinity. In many communities' men are socially positioned as household decision-makers, providers and authority figures, while women are expected to be submissive, responsible for unpaid care work, and less involved in major household and community decisions. Such norms can contribute to the acceptance or normalisation of controlling behaviour, emotional abuse, economic violence, and physical or sexual violence.

Within UDACIZA's implementation of SASA! Faith in Bikita District, male engagement has increasingly been recognised as an essential component of GBV prevention. Rather than viewing men only as potential perpetrators, the project has engaged men as partners and allies in prevention. This approach has sought to support men to examine how power operates in their relationships, reflect on harmful expectations of masculinity, improve communication with their partners, participate more equitably in household responsibilities, and promote non-violent relationships.

### WHAT THE EVIDENCE SAYS

A 2025 systematic review of reviews covering 35 reviews and approximately 960 primary studies across low- and middle-income countries found substantial evidence for interventions that engage men and boys, with strikingly similar principles emerging across health and violence-prevention domains. Gender-transformative group education consistently improved outcomes along the pathway to reduced violence — attitudes towards violence, communication within couples and families, and conflict-resolution skills.<sup>3</sup>

Crucially, the same body of evidence is clear that effective engagement must go beyond simply including men in programmes. It must intentionally address harmful masculinities, unequal power relations and gender norms — and must do so with accountability to women and women's rights organisations, or it risks reinforcing the very hierarchies it sets out to change.<sup>4</sup>

This is also a moment that demands care. UN Women reports that in 2024 nearly one quarter of governments worldwide recorded a backlash against women's rights that has undermined implementation of gender equality commitments. Work with men that is not explicitly anchored in power, accountability and the rights of women and girls can be absorbed by that backlash rather than resisting it. The design choices documented in this brief — safe

<sup>2</sup> Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) and ICF (2025). *Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey 2023–24: Final Report*. Harare, Zimbabwe, and Rockville, Maryland, USA: ZIMSTAT and ICF, June 2025.

<sup>3</sup> Gottert, A., Pulerwitz, J., Weiner, R., Okondo, C., Werner, J., Magni, S. and Mathur, S. (2025). 'Systematic review of reviews on interventions to engage men and boys as clients, partners and agents of change for improved sexual and reproductive health and rights.' *BMJ Open*, 15(1): e083950. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2024-083950.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Independent Evaluation Office (2024). *Reflections: Masculinities and mobilising men for gender equality — a synthesis of 58 evaluations and case studies from UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA*. New York: UNDP IEO.

but challenging spaces, repeated exposure, faith-based framing, and a deliberate progression from personal to community change — are a direct response to that risk.

See UN Women (2025) on backlash dynamics and effective responses.<sup>56</sup>

## SCOPE

### Purpose of this Brief

This learning brief captures the experience of implementing male engagement activities under the ICSP Project being implemented by UDACIZA in Bikita. It documents:

- key lessons emerging from the engagement of men;
- approaches that contributed to meaningful participation and reflection;
- challenges encountered during implementation;
- practical adaptations made to respond to the local context;
- recommendations for strengthening male engagement in future programming.

#### WHO THIS BRIEF IS FOR

Practitioners designing or adapting male engagement components; faith-based organisations working on violence prevention; district and national government partners; and donors and investors seeking evidence on what community-level norms change requires — and what it costs in time, repetition and follow-up.

### Methodology

The male engagement component was implemented through a structured eight-session process, guided by the Men in Action Handbook and nested within the wider SASA! Faith community mobilisation approach. The sessions are designed to progressively support men to reflect on gender norms, masculinity, relationships, parenting, accountability and their role in preventing violence against women and girls.

The sessions used a participatory, dialogue-based methodology intended to create a safe and non-judgmental space where men could openly reflect on gender norms, masculinity, relationships, power and their role in prevention. They were facilitated by a representative from the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MWACSMED), who used group discussions to encourage active participation, experience sharing and collective reflection. Open-ended questions, guided discussions, reflection exercises and practical examples were used to explore the issues identified.

To complement the structured group discussions, informal interviews and one-on-one conversations were conducted with selected participants. These provided opportunities for men to share personal experiences,

<sup>5</sup> UN Women (2025). Understanding backlash against gender equality: Evidence, trends and policy responses. New York: UN Women, September 2025.

<sup>6</sup> UN Women (2025). Beijing+30: Women's Rights in Review. New York: UN Women. Reports that in 2024 nearly one quarter of governments worldwide recorded a backlash on women's rights affecting the implementation of gender equality commitments.

perceptions and changes in attitude in a more private setting, capturing perspectives that participants may have been less comfortable expressing in the larger group and offering deeper insight into the factors influencing men's behaviour and engagement.

The methodology also promoted peer learning, with participants encouraged to respond to and learn from each other's experiences rather than relying solely on facilitator-led instruction. The combination of group discussion and informal interview enabled the sessions to generate both collective learning and individual reflection, while allowing facilitators to identify emerging concerns, misconceptions, positive changes and areas requiring further support.

| ELEMENT                  | HOW IT WORKED                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Approach</b>          | SASA! Faith community mobilisation, adapted for faith communities.                                                              |
| <b>Session structure</b> | Eight structured sessions from the Men in Action Handbook, delivered sequentially.                                              |
| <b>Facilitation</b>      | Male MWACSMED representative; peer-led discussion; faith-based framing.                                                         |
| <b>Data sources</b>      | Facilitator observation, group discussion records, informal interviews and one-on-one conversations with selected participants. |
| <b>Between sessions</b>  | Take-home practice tasks, reviewed at the start of the following session.                                                       |

*The SASA! Faith approach was co-created by Raising Voices and Trócaire and remains the core mobilisation methodology used under the Initiative.<sup>7</sup>*

<sup>7</sup> Programme methodology source. Raising Voices and Trócaire, SASA! Faith: A guide for faith communities to prevent violence against women and HIV. Kampala, Uganda and Maynooth, Ireland. The approach continues to be maintained and disseminated by Raising Voices (raisingvoices.org) and remains the core mobilisation methodology used under the ICSP Social Norms Learning Initiative.

# WHAT WE LEARNED

## Key Lessons

Men who participated in the engagement sessions shared that the sessions initially caused them to examine their inner selves and pointed to the need for the wider community to adopt these approaches in preventing violence against women.

### 1

#### Men engage when the space is safe — but still challenging

One of the most important lessons is that men are more likely to participate meaningfully when they are given space to reflect on their own beliefs, experiences and behaviour, rather than being collectively labelled as perpetrators of violence. A judgmental approach makes participants defensive, reduces openness, and discourages men from discussing sensitive issues relating to relationships, power and masculinity.

Creating a safe space does not mean avoiding difficult conversations or excusing harmful behaviour. Facilitators instead created an environment in which men could honestly acknowledge harmful beliefs and behaviour while being challenged to take responsibility for changing them. The sessions created opportunities for men to examine their own understanding of what it means to be a man, how power is exercised within intimate relationships, and how social expectations shape their behaviour. Participants were encouraged to reflect on the messages they received while growing up about men's and women's roles, and to consider whether those expectations contribute to inequality or violence.

*“Kutishevedza tiri vana baba kwamurikuita kunoita kuti titaure takasununguka nyaya dzemhirizhonga idzi.”*

Calling us as men alone makes us feel comfortable and able to openly discuss these issues of violence.

— Male participant, Ward 13, Bikita District

This approach mattered because some of the behaviour that contributes to violence is normalised within communities. Controlling a partner's movements, controlling household finances, making decisions without consulting a partner, using insults during disagreements, or expecting women to carry all domestic responsibilities are not always recognised as harmful. The men-only space made it possible to name and critically examine exactly these behaviours.

### 2

#### Norm change requires repetition, not a single session

Deeply embedded gender norms cannot be shifted through a one-off session. Participants need repeated opportunities to discuss, practise and reinforce new behaviours. A participant may agree during a session that

women and men should participate equally in household decision-making, yet changing actual behaviour takes considerably longer. When he returns home, existing expectations of male authority continue to shape how decisions are made. The structured multi-session process therefore offers far greater potential for sustained learning than isolated awareness activities.

*“Isu tinoona sekuti chironzwa ichi chakanaka asi zvaizova zvakanaka kuti tirambe tichiwana dzidziso iyi nguva nenguva. Zvinotibatika kuti tigare tichiyeuchidzwa kuita zvakanaka tisingakonzeri mhirizhonga, saka chironzwa ngachienderere mberi imi sevaturungamiri vedu muchiuya muchitibatsira.”*

We feel that this programme is good, but it would be helpful if we could continue receiving this training regularly. It helps us to be constantly reminded to do what is right and avoid causing violence. Therefore, the programme should continue, with you as our leaders coming to support and assist us.

— Male participant, Bikita District

Take-home exercises reinforce this. They ensure that participants actually practise what is being asked of them rather than rushing to complete the sessions. During a one-on-one conversation, one participant emphasised that although the sessions had been conducted, more were still needed so that men are consistently reminded that violence should not be tolerated under any circumstances.

*“Zvidzidzo zvenyu izvi zvaita kuti tikwanisewo kuratidza rudo kumadzimai edu nekuti takagumisira kare kuudza madzimai edu kuti ndinokuda, saka homework iyi irikukuchidzira moto werudo mumba.”*

These lessons have enabled us to show love to our wives, because it had been a long time since we last told our wives that we love them. This homework is rekindling the fire of love in our homes.

— Male participant, Bikita District

Repeated engagement also matters because participants progress at different rates. Some men quickly recognise harmful gender norms; others initially resist the discussions. Continued engagement gives facilitators time to address misconceptions and allows participants who were hesitant at first to become gradually more involved.

### 3 Individual awareness does not automatically change relationships

A key lesson to emerge was that individual awareness does not automatically change relationships. Participants themselves highlighted that personal reflection does not translate automatically into change within intimate relationships — a man may leave a session convinced that power should be shared yet return to a household where old patterns of decision-making persist. They pointed to the involvement of spouses as the missing link, noting that couples' sessions would create space for partners to discuss these issues together and would extend the conversation from the individual into the household and, ultimately, the wider community. This feedback directly shaped the programme: the Men in Action Handbook originally comprised six sessions for men only, and two couples-focused sessions were subsequently added specifically so that change would also be realised at household level, not just in individual attitudes.

“*Tinoda kuti dzidziso iyi igoitwa tiri pamwepo nemadzimai edu nekuti ini ndikawana ruzivo, ko iye anozodzidza kupi kuita zvakanaka sezvo mhirizhonga ichiitwa kunyangwe nevanhukadzi?*”

We want this training to be conducted together with our wives, because if I gain the knowledge, where will she learn how to do things better — since violence can also be perpetrated by women?

— Walter Manasa, Ward 13, Bikita District

This adaptation is consistent with international evidence, which shows that couples-based and father-focused approaches are among the most consistently effective ways of translating individual attitude change into changed household practice, particularly around caregiving, shared decision-making and non-violent conflict resolution.<sup>8</sup>

## 4 Committed participants become credible peer influencers

Male participants who demonstrate commitment to change can become important peer influencers. These male allies initiate conversations with other men, challenge harmful comments and behaviours, encourage positive fatherhood and support community action against GBV. They also work alongside the Fire Circle Committee in leading these conversations forward.

This mirrors findings that male engagement is most durable when it strengthens men’s social connection and peer support structures, rather than relying on individual instruction alone.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Equimundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice (2026). State of the World’s Fathers. Washington, DC: Equimundo / MenCare. Based on survey data from approximately 8,000 parents and caregivers across 16 countries.

<sup>9</sup> USAID Interagency Gender Working Group, Male Engagement Task Force (2024). Building Bridges: Promising Strategies for Improving the Health of Boys and Men by Promoting Social Connection and Support. Washington, DC: IGWG.

# WHAT WORKED

## Effective Approaches

| APPROACH                                            | WHY IT WORKED                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Male facilitation from a trusted institution</b> | Participants welcomed the involvement of a male MWACSMED representative as facilitator. Men were able to create relatable, safe spaces to discuss masculinity, power and relationships openly. Shared experience encouraged honest reflection, challenged harmful norms, promoted accountability and strengthened peer learning. Male facilitators also served as positive role models — demonstrating respectful communication, shared decision-making and non-violent conflict resolution, while encouraging participants to become allies for prevention.                                              |
| <b>Peer-to-peer discussion</b>                      | Men responded positively to hearing the experiences of other men. Peer discussion created space to challenge harmful norms collectively and to identify realistic alternatives, rather than abstract ideals.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Making power concrete</b>                        | Sessions became far more relevant when power was linked to household decisions, money, parenting, sexuality, communication, and access to and control over resources. Framed this way, the conversation became recognisable — and men testified that violence had indeed been present in their own homes.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Faith teachings as an entry point</b>            | Faith teachings were used to emphasise men's responsibilities as role models, husbands, fathers and community leaders, encouraging positive masculinity within families and communities. This opened up sensitive subjects — communication, shared decision-making, household responsibilities, discipline, consent and violence prevention — without participants feeling judged or accused. By connecting prevention to values men already recognised and respected, the sessions increased their willingness to examine harmful norms and consider alternative ways of relating to women and children. |

# WHAT MADE IT DIFFICULT

## Challenges Encountered

| CHALLENGE                             | HOW IT PRESENTED                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Deeply entrenched gender norms</b> | Some participants initially viewed male authority and female submissiveness as normal or culturally appropriate, making discussion of shared decision-making and equality difficult. |

| CHALLENGE                                  | HOW IT PRESENTED                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Misunderstanding of gender equality</b> | Equality was sometimes interpreted as women taking over men's roles or challenging male authority. The facilitator reframed it in terms of dignity, shared responsibility, mutual respect and fair participation.                    |
| <b>Limited time</b>                        | Men carry livelihood, farming, church and family responsibilities that affect attendance, creating difficulties in maintaining consistent participation across all sessions.                                                         |
| <b>Maintaining accountability</b>          | Positive change among participants does not automatically mean wider community transformation. Continued awareness-raising and monitoring are needed so that men can demonstrate that their commitments are translating into action. |

## HOW WE RESPONDED

### Practical Adaptations

| ADAPTATION                          | WHAT IT INVOLVED                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Use of SASA! Faith materials</b> | Sessions adapted SASA! Faith posters as visual and interactive tools to stimulate discussion on effective communication, joint planning, shared decision-making, power dynamics and equitable relationships.                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Flexible scheduling</b>          | Sessions were held on agreed days and at times convenient for participants, taking account of household, livelihood and community responsibilities. Consulting participants on timing promoted ownership, consistent attendance and active participation.                                                                                              |
| <b>Role plays</b>                   | Role plays gave participants practical opportunities to explore and practise positive behaviours in real-life situations, and to reflect on how their words, attitudes and actions can either contribute to or prevent violence and unequal power relations.                                                                                           |
| <b>Take-home practice tasks</b>     | At the end of each session participants committed to one practical behaviour to practise before the next meeting — sharing a household task, discussing a decision with a partner, or spending dedicated time communicating with their children. The following session opened with reflection on what happened, what worked and what proved difficult. |

## LOOKING FORWARD

## Recommendations for Future Programming

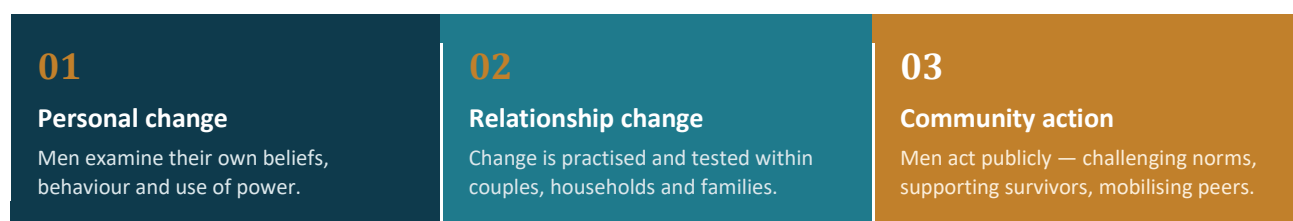
### 1. Maintain a structured, longer-term male engagement model

Future programming should retain a multi-session approach rather than relying on isolated awareness activities. Sufficient time should be provided for reflection, practice, reinforcement and follow-up. This is also where the evidence is clearest: programmes of longer duration, delivered in structured sequence, consistently outperform short or single-exposure activities.

*See Gottert et al. (2025) on duration, sequencing and multi-component design.*<sup>10</sup>

### 2. Strengthen the transition from personal change to community action

Programmes should deliberately support men to move through three levels. This progression should be reflected in session objectives and in monitoring indicators, so that it is measured rather than assumed.



### 3. Institutionalise couples' engagement

Couples' sessions should be integrated into male engagement programming where appropriate, with particular emphasis on communication, joint decision-making, household responsibilities, financial discussions and non-violent conflict resolution. Participants themselves have asked for this, and it is the most direct route from individual awareness to changed household practice.

### 4. Strengthen follow-up and mentorship

Follow-up meetings should be conducted after the completion of the session cycle, providing opportunities to assess behaviour change, address challenges and reinforce commitments. Male allies should be supported with light-touch mentorship rather than left to sustain momentum alone.

### 5. Build the capacity of faith and traditional leaders

Faith and traditional leaders should be equipped to reinforce positive messages on gender equality, respectful relationships, non-violence and shared responsibility through sermons, counselling, marriage preparation and other faith and community platforms. They should also understand confidentiality, safe referral, survivor choice and appropriate referral pathways.

<sup>10</sup> Gottert et al. (2025), op. cit. The review found that longer-duration, multi-component and structured-sequence interventions consistently outperformed short or single-exposure activities.

## 6. Anchor the work in accountability and anticipate backlash

Male engagement should remain explicitly accountable to women, women's rights organisations and survivors. Programmes should plan for resistance and backlash from the outset — including within households, congregations and community structures — and equip facilitators to respond without abandoning the substance of the conversation.<sup>1112</sup>

### WHAT THIS WOULD TAKE

The single most consequential investment is time. Extending the model from a completed cycle of sessions to a sustained cycle with couples' sessions, structured follow-up and mentored male allies is what converts stated commitment into measurable change in households. Partners with continued support are well positioned to take this next step across Mutasa, Bikita and Insiza.

## IN SUMMARY

### Conclusion

The experience of implementing male engagement through the Men in Action Handbook in Bikita demonstrates that men can play an important role in preventing GBV when programmes create opportunities for honest reflection, accountability and practical behaviour change. Engaging men as partners, role models and allies provides an opportunity to challenge harmful constructions of masculinity while promoting healthier relationships, shared decision-making and non-violent families.

However, meaningful transformation requires sustained engagement. Individual awareness must be connected to change within couples, families and the wider community. Future programming should therefore maintain the structured and phased approach, strengthen follow-up and mentorship, institutionalise couples' engagement, equip men for community action, and measure changes in actual behaviour and relationships rather than attendance alone.

By moving beyond awareness towards sustained action and accountability, male engagement can contribute significantly to transforming harmful gender norms and strengthening community prevention of violence against women and girls.

**The men of Bikita asked for one thing above all else: not more information, but more time — repeated conversations, with their wives beside them, sustained long enough for new behaviour to become ordinary. That is the investment this brief makes the case for.**

<sup>11</sup> International Center for Research on Women and UNESCO (2024). Engaging Men and Boys: A Report on Pathways to Gender Equality. New Delhi: ICRW. Drawn on here for its guidance on contextualisation, accountability and the management of backlash in male engagement programming.

<sup>12</sup> UN Women (2025), op. cit., on anticipating and responding to resistance within households, institutions and community structures.

## Acknowledgements

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*Full source details are also given in the footnotes at the point of citation.*

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