

# Male Engagement Strategic Plan 2023-2026

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Prepared by:



With support from



In partnership with

Canada



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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

BWA - Baghdad Women Association

CDO - Civil Development Organisation

CGDS - Centre of Gender Development and Studies

CPD - Country Programme Document

DCVAW - Directorate to Combat Violence against Women

GDCVAW - The General Directorate to Combat Violence against Women

FGD - focus group discussion

FGM/C - female genital mutilation/cutting

GEWE - Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment

GBV - gender-based violence

GBVIMS - Gender-Based Violence Information Management System

GE - gender equality

HCWD - High Council for Women and Development

HJC - High Juridical Council

IHAO - Iraq Health Access Organisation

IOM - International Organisation for Migration

KRI - Kurdistan Region of Iraq

LNOB - Leave No One Behind

ME - male engagement

M&E - monitoring and evaluation

MOE - Ministry of Education

MOH - Ministry of Health

MOLSA - Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

OSAC - One-Stop Assistance Centre

PDO - People's Development Organisation

PSS – psychosocial support

SDG - Sustainable Development Goal

SRH - sexual and reproductive health

SRHR - sexual and reproductive health and rights

SWEDO - The Swedish Development Aid organisation

TAG - technical advisory group

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UN - United Nations

UNAMI - United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

UNFPA - United Nations Populations Fund

UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund

UNSDCF - United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

WCC - women community centre

WHO - World Health organisation

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## About the Strategic plan

UNFPA CO Iraq is designing an intervention strategy for the period between 2023 and 2026. The Strategy will address the work on the transformation of gender stereotypes and harmful social norms contributing to gender-based violence and the barriers to access and utilisation of family planning by engaging men and boys.

UNFPA Iraq will use this strategy to support the ambitious plan to achieve the following:

**A Complement** ongoing effort by civil society and government actors in Iraq to address gender inequity and GBV.

**B Systematise** approach to better engage men and boys throughout UNFPA Gender and GBV-related programming, from the prevention to the response and the normative actions around promoting a more conducive legal and policy framework.

**C Achieve** change in behaviour and detrimental social norms within Iraq's humanitarian and development contexts.

The Strategic Plan presents the background, summarising the mapping/scoping activity results and their implications for the development of the document. It further presents the Rationale for the Strategic plan, focusing on how it falls into the broader UNFPA Iraq work around GBV prevention and SRHR promotion. It includes an intervention description, including the guiding principles, mission, and vision.

The programme for 2022-2026 describes the aspired overall goal, result areas, and outcomes and outputs of the Strategic plan. In more detail, it presents the results framework for the Programme, elaborating further on the results areas, including relevance for including the relevance of CPD for Iraq, 2020-2024, outcomes and sub-outcomes.

The document additionally provides the overview of the following steps, presented through a timeline, and the M&E plan for implementing the strategy, elaborating further on the potential challenges and ways to overcome them.

The summary is a shorter, user-friendly version of the Programme. It will be helpful to present the Strategic plan more concisely.

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## Background and context

In 2018, Iraq began a transition towards stability and development as the large-scale military conflict with Daesh ended. However, the situation remains volatile, and the Government must respond to both development and humanitarian needs. Meeting the significant demands for essential services nationwide will require the humanitarian and development actors to work together towards an integrated response<sup>1</sup>.

Iraq is the third last country in the global Gender equality ranking 2021; women's economic participation and opportunity, education, and political empowerment are still weak. Gender inequality contributes to the high prevalence of GBV and harmful traditional practices. Gender stereotypes are rooted in the Iraqi context, and the dominating role of men in society powerfully influences gender-based violence.

Iraq has made improvements in legal and policy frameworks to advance the empowerment of women and gender equality. GBV, particularly in conflict-affected areas and displacement settings, is still a significant issue in Iraq. According to the gender-based violence information management system, intimate partners perpetrate approximately 70 per cent of cases within the household.

Deep-rooted harmful practices, such as child marriage (with 24.8 per cent prevalence), female genital mutilation (in pocket areas in northern Iraq), and honour killings, as well as gender inequality and weak accountability systems, continue to affect access to justice and realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

According to the MICS-6 survey, 57% of women and girls aged 15-49 justify wife-beating if she goes out without telling her husband, neglects the children, argues with him, refuses sex with him, or even if she burns the food. Traditionally women and girls in Iraqi society believe it is justified for a husband to beat his wife and have control over them, 93 per cent of women and girls aged 15-19 years reported experiencing discrimination or harassment based on their gender in Iraq<sup>2</sup>. According to the GBVIMS data, women and girls comprise 98 per cent of survivors who report to GBV service delivery points<sup>3</sup>.

Further analysis indicates that violence committed by intimate partners (domestic violence) accounts for nearly half of the incidents reported to GBVIMS. Male partners or spouses mostly perpetrate domestic violence toward women.

Harmful practices such as child marriage and FGM/C are generally related to the desire to control women's sexuality, although cultural and religious considerations are used to justify those actions<sup>4</sup>.

As highlighted in the report from the formative research conducted in KRI on masculinities, women, men, and children's roles in the family and community are influenced by the volatile context, economic conditions, traditions, and to a lesser extent, religion<sup>5</sup>. The leading causes of

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Population Fund Country programme document for Iraq, 2020-2024

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Population Fund Country programme document for Iraq, 2020-2024

<sup>3</sup> GBVIMS, Iraq 2020 data

<sup>4</sup> MALE ENGAGEMENT IN SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, Experiences in West Africa: Burkina Faso, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania, Niger, Sierra Leone, Togo, UNFPA

<sup>5</sup> Fostering Healthy Masculinities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Equipundo/SEED Foundation, 2021.

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child marriage are poverty and lack of education, as highlighted in the CGDS study on gendered social norms in Iraq (2021). The practice of FGM/C is almost universally unacceptable as a social norm in Iraq. The lack of education is the primary cause of the method. Approximately five per cent agree with the practice, and 10 per cent are neutral towards it.

According to the same study, if a man were to beat his wife, it is unlikely that she would say anything or report it. Most respondents disagree that women and girls should not share their personal opinions during discussions in male-dominated spaces. Most respondents believed that a woman's sexuality links to family honour and that a woman is more responsible for making a marriage work<sup>6</sup>.

According to the Oxfam study on social norms structuring masculinity, while most men have a cautious view of women working or participating at the community level, some men pride themselves on their supportive attitudes towards women engaging in the public sphere<sup>7</sup>.

Engaging men and boys in addressing gender inequality and discrimination is key for the country's UNFPA GEWE programme. The dynamics of manhood is changing in the country's context. As the CGDS study (2021) highlighted, men and boys must be involved in addressing the issues. There is a need to complement existing GBV prevention and response interventions. UNFPA Iraq will address gender stereotypes and harmful social norms contributing to gender-based violence and the barriers to access and utilisation of family planning through work on engaging men and boys.

To address gender stereotypes, harmful social norms contributing to GBV, and the barriers to access and utilisation of family planning, UNFPA CO Iraq is developing an actionable strategy for Iraq for working with men and boys for gender equality and promoting positive masculinities.

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<sup>6</sup> Between change and conservatism: a study of Gendered Social Norms in Iraq, Center for Gender and Development Studies The American University of Iraq Sulaimani, 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Social norms structuring masculinities, gender roles, and stereotypes; OXFAM, 2021.

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## Key findings from the mapping/scoping research

The development of the draft strategy included a desk review of available publications, reports and products developed by UNFPA in the country. Scoping and partner/institution mapping followed to explore what and how was done around gender-transformative, engaging men and boys-focused activities and research. This research was conducted in collaboration with the UNFPA CO Iraq Gender team and the Gender Focal Points. It included FGDs and interviews with key informants from the civil society and institutions/government on the local, regional, and country level.

Overall, 23 consultations were made throughout July and August 2022, with 101 informants, through 12 FGDs and 11 interviews. This section highlights some of the key findings from the research.

The findings suggest that the biggest challenge to programming around gender themes is the conservative and unfavourable environment, presenting an obstacle to programming and policy advocacy for gender equality. Respondents addressed a wide range of issues, the most common being gender-based violence and SRHR.

Prominent women's organisations in Iraq emphasise that failing to have a specific component on engaging men and boys is a gap, echoing that not much has been done, on the regional or federal level, to engage men and boys. Governmental informants also mention men being underserved. Better articulation of accountability and rationale of programmes engaging men and boys in gender equality is needed, using conceptualised models.

Changing social norms is a priority. The participants mainly refer to society as patriarchal, which they define as men having the most power. Although women make up around half of the country's population, their power is not shared equally with men. Women's roles are downsized.

Men attain most of the power. Men are generally missing from the debate on gender justice. They don't pay attention, don't see themselves as the changing force, don't trust gender equality, or don't support equality because of their interests. Some men engage in social projects only if they feel this would strengthen their societal position and give them additional power. There seems to be a stigma of having female-friendly attitudes. In larger groups of men, more conservative attitudes seem to prevail. Men disagree with women's human rights in their families, even though they may say they do in front of others.

Male privilege is apparent in perceptions of injustice but not readily acknowledged by men who mostly do not live a life of privilege. Women and girls acknowledge unhealthy patriarchal norms much more than men and boys. Any proposed intervention must consider the factors of oppression that men, women, and children suffer in such a context<sup>8</sup>.

Tribal and religious leaders have a profound impact on the lives of people. Their role is crucial to raise awareness of positive masculinities among boys and men. Working with them has been highlighted as probably the most critical aspect of engaging men and boys in gender equality. Role models can be people from different parts of life, religious or tribal leaders, sports trainers, businesspeople, artists, athletes, teachers, husbands, brothers, etc.

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<sup>8</sup> Fostering Healthy Masculinities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Equimundo/SEED Foundation, 2021.



Although service provision and awareness raising among women and girls is an essential strategy in promoting gender equity, the inclusion of men and boys in programmes must be seen as an equally vital priority to deconstruct the traditional, patriarchal attitudes about the distinct roles of men and women in society, leading to power imbalances and inequitable gender norms at the household and community levels, with widespread consequences for the health, safety, and personal autonomy of women and children.

Respondents report that women's rights are, in different ways, hindered by the legislation. Advancements have been made in legal aspects of GBV prevention in the last decade. Implementation of laws (and conventions) on the ground is not satisfactory. There is a lack of capacity, or will, to implement laws and internationally signed documents/resolutions/conventions. Conservative social norms are commonly seen as obstacles to implementing resolutions and ordinances.

Joined advocacy platform for engaging men and boys is critically needed to connect the prominent civil society actors, and smaller community organisations and initiatives, as a united voice toward the governmental actors. There are vital partners in governmental institutions who have uniformly extended support for the gender transformative male engagement component to their work.

Gaps in evaluating the impact of gender-transformative programming present a challenge. Evaluation is critical for building a solid evidence base of “what works” to engage men and boys in gender-transformative programmes. Several important studies on masculinities have been conducted in the last couple of years in Iraq, defining masculinity and exploring the use of violence, among other topics<sup>9</sup>. A more extensive quantitative study exploring attitudes and norms around masculinities is still to be done in the country.

Iraqi society requires much cohesion, so putting gender equality in the plan can contribute to that. Change takes time and encouragement. Gender equality needs to be translated into everyday life.

Work on engaging men and boys needs to build on the combination of experiences of partners in the field, experience in engaging men and boys, global experiences, and the capacities of the organisations recognised by the communities for their work in other areas.

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<sup>9</sup> These studies are: Between change and conservatism: a study of Gendered Social Norms in Iraq, Center for Gender and Development Studies The American University of Iraq Sulaimani, 2021.; Fostering Healthy Masculinities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Equimundo/SEED Foundation, 2021.; and Social norms structuring masculinities, gender roles, and stereotypes; OXFAM, 2021.

## The rationale for the strategy

UNFPA CO Iraq is designing an intervention Strategy for ME between 2023 and 2026 that will contribute to the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda SDGs, the UNFPA Global Strategic plan (2022-2025), and, more specifically, the UNFPA CPD (2020-2024).

As framed within the UNSDCF, gender equality and women's empowerment are crucial to realising the 2030 Agenda and all the SDGs, especially SDGs 3 (good health, well-being;) and 5 (gender equality). UNFPA Global Strategic plan (2022-2025) stresses the gender-transformative approach as an accelerator to achieve the desired strategic effort to achieve three zeros by 2030: zero unmet need for contraception, zero preventable maternal deaths, and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices (especially child marriage and female genital mutilation).

Gender inequalities and gender injustice are linked with different forms of violence, including the suppression of reproductive rights. Gender transformative approaches to engaging men and boys in SRHR promotion and GBV prevention examine, question, and change rigid gender norms and power imbalance and build structural and social capacities to dismantle harmful social norms around masculinity.

Common behavioural aims of male engagement programming include increased participation as contraceptive users or partners using family planning methods requiring cooperation, partners engaged in open communication about family planning and contraceptives, and advocates for gender equality and family planning in their families and communities<sup>10</sup>. This Strategy will contribute to Outcome 1 of the UNFPA CPD (2020-2024) on Sexual & Reproductive Health.

The Interventions described in this strategy will contribute to women, adolescents, and youth, especially those who are the furthest behind, having access to integrated sexual and reproductive health services and the opportunity to exercise reproductive rights free of coercion, discrimination, and violence.

Programmes that facilitate critical reflection among adolescent boys on what it means to be a man in their community and how that affects them and the women and children in their lives accelerate progress toward transformative results. The Strategy will contribute to Outcome 2 of the UNFPA CPD (2020-2024) on Adolescents & Youth, expanding models for community-based youth engagement, peer-to-peer online learning and counselling, promoting healthy lifestyles, and life skills-building, including comprehensive sexual education and toolkits for youth.

UNFPA Iraq CPD (2020-2024) Outcome 3 area on GEWE stresses the importance of contributing to improved capacity of the government, human rights institutions, local CSOs and communities to prevent and respond to GBV, including in humanitarian settings, through advancing programming and advocacy on engaging men and boys in achieving gender justice. The Strategy will directly propose interventions to achieve Sub-Outputs of the Outcome 3 Area of the UNFPA Iraq CPD (2020-2024) on GEWE (see Annexe 1: Contribution of proposed interventions to achieving the Sub-Outputs of the Outcome 3 Area of the UNFPA Iraq CPD (2020-2024)).

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<sup>10</sup> High-Impact Practices in Family Planning (HIPs). Engaging Men and Boys in Family Planning: A Strategic Planning Guide. Washington, DC: USAID; 2018 Jan. Available from: <https://www.fphighimpactpractices.org/guides/engaging-men-and-boys-in-family-planning/>

## Guiding principles for the strategy<sup>11</sup>

**Gender transformative approach** addresses the causes of gender-based inequalities and works to transform harmful gender roles, norms, and power relations<sup>12</sup>. The strategy will build on intersectionality: using feminist and transnational intersectional approaches, centring the work in feminist analysis and vision, acknowledging patriarchy at the roots of gender-based power inequalities and recognising the need to address male power and privilege<sup>13</sup>.

Gender transformative approaches to engaging men and boys promote ongoing growth and development and have a butterfly effect, meaning that slight changes in belief can affect multiple outcomes<sup>14</sup>. To accelerate progress in multiple spheres of society<sup>15</sup>, the Strategy will support critical reflection among men and boys in various related processes on what it means to be a man in their community and how that affects them and the women and children in their lives, building **resilience, adaptation, and complementarity among development, humanitarian, and peace-responsive efforts**.

Engaging men and boys requires focusing on the most marginalised populations by identifying and prioritising factors of discrimination and exclusion found in each operating context<sup>16</sup>. *Leave No One Behind*, or **LNOB**, the transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is a commitment of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals and humanity as a whole<sup>17</sup>. **Human rights-based approach** focuses on those most marginalised, excluded or discriminated against, often requiring an analysis of gender norms, different forms of discrimination and power imbalances to ensure that interventions reach the most marginalised segments of the population<sup>18</sup>.

Strategy will promote generating evidence-based research for robust strategies and people-centred policies to improve **data for evidence-based decision-making**.

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<sup>11</sup> The guiding principles of the Strategy are aligned with the UNFPA Global Strategic plan (2022-2025) accelerators toward transformative results.

<sup>12</sup> Technical Note on Gender-Transformative Approaches: A summary for practitioners: UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women. 2020.

<sup>13</sup> MenEngage-Alliance-Strategic-Plan-2021-24.

<sup>14</sup> Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation: Accelerating Change Phase III (2018-2021).

<sup>15</sup> Engaging Boys and Men in Gender Transformation: The Group Education Manual. The ACQUIRE Project/EngenderHealth and Promundo. 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Guidance on integrating the principles of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind in UNFPA evaluations.

<sup>17</sup> <https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/leave-no-one-behind>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.unfpa.org/human-rights-based-approach>

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## Vision and Mission

**Vision:** BY 2026, Iraqi men and boys will be actively engaged in transforming harmful social norms and gender stereotypes to prevent and reduce GBV and increase access to SRH services

**Mission:** UNFPA is improving the capacities of strategic partners, including key government ministries, donors, media networks, academia, private sector, and civil society organisations, including faith-based institutions and youth-led organisations, within the country and the region, in particular of health systems and woman machinery, on positive masculinities work, for the implementation of programmes addressing emerging development and humanitarian needs, through engaging men and boys, in preventing GBV and promoting gender equality and SRHR.

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## Programme Description

*Overall Goal: Social protection and health systems, and civil society machinery have capacity for effective male engagement to prevent GBV and promoting GE and SRHR in humanitarian and the emerging context by 2026.*

Male engagement (ME) is part of a holistic approach to responding to and preventing GBV, ensuring positive SRH outcomes, challenging negative notions of masculinity, promoting healthy, gender-equitable relationships, and facilitating effective interpersonal communication and shared decision-making. The process includes creating opportunities for men, including youth, to be involved in social development and to learn and practice how to be advocates for gender equality.

*Result area 1: The evidence bases for the future development of programmes and advocacy focused on engaging men and boys in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.*

### **Output 1: Enhanced knowledge of main stakeholders on various topics related to ME in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.**

Findings from context-relevant research on crucial gender equality and masculinities issues, such as gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights, reproductive labour and participation in caregiving, and fatherhood, provide evidence to drive and inform government policy at a local, regional, and national levels, and operate concrete programming in the field.

*Result area 2: Normative actions around promoting a more conducive legal and policy framework by civil society and government actors in Iraq to address gender inequity and GBV.*

### **Output 2: Established a platform for sustainable programme and policy support to ME in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.**

A joined male engagement advocacy platform is a space for civil society members to come together, build inclusive collaborations from local to regional to national levels, develop joint actions in partnership with institutional partners, and take collective action toward policy and political agendas for transforming harmful notions of masculinities. Evidence from the research provides action-oriented steps and guidance on how institutions, with the support of civil society partners, and United Nations key players, can implement policies and programs to bring about change to achieve greater gender equality.

*Result area 3: A systematised approach to engaging men and boys throughout UNFPA SRHR, Youth and GBV-related programming, from the prevention to the response.*

### **Output 3: Increased knowledge and skills of main stakeholders in transforming masculinity and addressing stereotypical gender norms to prevent GBV and promote GE and SRHR in the targeted governorates.**

A set of common institutional standards for the work of transforming masculinities and gender justice work with men and boys, including engaging men and boys to address stereotypical gender norms, eliminate violence against women and girls, oppose harmful practices fostering injustice and increase access and utilisation of sexual and reproductive health services, are promoted with civil society and institutional partners. Capacities of the CSOs and government institutions are built for gender transformative approaches engaging men and boys. Training

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Curricula and protocols are developed or adapted with built capabilities for their use. Services and community-based interventions are gradually piloted and scaled up. Corporate interventions to promote family-friendly workplaces are developed.

*Result area 4: Boys and men are less violent, more engaged in community change, have more gender-equitable attitudes, exhibiting greater self-efficacy and knowledge for preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.*

**Output 4: Improved knowledge and practices of men and boys around preventing GBV, promoting GE and SRHR, and dismantling detrimental social norms around masculinity.**

Integrated gender-based violence prevention pilot interventions for engaging men and boys are piloted and evaluated:

- Health sector and community interventions and campaigns promoting men's caregiving,
- Community-based programmes that promote women's economic empowerment, together with sensitisation activities for their male counterparts and other male relatives,
- GBV prevention and SRHR promotion curricula for youth, parents and staff of schools, sports clubs, and youth centres, using group education modules focusing on men and boys' abilities to think critically about transforming inequitable gender norms and harmful practices.
- PSS for victims of violence, paired with secondary prevention for the perpetrators and bystander intervention programmes in which men become part of speaking out against GBV.
- Community-based interventions that change violence-supportive norms by engaging community leaders (especially faith-based leaders) in preventing violence, promoting SRHR, and holding men who use gender-based violence accountable.

Activism and leadership (primarily through youth-adult partnerships) gear community-based campaigns that promote gender equality. Powerful social marketing tools reinforce local, regional, and national campaigns using different, innovative media outlets, including traditional and innovative approaches.

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## Results Framework

Output		Key Interventions	Expected Results	Indicators
1	<b>Enhanced knowledge of main stakeholders on various topics related to ME in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.</b>	<b>1.1:</b> Comprehensive study on men’s attitudes and practices – along with women’s opinions and reports of their own experiences and men’s practices.	High-quality country-wide research conducted.	Formed TAG.  The research report is published and disseminated among the main stakeholders
2	<b>Established a platform for sustainable programme and policy support to ME in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.</b>	<b>2.1:</b> Male engagement advocacy platform with state and non-state actors.  <b>2.2:</b> Country-level advocacy and communications activities to disseminate research results and recommendations widely.	Advocacy and communications strategy for the male engagement network developed.  Framework for including ME priorities in the government actions and policy developed. Comprehensive policy and programming recommendation products.  Organised dissemination events.  Set advocacy goals for policy changes.	Number of partners engaged in the Established ME network.  A number of policy and advocacy products disseminated by the network
3	<b>Increased knowledge and skills of main stakeholders in transforming masculinity and addressing stereotypical gender norms to prevent GBV and promote GE and SRHR in the targeted governorates.</b>	<b>3.1:</b> A roadmap for enhanced programme response to engaging men and boys in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.  <b>3.2:</b> Capacity building of targeted CSOs and government institutions for ME on preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.	Resources framework for male engagement in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR adopted.  Methodologies on ME in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR developed or adapted.  Gender transformative programming on ME in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR for CSOs and government conduct.  Corporate interventions to promote family-friendly workplaces are developed.	Number of improved and provided the institutionalised guidelines, prevention frameworks and implementation plans.  Number of internalised methodologies for engaging men and boys.  Number of CSOs and government institutions engaged in built capacities activities. s  Number and document of gender transformative programs result from conducted capacity building activities.

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Output	Key Interventions	Expected Results	Indicators
<b>4 Improved knowledge and practices of men and boys in preventing GBV, promoting GE and SRHR, and dismantling detrimental social norms around masculinity</b>	<p><b>4.1:</b> Positive masculinities behaviour change interventions for groups of men and boys as allies in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.</p> <p><b>4.2:</b> Community campaign to sensitise community members on positive masculinities.</p>	<p>Group education sessions with men and boys in the communities on preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR implemented.</p> <p>Campaign and messaging to support male engagement in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR launched.</p>	<p>% (percentage of) Increased knowledge, improved skills and behaviours of men and boys. (Need to conduct pre- and post-survey) to measure this percentage.</p> <p># Number of Established community and national campaigns.</p> <p>Improved community social norms on GE.</p>

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## Timeline

#	Interventions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
1	1.1: Comprehensive study on men's attitudes and practices – along with women's opinions and reports of their own experiences and men's practices.				
2	2.1: Male engagement advocacy platform with state and non-state actors.				
3	2.2: Country-level advocacy and communications activities to disseminate research results and recommendations widely.				
4	3.1: A roadmap for enhanced programme response to engaging men and boys in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.				
5	3.2: Capacity building of targeted CSOs and government institutions for ME on preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.				
6	4.1: Positive masculinities behaviour change interventions for groups of men and boys as allies in preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR.				
7	4.2: Community campaign to sensitise community members on positive masculinities.				

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## Monitoring and evaluation

*Field monitoring visits* - Field coordinators will monitor the daily implementation of the project activities. UNFPA country office and Implementing Partners, together with Government partners, will conduct quarterly monitoring visits.

*Quarterly Progress Report to UNFPA* - The project Implementing Partners will submit quarterly narrative and financial reports. They will include the implementation progress, main achievements, challenges and lessons learned. The quarterly field monitoring visits will take place after reviewing the quarterly project reports submitted by the Implementing Partner to confirm results and work to address challenges highlighted in the quarterly reports.

*Review meetings and assessment* - UNFPA will ensure regular monthly review meetings and a final evaluation at the end of the project.

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## Risk framework/plan

Given the volatility and political instability in the country, certain risks are inherent to implementing the strategy. Specific risks include:

- Partners cannot conduct activities according to schedule because of government restrictions or security risks in a given setting.
- Government or institutional entities find strategy elements too sensitive and either seek to restrict them or otherwise create obstacles to obtaining local approval to carry out different aspects of the work.
- Security risks are due to ongoing instability in some parts of the country.

*Mitigation strategies include*

- Formation of TAG to work to ensure acceptance and support for the work from governments.
- Requirement of a security plan from each partner organisation of how it works to ensure the safety of its staff.
- Close liaison with CO on those plans to ensure their suitability to local conditions.
- Strict adherence to all standard ethical and safety guidelines.

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## Summary

UNFPA Iraq will strengthen national capacities for male engagement, particularly social protection and health systems and civil society machinery, to address emerging development and humanitarian needs, contributing to GBV prevention and response and SRHR promotion. It will achieve this by the end of 2026.

Initially, complementing the evidence base on gender transformative programming and advocacy with men and boys through high-impact country representative quantitative and additional focused qualitative research on men's attitudes and practices - along with women's opinions and reports of their own experiences on men's practices. Prominent global and local research partners will conduct this work. A technical advisory group made up of prominent institutional, academic, and civil society partners will support the contextualisation of the methodology and uptake of the results. The findings of the research will inform comprehensive advocacy and programming action plan.

The civil society platform, informed by the accountability vision of the MenEngage Global Alliance, will be established. The platform members will exchange and disseminate new and existing knowledge and information on engaging men and boys in gender equality. In collaboration with governmental entities, the platform will provide a space for capacity development and be a collective for joint actions for gender justice.

As a result of increased capacities for preventing GBV and promoting GE and SRHR, interventions for men and boys as allies in achieving gender justice will be piloted in various contexts to improve behaviour and transform community norms on masculinities toward more positive ones. These rigorously monitored and evaluated actions will inform the future institutionalisation and sustainability of GT approaches with men and boys.

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## **Annexe: Contribution of interventions to Sub-Outputs of UNFPA Iraq CPD Outcome 3**

Sub-Output 1: Strengthened laws, policies and strategies that contribute to the prevention of and response to GBV in line with international conventions and agreements

- Advocating through male engagement civil society platform to support women's machinery to review gender-related laws and national action plans.
- Mainstreaming male engagement in policies and procedures (i.e., internal policies and procedures on family-friendly workplace and sexual harassment prevention, eradicating harmful practices).
- Supporting curricular changes in education around human rights and SRHR.

Sub-Output 2: Strengthen the capacity of the Government Institutions for multi-sectoral GBV prevention and response mechanisms and systems

- Mainstreaming male engagement in programming and service provision through training health workers on family planning and SRHR, working with faith-based organisations and community structures and building their capacity to eliminate harmful practices.
- Building the capacity of the Government and GBV service providers on mental health and psychological support to men and boys through building allyship to support the victims of violence and implementing secondary GBV prevention through the provision of PSS for the perpetrators of violence.

Sub-Output 3: Increased community access to information, education and communication activities that create awareness of GBV, including harmful practices, prevention, and response services

- Supporting group education for changing attitudes and behaviours that derive from harmful gender norms.
- Promoting nonviolent masculinities through media/culture.
- Positioning family planning as a human right for all (i.e., gender transformative parenting clubs, campaigns on male caregiving, supporting couples in peaceful and equitable coexistence).
- Building on positive approaches to youth development and activism, primarily through boys' clubs, youth centres and sports clubs.
- Identifying people whose opinions matter to men and may influence those behaviours: community leaders, parents, religious leaders, or positive deviants (i.e., those already practising the desired behaviour).

Sub-Output 4: Improved collection, analysis, and use of data to enhance GBV prevention and response efforts

- Building the evidence base on gender transformative approaches engaging men and boys, providing a solid logical and institutional rationale for working with men and boys to promote gender equality as well as sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and reproductive rights.
- Helping programmers and policymakers understand the diversity of experiences of gender, as well as which positive masculinities interventions or campaign approaches are most promising.

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