

RESEARCH TO ACTION TOOLKIT

HOW TO ACTIVATE IMAGES DATA
TO IMPROVE YOUR PROGRAMS,
ADVOCACY, AND CAMPAIGNS

Acknowledgments

This toolkit was authored by Equipundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice (formerly Promundo-US) with the generous support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Strategic support for sections related to East Africa was provided by Sonke Gender Justice.

Thank you to all the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) teams, past, present, and future, around the world, who provided feedback on an earlier version of the messages in this toolkit.

About Equipundo:

Initially founded in partnership with Instituto Promundo in Brazil, Equipundo works globally to promote gender equality and create a world free from violence by engaging men and boys in partnership with women and girls. Equipundo collaborates with partners to achieve this mission by conducting cutting-edge research that builds the knowledge base on masculinities and gender equality; developing, evaluating, and scaling up high-impact gender-transformative interventions and programs; and carrying out national and international campaigns and advocacy initiatives to prevent violence and promote gender justice. Learn more at www.equipundo.org and www.menandgendersurvey.org.

Contents




BACKGROUND

- What is the goal of IMAGES? 4
 - Are there IMAGES data for my country? 5
 - Why and how should I use this tool? 6
-

HOW TO ACTIVATE IMAGES DATA

- CORE CONSIDERATIONS** 8
 - Using data to improve **PROGRAMS** 15
 - Using data to improve **ADVOCACY** 20
 - Using data to improve **CAMPAIGNS** 25
-

ADDITIONAL LINKS AND REFERENCES

- Safety and Ethical Considerations for Data Use 31
- 

Background

So you'd like to put IMAGES data to use to improve your programs, advocacy, or campaigns. You've come to the right place! This brief introductory section shares the foundational goal of IMAGES, its global reach, and some basic information on how best to navigate and use the rest of the document.

What is the goal of IMAGES?

The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) is one of the most comprehensive studies ever to explore men's practices and attitudes related to gender equality alongside women's. Using a wide variety of measures, IMAGES questionnaires investigate: gender-based violence; health and health-related practices; household division of labor; men's participation in caregiving and as fathers; men's and women's attitudes about gender and gender-related policies; transactional sex; men's reports of criminal behavior; and quality of life.

The overarching goal of IMAGES is to build an understanding of men's and women's practices and attitudes about gender equality to inform, drive, and monitor efforts to promote gender equality, particularly at the government-policy level.

The IMAGES questionnaire incorporates items from survey instruments on gender, quality of life, childhood antecedents of violence (including gender-based violence), health, sexuality, family gender dynamics, and fatherhood. Wherever quantitative data collection and analysis occurred using the IMAGES survey, research partners also conducted complementary qualitative studies in the same settings, seeking to document the in-depth lived realities of gender inequalities, notions of masculinity and femininity, and participants' perspectives on efforts to promote gender equality.

The added value of using IMAGES data:

- explore men's data on topics usually explored with women only;
- triangulate results across men's and women's data;
- generate a baseline for gendered attitudes and practices in a setting such that progress toward the equality agenda can be contrasted to it in the future; and
- contribute to a global effort to improve the evidence base on men and masculinities.

Toward the goals above, IMAGES findings have been widely disseminated to inform policy and programming across multiple sectors. At the national level, IMAGES data have informed policy and action in a variety of ways, including inspiring men's health initiatives in **Brazil**; starting discussions with the Ministry of Health in **Chile** around creating specific strategies for men's health and for engaging men in maternal and child health and childbirth; promoting new and progressive sexuality education policies in the public education system in **Croatia**; initiating civil society-led sexual and gender-based violence prevention activities with men in **Tanzania**; creating new trauma-informed prevention activities for men in the eastern region of the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**; and implementing and scaling up fatherhood and care-equality activities in **Lebanon, Rwanda**, and elsewhere. At the global level, IMAGES data were the foundation for creating the global MenCare campaign, a 50-plus country initiative to promote men's involvement as equitable, nonviolent caregivers, and has informed key UN processes on gender equality. Many IMAGES country studies have been carried out in partnership and with financial support from UN Women, UNFPA, and UNDP, and have contributed to national-level policy and donor discussions about male allyship in gender equality and gender-based violence prevention activities. The *State of the World's Fathers*, a biennial global report on men's participation in caregiving (see www.stateoftheworldsfathers.org), has consistently featured IMAGES data.

Are there IMAGES data for my country?

As of spring 2020, IMAGES and IMAGES-inspired studies have been conducted and implemented in 42 countries around the world (see list below). New IMAGES studies are frequently being planned in new locations as well. If you are interested in adding your country to this list, please be in touch with us at research@equimundo.org.

 AFGHANISTAN	 GEORGIA	 NIGER
 ARMENIA	 INDIA*	 NIGERIA
 AZERBAIJAN	 INDONESIA**	 PAKISTAN
 BANGLADESH**	 KOSOVO	 PALESTINE
 BOLIVIA	 KUWAIT	 PAPUA NEW GUINEA**
 BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	 KYRGYZSTAN	 POLAND
 BRAZIL*	 LEBANON	 RUSSIA
 CAMBODIA**	 MALAWI	 RWANDA
 CHILE	 MALI	 SERBIA
 CHINA**	 MEXICO	 SRI LANKA**
 CROATIA	 MOLDOVA	 TANZANIA
 DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO	 MOROCCO	 UGANDA
 EGYPT	 MOZAMBIQUE	 UKRAINE*
 EL SALVADOR	 NEPAL*	 VIETNAM**
	 NICARAGUA	

* These countries have been host to more than one IMAGES study, often with regional or thematic variations. In the case of Nepal and Ukraine, the latest IMAGES studies were still in progress at the time of this toolkit's release.

** These countries were part of the IMAGES-inspired "UN Multi-country Study on Men and Violence" (see www.partners4prevention.org).

New IMAGES studies are frequently being planned in new locations as well. If you are interested in adding your country to this list, please be in touch with us at research@equimundo.org.



Why and how should I use this tool?

Exploring a large dataset or reading a very long research report can be overwhelming. But IMAGES data and reports contain incredibly useful information to advance the goals of gender equality, violence prevention, equality in care work, and public health. We hope that by using this document, you will feel empowered and capable of putting these data to use in your programs, advocacy, and campaigns.

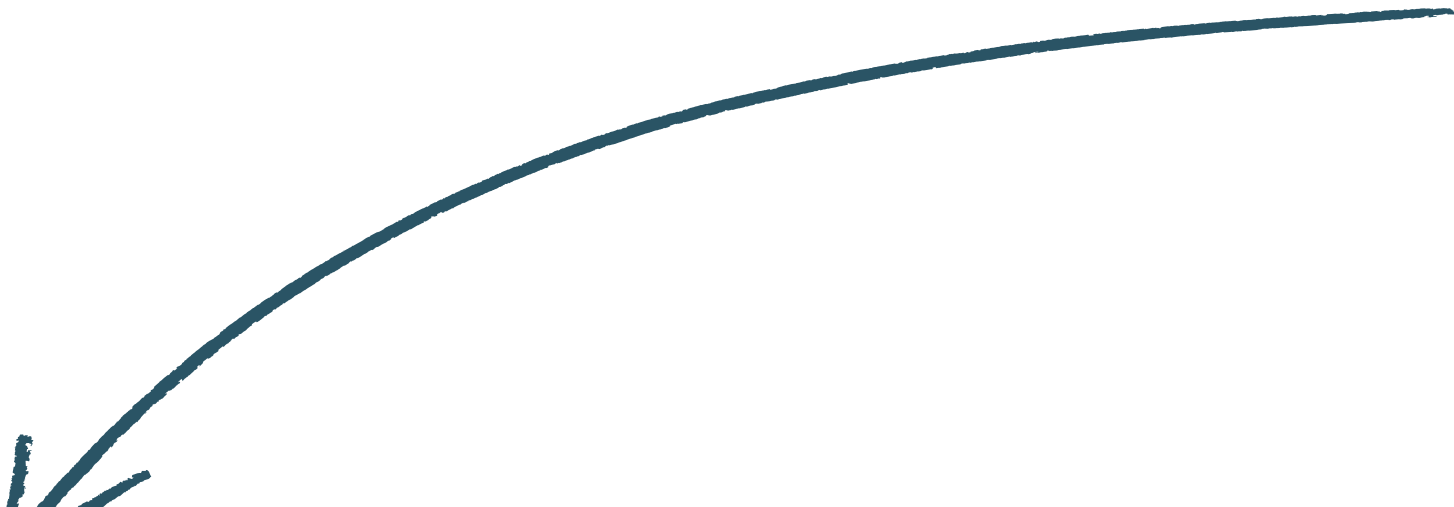
You **SHOULD** use this tool if you want to achieve the IMAGES overarching goal in one or more of the countries listed above. If you are a researcher, activist, professor, program facilitator, teacher, NGO director, or someone else actively engaged in gender equality or violence prevention work, the authors had you in mind when preparing this document. The authors want to help you feel excited about having access to IMAGES data and to make it easier for you to get the most of the data for your programs, advocacy, and campaigns. In the following sections, you will see a clear set of suggestions toward this end. Each suggestion includes a basic explanation and rationale, and in most cases, also cites a concrete example of that suggestion in action. These examples are sometimes drawn from actual IMAGES data uses, and sometimes are merely illustrative. We hope that by reading this guidance and seeing these examples you will start to imagine achievable, exciting, and effective uses for the data in your own work.

You **SHOULD NOT** turn to this tool for many other uses, however. Firstly, this tool does not describe how to undertake a new IMAGES survey or data-collection

process. For that use, you can contact Equipundo to download the *IMAGES Manual*. Likewise, if you are already involved in one or more IMAGES studies in an advisory role – as a member of a technical advisory or strategic consultative group, or as an expert reviewer – then please be advised that this tool does not address those advisory groups' coordination nor their roles/responsibilities/efforts at ensuring the data's effectiveness.

Unfortunately, you also **SHOULD NOT** use this tool if your country of focus for programs, advocacy, or campaigns is not included in the list above. That means that there are no IMAGES data as yet in your location, which makes the guidance in this document somewhat irrelevant for you. It is also important that programs, advocacy, and campaigns be led by the priorities of local women's rights and gender equality advocates in each country, and if you are not connected to those communities of practice, then it may be counterproductive or unethical for you to pursue your own data uses in isolation. That said, it is possible that much of the information here may be useful as broad guidance on how to make use of survey data for program, advocacy, and campaign goals, above and beyond IMAGES specifically.

Please also be in touch with Equipundo's research team to share your successes and frustrations in using this document by emailing us at research@equipundo.org.



How to activate IMAGES data

In the following pages, the toolkit lays out several concrete guidelines about IMAGES data use. The first section, **Core Considerations for IMAGES Data Use**, presents guidance that should apply regardless of the data use you have in mind. Then, the remaining three sections explore data uses for (1) **programs**,

(2) **advocacy**, and (3) **campaigns**, in that order. These suggestions are often followed by a specific example, either drawn from real IMAGES data (in the cases of programs, advocacy, and campaigns) or sketched out as a hypothetical illustration (in the case of the core considerations).

ANNOUNCING THE IMAGES ONLINE DATABASE

This research-to-action toolkit has been released in coordination with the launch of the new IMAGES Online Database. This database is a searchable archive of all IMAGES survey items ever asked, including all variations of similar questions. The online entry for each question also includes useful metadata, particularly, its relevant variable name, the gender of the respondents, as well as the country, year, and language it was asked in.

The database also makes the country reports, questionnaires, and study details more accessible than ever. Each country study included in the database will also have accompanying information on the data collection procedure, sampling, and so on. The online tool will also allow researchers to build surveys using IMAGES survey items, browse published IMAGES studies from around the world, and request access to data from particular countries of interest.

Please visit the IMAGES Online Database at www.menandgendersonline.org.

~~CONSIDERATIONS~~

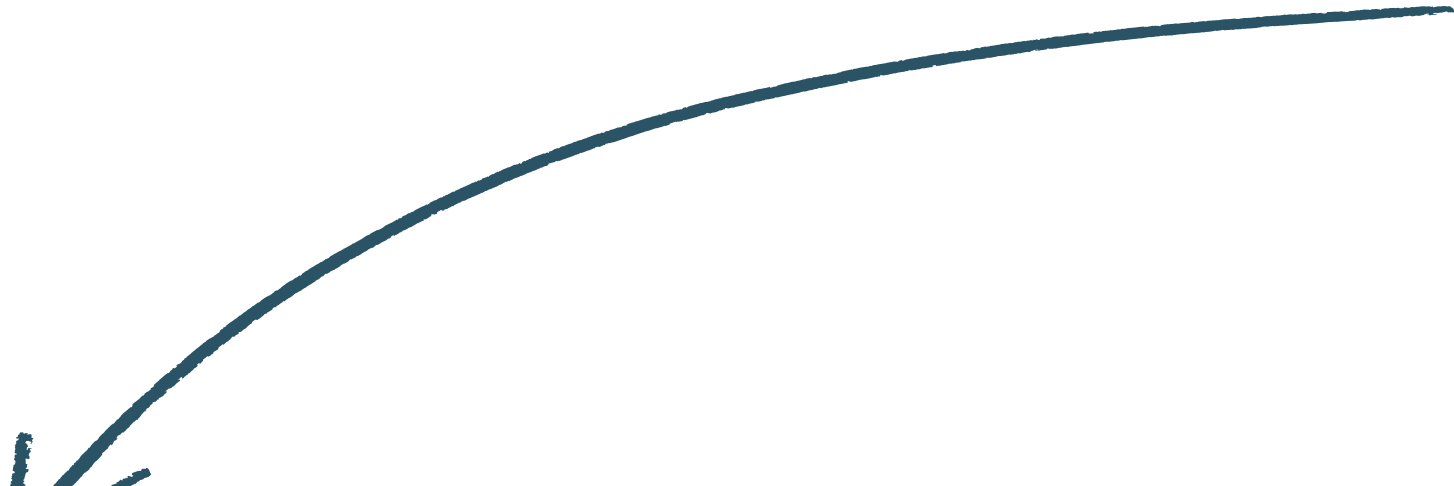


USE DATA TO UPLIFT, INSPIRE, FOCUS, AND ADVANCE THE MOVEMENT FOR GENDER EQUALITY, VIOLENCE PREVENTION, CARE EQUALITY, AND PUBLIC HEALTH

There's no doubt about it: the IMAGES questionnaire includes questions about some of the worst aspects of the human experience, including violence, bias, discrimination, the effects of armed conflict, and harassment, among others. This brings about the inherent risk that any user of IMAGES data will start to feel bogged down by everything that's wrong with society. Or worse, there is a real risk that presenting the widespread prevalence of negative attitudes and behaviors can embolden people who hold those attitudes and exhibit those behaviors, making them feel that their beliefs are normal and widespread. One of the core considerations of IMAGES data use, therefore, is to find the balance between highlighting social ills and injustices on the one hand, while on the other hand,

keeping a strong pro-equality analytical voice and a principled, aspirational tone.

IMAGES has a unique focus on masculinities and includes men's survey responses on topics often only asked of women. As such, one important way to keep an aspirational tone is to highlight the cases where surprising, significant, or majority proportions of male respondents show positive intentions or attitudes in support of gender equality. These and other responses can point toward possible entry points for pro-feminist modes of engaging men and boys for gender equality.



2

ENSURE THAT YOUR DATA USE DOES NOT SUPPORT HARMFUL STEREOTYPES OR FURTHER STIGMATIZE ALREADY STIGMATIZED GROUPS

It is inevitable that quantitative data analysis will seek to make comparisons between different groups of people or different countries. Unfortunately, too many of these comparisons serve to amplify harmful tropes and stereotypes. The most common manifestation of this risk is the desire to compare responses between countries, or within a country to compare responses between racial groups, ethnic groups, religious groups, or groups from different regions within a country. This is one of the most serious risks facing anyone using IMAGES data or other quantitative data.

There will be many people in your community and country, possibly even in places of influence within the government or other institutions, whom you may hope to influence, who will want to see the data used to *support* their biases and stereotypes rather than challenge them. If someone has a discriminatory view against a certain racial group, for instance, then it only supports that person's racist views to calculate comparisons within the data to show that that particular racial group has slightly higher rates of some negative attitude or behavior than other groups. The same

can happen in comparing countries or other divisions within the population. And it is never appropriate, ethical, or useful to the gender equality movement to produce data analyses that stigmatize social groups or countries that already face unjust social stigma and discrimination.

While some comparative analyses are unavoidable, you must take particular care to avoid doing these harmful kinds of comparisons. See the illustrative example for a view of what a harmful comparison could look like. But in a broader sense, this core consideration means that you must be diligent and grounded in your analysis plans. You must resist comparisons and solutions that are too easy. You must resist the impulse to blame social problems on just one group if their prevalence rates are slightly higher. Instead, recognize the widespread nature of violence and misogynist attitudes among all populations. You must also bring focus on the institutions of power – governments, education systems, economic systems – who have the true mandate for improving society and solving social problems. This is preferable to the overly simple solution of blaming individuals or stigmatized social groups for these problems.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE FOR CORE CONSIDERATION 1

An advocacy group published a handout of IMAGES findings related to the public's attitudes about women as political leaders. The handout included a list of IMAGES results, all of which showed strong resistance to women as political leaders. With no additional context or messages, the handout listed

"60% of respondents felt that women are too emotional to be leaders;"

"Only 10% of respondents approved of women in the role of judges or ministers of parliament;"

and other sentences all of which showed that the majority of respondents were resistant to women's political leadership.

A news media organization saw this handout and reported on it, using the headline "Survey results show that [country name] is not ready for women leaders."

This was inadvertently harmful to the movement for women's political leadership. It reinforced harmful social norms rather than challenging them. People with inequitable views reading the article and handout may have felt emboldened by the fact that many people agree with their biased ideas and reached the conclusion, "See, just as I thought, women's political leadership is unpopular and unwanted in my country."

A better approach would be to include information about the advantages of women in political leadership, to shed light on any voices within the IMAGES quantitative or qualitative findings showing support for women's leadership as well, and to clearly denounce the attitudes opposed to women's leadership as biased and inequitable. Local advocates for women's rights can guide you in crafting these messages in movement-aligned ways.

ONLY DRAW COMPARISONS WHEN APPROPRIATE

To continue the idea from the previous core consideration, there is another important risk arising from the desire to compare countries or groups. This additional risk comes from the comparability of the data themselves. The sample construction for each IMAGES study is slightly different owing to the demographic complexity of each country, the funding at hand, and other considerations. Suppose one country study asked a set of questions on a topic to a rigorously randomized, nationally representative sample, and another country study asked differently phrased questions on this topic to a metropolitan-area sample rather than national. It would be inappropriate to present the resultant data side by side as a “country comparison”

for at least two reasons: the questions were not identical, and the sample construction was vastly different.

Please take care to ensure that you put forward country or social group comparisons only when: the sample size in each category is adequate; the sampling strategy was the same; the question language was identical; the answer categories were identical; and the method of recoding and calculating the answer categories was also identical. This can be very limiting, but it guarantees that no comparisons will be based on insufficient data. Another strategy you may consider is to seek other existing datasets to help fill out your comparisons.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE FOR CORE CONSIDERATIONS 2 & 3

An NGO tweeted about IMAGES findings on the prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV) arranged by regions of the country. The data showed a 65 percent lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence among women in an economically unstable rural region with a high proportion of an ethnic minority population. It also showed a 49 percent lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence among women in the wealthier urban capital of the country with a greater population of the ethnic majority. The final tweet concluded, “IPV is a much more serious issue in [the rural region] than in [the capital].”

These tweets were harmful for many reasons. First, they fed into stereotypes about this ethnic minority community as violent or otherwise stigmatized. This is unfair and incomplete, as the tweets did not explore the many stresses of living in an underserved, unstable location, nor the diminished access to resources and services among people in this region. The tweets also obscured the fact that 49 percent lifetime prevalence of violence – the rate in the capital city – is an extremely high rate of violence as well, a fundamental violation of women’s rights. The data reveal tremendous rates of violence in all locations, but the data use pointed most specifically to a stigmatized group without the necessary context or nuance.

A better approach would have been to point out the structural issues being faced by the population in the rural community and call upon duty-bearers to improve service delivery and better protect human rights in that location. The tweets should also have demonstrated that IPV is an extremely serious issue in all locations and all populations in the country. Local violence prevention programmers and women’s rights activists could guide you in crafting these messages in movement-aligned ways.

LOOK TO LOCAL FEMINIST, WOMEN'S RIGHTS, LGBTQIA+ RIGHTS, AND VIOLENCE-PREVENTION MOVEMENTS AND VOICES FOR GUIDANCE ON WHAT MESSAGES TO PRIORITIZE AND HOW

The authors hope that IMAGES data receive the widest possible uses and are happy to be making the data available more broadly than ever before. At the same time, it is of utmost importance that the data be put to uses that support local, in-country movements for greater equality and justice related to IMAGES themes. Wherever you are, there are local activists representing the very communities and identities that face the worst outcomes in an unjust patriarchal world, driving a local

agenda for programs, advocacy, and campaigns. Possibly you yourself are such an activist or represent such a group; if so, amazing, you're in the right place! But if you are coming to IMAGES data without real connections to or relationships with those movements, then our core consideration asks you to take a step back and see if you can align your analysis and data use with more locally grounded priorities.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE FOR CORE CONSIDERATION 4

An NGO without any connection to LGBTQIA+ communities is interested in disseminating IMAGES data about the high prevalence of homophobic attitudes in their country. They feel, on their own terms, that these data speak to the urgency of LGBTQIA+ rights within that country. In an effort to raise awareness of the issue and promote positive social change, they decide to publish the IMAGES data alongside LGBTQIA+ rights policy recommendations that the NGO has identified and prioritized on its own, without consulting local LGBTQIA+ groups.

By taking it upon themselves to disseminate these data, the NGO is causing unintended harm.

Despite their good intentions, the NGO is excluding the community directly affected by the issue in order to serve their own priorities. Moreover, local LGBTQIA+ rights organizations in at least one IMAGES country have expressed very clearly that it is more harmful than helpful to broadly circulate statistics about the level of homophobia or justification of violence against LGBTQIA+ populations within that country.

A better approach would be to partner with local groups to work with the most affected communities in the country of reference to align your data presentations and analyses according to their priorities. The general principle to keep in mind is, "nothing about us without us."



SEEK OUT, GIVE CREDIT TO, AND OFFER CO-AUTHORSHIP OR OTHER COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES TO THE LOCAL DATA COLLECTORS AND IMAGES STUDY LEADERS

In a spirit of collaboration, we ask that the local team who put in the tremendous effort to conduct the IMAGES study in your country of interest be given adequate credit for this work and the opportunity to participate in relevant data uses. If you have received raw IMAGES data, then it's likely that you've also received clear guidance in the form of a data use agreement and a memorandum of understanding (MOU) stating some of these terms more formally. But even if you are drawing upon IMAGES data from a report (rather than raw data), we ask that you respect this spirit of inclusion and share

credit where it is due. It is also quite likely that the local IMAGES data collection or coordination groups may have contact with other relevant activists or researchers who can be helpful to you.

If you have any questions about how to contact the local IMAGES coordinators or wish to have additional support in being in touch with the movement leaders mentioned in the core consideration 4, we strongly encourage you to contact the Equipundo research team by email at research@equipundo.org



KEEP IN MIND THE LIMITS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

Quantitative data are exciting and useful because they can condense the basic realities of many hundreds or thousands of lives to identify undeniable trends or patterns of behavior. Trends and patterns are incredibly useful for policymaking, programming, campaigns, and so on. However, quantitative data on their own, even from a study as groundbreaking as IMAGES, can only paint a partial picture of the issues at hand. Population-level trends captured by quantitative research methods cannot be used to stand in for individual-level perspectives, which are significantly more nuanced and varied. Also, although a survey finding could show that the majority of people engage in a certain behavior, that doesn't mean *everyone* in the population engages in that behavior. Even if 90 percent of people say they do something or believe something, that still leaves a big proportion of people who don't and also does not capture the situational and contextual nature of gendered behaviors and attitudes. It is because of these limitations of quantitative research that we always encourage partners

to carry out complementary qualitative research and to draw on the increasing array of qualitative studies in most countries on masculinities and gender relations.

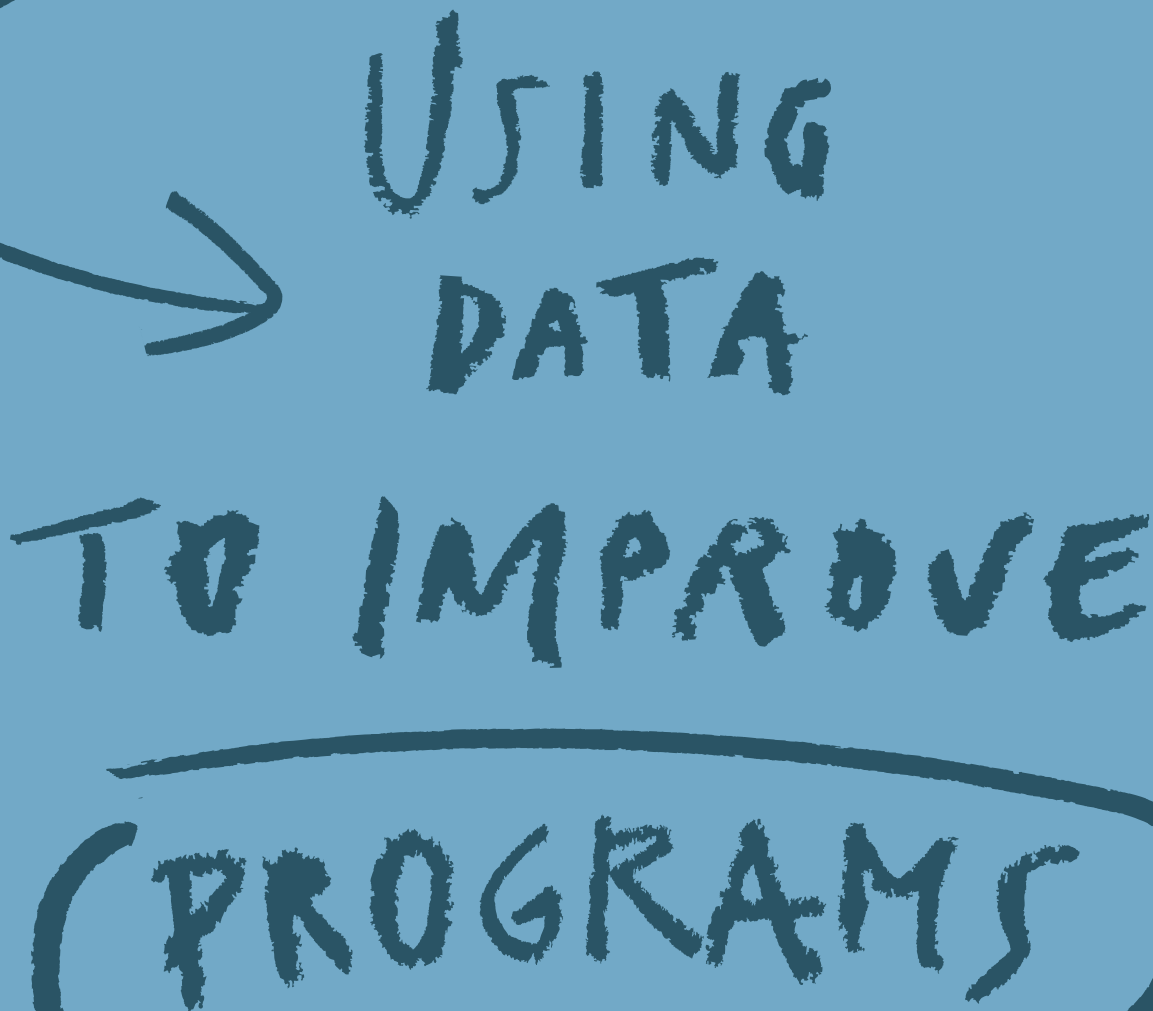
Furthermore, the breadth of topics included in the IMAGES questionnaires also means that each topic cannot be explored in great depth. If we were to investigate every single topic of interest for IMAGES in the finest level of detail, the study would need to be ten or twenty times as long, and therefore impossibly long to field as a survey! As you work with IMAGES survey items, note the precise language of the questions that were asked of the participants and take care not to paraphrase or extrapolate meaning beyond what is written. To use data ethically and effectively, it is important to keep in mind the limitations of quantitative data in general, and the IMAGES study in particular. Even if this seems counterintuitive, it only aids your trustworthiness in your audiences of interest by being very clear about these limitations and communicating them openly.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE FOR CORE CONSIDERATION 6

An advocacy group was struck by IMAGES data showing high levels of agreement among men with the statement "It is a mother's responsibility to take care of the home and look after the children." They interpret this finding to be an indicator of highly prevalent gender inequitable attitudes and report on it by paraphrasing the finding with the headline "Men in our country don't take responsibility for childcare and hold women back from professional goals."

Paraphrasing a survey finding or extrapolating beyond the wording directly in the questionnaire can lead to misinterpretation of the findings and cause unintended harms. Keep in mind: all we know from quantitative survey items is a respondent's answer to a specific, closed-ended question. We can't say WHY an individual respondent gave a certain answer, and we don't know what they were thinking about when they answered. The respondent could have misinterpreted the question, or they may be reflecting some cultural consideration that the survey authors didn't have in mind.

A better approach would be to report the question's wording verbatim but also share findings from additional IMAGES survey items related to men's roles in childcare and women's access to professional and public aspirations. The advocacy group could also incorporate qualitative data that can provide in-depth, individual-level perspectives as a complement to the broad trends.



USING DATA TO IMPROVE PROGRAMS

This section advises you on activating IMAGES data directly in your programs. By “programs” in this case, we’re specifically referring to curricula, group education sessions, school classroom sessions, support groups, parenting trainings, community conversations, and any other element where you are directly engaging community members in person with prepared educational or discussion material. It differs from advocacy for policies or social media or media campaigns, which are addressed in the following sections.

1 ←

USE IMAGES DATA TO IDENTIFY THE HIGHEST PRIORITY, MOST HARMFUL, OR MOST WIDELY HELD ATTITUDES TO ADDRESS THROUGH YOUR PROGRAM

In the past, when preparing your program curricula or choosing which particular issues or messages to focus on, you may have had to guess, rely on “what we’ve always done,” or use anecdotal stories to inform you. Now, you have access to relevant data which tell you precisely the most commonly held negative attitudes within your program population. This data can tell you exactly what to focus on or not focus on. Look through the rates of agreement with harmful attitudes and norms and note the attitudes most commonly held. The data may reveal a surprisingly high rate of agreement with some attitudes or norms you hadn’t previously incorporated into your program. You would do well to bring attention to those. Likewise, if you have activities or curriculum sessions prioritizing topics and attitudes where a great proportion already agrees or holds a positive attitude, you might want to refocus.

Look to the GEM (Gender Equitable Men) scale section of the report or dataset, where there are many agree/disagree items responding to statements about gender equality.

In your data analysis, these statements can often be sorted into helpful theme categories, such as:

- Support for gender equality in society
- Gender roles and decision-making power within the home
- Attitudes about violence
- Attitudes about women’s economic empowerment/ rights/education
- Attitudes about relationships, sexuality, and reproduction
- Attitudes about marriage and divorce
- Attitudes about women in public life and their political empowerment
- Many subcategories related to masculinities and norms of manhood: Self-sufficiency, Toughness, Homophobia, Hypersexuality, Aggression, and Control

EXAMPLE FROM IMAGES TANZANIA

The majority of women (62 percent) and men (55 percent) agreed with the statement **“I think changing diapers, giving baths to children, and feeding children are the mother’s responsibility, not the father’s.”**

For any program focused on equality in household roles or men’s involvement in caregiving, this result deserves a lot of focus. Engage participants in reflective, transformative conversations about why this attitude is so prevalent, and find ways to encourage men to seek deeper, more involved connections with their children.

DRAW UPON POSITIVE ATTITUDES THAT ARE WIDELY HELD TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THERE IS PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR CERTAIN ASPECTS OF EQUALITY

This piece of guidance complements the previous one. It can be very useful within programs – sessions with men, with youth – to show that a great proportion of people hold a supportive/positive/feminist attitude. Sometimes people are afraid to admit that they hold a more progressive view because they think no one else agrees with them. But this can have the unfortunate effect of silencing the secret majority that also shares this view.

So almost certainly, within the IMAGES data in your country, you will find some statistics that show that a great proportion of people agree with a positive idea. Elevating these findings tells other people who hold that opinion, “You’re not alone.” You can find such examples in the same categories listed under guidance #1 in this section, but promising examples from IMAGES history include the positive survey items in the following categories:

- **Fatherhood:**
 - “I wish I could spend more time with my children.”
 - “I would support expanded parental leave.”
- **Gender equality in society:**
 - “We in [my country] need to do more to achieve gender equality in our society.”
- **Violence:**
 - Hopefully, in many cases, we’d see a large majority *disagreeing* with the statements that justify men’s intimate partner violence (IPV) or sexual harassment.

It’s important that you don’t paint a misleadingly positive picture. If there are contradictory attitudes, it’s more honest to present both of them side by side.

EXAMPLE FROM IMAGES CENTRAL UGANDA

In the Central Uganda IMAGES, a fascinating finding emerged which relates to this guidance. We found that the majority of respondents regardless of gender felt that **“most people in my community think that women should tolerate violence to keep their families together.”**

However, we also asked each respondent this question directly about themselves. Only one-third of the respondents agreed that **“a woman should tolerate violence to keep the family together.”** Do you see the discrepancy? People think that a negative attitude is more common than it actually is. In fact, most people in that community do NOT think that women should tolerate violence to keep their families together. Only one-third do.

It is very important to reveal this to the community. If you reject violence, you are not alone – you’re part of the majority!

3 USE CARE WORK AND FATHERHOOD DATA (AMONG OTHER TOPICS) TO GIVE VERY SPECIFIC EXAMPLES FOR PROGRAM DISCUSSIONS

This piece of guidance is similar to the first two in this section but more related to respondents' *behaviors* than their *attitudes*. Looking specifically at care work (although you could pursue the same approach for domestic work, health seeking, and many other topics within the study), watch out for the following:

- Which specific parenting/fatherhood, care work, or domestic-work activity are **men doing the least** in your country? Whatever that is, try to push your participants to increase their involvement specifically in that task. This is often cleaning, cooking, bathing children, preparing food, changing diapers, or keeping track of the children's daily schedule/health care, among others. But it will vary country by country and the data in your location can tell you specifically where men are falling behind.
 - Also, look at which activities are **most equally shared** by all genders to demonstrate the real-world examples in your country where equality is already active in practice. Your participants can't hold the view that equality is pure fantasy when there are already tasks that embody that principle in their own communities, their own families.
- Some interesting examples of this have been tending livestock, repairing things in the home (though this can be male dominated in some places), cleaning the yard, or fetching water. You might start a program conversation by asking, "What is it about tending livestock that makes it easy to collaborate as a couple? Why is this different from other tasks that are more segregated?"
- Finally, look at which activities **men are contributing the most** to, both to celebrate (if they are more gender transgressive or gender equal, so to speak) or to call them out when those types of work are only the easiest, most fun, least time consuming, or most masculine-gendered tasks. Tasks that often fall into this category include financial tasks, such as controlling the budget, paying bills, or decision-making about large investments or purchases, or tasks that require free movement outside the home, such as grocery shopping or attending community meetings. These are not findings to celebrate in this case, since they point to men's domination over decision-making and women's curtailed movement. So challenge the men in your programs to contribute more in other areas.

SHOW PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS SOME OF THE DATA DIRECTLY AND DISCUSS IT WITH THEM

As an even simpler option than the previous two points of guidance in this section, perhaps the IMAGES report and data themselves can *become* the curriculum or activity for a session or two. Bring the findings related to attitudes, equality at home, equality in society, health seeking, and parenting, and show the participants how their fellow countrymen and women

responded. You can facilitate conversation by asking questions like:

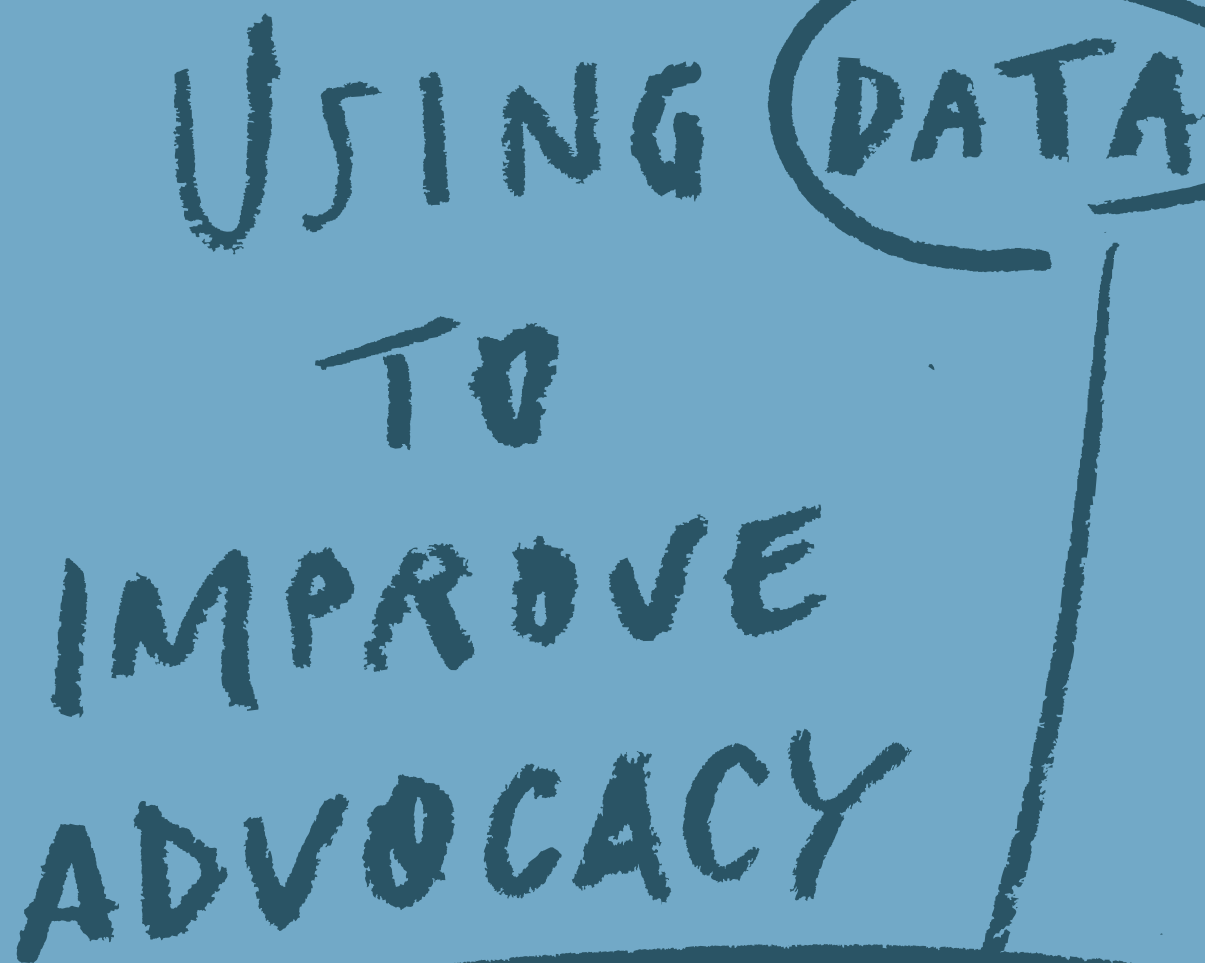
- Which findings were most surprising to you? Why?
- Out of all the issues covered, which ones do you feel are the most pressing issues for our society?

CAUTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

In any program discussion related to IMAGES themes, you can be certain to receive pushback and defensiveness from participants, especially men. They may not have much experience directly discussing these sensitive issues in a feminist-informed, data-driven way, and will cling to their preconceived notions. It is important to have program participants feel heard, but it is also essential to challenge anyone who brings harmful and inaccurate ideas into the group. Discussions with IMAGES partners pointed to a couple common topics of backlash:

- **Men are eager to identify inaccurately as victims, both of intimate partner violence and of gender equality movements as a whole.** Yes, there are indeed cases where a female partner may use emotional, physical, or other forms of violence against a male partner. The evidence is overwhelming that in nearly all cases, this happens in the context of bidirectional violence. Meaning, women use violent actions only in a situation where they are also experiencing violence. It is important to use statistics and a strong voice to correct the inaccurate presumption that any act of self-defense by a member of a historically less empowered, less privileged group (women) is somehow the equivalent of domination and aggression in the first place by a man, a member of an advantaged group. It's simply not the same, and program discussions must emphasize this.
- **Misleading and manipulative definitions of "violence" are sometimes offered.** For example, program leaders shared that men participants offered the idea that women withholding sex from their husbands are "committing violence" against them. It is very important to challenge this and other ideas like this. Someone choosing not to have sex, even with their marital partner, is exercising their essential right to have control over their own body and consent for their own sexual experiences. In fact, the truth is that when men force their wives to have sex against their will, they are the ones committing the violence of marital rape.

USING DATA TO IMPROVE ADVOCACY



In this section, we'll refer specifically to advocacy for policy or legal changes in your community, imagining any efforts you may take to directly engage with members of parliament, ministers, lawmakers, heads of state, or other dignitaries or duty-bearers who have the power to shape the legal and political environment for gender issues in your country. This is distinct from public-facing campaigns, which will be addressed in the next section.

1

DRAW UPON THE SUPPORT FOR VARIOUS POLICIES THAT IS EXPRESSED IN THE SURVEY RESPONSES

Perhaps you've noticed a common thread through this document: **Build on the positive!** This applies in policy advocacy as well. One of the most convincing approaches to building momentum for new legislation or significant policy shifts is to show lawmakers that there is already broad support for some policy ideas to promote equality. To be sure, this can be a fine line to walk. When findings show a mix of very positive and

very negative feelings about policies and laws, as was the case in Uganda, activists should take a twofold strategy. Where there are positive findings, use those to shift the attitudes of policymakers. Where there are negative findings, it is best not to bring these to policymakers quite yet, but rather to focus on attitude change among the public. See guidance on public campaigns in the next section.

A MIXED PICTURE OF POLICY-RELATED ATTITUDES

Let us consider several messages published in the Uganda IMAGES report, specifically the questions about gender equality and domestic violence legislation, to determine the best advocacy strategy for each.

- Approximately three-quarters of the respondents said they were aware of the existing domestic violence law (73 percent of men and 70 percent of women). This is a **mixed finding** that might prompt activist groups to tell policymakers that their actions are followed closely by a majority of the population while still working to build awareness among the ~30 percent who may not know their rights under the law.
- More than half of the respondents – and in particular, men – reported that domestic violence laws have contributed to increased conflicts within the family context. More alarmingly, three-quarters of the men surveyed agreed women were using these laws to dominate men, as did about half of the women. These are very **negative and troubling** findings. If we were to report these findings directly to policymakers with no context, they may take the wrong idea and start working to undermine or reverse these laws. The issue here is not with the laws but with the public perception and understanding. As such, this is a finding that calls on us to do public outreach and education. It is not a finding that serves policy advocacy very well.
- Finally, for some better news: the majority of both men and women supported the idea of new legislation to criminalize marital rape. This is a **positive finding**, and it is the perfect kind of message to deliver to policymakers as part of advocacy outreach. It may be very influential and convincing indeed for a lawmaker to realize that a new piece of legislation would be welcomed by the public.

The idea of focusing on the positive is not to diminish the serious issues we face as a movement for equality. It's just a matter of determining which kinds of findings lead us toward which kinds of data uses. When findings related to gender equality are positive or encouraging, then it is strategic to share them far and wide via advocacy and public campaigns. It's also common to hear comments in many settings that "all men are like that" or "men, or patriarchy won't change." The mixture of positive (change

is happening) with inequality (the gaps needed to achieve equality) is where the majority of countries in the world are. IMAGES is most often a tale of both: there are some men everywhere we look who support some aspects of gender equality, and there are men (and some areas of men's practices) where lots of change needs to happen. When they show a strong level of ongoing discrimination, bias, and negative attitudes, it is best to work to change and transform these ideas rather than simply broadcasting them.

2 ADVOCATE FOR PREVENTATIVE MEASURES – DON'T FOCUS ONLY ON RESPONSE

Sometimes when we talk about policies and laws, the first or only instinct is to determine when and how to *punish* those who break the laws. This can be categorized as a policy related to “response,” meaning it relates to what happens *after* an act of violence, discrimination, harassment, or otherwise. It is essential to have good laws on the books to deter those who would commit these actions. But this is only one part of what we should be advocating for.

In addition to “response,” we should be pushing lawmakers and duty-bearers to do their part to *prevent* these harmful actions from ever happening in the first place.

Our communities need proactive, preventative measures to address the root causes of inequality and violence: better curricula, better services, efforts at norm change, and more! So try to think outside the box, or “outside the constitution.” In addition to a new or strengthened law in the penal code, what kinds of measures can we be suggesting to health ministries (based on the health-seeking data in IMAGES), education ministries (based on the attitudes and norms data in IMAGES), gender or family ministries (based on the childcare or parental leave data in IMAGES) in order to advance a more well-rounded vision of a policy framework in support of gender equality?

POLICY SUCCESSES BEYOND LAWS

IMAGES data have been used to advance several compelling and effective policies for gender equality, above and beyond the establishment of new laws per se. Some prominent examples include:

Brazil: Using IMAGES data, activists successfully encouraged the Ministry of Health to set up services for men in hospitals and a dedicated men’s health department within the ministry.

Chile: Using IMAGES data, activists persuaded the government to include men and boys in gender-based violence prevention programs.

Croatia: Using IMAGES data, activists convinced the government to introduce sexual education in public schools and to support the NGO-led Young Men’s Initiative.

3

DEMONSTRATE UNMET NEEDS AMONG THE NATIONAL POPULATION AND PUSH FOR STRUCTURAL RESPONSES

It is sometimes too easy to think of every problem as an *individual* problem: the actions of a lawbreaker, violent person, or bigot. This isn't the full picture. In truth, most gender inequality concerns have their roots in structural and societal issues that governments can and should address.

Chronic unemployment, poor education systems, lack of an adequate social-safety net, food insecurity, income insecurity – all these issues have gender equality implications and associations.

PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR STRUCTURAL-LEVEL ADVOCACY

The 2021 State of the World's Fathers report, which is informed by and features IMAGES data, takes an exclusively structural focus on the issue of equality in care work. This report shows how inequalities in care at home are influenced by many structural inequalities in our societies, driven by government inaction or insufficient support programs. The report's "Seven Structural Actions" may point toward advocacy targets that resonate in your location:

1. Put in place **national care policies** and campaigns that recognize, reduce, and redistribute care work equally between men and women.
2. Provide equal, job-protected, fully paid **parental leave** for all parents as a national policy.
3. Design and expand **social protection programs** to redistribute care work equally between women and men, while keeping a focus on the needs and rights of women and girls.
4. Transform **health sector institutions** to promote fathers' involvement from the prenatal period through birth and childhood and men's involvement as caregivers.
5. Promote an **ethic of male care** in schools, media, and other key institutions in which social norms are created and reinforced.
6. Change **workplace conditions**, culture, and policies to support workers' caregiving – and mandate those changes in national legislation.
7. Hold **male political leaders** accountable for their support of care policies, while advocating for women's equality in political leadership.

The full report can be downloaded at www.stateoftheworldsfathers.org



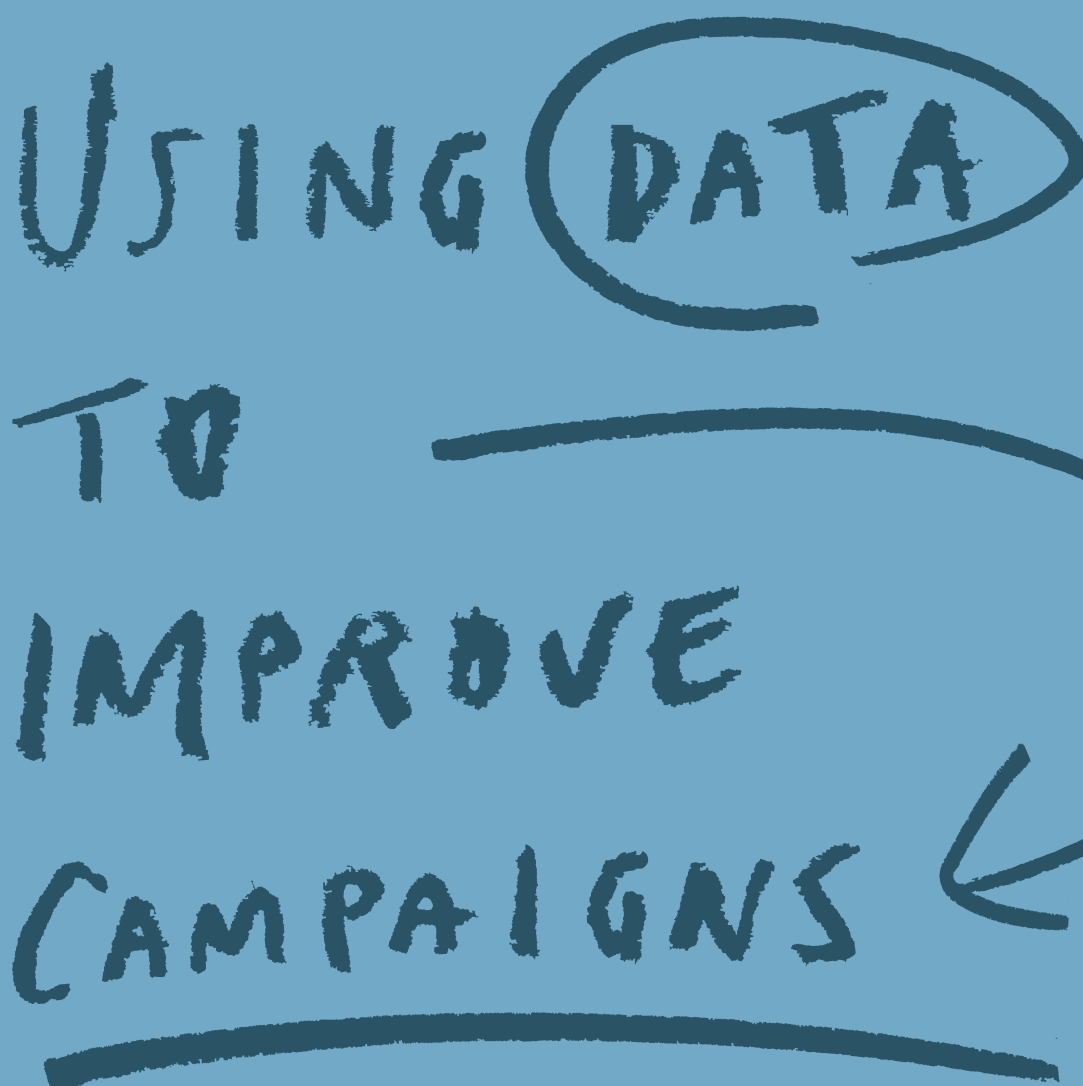
USE THE DATA TO GIVE ADDITIONAL WEIGHT TO LOCAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENTS' PRIORITIES AND EXISTING CAMPAIGNS

It is much more powerful to bring IMAGES data and information to support *existing* advocacy campaigns and efforts. You don't – you shouldn't! – always start something completely new, alone. So perhaps the overarching guidance for this whole section is that rather than diving in on your own advocacy strategy, you should

first convene strategic meetings with feminist, women's rights, and LGBTQIA+ movements in your location, share the report, and see which findings most resonate and support their ongoing or upcoming campaigns or events. This will also have the effect of building new coalitions



USING DATA TO IMPROVE CAMPAIGNS



In this final section, we refer to social media campaigns, mass media campaigns, and other public education efforts where you're seeking to reach a wide audience all at once. This is distinct from programs, in that your campaigns will reach far beyond anyone you would consider a direct "participant," and this is distinct from advocacy because here we're talking about engaging the public rather than lawmakers.



BUILD THE GOOD KIND OF SOCIAL NORMS

When we use the word “norms,” it doesn’t refer simply to one’s attitudes. It refers to what is “normal” in a certain location. What is the “normal” way people think here? What is the “normal” way people behave here? All of us have opinions about what is normal in our communities. But it’s surprising just how often we are wrong! IMAGES data often show that respondents have inaccurate, and most often excessively negative or restrictive, ideas of what is normal.

Earlier, we shared the example of how the *majority* of IMAGES Uganda respondents said that people in their community think women should tolerate violence to keep the family together, but in fact, only a much smaller *minority* actually said that they hold this opinion. This is exactly the kind of discrepancy that can be tremendously powerful in campaigns.

In essence, you can use the data to say, “You think you are in the minority, but actually most people agree with you! So speak up against violence and you’ll see that most people will support and agree with you.”

IMAGES data can be tremendously powerful in shining a light on situations where there is more widespread agreement with *positive, pro-equality* ideas than people think. When we harness these kinds of findings, we can call it “building the good kind of social norms.” You’re showing people that it’s actually normal to reject violence, normal to believe in equality.



QUOTATION FROM TANZANIA

“Women and men consistently hold more equitable views and are more supportive of equality for women than they perceive individuals in their community to be. This provides a tremendous opportunity for building on men’s and women’s willingness to question community norms. Community and national campaigns can be designed to emphasize that many individuals already agree with equality, rather than assuming they do not. Campaigns can say, for example, *‘Did you know the vast majority of women and men in your community actually agree that ... ?’* to reinforce the reality that *‘more people believe in equality than you think.’*”

2

DON'T PUT FORWARD HIGH RATES OF AGREEMENT WITH HARMFUL IDEAS WITHOUT CONTEXT OR COMPLEXITY

Unfortunately, showing widespread agreement with *negative* ideas can have the same effect as the previous point, but in a negative way: it shows people that their harmful ideas are popular. This will only support the opponents of equality. Therefore, whenever we show wide agreement with negative ideas, we need to provide

a direct challenge to those ideas and explain why they are harmful to society. It's not enough to just display them and presume that the readers will understand that they are bad. This is a very common mistake in the gender equality field.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

In the IMAGES Tanzania report, some 56 percent of men agreed that “men make better political leaders than women,” and 79 percent of men agreed that “women are too emotional to be leaders.” These paint a picture of extreme discrimination against women’s proven leadership abilities and attitudes like this are the root cause of women’s political marginalization. Imagine seeing a campaign billboard in Dar es Salaam that simply reads, “79% of men feel women are too emotional to be leaders.” Without any additional context, explanation, or challenge, people who pass by this campaign poster will essentially be taught that it is normal and common to hold this discriminatory view.

A much better campaign billboard or approach would be to find examples of women leaders from across Tanzania, East Africa, and the world at large and show them taking charge, thriving, and leading important efforts to improve their communities, companies, and world. This way you are challenging the discriminatory view – and you don’t even need to share the IMAGES statistic at all!



EXPLORE WAYS TO SHARE NUANCE IN ADDITION TO JUST NUMBERS

Remember that IMAGES studies often include qualitative data along with the survey results, and these “mixed method” data sources are meant to be used in tandem with one another. Statistics are powerful, and certainly, a great amount of your use of IMAGES data will involve statistics that can make a difference in your setting. But most viewers of your campaign will only have so much patience for an unending series of numbers. The statistics will shine more if you’re able to present them in combination with *stories*, and in a way that shows how people are complex and nuanced individuals, and not just a number. Statistics also often

look like frozen pictures of human lives and our gendered relations. When combined with qualitative research – case studies, individual stories, local stories – the data can show the dynamic nature of gender relations and masculinities.

Social media spaces provide many opportunities to present this nuance. Can you use a narrative or a story from the qualitative data in a Facebook post along with IMAGES statistics? Can you use a Twitter thread to put forward some statistics but then contextualize them and add nuance?

QUALITATIVE DATA ADDS RICHNESS AND SPECIFICITY

Statistics are useful to communicate wide trends but are incapable of telling the stories of individuals. Here are some compelling quotations drawn from IMAGES studies that offer insight into gender equality dynamics that no survey question could ever uncover:

On the topic of gender, religion, and tradition, from a Moroccan woman:

“There is no relationship between religion and tradition. Tradition is produced by society and religion has nothing to do with that. Tradition has affected me tremendously and badly, while religion was there to protect me. It gave me power, it allowed me to use my intelligence to share things ... This body that God gave me is my right, it does not belong to anyone else.”

On the more equitable past compared to a more oppressive present, from an Afghan man:

“It is like I came from heaven to hell. Now we can see how people have replaced kindness, compassion, and love with violence, discrimination, and war. The culture that we had about 40 years ago, you would not be able to find 5 percent of it [now]. In case you are able to find it, it certainly would be among those people who lived in Kabul about 40 years ago; they are the people who feel sorry. They saw their Kabul 40 years ago – it was very clean, no dust, and everyone had a kind of feeling for their city. Even a person selling bananas had a dustbin with him and would store the peels in it. But now it is more than 200 percent different from that time. People in the current era are not so respectful.”

On breaking intergenerational chains of violence, from a Brazilian man:


“No, I have no relationship with my dad. One of the reasons why [my parents] separated was because she suffered mistreatment from him, and he was an alcoholic, a drunkard, he used to beat her, which is why my mom decided to separate from him. So, that marks your life. As a child I used to see all that and that’s why I promised myself that I would never be like that: I would never drink alcohol, I would never hit a woman and I would never abandon my child. These were the three things I proposed for myself since I was little.”

QUESTION THE NEED TO USE “BE A MAN” TYPE LANGUAGE EVEN WITH POSITIVE INTENT – INSTEAD, MAKE A DIRECT APPEAL

Many examples exist where campaigns for gender equality think it is appropriate to use the phrase “be a man” or other similar phrases but to support a positive goal. In some settings, being recognized as a man (or a woman) is a highly salient part of people’s identities. As an ideal in the gender equality space, we push for breaking that binary and for static categories of manhood and womanhood to be overcome. But in some settings, it is still attractive to use messages like “Be a man: don’t use violence” or “A real man is a caring father” or another variation like this. This is a good intention, and in some settings may be a starting point, but we urge trying to think beyond that. Unfortunately, even by using the phrase “be a man” or “real man” with a positive goal, you are still introducing the concept that there is one right way to “be a man,” and you’re likely reminding viewers of all those other negative ideas as well.

A much better alternative is to use second-person language to address the viewer directly, especially in a positive tone. See the example poster of the MenCare campaign that attempted this approach, saying, “YOU see equality in my future. YOU are my father.” An even more engaging option to consider is to ask the viewer a direct question. This forces them to think and reflect right there on the spot, even though they’re not a participant in your program. This can have an incredibly powerful impact. Consider questions like:

- “How can you stand up for equality today?”
- “Have you shown your family you care today?”
- “What can you do to show care to a friend today?”
- “Will you stand up when you see someone using violence?”
- “What can you do to brighten the life of your child today?”





**YOU SEE EQUALITY IN MY FUTURE.
YOU ARE MY FATHER.**

A more hopeful and more equal future is possible. The more your children know, the further they go in school, the bigger their future becomes. And that future - for girls and for boys - starts at home.

When you teach your children that all people - boys or girls, of different backgrounds, gay or straight - should be treated equally and respectfully, you're also teaching them that they deserve a future full of opportunity and equality too. That's a powerful lesson that they'll remember forever.

For more on teaching equality: www.men-care.org


MenCare MenCare is coordinated by  



DON'T SHOW IMAGES OF VIOLENCE OR USE OTHER EXPLOITATIVE APPROACHES

Displaying images of violent acts or the marks/bruises resulting from violence puts women's bodies and traumas into the public sphere in an exploitative way. This has also been an ineffective way of building support for the movement against violence, and it unnecessarily adds more examples and visions of violence in our daily lives. It may likely be traumatizing or re-traumatizing for a

great many people who have experienced violence and/or supported survivors of violence. So even though you may have the right intentions, this is not the best path to go down for your campaign. Please avoid this approach in favor of the more positive framing ideas suggested in prior points of guidance in this section.




Additional links and references

SAFETY AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR DATA USE

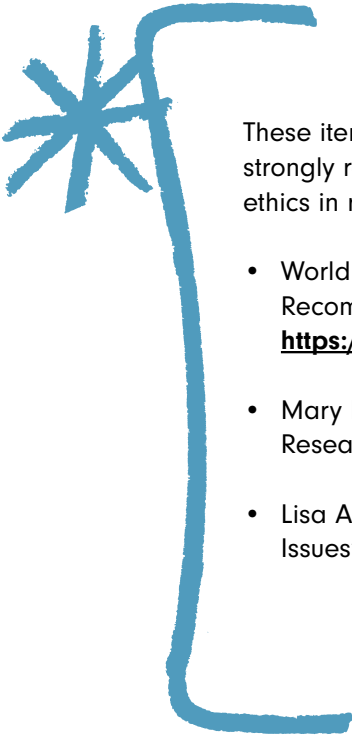
The World Health Organization's Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women, first published in 2001, has become an essential resource for international researchers. Drawing directly from the WHO recommendations, as well as sources authored by Lori Heise, Mary Ellsberg, and Lisa Aronson Fontes, the staff of International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) produced in 2009 a shortlist of key safety and ethical considerations for data analysis and use as part of a larger toolkit. This guidance is still useful in highlighting the particular risks and considerations for presenting data about violence against women. The following is an adaptation of that ICRW toolkit section.

- 1. Researchers and donors have an ethical obligation to help ensure that their findings are properly interpreted and used to advance policy and intervention development (WHO Recommendation).**
This consideration means that it is unethical to keep useful data concealed or unreported, but it also means that data findings must be presented properly, accurately, and with attention to violence prevention priorities and duty-bearer responsibilities. To help accomplish this, researchers should involve advocacy and direct service groups in the study from the beginning, whether as co-designers, advisors, or otherwise.
- 2. Maintain ethical standards of confidentiality throughout analysis and dissemination.**
It is absolutely essential to ensure that all research findings are adequately aggregated so that no one community or individual can be identified. IMAGES data will only be shared in this way.
- 3. Interpret data to promote comprehensive learning, not to further stigmatize vulnerable groups.**
As explored elsewhere in this toolkit, rather than producing findings that feed into negative stereotypes of particular ethnic or social groups, it is essential and advisable to highlight how violence against women cuts across all communities and socioeconomic groups.
- 4. Be aware of local legislation on mandatory reporting.** In some IMAGES countries and locales, there may be legislation in place that demands police/authorities be informed when anyone comes to know of a situation of violence against women or other forms of violence included in the IMAGES dataset. This puts interviewers and field coordinators in a difficult position, and may also influence data analysis, use, and dissemination. Your team should make a deliberate decision about whether or not to follow local mandatory reporting legislation, understanding the risks in either direction.



5. Be especially cautious in reporting findings of very low rates of violence. Even as the IMAGES questionnaire and field procedures follow the best standards to minimize the risk of underreporting of violence, the fact remains that survey results almost always underreport the true rate of violence due to numerous factors. Before presenting these kinds of findings, it may be advisable to discuss them with key informants and different community groups. If these informants question the validity of the findings, include their concerns in the main research headlines alongside the figures. Or you may even determine that the step most in line with violence prevention priorities is to refuse to disseminate findings that feel significantly underreported or illegitimate.

6. Use research results to create something of direct use to the participant communities themselves. Even at the stage of data analysis and use, it is important to remember the significant time and emotional contributions that research participants offered to IMAGES and other data collection on violence against women. At a minimum, the participant community should be able to have access to the reports and conclusions drawn from their own time and life details. Ideally, all data use and dissemination would also be done in partnership with local service providers in a way that enhances services for survivors.



These items are drawn and adapted from the following resources, which are strongly recommended to readers interested in learning more about safety and ethics in researching violence against women.

- World Health Organization, "Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women" <https://www.who.int/gender/violence/womenfirtseng.pdf>
 - Mary Ellsberg and Lori Heise, "Bearing Witness: Ethics in Domestic Violence Research" <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12047984/>
 - Lisa Aronson Fontes, "Ethics in Family Violence Research: Cross-Cultural Issues" <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/14627049/>
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