



# THE CHANGE PROJECT

Understanding gender, masculinities and  
power to prevent gender-based violence



## Challenges and Lessons in Interviewing Men

# Considerations for research with boys and men

- First, recognise that there is understandable concern from the feminist movement
- Important not to “re-center” men in this research
- Not about researching men in isolation from women
- Research with men and boys should never be at the expense of research with women & girls, as a complement to research with women and girls
- Researching masculinities must be to promote gender equality and violence prevention – must be used to improve policy and programming

# Dialogue with partners

- Collaboration among multiple partners is vital to get buy-in for sensitive research
- Balance between adapting to local context, addressing areas of national interest, and providing cross-country comparable data
- Rigorous, ethical research with men on SV is expensive, time consuming and challenging - should be made clear from the outset
- Research fatigue - communities not seeing practical outcomes

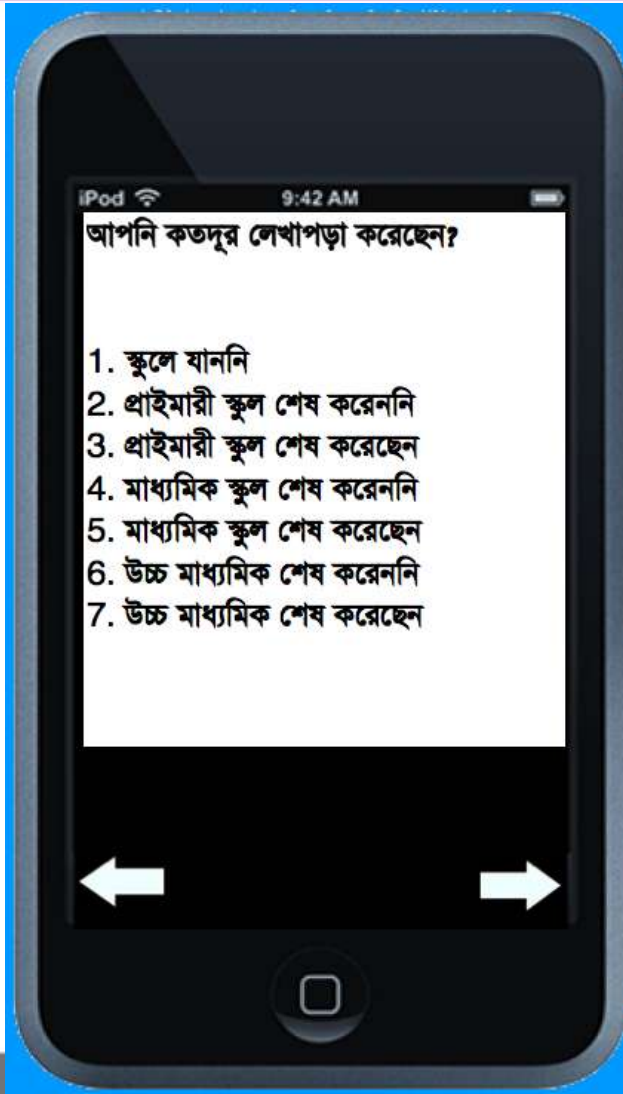
# Dialogue with partners

- Initially partners were very hesitant - interviewing men about SV and sexuality seems even more sensitive than interviewing women
- Partners believed that men will not answer such questions
- *“Men do respond to sensitive questions and do appreciate such surveys even in a Muslim dominated country usually known as conservative!”* (Bangladesh Team)

# Questionnaire

- Multiple questions about different types of SV
- Men's experiences of SV and perpetration of SV against men and boys
- Perpetrations in the last 12 months
- Age at first perpetration and number of women/girls raped
- Consequences and motivations
- Questions that link SV to other forms of violence, both physical and societal
- Ideally, have some directly comparable questions on women's experiences

# Use of handhelds



- Addresses ethical issues – asking men about criminal behaviour
- User friendly – even for those with low literacy (commonality of mobile phone use)
- Automatic skips programmed to reduce errors
- Data available immediately
- Getting consistent answers and high self-reports of SV

# Use of handhelds

- Pre-recorded audio helps to desensitize sensitive questions
- Countries requesting fully self-administered due to sensitive nature of research
- Reduced the work load, burden on interviewers, and exposure to vicarious trauma
- Programming is time consuming and expensive
- Challenges for interviewers not used to touch screens
- Electricity access in remote areas for re-charging
- Issues with Wi-Fi connection and uploading data

# Training and interviewers

- Finding appropriate male interviewers is challenging
- Some male interviewers were changed by their experiences, and altered their perceptions of gender
- In shorter, qualitative training some did not fully grasp the significance of gender
- Some male interviewers not comfortable talking about sex and decided to quit during training



# Training and interviewers

- In-depth training is paramount
- Provides opportunity for discussion of sensitive issues and self reflection
- Allows relationships to develop within the research team, and ownership with the questionnaire



# Fieldwork challenges

- Finding men & overcoming unwillingness to give time - Men usually not available during the day
- Security concerns when interviews take place mainly in the evening and in private
- Mixed sex research teams - case of sexual harassment within the team



# Responses from men

*“There are many things in life which remain untold. It felt good to answer your questions as I never before had the opportunity to think about my own life so deeply.”*

*“I came to know myself better as a result of the interview.”*

*“Many things occurring in our families and communities escape our attention. This interview made me realize they need to be understood and reflected upon.”*



# Thank you!

