

Gender Roles and Stereotypes

Welcome

To '**Cultura de paz y prevención de la violencia**' – through music and sports.



What is the Project about?

Background

SDC supported the **Participation and Equality (PYE) platform**, of which the Ibero-American and African Network of Masculinities (Red Iberoamericana y Africana de Masculinidades, RIAM) is a member. RIAM was established in 2006 with the idea to create a safe reserved space for academics and activists interested in promoting equitable relations between men and women. The motivation arose from a need to discuss issues that men in general feel very uncertain about and are unable to externalize due to a hegemonic model of masculinity in Cuban society.. RIAM's objectives are to raise awareness, train and support equality campaigns and local or national initiatives. The work has had a strong focus on the Cuban society but it has reached out to different Latin American countries and in 2012 included collaborations with scholars and activists from the African continent.

Context

The country faces a series of challenges, both in the public and private spheres, of sexist and discriminatory patterns. The National Survey on Gender Equality (2019) found, among other relevant data, that 26.7% of women had been victims of violence in their intimate partner relationship. The Survey also showed the persistence of stereotypes linked to employment, family, sexuality and maternal and paternal roles. In addition, there are challenges derived from the aftermath of the health crisis caused by COVID-19, which affected areas such as employment, care and violence, among others. Music as a product of human creation has expressed and reflected the culture of patriarchy: from the exclusion of women artists in certain periods, to the reinforcement of gender roles and stereotypes in various forms. The sports field is another most relevant social space where masculinities play an enormous role, in Cuba and beyond. Extensive media coverage and commercialization have promoted sports as a socio-cultural phenomenon. The sports space constitutes a central axis in the socialization of masculinities, in its hegemonic manifestations and, therefore, in its patriarchal conception as "men's business". Today, sports are also perceived as a vehicle for fostering community relations and working with disadvantaged groups, even as a diplomatic means or an instrument for managing conflicts.

Summary

Theory of change

Fostering research, reflection and public debates around masculinity, its construction and its manifestations, will contribute to challenge the "supremacy of men", prevent gender-based violence and promote gender equality. Messages from famous figures in the arts and sports in mass media will raise awareness and change behavior of the public. Artists and sportsmen will serve as role models for specific social groups. Women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are agents of change in terms of discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes.

Overall goal

Increase men's leadership to prevent violence against women and girls using the space of music and sports.

Specific objective(s)

- Broaden the debate and awareness in Cuba on issues such as gender violence, men's sexual health, paternity, feminism.
- Deconstruct sexist and violent stereotypes towards women and among men present in the field of music.
- Raise awareness and train athletes to become promoters of a Culture of Peace in Sports on the field, with the fans, in the media, in families and sports culture.

Expected results

- Young male multipliers trained on non-violence issues through music within the PYE Platform projects.
- Leadership of 50 male athletes strengthened on issues against sexism and harassment in sports.
- Audiovisual products in traditional media and social networks promoted, with themes related to masculinities of solidarity and equality.

Stakeholders

Project partners

The project was implemented by **RIAM**, in alliance with the Federation of Cuban Women has been a fundamental ally, as well as other entities such as Editorial de la Mujer, the Universities of Havana, Pinar del Río and Matanzas, without leaving aside the United Nations System in Cuba.

Project primary stakeholders (priority target group(s))

Since 2010, the work with male athletes and artists has been strengthened, in training and awareness on gender equality, especially on the issue of Non-Violence towards Women and Girls.

Project secondary and boundary stakeholders (system actors, duty bearers, service providers etc.)

National Sports Institute INDER; Cuban Football Federation FCF. Cuban Institute of Music ICM.



Some key challenges:

- The main obstacle to the objectives pursued, and to gender equality in general, continues to be the patriarchal culture in which the target societies and groups are immersed.
- The current economic and social crisis in Cuba forced many of the trained people to emigrate, especially the younger ones, which makes the sustainability of many projects difficult.
- Other challenges have to do with structural changes in the country's economy and politics that do not directly part of the projects but nevertheless need monitoring.

What did the project do and learn?

Design and Implementation

Key design and implementation features, included:

- The pedagogical-methodological approaches have been established according to the type of activity to be carried out and the group to be worked with, focusing on participatory methodology, promoting interactive learning and generating knowledge based on the experiences of the participants, creating spaces for reflection. It also fosters the analysis of bibliographic, documentary and public sources, as well as communicative products.
- RIAM developed a working methodology that linked the space of a concert with a workshop on gender violence through the screening and discussion of highly popular video clips, contributing to bringing the messages of non-violence to broad audiences.
- RIAM used the traditional Study Day on Masculinities in Cuba to open spaces for exchange and encourage reflection on the traditional ways of "being a man", the possibility of empowering "other masculinities" and promoting change.
- RIAM has focused on using the educational dimension of sports, by providing research on manifestations of gender inequalities within this field, and profiting from the positive values of sports for the broader public. Soccer and other sports served as the setting for awareness-raising workshops in communities and with adolescents and young university students, including topics such as sexual harassment in universities, gender violence and the visualization of the contribution of women.



The campaign **El Valiente no es Violento**, launched by the United Nations, has been one of the pillars on which RIAM has trained and advised opinion leaders for the dissemination of non-violence messages.

Key Achievements and Good Practices

- RIAM's work has revolved around dismantling the archetypes historically shaped around the construction of masculinities, the intrinsic values within the songs that in their daily reproduction have normalized such actions and behavior. In addition, it has sought to use the educational component of music to unravel the expression of gender inequalities or different forms of violence, including the use of the image of women as sexual objects and the worrying insertion of girls and boys in the stories of a considerable number of extremely sexist and misogynist video clips.
- The RIAM stands out for having fostered reflections and debates in numerous groups in different societies, on a challenging and sensitive topic. Thanks to RIAM's creation, research work was promoted and research results widely distributed, filling gaps in Cuban and Ibero-American academia on issues of gender and masculinities.
- The events organized in the field of sports, targeting athletes, coaches and trainers of different disciplines, helped address and sensitize for themes, such as sexuality, violence, fatherhood, health and diversity, the use of anabolics, self-care and the inclusion of women and all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- RIAM was able to highlight issues that require public attention, such as gender violence, attracting opinion leaders from the world of art and sports, with a strong impact on the media, transmitting messages of peace and non-violence towards women and girls.
- RIAM was able to reach many people with its messages of change of violent patriarchal models through the mass media. For example, in 2022, the program "Cosas de hombres" (men's issues) was broadcast with thirteen chapters and a weekly audience of about 6 million people in Cubavisión, the most watched program in the country. The program was advised and conducted by RIAM, which showed good practices on cardinal issues such as fatherhood, sexual health care, gender violence, among others. Many men were motivated to write and tell their experiences in new masculinities.



For more on the project, and SDC Gender in LAC experiences

- <https://www.shareweb.ch/site/PGE/Gender/Pages/Toolbox/Knowledge%20sharing/Gender-experiences-from-Latin-America.aspx>



Key Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

- The work within the PYE Platform with organizations that are addressing objectives and population groups different from RIAM's made the work more diversified. This also helped increase the possibility of sustainable results in complex environments.
- Training opinion leaders emerging from the context of music and sports allowed to have a language and action that reaches young people effectively and naturally. Adequate messages issued publicly by a famous figure recognized by a certain group or social sector, had an impact on that group, as role models that can be reflected and imitated. It also helped transmit and multiplying the message of non-violence, fair play and gender equality to a wider public, and made the theme gain in popularity and authenticity in general.
- Using the sports spaces in the media has a strong impact on a broader public.
- Fundamental has also been the debates around masculinities promoted in both traditional media and social networks to reach a wider audience.
- It is necessary to consider spaces that allow for the continuous evaluation of what has been learned and what knowledge needs to be consolidated or deepened. The training methodology should consider follow-up spaces that allow monitoring through interviews and/or dialogue with the trained volunteer leaders. This would not only guarantee the training but also identify those topics that should be deepened, appropriate to the contexts of music and sport.