

ShowCase

Program H

Topic: Sexual health

Organisation: H Alliance

Location: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Dates: 1999 - ongoing

Budget: Approximately US\$57,000

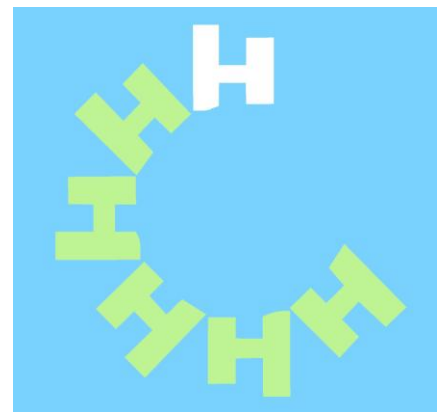
Website:

www.promundo.org.br/en/activities/programs

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Overview

Program H aims to prevent and reduce the prevalence of HIV/STIs by questioning male gender norms. There is a strong link between gender attitudes toward sexuality and HIV risk behaviours, such as non-condom use.

Program H seeks to engage young men and their communities in critical reflections about rigid norms related to manhood. It includes group educational activities, community campaigns and an innovative evaluation model for assessing the programme's impact on gender-related attitudes.

Program H was developed and validated in Latin America and the Caribbean (Bolivia, Colombia, Jamaica and Peru) in 1999 by four Latin American NGOs: Instituto Promundo (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), ECOS (São Paulo, Brazil), Instituto PAPAÍ (Recife, Brazil) and Salud y Género (Mexico). This case study focuses on implementation of Program H as a six-month quasi-experimental study in Rio de Janeiro in 2002.

Pre- and post-implementation surveys from this study indicated a significant positive change in men's attitudes toward women, increased condom use and reduced reported STI symptoms in the two intervention sites, and no change in the control site. Qualitative in-depth interviews with young men and women also indicated increased caring and respect in participants' relationships, as well as more health-protective behaviours.

1. BEHAVIOUR

- Seek relationships with women based on equality and intimacy, rather than sexual conquest
- Seek to be involved fathers (for those who are fathers) or to be involved in caregiving
- Assume some responsibility for reproductive health and disease-prevention issues
- Oppose violence against women

2. CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- 'Mapping' masculinity to better understand how men and women view what it means to be male: a range of existing literature, studies and surveys from Latin America and elsewhere were reviewed
- In-depth interviews with these 'more gender-equitable men'

3. THEORY

- **Stages of Change Theory:** aims to move people from pre-contemplation of a new behaviour, through contemplation, towards action and maintenance
- Ecological model

4. INSIGHT

- Researchers identified individuals who questioned the prevailing views about manhood
- These men generally showed a high degree of self-reflection in the interviews, some awareness of the personal benefits of embracing gender equality, and usually had others around them - family members, a valued peer or peer group, or an adult male - who modelled gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours
- These men sometimes also had seen or experienced gender violence - violence against a mother or sister when they were children, or perhaps had used violence against a female partner themselves

5. EXCHANGE

Benefits:

- Short-term: young people can choose to avoid risky behaviours that may lead to disease or death, as well as sexual coercion and physical violence
- Longer-term: stronger and more rewarding relationships and more life choices for future generations

Barriers:

- A long cultural tradition that reinforces machismo
- The lure of sexual gratification
- Peer pressure ('Everyone is doing it')
- Reinforcement from entertainment media's representation of machismo values

6. COMPETITION

- Generations of ingrained traditional machismo values, held by peers and family members
- Media reinforcement of machismo values

7. SEGMENTATION

- Focuses on young men rather than older men, since they potentially hold more flexible views about gender and are just beginning their sexual lives or starting to develop intimate partnerships

8. METHODS MIX

- A validated curriculum that includes a manual and educational video for promoting attitude and behaviour change among men
- A lifestyle campaign for promoting changes in community or social norms about what it means to be a man
- Gender-equitable Men (GEM) Scale to measure the impact of the intervention on attitudes toward gender norms