ENGAGING MEN IN RMNCH

Preliminary findings from an RCT of Couples' Group Education in Rwanda

Giovanna Lauro, PhD

Deputy Director of International Programs, Promundo-US

g.lauro@promundoglobal.org

PROMUNDO

Overview

Increased attention to gender inequality as a barrier to improved MNCH outcomes

Fatherhood as an entry point to:

- Increase men's involvement in RMNCH
- Transform inequitable attitudes and increase men's caregiving
- Improve couple relationships

PROMUNDO

The Methodology: Program P

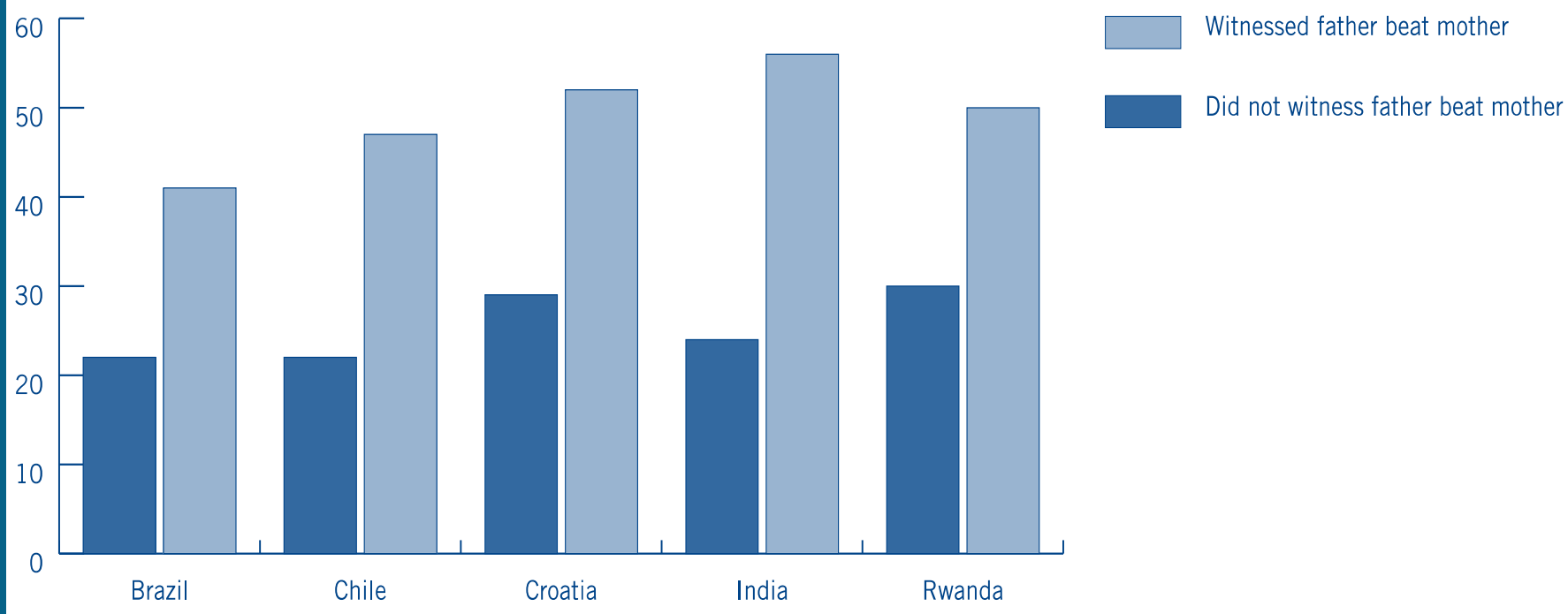
Developed as part of the global MenCare Campaign

- Activities for men only and for couples (recruiting men via prenatal visits)
- Activities for health providers
- Promoting positive parenting through rejection of corporal punishment
- Multi-country adaptation across 4 continents

PROMUNDO

Strongest IPV predictor: childhood exposure to violence (IMAGES)

Figure 2 Links between witnessing and ever perpetrating IPV

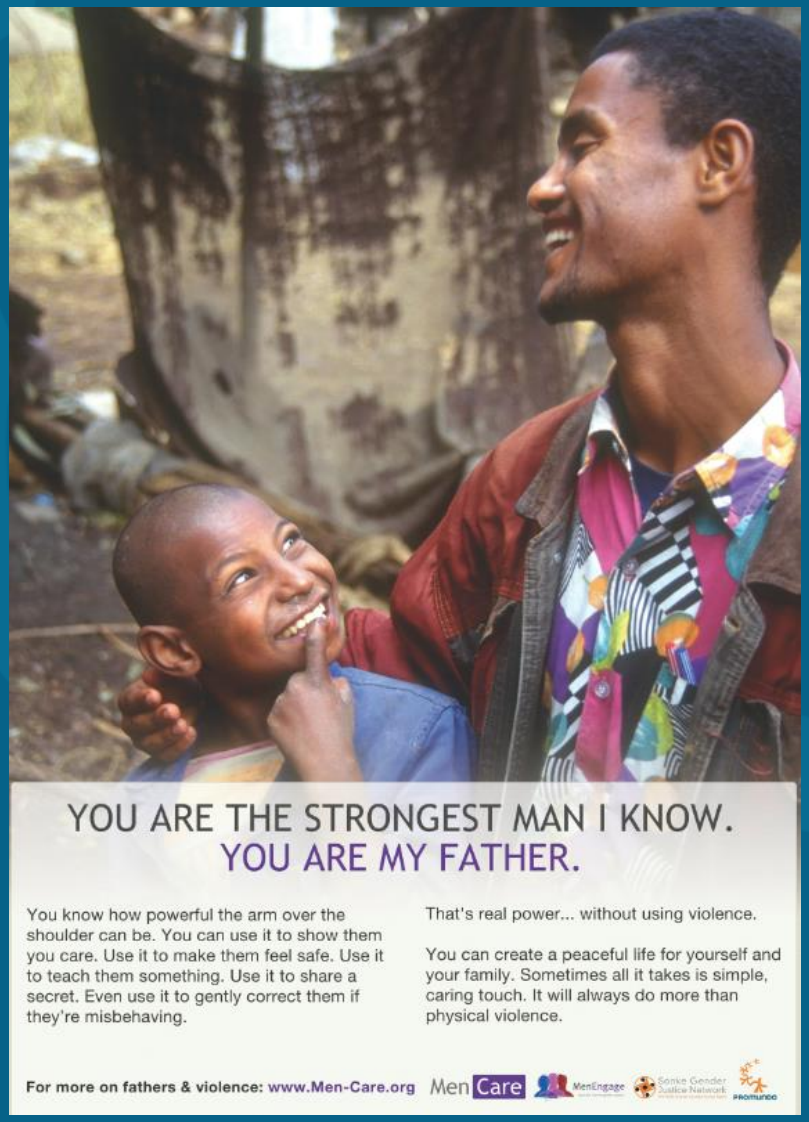


PROMUNDO

What factors reduce boys' exposure to violence?

- Parent's educational attainment
- Father participation in caregiving and domestic activities
- Equitable household decision-making by parents

Father involvement and equitable relations between parents *emerged as key factor reducing boys' exposure to violence*



PROMUNDO

The intervention

PROMUNDO

MenCare+ Rwanda

Four country initiative to engage men in SRHR and MNCH

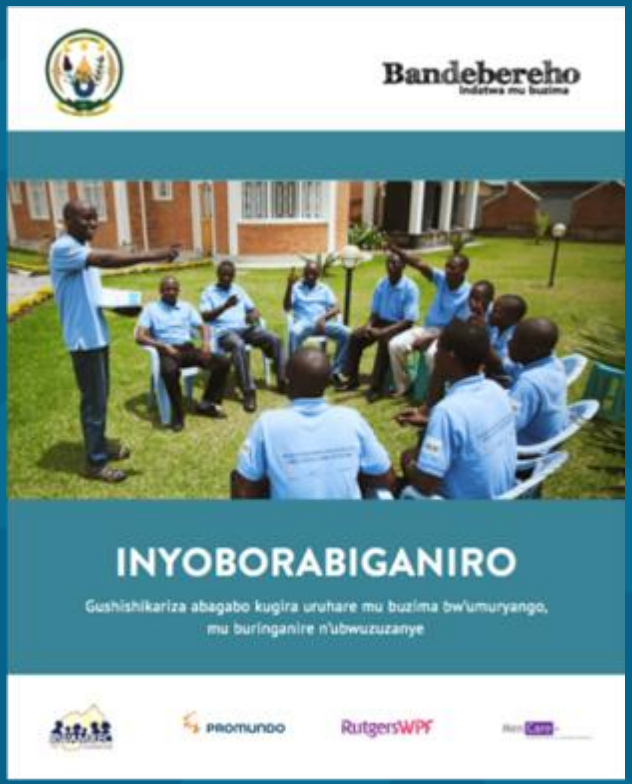
- Increase men's participation in pregnancy, delivery and beyond
- Coordinated by Rutgers and Promundo-US
- Implemented by **RWAMREC** in collaboration with Rwanda MCH Division
- Funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PROMUNDO

Gender-Transformative Group Education

Curriculum to promote positive couple relations and men's involvement in MNCH and caregiving

- Targeted young parents and expectant couples
- Adapted from Program P
- 15 weekly sessions facilitated by peer educators (8 sessions with couples)
- More than 1,700 couples' reached 2014-2015

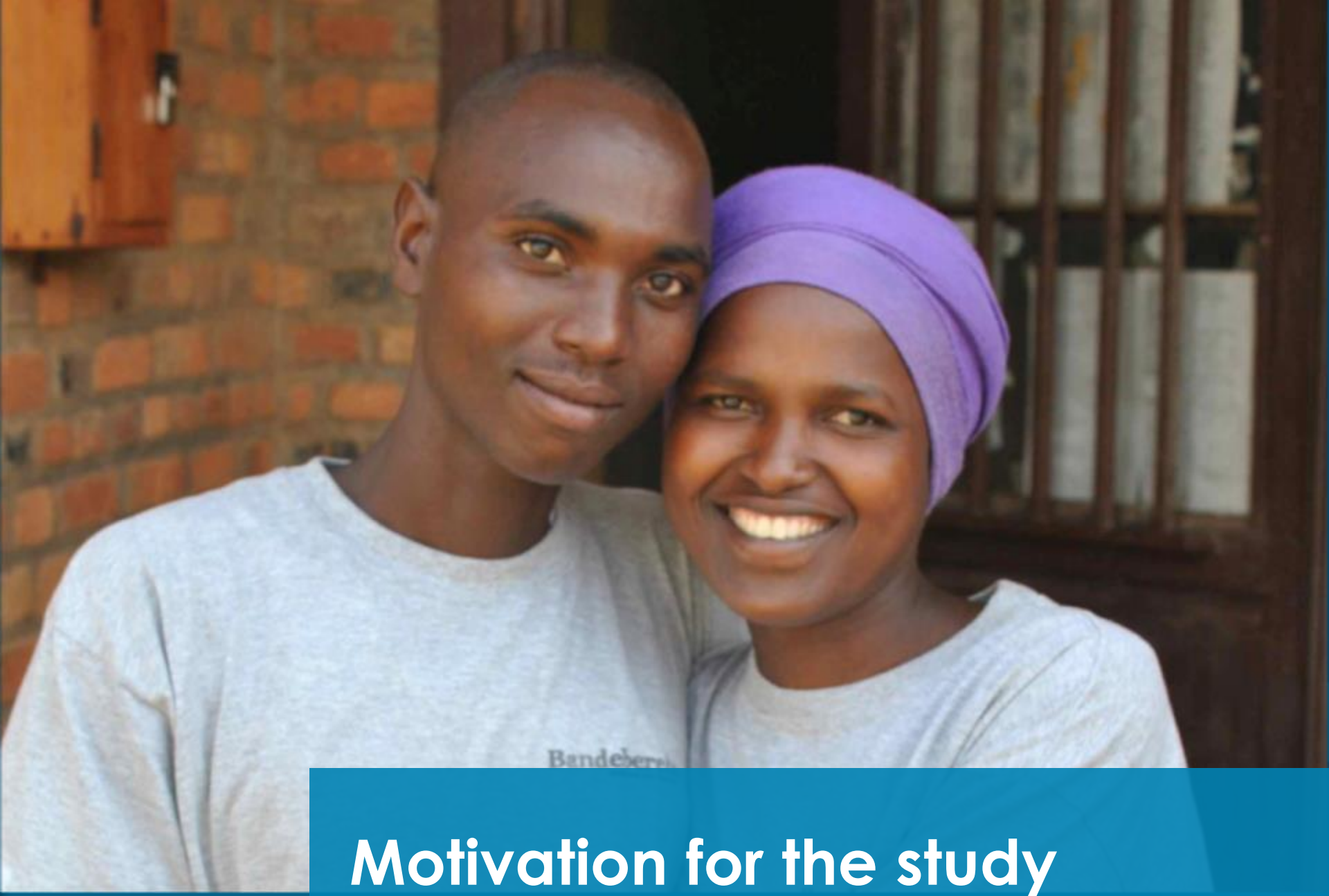


PROMUNDO

Create spaces for men to:

- Examine and challenge gender norms, including those related to fatherhood & caregiving
- Learn new caregiving skills
- Communicate and plan together with their partners
- Reflect on a shared vision for their family with their partners

PROMUNDO



Motivation for the study

PROMUNDO

Primary outcomes:

- Men's participation in family planning and MNCH
- Gendered division of caregiving and domestic tasks
- Women's experiences of intimate partner violence
- Gender-related attitudes

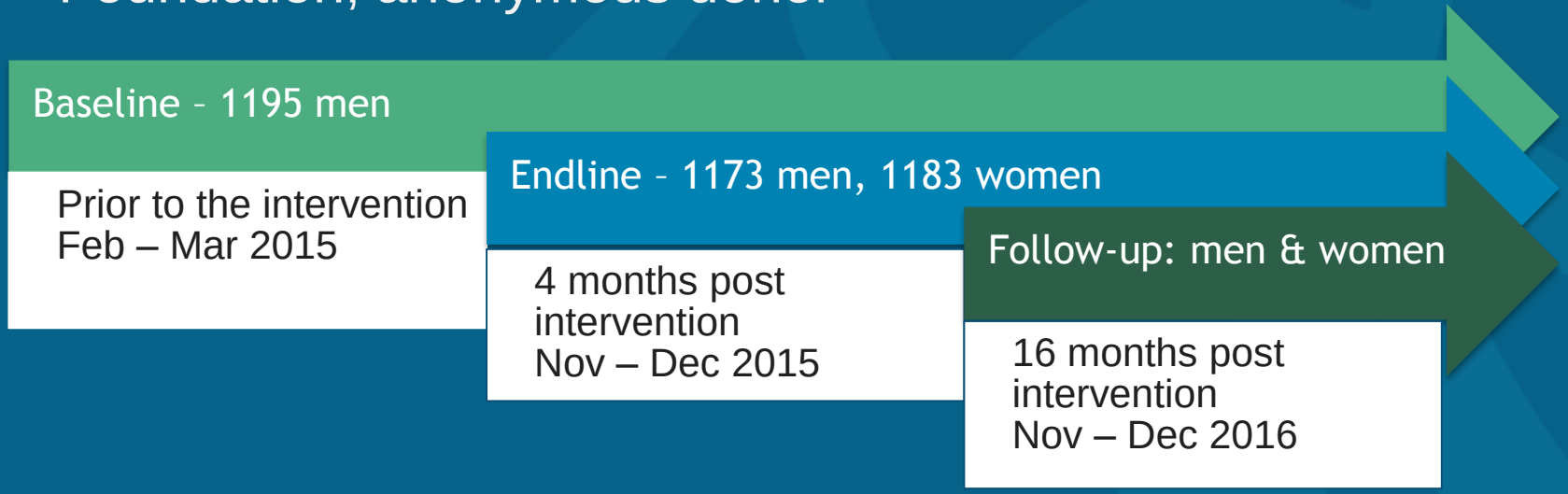
Secondary outcomes:

- Couples' relationship quality
- Couple communication
- Harsh & humiliating punishment of children

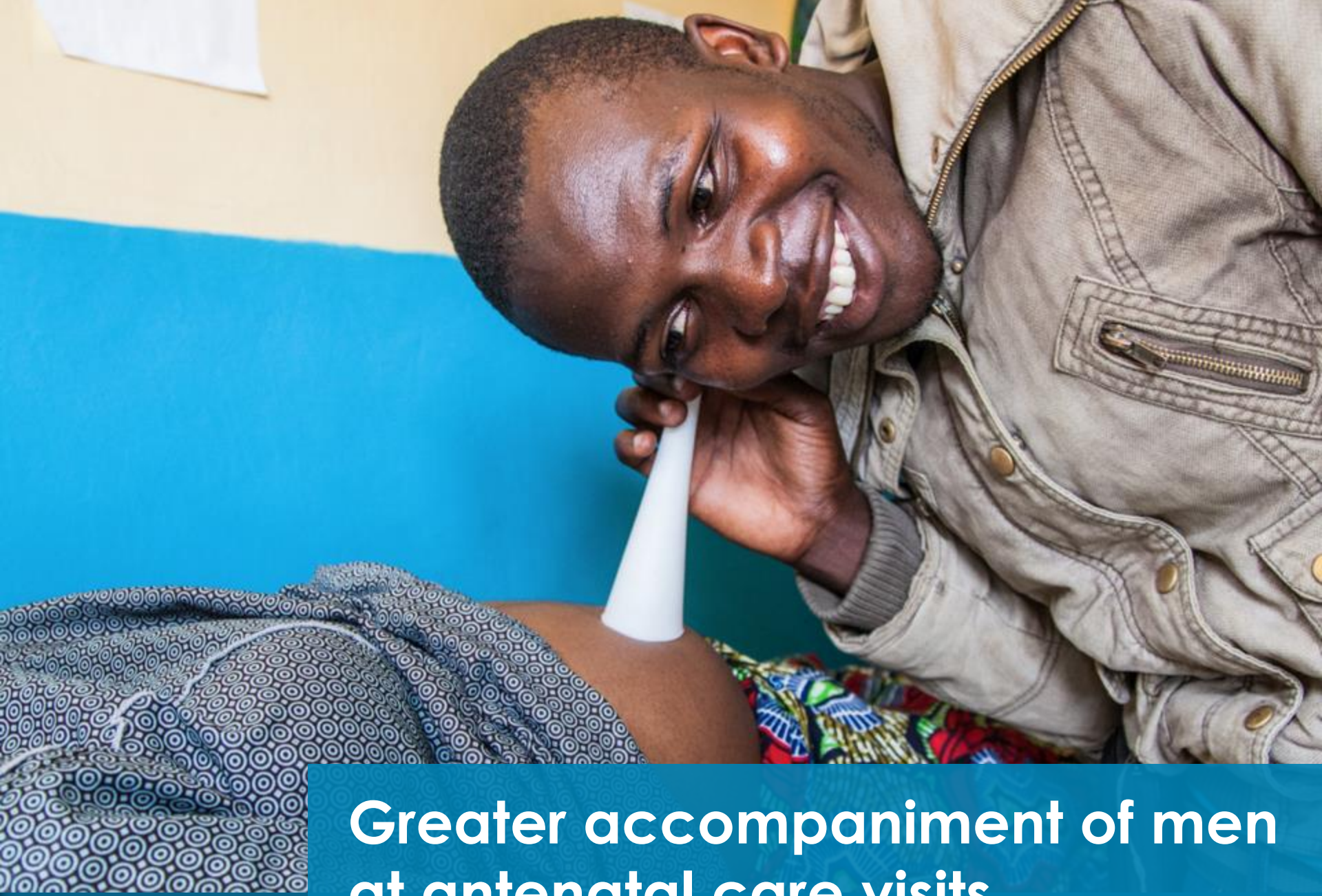
PROMUNDO

Study Design

- Two-armed, multi-site randomized controlled trial in 4 districts
- Study protocol approved by: RNEC, NHRC, NISR
- Sample size: n=1199 men (624 control, 575 treatment)
- Study funded by Dutch SRHR Fund, MacArthur Foundation, anonymous donor



PROMUNDO

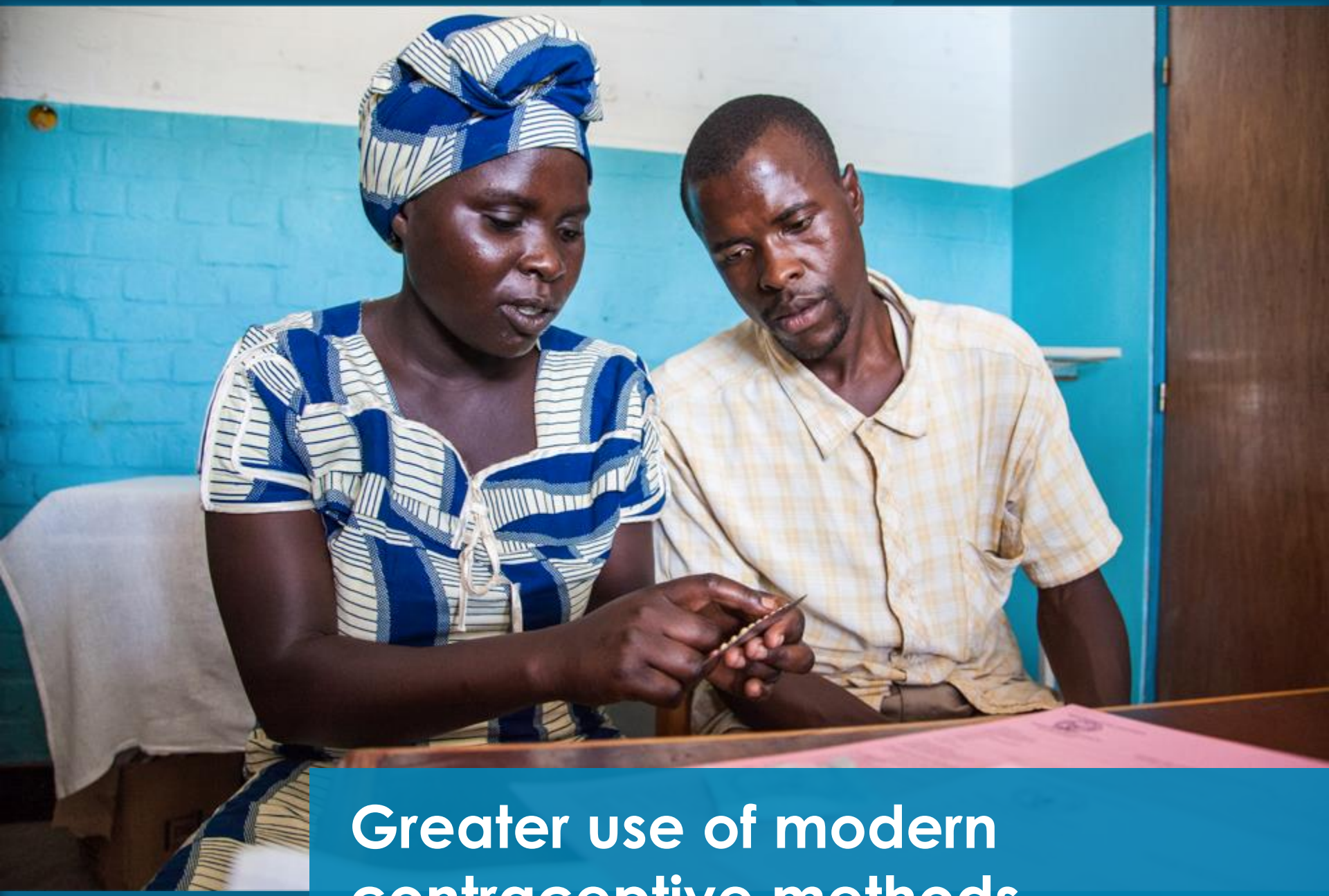


Greater accompaniment of men at antenatal care visits

PROMUNDO

Greater support from partner during pregnancy

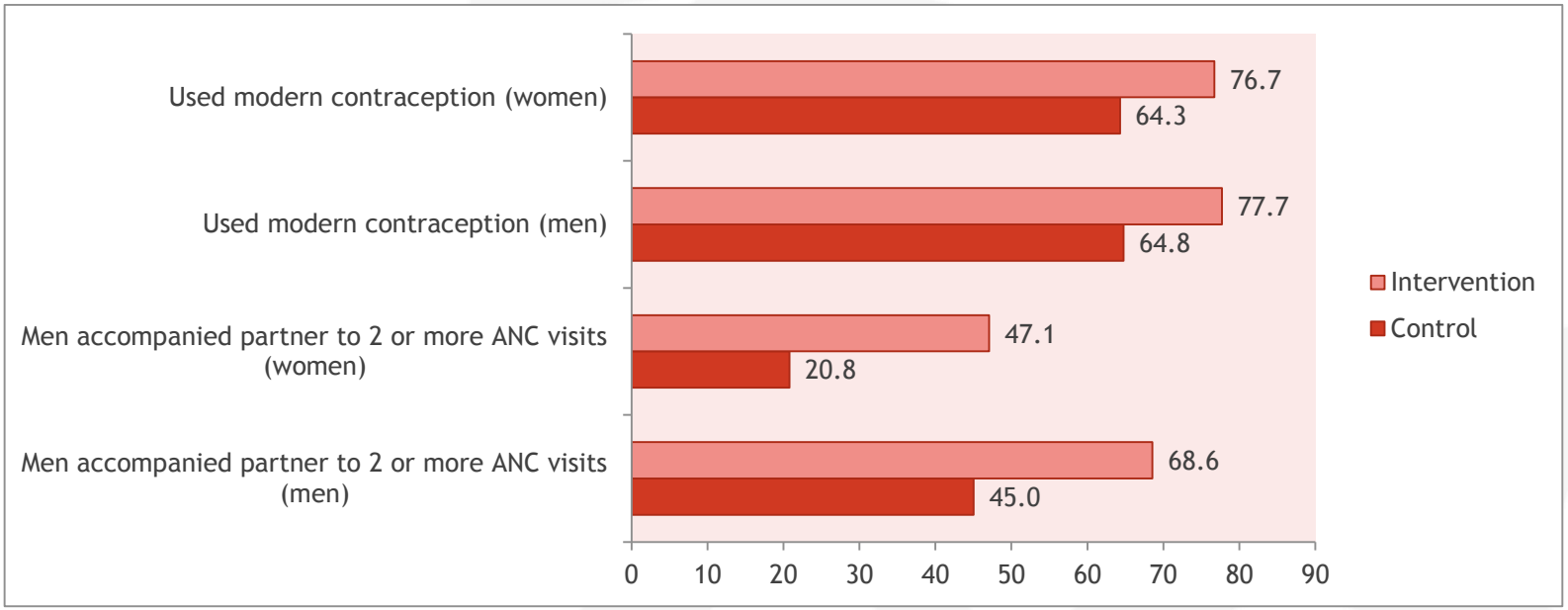
PROMUNDO



Greater use of modern contraceptive methods

PROMUNDO

Preliminary results on SRHR & MNCH



Compared to the control group, **men in the intervention group were:**

- ~2 times more likely to use family planning
  - Women reported the same results!
- >2 times more likely to accompany partner to 2 or more ANC visits

PROMUNDO

Less intimate partner violence

PROMUNDO

Preliminary results on violence

Intimate partner violence (women's reports in past 9 months):

Type	Control Group	Bandebereho Group
Physical violence	51.5%	28.1%
Sexual violence	61.7%	35.2%
Physical OR sexual	69.9%	46.2%

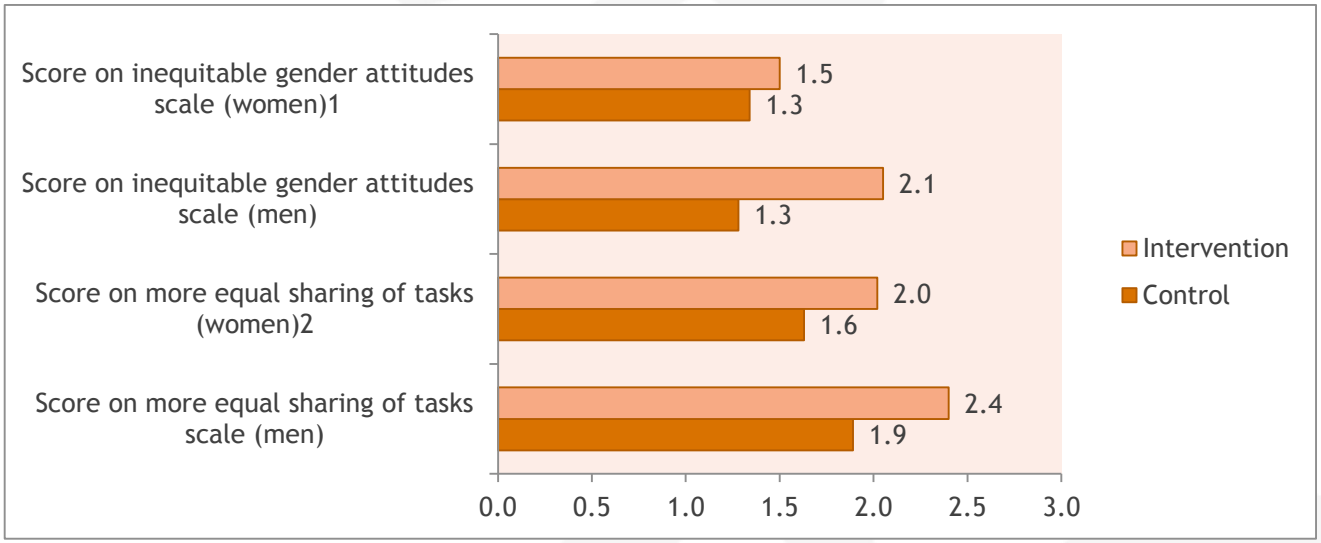
Women in the intervention group were less likely to experience physical or sexual violence compared to women in the intervention group (Odds ratio=0.36, p<.001).

PROMUNDO

More equitable attitudes & relationships

PROMUNDO

Preliminary results on gender attitudes & sharing care-giving and domestic tasks



Compared to controls, intervention participants were:

- More likely to hold more equitable gender attitudes
- More likely to share childcare & household tasks

[1] Possible scores range from 0 to 4, with higher score indicating more equitable attitudes.

[2] Possible scores range from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating men's equal or greater participation

PROMUNDO

Conclusions

- It is possible to address and have impact on multiple outcomes!
- Efforts to engage men in MNCH must be transformative
- Gender synchronized approach is important
- Scale-up is needed to embed this work in institutions and systems and remove structural barriers

PROMUNDO

Conclusions (cont.)

- Need to strengthen the evidence on the other Program P components
- How to maintain quality while scaling up?
- How to go beyond promising but isolated interventions?

PROMUNDO

THANK YOU

MURAKOZE

MERCI

Promundo
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Washington, DC, USA
www.promundoglobal.org

PROMUNDO