

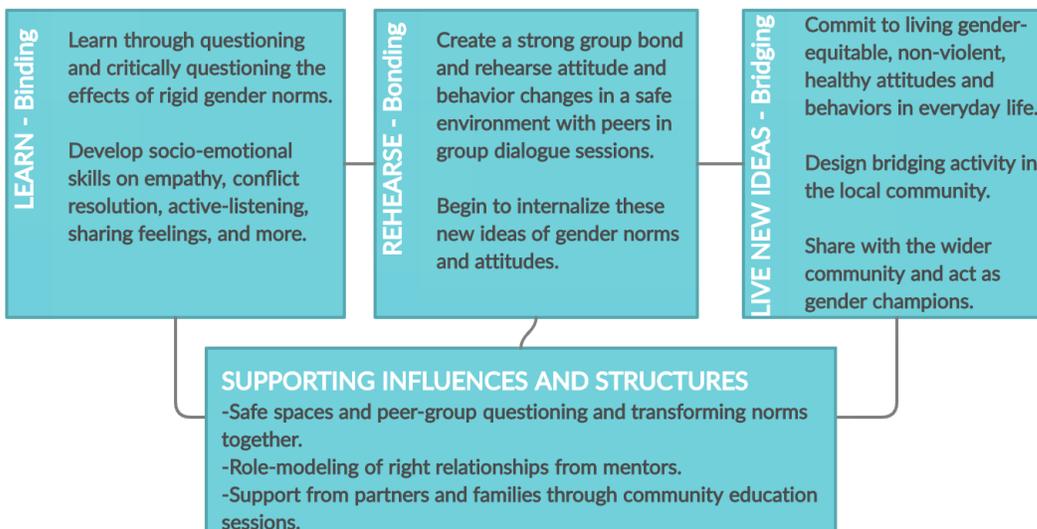
A Journey Towards a Peaceful Masculinity

A POSITIVE MASCULINITY CURRICULUM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This curriculum is intended to be used by project implementers, planners and youth development practitioners in CRS programming. The aim is to support behavior change, build socio-emotional skills, and to change social norms and internalized ideas of what it is to be a ‘man.’ Facilitators can use this manual to guide adolescent boys and young men through a journey towards a more positive masculine identity. This journey is a ‘new rite of passage’ guided by male mentors and facilitators, inspired by Catholic Social Teaching, the principles of CRS’ 3Bs/4Ds peacebuilding framework and theories from numerous evidence-based positive masculinity approaches.

The Journey towards a Peaceful Masculinity



WHY ENGAGE YOUNG MEN ON POSITIVE MASCULINITY?

- Young men are a fast-growing demographic around the globe. Engaging this growing population has an immediate impact on the individuals, their families and communities. This engagement is also an investment in shaping young men as future husbands, fathers and leaders.
- Adolescents are at a critical human development stage, in which they can negotiate their interactions in relationships and

their identity. They are beginning to search for the ‘self’ during a time of increased decision-making and increased pressure.

- There is growing evidence of the negative impacts of rigid, hyper-masculine norms on physical and mental health. (ie. depression, inability to express feelings, build right relationships, take responsibility for household tasks, lower attendance at school and higher incidences of violence)
- Based on extensive research men and boys are asking for this type of programming. There is ample evidence of the effectiveness of and need to include men and boys in gender integrated programming in order to transform harmful gender norms.

GENDER STRATEGY 2030: PRIORITY AREA 2

CRS' *Global Gender Strategy 2030*, Priority Area 2, in recognizing the above-mentioned need, CRS understands that programs that seek to realize equitable outcomes and work toward ensuring all people are able to live a life full of human dignity and fairness must involve men and boys to question harmful norms of what it means to be a man, hyper-masculine norms and unequal power dynamics that accompany them.

CRS hopes to engage men and boys to:

- **reflect** on how conceptions of 'manhood' are influenced by unequal gender norms
- **encourage** men to move from harmful notions of what it "means to be a man" to the innate positive that each person has within them, which is not always celebrated or raised up
- **guide** adolescent boys towards a more peaceful, positive masculine identity through increased socio-emotional and relational knowledge, skills and attitudes

These outcomes not only benefit men and boys themselves, but also have positive implications for their families, women, girls, and communities in promoting right relationships.

THE CURRICULUM AT A GLANCE

WHAT DOES IT CONTAIN?

- Introduction and background to the issues surrounding hyper-masculinity and the 'Man Box'.
- Developing and reinforcing gender-equitable skills, knowledge and attitudes including: empathy, recognizing violence and power in relationships, active-listening, non-violent conflict-resolution skills, increased responsibility in the household, accountability, and expressing emotions.
- Both 3.5 day or 8-12-week school model schedule, adaptable to the context and schedules of participants.
- Organized into subject-specific modules for increased adaptability and use.
- Over 50 lesson plans and activities (adapted from evidence-based practices), for building the socio-emotional skills of adolescent boys towards a more positive masculine identity.
- Planning and Implementation suggestions including Training of Facilitator outline.

WHO IS IT FOR?

This curriculum is to be used by facilitators as a planning and implementation tool for a 'rite of passage' program with boys and young men ages 15-24 to build and strengthen peaceful masculinities. The participants may be selected for the project, and specifically for this training, based on prior demonstrated leadership abilities and/or motivation to work actively for peace and gender equity.

WHAT IS THE METHODOLOGY BEHIND THE THEORY OF CHANGE?

The curriculum is inspired by Catholic Social Teaching and the need for a 'new' rite of passage for boys and young men as they journey into manhood. The curriculum draws several evidence-based theories of human and positive youth development.

- **Dialogue Groups** – used as a means to share information, expectations, feelings and beliefs, reflect on personal experience and challenge norms, practice skills and new behaviors, and create networks of support for boys and men who chose to challenge hegemonic masculinities in a safe space.
- **Socio-ecological model** - gender transformative programming requires work at all levels, from the individual to the relational and community levels, including institutions.
- **CRS' 3Bs/4Ds Approach to Social Cohesion** – the appreciative inquiry process will happen throughout the rite of passage taking the individual and group through the process of binding, bonding, and bridging, while discovering, dreaming, designing and delivering a new version of masculinity.

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