NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN

VIOLENCE AGAINST MEN

BREAK THE SILENCE

Men who suffer behind the closed doors of their homes.

Human dignity has no gender.

Awareness and advocacy dossier • DRC • November 2026

01 / EDITORIAL

Message from the founding president



Through our Foundation, we wish to draw attention to men who experience domestic violence. How many remain silent for fear of ridicule or of not being believed? Our campaign is not against women, but against violence, humiliation and indifference. Every victim deserves to be heard, justice and protection.

Michel Matondo Mayazola — Founding President

02 / MISSION

Invisible suffering

General objective

Promote recognition and protection of male victims of domestic and family violence, particularly in the DRC and Africa.

Specific objectives

Encourage speaking out, raise awareness of mutual respect, facilitate access to justice and listening services, protect children and promote research.

Beyond social expectations

A man is not merely someone expected to work, provide financially and solve household problems. Illness, unemployment or financial hardship never justify humiliation. Respect does not depend on income.

Being a man does not mean having to endure everything.

03 / RECOGNISE

Psychological and physical violence

Psychological abuse

Repeated insults, contempt, belittling comparisons, threats, emotional blackmail, intrusive monitoring and isolation can constitute abuse and control.

Physical violence

Slapping, hitting, biting, scratching and throwing objects must not be trivialised. A man’s presumed physical strength does not necessarily protect him from assault.

Distinguishing conflict from violence

An ordinary disagreement is not automatically violence. Coercive behaviour, assaults and threats must be taken seriously.

Neither partner has the right to hit or humiliate the other.

04 / RECOGNISE

Economic and sexual violence

Economic abuse

Demanding money through threats, imposing debts, confiscating income, destroying property or deliberately depriving someone of resources may constitute economic abuse.

Family responsibilities

Such abuse must be distinguished from legal obligations, legitimate household needs and ordinary financial disagreements.

Consent and personal integrity

A man has the right to refuse sexual activity. Forced sexual acts, coercion and sexual threats must be taken seriously. Marriage does not remove the right to consent.

Marriage should be a partnership of solidarity, not an instrument of domination.

05 / PROTECT

Children and justice

Using children as leverage

The Foundation condemns blackmail involving children and behaviour intended to wrongfully destroy their relationship with a parent. Custody decisions must respect their safety, the law and their best interests.

Accusations and threats

A deliberately false accusation used to control or intimidate can cause serious harm. Every complaint must be examined impartially, without assuming it is false or discouraging victims from reporting violence.

A child must never become a weapon in a conflict between adults.

06 / UNDERSTAND

Why the silence?

Barriers to speaking out

Shame, fear of ridicule, fear of losing children, emotional or financial dependence, a desire to preserve the marriage and a lack of appropriate services can prevent victims from seeking help.

Cultural expectations

In some communities, expectations surrounding masculinity make expressing suffering difficult. Experiences vary among individuals and settings.

Consequences

Anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, isolation, work difficulties and trauma can result from repeated abuse. Children exposed to violence may also suffer.

Seeking help is not a weakness.

FONDATION
MICHEL MATONDO MAYAZOLA
Solidarité • Développement • Espoir

07 / ACT

A message to victims and partners

To male victims

Seek a safe place and a trusted person. Consult a healthcare professional or legal adviser if necessary. In immediate danger, contact emergency services or the competent authorities. Do not retaliate.

To women

We invite women to participate in this campaign. A partner experiencing hardship deserves respect. The same principles apply to men towards their partners.

To all families

Dialogue and solidarity must be mutual. Loving someone does not mean controlling, possessing or humiliating them.

Your life and dignity deserve protection.

08 / DOCUMENTATION

Evidence and fundamental rights

International evidence

The US National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (CDC) documents violence experienced by men at the hands of intimate partners. These data cannot be extrapolated to the DRC. The Foundation calls for appropriate national and African surveys.

Constitution of the DRC

Articles 11, 12 and 16 establish, among other principles, equality in dignity and rights, equality before the law, and protection of life and personal integrity.

References

CDC: National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (cdc.gov/nisvs). Constitution of the DRC of 18 February 2006, as revised in 2011. Precise figures and legal references must be checked before official dissemination.

09 / ADVOCACY

Our appeal to institutions

Recognition and protection

Recognise male victims, develop confidential listening services and facilitate access to legal and psychological assistance.

Training and prevention

Train justice, police and health professionals to receive all victims without prejudice. Raise awareness among media, associations and communities.

Research and cooperation

Support scientific studies and national and international partnerships to better understand violence and improve responses.

10 / PROGRAMME

A phased action plan

Phase 1 — Awareness

Distribute publications, posters and prevention messages.

Phase 2 — Listening

Consider a confidential system for collecting testimonies with consent and identity protection.

Phase 3 — Support

Seek partnerships with lawyers, psychologists, doctors and social workers.

Phase 4 — Mobilisation

Organise conferences and community meetings.

Phase 5 — Documentation

Consider a periodic report. These activities remain dependent on available resources and partnerships.

11 / DECLARATION

Together, let us break the silence

Our commitment

We are not asking society to stop talking about violence against women. We ask that it also address violence against men. We call for dignity, listening, justice and protection.

Our conviction

No man should remain silent to prove his masculinity. No woman should endure violence to preserve her marriage. No child should grow up in fear.

NO TO ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE.

HUMAN DIGNITY HAS NO GENDER.

Michel Matondo Mayazola Foundation — Solidarity • Development • Hope

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