



At a Glance EQUIMUNDO

Equimundo is a global leader in engaging boys and men to advance gender equality, using research, programs, and advocacy to transform harmful norms and promote healthy, connected, and caring masculinities. In the education sector, we work with schools, teachers, families, and communities to create environments where boys can question stereotypes, build empathy, and grow into allies for equality.

Founding Background

Equimundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice was founded in 2011 as Promundo-US, emerging from Instituto Promundo in Brazil to bring its urgent and vital work to a global scale. Equimundo's origins trace back to early research conducted in Rio de Janeiro's

favelas examining how men understood masculinity, care, and violence - work carried out by founder Gary Barker that shaped the organization's focus on engaging men and boys. This early research showed that many men were already resisting dominant and harmful gender norms, even as they grappled with the pressure to conform. These findings

highlighted both the importance and the potential of engaging men - revealing that this often-overlooked resistance to violent and inequitable versions of manhood could be nurtured and mobilized in the pursuit of gender justice.

In 2021, the organization changed its name to Equimundo. While the previous name, Promundo, meant “for the world,” the name Equimundo signifies an urgent call for equity and equality in the world, which felt more aligned with its current mission and vision. Equimundo achieves its mission through research, programs and advocacy efforts.

Overview of Programs Offered

Equimundo’s work is grounded in three interrelated pillars: Caring Men, Healthy Boyhoods, and Connectedness & Allyship. Together, these themes reflect a holistic approach - supporting boys to grow free from harmful norms, fostering men’s capacity to care and connect, and strengthening relationships and solidarity across genders and communities.

As part of the work focused on adolescents, Equimundo has piloted a range of research, programs and advocacy efforts, including such as the [Global Boyhood Initiative](#). The initiative aims to equip adults in the lives of boys to promote safe environments where boys can grow and question harmful masculine norms and adopt healthy notions of masculinity based on equality and non-violence. Some of the programs

include: teacher training programs on gender transformative education, both in person and online; in class resources for young people to question gender norms; extracurricular workshops on masculinities, gender equality, sexual and reproductive health, and healthy relationships; peer-to-peer training; and resources for family members. In addition to these initiatives, to achieve impact at greater scale, Equimundo has harnessed the potential of promoting healthy notions of manhood online,, creating video games that support connection and empathy among boys, and training and consulting digital platforms to create safer online spaces for young people.

Target Population

Equimundo works with a range of populations to achieve its mission of promoting caring masculinities and boyhoods. Its work targets key actors and institutions in society that shape and are shaped by inequitable norms of masculinity and gender inequality. These institutions include governments; workplaces; schools and education systems; health systems; online platforms; media; individuals, communities and families. Programs and interventions focus on a relational approach to the construct of gender norms and target men and boys, as well as women, girls, and individuals of all gender identities - as we all hold deeply held beliefs and expectations around what it means to be a boy and a man.

Relationship to Formal Systems

Equimundo operates at the intersection of research, advocacy, and programs, weaving these three technical approaches together to transform ideas into impact. Through its flagship research, Equimundo seeks to inform and influence decision makers at the global, regional, national, and local levels to advance policies that promote gender equality across a variety of sectors, including education. This research also guides the development and adaptation of its gender-transformative curricula and initiatives worldwide, ensuring that solutions are contextually relevant, evidence-based, and scalable.

Equimundo's Role in Program Support

Equimundo works closely with trusted partners to strengthen their capacities to implement gender-transformative programs that specifically focus on masculinities and the intentional engagement of men and boys. Steeped in Equimundo's research and programmatic experience, programs are co-designed and aim to transform masculinities, to foster attitudes and behaviors that support gender equality, while also creating more inclusive and safe cultures in schools, homes, health centers, workplaces as well as online spaces. Equimundo's technical support includes co-designing formative research, adapting or co-creating programmatic

interventions, training trainers and/or facilitators on gender transformative methodologies, providing technical support for effective implementation, developing monitoring and evaluation plans and tools, and conducting process and impact evaluations.

Curriculum

Equimundo's gender-transformative curricula and methodologies are co-created and adapted for implementation within specific countries and communities, ensuring that each approach is responsive to local realities. One of its flagship approaches is the "Program H" methodology, first launched with partners in Latin America in 2002. Originally developed for young men ages 15–24, Program H has since been adapted across more than 30 countries and applied in a wide range of settings.

Program H combines gender-transformative group education sessions - engaging boys, girls, and young people of all genders - with community-wide campaigns that encourage behavioral, normative, and institutional change. This methodology has provided the foundation for several newer, context-specific adaptations, including Many Ways of Being, which promotes diversity and inclusion; Beyond Gender Stereotypes, which challenges harmful masculine norms in classroom settings; and Lifting Barriers, which supports boys' engagement in education, equality, and non-violence.

Geography and Reach

Over the past 15 years, Equipundo has worked across the globe to engage men and boys as allies in gender equality. It currently has active projects – in collaboration with country-based partners – in more than 25 countries across Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, Latin America and

the Caribbean. As a thought leader around masculinities and gender equality through education, Equipundo’s reach is global. Its research, methodologies and advocacy resources are open source and accessible on their website, allowing for organizations globally to use them.

For more information, see: equipundo.org

OVERVIEW AND MISSION

Equipundo is an applied research institution based in Washington, D.C.. Grounded in feminist praxis and focused on achieving impact through partnership and collaboration, Equipundo’s mission is to promote care by and for men and boys, reduce violence and inequity, and in doing so achieve well-being for all. The organization’s vision is a safe, just, and caring world, defined as:

- Safe: Where everyone lives free from violence.
- Just: Where inequities are prevented, mitigated, and redressed.
- Caring: Where everyone is connected, valued, and invested in supporting one another.

Since its founding, Equipundo has worked to engage men and boys in the struggle towards gender equality. The organization brings men and boys into the fold as allies towards gender equality, the promotion of healthy manhood, and a prevention of violence. Equipundo imagines a future where men, women, and individuals of all gender identities share power and care work more equally, and where all live free from violence.

Approach to Shifting Adolescent Gender Norms

Equipundo’s approach to shifting gender norms is grounded in three interconnected pillars - Caring Men, Healthy Boyhoods, and Connectedness & Allyship - that foster healthy

development, caring masculinities, and gender-equitable relationships. Equipundo advances its mission and framework through research, programs, and advocacy.

Healthy Boyhoods

As gender norms start being internalized by

individuals from a young age, Equimundo recognizes that challenging restrictive gender norms must begin early in life. Within this focus, the organization leads the [Global Boyhood Initiative](#) (GBI) - launched in 2020 and now active with partners across five continents. The Initiative is a global campaign that equips boys ages 4 to 13, along with the adults who raise, teach, and coach them, with tools to foster healthy masculinities and support gender equality. GBI advances this mission through research on boys' experiences and gender socialization, the design and evaluation of scalable school- and community-based interventions, and the development of evidence-based resources for families, educators, and communities.

Caring Men

Traditional gender roles often limit men's participation in caregiving. In this area, the organization builds the evidence around the state of care equity globally through their comprehensive research report on the State of the World's Fathers. Their advocacy

agenda is developed through country-specific opportunities centered around the [MenCare Global](#) campaign and programming to promote the caring and co-responsible engagement of fathers and male caregivers is being scaled in several countries.

Connectedness & Allyship

Equimundo's work in this thematic area aims to foster healthy, social interactions and cultivate inclusive allies in the spaces we share - including digital spaces and workplaces. Research in a number of settings suggests that support for gender equality has stalled or is decreasing among boys and men which may be intensified by the resurgence of populist, right-wing governments and a cultural backlash to feminist gains, fueled by the profound role of digital technologies where misinformation and misogynistic viewpoints are easily shared. Equimundo is advocating for and working with tech companies to promote safe online spaces and through its programs it is training online moderators on more equitable practices.



THEORY OF CHANGE

How Equimundo’s Approach Attempts to Shift Adolescent Gender Norms?

Equimundo’s theory of change is grounded in the belief that adolescent boys can develop more equitable, caring, and nonviolent ways of being when they have opportunities to question, practice, internalize, and apply new understandings of gender, power, and privilege. Young people learn through guided critical reflection, through rehearsal of equitable attitudes and behaviors in supportive group settings, and through translating these insights into their relationships, daily choices, and long-term identities.

At the heart of this approach is a simple but transformative idea: care is an antidote to violence. Equimundo recognizes that gender-based violence and structural inequities - unequal access to power, resources, and opportunities - remain pervasive. Addressing these realities requires engaging men and boys as stakeholders, actors, and allies working alongside women, girls, and people of all gender identities to build a more just, safe, and caring world.

Equimundo’s research consistently shows that care begets care. Children who grow up seeing gender equality practiced in their homes and communities tend to develop gender-equitable attitudes as adults. Men who embrace gender equality report better health and happiness, while those who hold restrictive gender norms are more likely to engage in harmful behaviors such as risk-taking, substance use, and are at greater risk of depression and suicidal thoughts. These findings reinforce Equimundo’s belief that men and boys are capable of and ready for caring, equitable ways of relating - and that nurturing these capacities benefits everyone.

This vision extends beyond individual change to a reimagining of social systems. Equimundo works toward a future built through collective action, accountability, and community-rooted partnerships. The organization collaborates closely with local partners, approaching this work with trust, humility, and a commitment to shared leadership.

Research and Program Evaluations

As applied research is the foundation of the organization, research and program evaluation significantly shape Equimundo’s work and efforts to shift gender norms.

Program Evaluations

Equimundo supports partners in developing

and adapting monitoring and evaluation tools - such as theories of change, surveys, interview guides, and monitoring logs - tailored to the intervention’s goals, context, and partner capacity.

To track changes in gender attitudes and behaviors, Equimundo uses survey instruments covering indicators related

to gender norms, health, violence, family dynamics, and caregiving. Tools such as the Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) Scale are adapted to local contexts. Evaluations measure shifts in gender attitudes and stereotypes, perceptions of caregiving and relational roles, knowledge of sexual and reproductive health, partner support, and acceptance of violence or punishment. Youth-focused assessments also examine knowledge of healthy relationships, bodily autonomy, and contraception.

Behavioral measures capture both intentions and actual changes, including engagement in household work, school participation, aspirations, self-efficacy, willingness to challenge stereotypes, and supportive friendships across genders. Additional indicators assess shared power in families - such as decision-making, division of care, and communication.

To ensure sustainable norms change, Equimundo also assesses systems-level shifts among parents, teachers, and school leaders, including their confidence and skills in discussing gender with youth, school policies on discrimination and violence, and the presence of gender bias in curricula and textbooks. These tools track whether school and community environments support equitable norms.

Process evaluations further illuminate pathways of change, informing program adaptation and scale-up. All analyses apply an intersectional and feminist lens to ensure interventions are effective for participants with diverse backgrounds, including those in

the most vulnerable positions.

Research

Equimundo’s research stands as a comprehensive evidence base on masculinities and gender equality, spanning 45 countries and engaging over 67,000 participants through the groundbreaking International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES). Equimundo’s global reach is matched by methodological rigor—employing randomized controlled trials, quasi-experimental designs, and nationally representative sampling alongside deep qualitative integration to capture both statistical trends and lived realities. The research has catalyzed the adaptation of evidence-based programs like Program P across 20+ countries and produced influential reports including the biennial State of the World’s Fathers, establishing Equimundo as the authoritative voice on men’s roles in caregiving, fatherhood, and social transformation.

The impact of this work extends far beyond academia, driving policy change and program implementation through partnerships with the world’s leading institutions—from the World Bank and UN Women to the Gates Foundation and Pivotal Ventures, which recently entrusted Equimundo’s President with distributing a \$20 million fund for women’s health and well-being. This institutional backing reflects the gold-standard quality of research that meets the highest ethical standards, including IRB protocols, trauma-informed methodologies, and culturally adapted instruments that

ensure both scientific validity and human dignity. The research doesn't just document gender inequalities; it provides the roadmap for dismantling them across critical domains including men's health, social connection, online behaviors, and the transformation of harmful masculine norms.

On the topic of adolescence, Equimundo conducts research that ranges from large-scale multi-country survey research, qualitative interviews, program evaluations of their research-based initiatives and comprehensive literature reviews. Research topics include as the State of Boyhood in Sub-Saharan Africa (2023), their research on the Global Boyhood Initiative (e.g., State of American Boys, State of UK Boys, State of Mexican Boys), their desk reviews on Boys and Sexuality in a Digital age, Boys in an anti-feminist backlash world, Boys and SRHR, Child Grooms, and Adolescent Dating Practices in Rwanda for instance.

Building on this foundation, Equimundo continues to innovate with cutting-edge studies like The Manosphere, Rewired and the State of American Men series, which illuminate how economic anxiety, social isolation, and digital spaces are reshaping modern masculinity in real-time. These national and regional deep-dives—including recent State of UK Men and State of UK Boys reports—complement the global IMAGES dataset to create an unparalleled 360-degree view of men and boys' lives today. From understanding how two-thirds of young American men feel unknown to documenting the provider pressures that multiply suicide risk sixteenfold,

Equimundo's research transforms abstract social challenges into actionable insights that empower governments, organizations, and communities to build a world where care, connection, and equality aren't aspirations but realities for all.

What Works

Equimundo contributes to the field of gender norms change with critical promising practices. First and foremost, Equimundo's focus on boys, men and masculinity is an essential yet underexamined area of research and practice within educational settings. The field has long advocated for the rights to education and empowerment for girls, and even though this work is still needed, in order to transform relational gendered power dynamics and move towards gender equality, boys, men, and masculinities also need attention in order to effectively achieve gender equality. Further, as gender scholars have argued, rigid, binary gendered stereotypes negatively affect all genders. And therefore, Equimundo's commitment to transforming masculinities is a promising focus that must be expanded within the field of gender and education.

Second, as an applied research organization, as its theory of change underscores, program design and implementation are based on research and evidence. Further, Equimundo conducts both stand-alone research such as the IMAGES global survey as well as rigorous evaluative studies on their programs.

Third, Equimundo develops sustainability and scale by serving as a technical assistant to

local partners. The organization strengthens their capacity and co-conducts formative research, program interventions, and training of facilitators. This approach develops the capacity of local partners and promises that programs are locally contextualized and responsive to the needs of communities.

Equimundo works to achieve impact at scale through partnerships with civil society and government institutions including schools, ministries of health and corporate partners to promote the scale-up of promising interventions to ensure sustainability.