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## **Briefing note:**

**Engaging men and boys and transforming masculinities for the realization of CEDAW's Mandates**

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**MenEngage Alliance**  
working with men and boys for gender equality

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# 1. Introduction

We welcome the opportunity to brief members of the honorable CEDAW Committee on this occasion, in order to further collaboration and discourse on current trends, opportunities and challenges in advancing a **feminist-informed, human-rights based, gender transformative agenda for the engagement of men and boys and the dismantling of patriarchal power structures, seeking to advance the common objective of the realization of women’s rights and gender justice for all.**

We recognize the pivotal role which the CEDAW Convention and its subsequent recommendations, as well as the CEDAW Committee itself, have had and continue today to advance, in holding States accountable for the **“human rights and fundamental freedoms” of all women and girls.** In this regard, we welcome the opportunity to initiate an ongoing dialogue, as well as explore opportunities for joint action, on the necessary steps to advance this common agenda, and in particular, **how the work of transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys can contribute to this end.** Further exploration of the gaps and inclusions in the jurisprudence for holding governments to account on the growing articulations across human rights frameworks for the engagement of men and boys is required and welcome.

We observe a marked global uptake in the work with men and boys, and as such, seek to discuss ways in which the CEDAW Committee can play the critical role of establishing the normative framework for the international community, on how responsible and transformative programs and policies with men and boys can and should be carried out. **Being that CEDAW represents the most important international legal instrument for the promotion and protection of the human rights – civic, political, economic, social and cultural - of all women and girls, it establishes the benchmark on both global discourse-setting around gender equality, as well as the normative framework for the same.** As such, the CEDAW Committees’ engagement in driving forward this work, is imperative.

This brief will explore key insights into the global efforts to engage men and boys, transform masculinities and dismantle patriarchal power, as well as how these efforts have been carried out at the normative, global, regional and national levels in both programming and policy contexts. Additionally, it will layout both opportunities and challenges in advancing work on men and masculinities and propose ways for ensuring that these strategies remain effective and beneficial towards the achievement of gender equality. Lastly, it will propose recommendations for further engagement with the Honourable Committee, in order to ensure collaborative and ongoing dialogue and action towards the realization of its mandates.

Please refer to the Glossary section for a description of how we understand the terms used throughout this document. Please refer to the last page for a description of who we are and what we strive to achieve, as MenEngage Alliance

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## 2. Key messages

- In every region and context, ideologies of men’s entitlements and privileges over women and people of diverse gender identities, rigid gender & social norms regarding masculinities, and enforced stereotypical gender roles and practices, socialize men and boys to respond to conflict with violence and to dominate their partners and others in their lives. As such, work with men and boys is an essential and complimentary element in efforts to transform deeply entrenched gender inequalities across our societies, in all spaces and spheres of human interaction, whether public or private.
- Work with men and boys can have a positive, transformative impact on the lives of women and girls. Boys and men can play relevant roles as partners, allies, supporters and advocates for gender equality and in eradicating stereotypes, prejudices, customs and practices that condone or promote GBV against women and girls and underpin structural inequalities, including to end the culture of impunity that currently exists around VAWG/GBV.
- In order to realize the normative framework established within CEDAW’s mandates, the SDG’s and other human rights treaties and international human rights and development frameworks, there is a growing consensus worldwide that the work with men and boys is necessary. In the past two decades, governments, UN agencies, non-governmental and civil society organizations in global norm-setting and policy-making spaces have shown considerable recognition of the need to engage men and boys in women’s rights and gender equality and have increasingly included engagement of men and boys in their policies. Started decades ago in local communities and by feminist movements who’ve always worked with men and boys, followed by the NGO sector who developed targeted interventions by and with men and boys following the global call to action set forth in the Beijing Platform for Action. In recent years, a marked increased uptake by policy makers and practitioners has been observed, in putting these frameworks into practice. Very recently Governments have begun drafting policies, guidelines, and programs. First integrated, and increasingly stand-alone. This is a welcome trend, since men are part of problem, and must be part of solution.
- As well, we observe a steady uptake of language on engaging men and boys towards advancing women’s and girls’ human rights and fundamental freedoms, across international human rights instruments, from CEDAW General Recommendations to CSW Agreed conclusion and HRC Resolutions.
- An increased translation of these commitments within such frameworks is showing an increasingly deepened and nuanced discourse on engaging men and boys, going beyond the need to merely engage this critical constituency, to establishing the parameters for how to do so transformatively, in order to challenge and eliminate harmful social norms, practices, stereotypes, and dismantling patriarchal power inequalities as impediments to the realization

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of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women and girls. We welcome this deepening global normative framework.

- As more stakeholders take-on this work, the need to work strategically together to ensure it upholds the frameworks of women’s human rights. There is risk involved when initiatives that do work with men and boys are neither feminist-informed nor gender transformative. This brings us to the need to ensure that policies targeted at men and boys are both gender transformative in nature as well as informed by feminist approaches, and must be mindful of gendered-power relations, reinforcing male power and privilege. Recent knowledge-generation shows it is essential that work with men and boys is done critically, and tackles holistically the issue of male power and privilege as part of the process of transformation. As well, a strong commitment is needed to ensuring that these efforts do not marginalizing women-led initiatives - if competing for resources, like funds and spaces - that are increasingly shrinking for civil society – in particular for women’s rights and feminist groups.
- There is a need to ensure that equity, rights and justice remain central in the development agenda, and that the agenda fully challenges unequal power structures. International human rights frameworks such as CEDAW and the Human Rights Council (HRC), are increasingly recognizing that development cannot be discussed in isolation from human rights, gender equality and social justice. Thus there is a need and opportunity to continue targeting the UN development frameworks such as the SDGs, CSW and CPD; as well as to target binding international human rights agreements.
- Furthermore, global commitments to engaging men and boys have not yet fully translated to national and local level policies, which generally continue to limit the understanding of “gender” as solely addressing the roles and responsibilities of women and girls. The majority of policies and programs thus lack nuanced analysis of the multiple roles of men and boys in gender-informed power inequalities and their roles and responsibilities in transforming them, missing valuable opportunities to transform the very patriarchal system that is at the basis of gender injustices.

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## 3. Trends

### Gaps and inclusions in the global normative framework to engage men and boys and transform masculinities for the achievement of gender justice for all

In the past decade, international agreements and treaties have increasingly pushed for engaging men and boys in achieving women's rights and gender equality. Those inclusions have increasingly become gender transformative, articulating the importance of addressing root causes of gender inequality such as harmful social norms, practices, traditions and stereotypes. Importantly, more recent agreements and recommendations have specifically pointed to **patriarchal masculinities as a driving root cause of men's violence against women** and inequalities in other areas such as sexual and reproductive health, peace and security and unpaid care. MenEngage Alliance welcome these developments and hopes that this focus is maintained and further elaborated upon in future agreements, **while ensuring that accountability to women and girls is central to initiatives to engage men and boys.**

The agreements and recommendations highlighted in this section lay out the existing normative framework from which states can develop women and girls-centred, gender transformative initiatives and policies to engage men and boys. It is imperative now that states are held responsible by international treaty bodies and UN committees for ensuring these recommendations are put into practice, as well as for influential mechanisms such as the CEDAW Committee, to continue to take leadership in establishing clear frameworks for how this work is to be carried out.

### CEDAW Convention and General Recommendations

#### Inclusions and Gaps

The CEDAW Convention and General Recommendations contain strong framing around addressing root causes of gender inequalities through urging for gender-norms transformation and eliminating gender-based stereotypes, including references to the needs to engage men and boys in gender equality more broadly. The CEDAW general recommendations are based on a strong analysis of the root causes of discrimination against women, including patriarchal masculinities, and how these can be addressed. MenEngage Alliance support this language and framing and would welcome further General Recommendations elaborating on these ideas. In addition, we would further welcome a General Recommendations with an emphasis on the need for accountability to, and the involvement of, women and girls in any initiatives targeting men and boys.

#### Analysis of Normative Framework

From the earliest articulation, the CEDAW Convention urges states to:

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*“modify the **social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women**, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on **stereotyped roles for men and women** (article 5a)”.*

In subsequent General Recommendations, progressive discourse-setting drives an analysis of patriarchal structures and social norms that underpin gender inequalities and elaborates a theory of rights-based social norms change. The recommendations refer to **‘patriarchal structures’, ‘patriarchal traditions and attitudes’** as root causes of gender inequality, and specifically mention **“social norms, attitudes and expectations that are associated with traditional femininity and masculinity”** and **‘violent masculinities’** as key elements to be addressed. The recommendations place the responsibility for addressing social norms and stereotypes firmly on states, and call for the engagement of men and boys in this effort. They urge states to engage men and boys in a range of issues including gender-based violence, harmful practices, unpaid care work, conflict prevention, HIV prevention and women’s access to justice. For example, in General recommendation x on harmful practices the committee states. The committee points of childhood and adolescence as a key stage for addressing social norms and to the crucial role of education in this effort.

General recommendation 35 on violence against women is a milestone in terms of gender transformative language on the engagement of men and boys. It frames the problem of gender-based violence firmly as a social, structural issue and links it to issues of masculinities, power and privilege:

*“The Committee regards gender-based violence against women to be rooted in gender-related factors such as the **ideology of men’s entitlement and privilege over women, social norms regarding masculinity, the need to assert male control or power, enforce gender roles, or prevent, discourage or punish what is considered to be unacceptable female behaviour..”**  
(General recommendation 35 on Gender-based Violence against Women, paragraph 9).*

The recommendation calls for states to implement a number of measures to combat social norms, including through education systems.

## **Human Rights Council**

### **Inclusions and Gaps**

MenEngage Alliance welcome the increased focus and strengthened framing on gender transformative approaches and engaging men and boys in recent Human Rights Council resolutions and the passing of a stand-alone resolution on engaging men and boys to prevent violence against women. In future resolutions we would like this focus further strengthened and elaborated upon, and for the focus on accountability and ensuring women and girls remain central in efforts to engage men and boys to be expanded. The Human Rights Council has passed a number of resolutions in recent years on sexual orientation and gender identity. However, these resolutions lack a focus on transforming the social norms that underlie the discrimination faced by the LGBTIQ community. We would welcome this focus on social norms and attitudes around masculinities be integrated into HRC resolutions on SOGI in the future, as the HRC has done in resolutions relating to discrimination against women.

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## Analysis of Normative Framework

Recent resolutions by the Human Rights Council have put forward strong gender transformative framing and language on the engagement of men and boys. In particular, the 2017 resolution “Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: engaging men and boys in preventing and responding to violence against all women and girls” was a milestone for the field in terms of gender transformative violence prevention work. In the last decade, the Human Rights Council has increasingly placed emphasis on the root causes of discrimination against women, which are identified as rooted in historical and structural inequalities in power relations between men and women. For example, the HRC states that:

*“effective remedies for women and girls should aim to have a **transformative effect by addressing the root causes of violence against them**”* (A/HRC/RES/20/12, preamble)

and urges states to:

*“take all appropriate measures to modify social and cultural patterns of conduct with a view to preventing and eliminating in the public and private spheres **patriarchal and gender stereotypes, negative social norms, attitudes and behaviours, and unequal power relations that view women and girls as subordinate to men and boys and that underlie and perpetuate discrimination and violence against women and girls**”* (A/HRC/35/L.29, paragraph 4)

The HRC underlines the key role that men and boys have in addressing these root causes and emphasizes that men and boys, through taking responsibility themselves as agents and beneficiaries of change, as an essential component in the achievement of gender equality.

The resolution crucially recognizes the need to ensure initiatives to engage men and boys are done in an accountable manner, and in close collaboration with women and girls. The HRC places the responsibility on states to implement national level policies and strategies to address these root causes, calling on states to implement policy’s and legislative approaches to engaging men and boys in primary prevention, from group education, to mass media campaigns, prevention skill-building and community outreach. In addition, it calls on individual men and boys to **“take responsibility and be held accountable for behavior, including behavior that perpetuates gender stereotypes, including misconceptions about masculinities that underlie discrimination and violence against women and girls,”** (A/HRC/RES/35/10, paragraph 9f).

The Human Rights Council promotes the engagement of men and boys as allies in a range of key issues related to gender equality, including, FGM, early marriage and unpaid care work. It emphasizes the importance of education and awareness raising, promoting positive male roles models and engaging religious and community leaders. Importantly, HRC resolutions recognize and emphasize the close links between gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health and rights, in particular emphasizing bodily autonomy, consent and respectful relationships.

In particular the HRC calls for states to implement comprehensive sexuality education for all adolescent boys and girls, and details the important elements of this education.



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Another important inclusion in HRC resolutions is the recognition of the links between violence against children and violence against women, and the importance of targeting boys who have experiences violence as a means of breaking the intergenerational cycle of violence:

## The Beijing Platform for Action, CSW Agreed Conclusions

### Inclusions and Gaps

MenEngage Alliance observes the language in CSW agreed conclusions around men and boys gradually becoming more gender-transformative in nature in recent years, with a greater focus on transforming social norms, underlying power structure and root causes of gender inequality. While the agreed conclusions rightly identify changing underlying social norms as a key area for action, a specific focus on transforming masculinities is still completely absent. While there are numerous references to ‘gender stereotypes’ no further attention is given to the kind of male attitudes, norms and expectations that are particularly harmful and how they can harm both men and women. We would welcome a more explicit focus on social norms related to masculinities in future CSW conclusions, as well as further information on the kind of initiatives that can be taken to address these norms. In addition, we would welcome a call to member states to take responsibility for scaling up and institutionalizing programs and policies that focus on men and boys.

### Analysis of Normative Framework

The Beijing Platform for Action and CSW agreed conclusions emphasize the critical contributions of men and boys in the achievement of gender equality. In particular, CSW48 in 2004 was dedicated to the theme “The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality”, and set forth a strong articulation for the engaging men and boys.

In order to address violence against women, the Beijing Platform for Action and CSW48 agreed conclusions acknowledge the responsibility of men in ending the cycle of violence and in promoting a ‘zero tolerance’ attitude to violence in society. They call on states to:

*“Encourage and support men and boys to take an active part in the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence, especially gender-based violence, including in the context of HIV/AIDS, and increase awareness of **men’s and boys’ responsibility in ending the cycle of violence**, inter alia, through the promotion of **attitudinal and behavioural change**, integrated education and training prioritizing the safety of women and children, the prosecution and rehabilitation of perpetrators of violence and support for survivors, **recognizing that men and boys also experience violence.**” (CSW48, Paragraph 6(r))*

The media is identified as an important actor in transforming social norms and harmful stereotypes of men and women in CSW48 AC as well.

The CSW58 AC identify the unfair distribution of domestic and care work as a significant impediment to women’s empowerment, and urges men and boys to assume household responsibilities, and fathers to play a greater role in the upbringing of children. It emphasises the importance of:

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The CSW58 AC also encourages men and boys to take equal responsibility in matters of sexuality and reproduction as well as HIV/AIDS prevention. The importance of education, including comprehensive sexuality education, in changing harmful attitudes and behaviours and challenging gender stereotypes is highlighted repeatedly and emerges in several themes.

The CSW60 AC highlight the benefits of a more equal society for men, women and children and emphasise the need to engage men in caregiving and domestic work, and to transform social norms that condone violence.

*“Fully engage men and boys, including community leaders, as strategic partners and allies in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls in both the public and private spheres, design and implement national **policies and programmes that address the role and responsibility of men and boys** and aim to ensure the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men in caregiving and domestic work, transform with the aim to eliminate those **social norms that condone violence against women and girls** and attitudes and social norms by which women and girls are regarded as subordinate to men and boys, including by understanding and addressing the **root causes of gender inequality, such as unequal power relations, social norms, practices and stereotypes** that perpetuate discrimination against women and girls, and engage them in efforts to promote and achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls for the benefit of both women and men, girls and boys.”*  
(CSW60, Paragraph 23t)

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## Research and evidence-base on men and masculinities policies and programming

As the need to engage men and boys in gender equality has become more accepted, the conversation has shifted from the ‘Why’ to the ‘How’. Despite international commitments and growing indications that there can be positive impacts of engaging men and boys and transforming masculinities to advance women’s rights and gender justice, **most initiatives with men and boys continue to be small-scale and short-term**. Such initiatives have yet to increase in uptake and reach significant numbers of men and boys.

Studies and other research to date point towards promising practices in engaging men and boys in eliminating violence against women and girls. **Nevertheless, the field of engaging men and boys in gender justice remains relatively young, and more efforts are needed to consolidate a body of rigorous evidence collection which points towards unwavering conclusions on the efficacy of interventions from programming to policies**. Despite this, emerging evidence indicates the positive effects of gender transformative work with men and boys, although a comprehensive evidence base for this work is still lacking.

There are many programs and projects at grassroots levels, which are still not well documented and disseminated due to various capacity issues. Further, there are still serious gaps, for example in programming and action research with men and boys that goes beyond interpersonal issues, to tackle structural drivers. This calls for combining existing knowledge with emerging evidence on promising practices in transforming discriminatory norms, intergenerational and human development research, programs and advocacy efforts on men and masculinities work. MenEngage Alliance aims to fill this gap by collating, synthesizing and presenting existing evidence to provide promising solutions to the strategic questions around gender transformative approaches engaging men and boys.

As well, throughout public policy discussions, there is a growing consensus that policies formed on the basis of sound evidence are likely to be more successful. However, it is not always the best research, evidence and theory which is the most influential; often high-quality research never reaches its potential to solve problems and improve people’s livelihoods. Although many CSOs do not have an explicit focus on changing policy, they are important reservoirs of research expertise. Community lead interventions can create the experience as a practical means of both generating and successfully applying evidence. Improving the links between research and policy, therefore, would seem key to raising CSO effectiveness – both in ability to influence other development actors and in capacity to deliver services and become better organizations themselves.

### Promising Practices

The **Engendering Men: Evidence on Routes to Gender Equality (EMERGE) project by the Institute for Development Studies (IDS, United Kingdom)**, is a two-year project to build an openly accessible basis of evidence, lessons and guidance for working with boys and men to promote gender equality. The project concludes that “strategies with men and boys shown to be effective at the individual and community level in changing gender attitudes and behaviors include a combination of peer education, using male advocates,

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large-scale media programs, workplace programs and community/rights-based programming that aim to reduce gender inequality by working to change social norms”.<sup>1</sup>

It further **recommends that a gender transformative policy framework** should acknowledge the varying roles played by both men and women, link gender inequality with other forms of social inequality, and use a wide range of approaches that seek to transform not only individual attitudes but communities, institutions and policies. In order to achieve this community and institutional level change, the synthesis study highlights the need to support alliance building and collective action across organizations, activist networks, and services. The review also called **for increased accountability to women’s movements** to ensure strategies that guard against male protectionism or the reinforcement of male supremacy.

**Older studies<sup>23</sup> have similarly highlighted the superior effectiveness of gender-transformative interventions seeking to challenge gender stereotypes and the negative social norms**, over traditional efforts that are merely gender neutral or gender blind. More recent evaluations of well-designed projects and programs have shown positive impacts on the well-being of women and girls<sup>4</sup>, and of men and boys themselves, and **marked attitudinal and behavioral changes<sup>5</sup> among boys and men towards women’s rights and gender equality<sup>6</sup>**.

Further evidence suggests the potential for individual change among men and boys. Their agency can contribute to changing the patriarchal systems around them and of which they are part. A longitudinal analysis of **Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data** from 15 low- and middle-income countries during the first decade of the 2000s found significant increases in the percentage of men who rejected justifications of violence against women<sup>7</sup>. Findings from the **International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)** also point to a generational shift: younger men and men with higher levels of education (completed secondary education and above) showed more support for gender equality, less use of violence and higher rates of participation in care work (however, this was significantly different in the recent IMAGES-MENA studies, where young men demonstrated less gender-equitable attitudes, suggested to be result of growing conservatism in the region)<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Institute of International Studies (2015), ‘Engendering Men A Collaborative Review of Evidence on Men and Boys in Social Change and Gender Equality’’: <http://menandboys.ids.ac.uk/emerge>

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization (2007), ‘Engaging men and boys in changing gender-based inequity in health: Evidence from programme interventions’: [http://www.who.int/gender/documents/Engaging\\_men\\_boys.pdf](http://www.who.int/gender/documents/Engaging_men_boys.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> USAID (2005), ‘Working with Men and Boys to End Violence Against Women and Girls’: [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/Sector-5-SocialDev\\_MenandBoys.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/Sector-5-SocialDev_MenandBoys.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Lundgren, R., & Amin, A. (2015), Addressing Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence Among Adolescents: Emerging Evidence of Effectiveness, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, Volume 56, Issue 1, Pages S42-S50

<sup>5</sup> The Global Women’s Institute and International Rescue Committee. (2016) Evidence brief: What works to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls in conflict and humanitarian settings? Washington DC: George Washington University and London: IRC.

<sup>6</sup> Ricardo, C., Eads, M., & Barker, G. (2011). Engaging boys and young men in the prevention of sexual violence: A systematic and global review of evaluated interventions. Pretoria: South Africa: Oak Foundation.

<sup>7</sup> MenEngage Alliance, UN Women and UNFPA (2014), ‘Men, Masculinities, and Changing Power: A Discussion Paper on Engaging Men in Gender Equality from Beijing 1995 to 2015’

<sup>8</sup> El Feki, S., Heilman, B. and Barker, G., Eds. (2017) Understanding Masculinities: Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) – Middle East and North Africa. Cairo and Washington, D.C.: UN Women and Promundo-US.

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The joint publication **Men, Masculinities and Changing Power**<sup>9</sup> forms the basis for UN Women’s strategy to engage men and boys in their work, by placing gender norms transformation and addressing male power and privilege more firmly at the heart of the agenda. Together with UNFPA we launched the paper **Engaging Men, Changing Gender Norms: Directions for Gender-Transformative Action**<sup>10</sup>, and have partnered to produce various publications, including issue-based **Advocacy Briefs**<sup>11</sup> as well as a Global Toolkit on **Strengthening Partnership with Governments and Civil Society on Gender Transformative Programming**<sup>12</sup>, as well as MenEngage Africa’s joint publication, **Policy Advocacy Toolkit**<sup>13</sup>. **Engaging Men in Public Policies for the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls**<sup>14</sup>, developed by UN Women, UNFPA, EME/CulturaSalud, Promundo and MenEngage Latin America, reviews impact-evaluated programs that engage men in the prevention and elimination of VAWG and drives forward recommendations for best practices.

Similarly, our work with other key development actors has contributed to the increased uptake of evidence-based intervention to engage men and boys. **Men-streaming in Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV: A Toolkit for Policy Development and Advocacy**<sup>15</sup>, developed by International Planned Parenthood Federation and MenEngage Alliance, serves as a guide for CSOs and States to support the review and updating of existing policies to ensure they fully engage men and boys in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and HIV/AIDS. **Men, Masculinities and HIV/Aids: Strategies for Action**<sup>16</sup>, by ICRW along with other MenEngage Alliance members, provides recommended “strategies for action” based on promising practices for both policy & programs on engaging men and boys in addressing the gender dimensions of HIV.

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<sup>9</sup> MenEngage Alliance, UN Women and UNFPA (2014), ‘Men, Masculinities, and Changing Power: A Discussion Paper on Engaging Men in Gender Equality from Beijing 1995 to 2015’

<sup>10</sup> UNFPA, MenEngage Alliance (2013), ‘Engaging Men, Changing Gender Norms: Directions for Gender-Transformative Action’

<sup>11</sup> *Sexual Violence in Conflict and Post-Conflict, Engaging Men, Changing Gender Norms: Directions for Gender-Transformative Action & Sports and the Making of Men: Transforming Gender Norms on the Playing Field*, Global Toolkit for Action “Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health Equity”

<sup>12</sup> Promundo and UNFPA. (2016). Strengthening CSO-Government Partnerships to Scale Up Approaches Engaging Men and Boys for Gender Equality and SRHR: A Tool for Action. Washington, D.C.: Promundo-US and New York City, NY: UNFPA.

<sup>13</sup> Sonke Gender Justice Network. (2013). *Policy Advocacy Toolkit: How to Influence Public Policy for Social Justice and Gender Equality in Africa*. Sonke Gender Justice Network and MenEngage Africa: Cape Town, South Africa.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.eme.cl/wp-content/uploads/2016-Engaging-Men-in-Public-Policies-to-Prevent-VAWG.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> MenEngage Alliance and IPPF. (2014). ‘[Men-streaming in sexual and reproductive health and HIV: A toolkit for policy development and advocacy](#)’

<sup>16</sup> ICRW, Instituto Promundo, MenEngage Alliance, Sonke Gender Justice Network.(2014). ‘[Men, Masculinities and HIV/Aids: Strategies for Action](#)’.

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## 4. Opportunities

Transforming deeply entrenched gender inequalities is essential for achieving human rights and sustainable development for all, and towards driving meaningful change from our local to our global communities. Given that the lives of women and men are inextricably linked, working with men and boys is one critical piece of the puzzle to achieving our international human rights treaties and frameworks, including CEDAW and Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. This effort works in complement to and in support of the many decades of continued work and activism done by feminist women's rights organizations and activists. **Gender transformative approaches to engaging men and boys can contribute to achieving gender justice for all**, by engaging these key actors as agents of change in challenging harmful social norms, stereotypes, traditional practices, privileges and dismantling patriarchal power structures which perpetuate and underpin systemic gender inequalities across every society of the world.

**We continue to witness that violence and discrimination against all women, girls and SOGI people remains unacceptably high, constituting one of the most severe and widespread human rights violation of our times.** Dismantling discriminatory norms that tolerate, justify and encourage discrimination and VAWG, and which are at the root of other forms of GBV, including violence by men against people of diverse gender identities, children, adolescents and other men – is imperative. As such, work to transform patriarchal masculinities can be seen as part of the solution to this global pandemic. There is a need to address the roles that men of all ages can play in preventing and responding to discrimination and VAWG and examine the root causes of violence towards women and girls, including the socialization of men, unequal power relations, patriarchal systems and social norms around masculinities.

Men and boys continue to experience many advantages in our patriarchal societies. At the same time, they are also affected by restrictive gender roles and norms that have negative consequences for themselves, and those around them. **Boys and men can play an important role as partners, allies, supporters and champions for gender equality, by learning about gender inequalities and human rights and actively challenging discriminatory gender norms and addressing power inequities between persons of different genders.** The engagement of men and boys must be done across all levels of society, from the individual, to the community to the institutional and systemic levels, and must include the engagement of community, religious and political leaders, most of whom are still men.

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## **Value clarification on the work on men and masculinities towards women's, girl's and SOGI rights**

**Work with men and boys stems from and must honor the pioneering work and ongoing leadership of women's rights organizations and movements.** We acknowledge that we build on a precious heritage of feminist vision and analysis, including by placing the elimination of inequalities in privilege and power that result from patriarchy at the heart of our work with men and boys. Accountability to the women's rights movement and to other historically-oppressed social groups is central to our work and we are committed to working as allies and in partnership with other activists, organizations, networks and movements. As such, we stand in solidarity with - and seek to add value to - the ongoing struggles for women's autonomy, empowerment, equality and rights.

**Going beyond merely engaging men and boys, there is a critical need to advocate for feminist-informed, human rights-based, gender transformative approaches** which seek to dismantle harmful norms, attitudes, customs, stereotypes, inequalities in power and privilege, in particular related to masculinities and manhood, including within institutional practices, which perpetuate discrimination and violence against women and girls. Gender transformative approaches do not view the engagement of men and boys as an end in itself, rather, as a means to transform social norms and gender power relations at their roots. The concept, in a framework to understand how change happens, is part of a 'gender integration continuum' that classifies interventions as gender exploitative, gender neutral, gender sensitive or gender transformative. Gender transformative approaches with men and boys are those that go beyond merely 'engaging men and boys' or educating or raising awareness of men and boys on a particular issue, and seek to create a fundamental shift in attitudes and behaviors related to masculinity and what it means to be a man within a particular society or context. Men and boys play a key role in upholding and exercising these harmful norms, making them important actors in gender transformative interventions.

**Transforming patriarchal masculinities and dismantling stereotypical social norms should include interventions at all levels of society, based on a socio-ecological model of change:** from interventions aimed at changing men's individual attitudes and behaviour, to changes in their interpersonal relationships; to interventions targeted at communities that aim to transform dominant social norms regarding gender and violence; interventions that aim to embed positive gender norms into institutions; and through the promotion of government policies and laws that engage men and boys in violence prevention and response. These efforts must include the engagement of community, religious and political leaders, most of whom are still men.



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## Why engaging men and boys and transforming masculinities is important to achieving gender justice for all

**Work with women and girls is essential and can never be compromised.** There is ongoing need for financing, resources and other support of survivors and to promote women’s resilience, empowerment and organizing. This includes women-led building of systems and structures of support, by women’s rights organizations and feminist groups, as primary and secondary prevention mechanisms. **At the same time, while empowering women is essential, if programs only empower women, they can lead to backlash and increased violence by men<sup>17</sup>.** On the other hand, several studies affirm positive changes in couple conflict as a result of efforts to engage men to support women’s economic empowerment. Few efforts, however, have been made to engage men as allies in women’s economic and social empowerment and to explore and promote cooperation between couples.

**Work with men and boys is necessary to end discrimination and VAWG.** In every region and context, rigid gender norms, and harmful stereotypes, customs and practices socialize men and boys to respond to conflict with violence and to dominate their partners and others in their lives. As major perpetrators of all VAWG and GBV worldwide, the target audience for primary prevention, holders of social norms and influencers of other men, men and boys need to be engaged to eliminate violence. Given that the lives of women and men are inextricably linked, we see work with men and boys as an essential element in efforts to transform deeply entrenched gender inequalities across our societies.

**Work with men and boys can have a positive, transformative impact on the lives of women and girls.** There is a much broader spectrum of roles for men and boys to play than perpetrator or potential perpetrator of gender-based violence. Boys and men can play important roles as partners, allies, supporters and advocates for gender equality, by learning about gender inequalities and human rights, actively challenging discriminatory gender norms and the privileges men are granted under patriarchy, and speaking-up to end the culture of impunity that currently exists around discrimination and VAWG. These roles not only prevent and reduce violence against women and girls, but can also improve the lives of men and boys by freeing them from these dominating and limiting aspects of masculinities. As an Alliance we promote critical reflections on what it means to “be a man” and explore non-violent, equitable and inclusive attitudes, behaviors and manifestations of masculinities.

**Work with men and boys can be effective.** As the evidence base grows on the effectiveness of engaging men and boys when done in gender-transformative manners, we believe this may be a missing element to complement the many decades of continued work and activism done by feminist women’s rights organizations and activists to end VAWG and GBV more broadly.

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<sup>17</sup> Peacock, D and Barker, G. (2012) “Working with men and boys to promote gender equality: A review of the field and emerging approaches.” Prepared for the Expert Group Meeting Prevention of violence against women and girls for CSW. Bangkok, Thailand 17-20 September 2012



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## How to engage men and boys and transforming masculinities to achieve gender justice for all

**To ensure they are scalable and sustainable, strategies for engaging men and boys should include interventions and transformations at different levels, based on a socio-ecological model:** Interventions that aim to change men’s individual behaviour and behaviour within relationships, together with women and girls; interventions targeted at communities that aim to transform dominant social norms regarding gender and violence; interventions that aim to embed positive gender norms into institutions such as the health and education systems, the police and law enforcement, etc.; and government policies and laws that engage men and boys in gender-based violence prevention.

**Holding institutions accountable** across all the sectors, whose leadership is mostly men, for the adoption of practices, programs, education and policies which seek to transform harmful attitudes, practices, norms and power dynamics which sustain structural violence towards women and girls. **Holding the State accountable** for the adoption, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of comprehensive national strategies to end and prevent violence against all women and girls, implementing primary and secondary prevention programs to prevent and respond to violence against women. **Holding the International community and Human Rights Instruments accountable** for making an explicit call for scaling-up and implementing universal primary prevention programs to end men’s and boys’ use of violence against women and girls.

**Holding men and boys accountable for the discrimination and violence they have carried out must be part of comprehensive national strategies to end and prevent violence against all women and girls.** Programs for men who have used violence against women can be part of comprehensive community support for women survivors of violence. When such programs are part of an effective justice system, connected to the community, and combined with adequate support and protection of women survivors of violence, they can be an important part of preventing future violence<sup>18</sup>. Furthermore, community approaches to hold men accountable for violence against women – in which survivors have the chance to hear and ask for justice from men who have used violence – can be important elements in changing community norms and helping communities and individuals recover from violence.

**Well-designed group education processes can lead to attitude changes, and in some cases, behavior changes associated with VAW<sup>19</sup>.** A significant proportion of men who use sexual violence do so for the

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<sup>18</sup> Gondolf, E. (2009) The Survival of Batterer Programs? Responding to “Evidence-Based Practice and Improving Program Operation.” Position paper presented at the policy symposium - Batterer Intervention: Doing the Work and Measuring the Progress. Sponsored by the National Institute of Justice and Family Violence Prevention Fund, Bethesda, MD, December 3-4, 2009.

<sup>19</sup> Engaging men and boys in changing gender-based inequity in health: evidence from programme interventions. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2007

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first time as adolescents. Thus it is key to reach boys (age 10+) and young men when their attitudes and beliefs about gender stereotypes are developing and before the first perpetration of violence. Training teachers and community-based workers to facilitate group education and school-based campaigns on VAW, and implementing gender-sensitive school curricula can be effective in preventing violence.

**Universal comprehensive sexuality education, with specific reference to gender and the roles and responsibilities of boys and young men, can prove effective in raising awareness of and preventing violence. Comprehensive sexuality education increases awareness about safe sex, sexuality, and healthy non-violent relationships.** It can empower young women and men to negotiate the terms of sexual activity, understand the importance of consent, and learn how to resist peer pressure to engage in or accept VAW.

**Engaging men as positive role-models and caregivers** is a key strategy for ending cycles of violence. Programs with fathers and caregivers that emphasize alternatives to physical punishment, promote healthy and egalitarian relationships with mothers, and promote gender-equal child-rearing have shown promise in ending violence against women and children.

Men can also play positive roles in **changing attitudes towards survivors of gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict settings.** Perpetrators need to be held accountable, and efforts should be put in transforming their societies by changing gender norms and the behavior of men based on non-violence, care and equality. Given the high exposure to multiple forms of violence during conflict, psycho-social support that enables men, women, boys and girls to overcome their traumas can prove effective in preventing future violence.

Boys who experience, and/or witness violence against their mothers, are 2.5-3 times more likely to use violence against partners when they become adults<sup>20</sup>. Despite this, few children exposed to violence have access to ameliorative psychosocial support, and such services are seldom available in schools or in communities. **Secondary prevention approaches, such as group counselling and education, through which young people who have witnessed violence at home can receive support** are key to breaking cycles of violence and should be made available in all schools and community settings.

Many and perhaps most men around the world believe that violence against women is a violation of rights, but most men are silent when men they know carry out such violence<sup>21</sup>. This affirms the importance of **bystander interventions and community accountability approaches** in which men and boys who already

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<sup>20</sup> Barker G., Peacock, D., / Working with men and boys to promote gender equality: A review of the field and emerging approaches, 2012.

<sup>21</sup> Berkowitz, A. D. (2010). "Fostering Healthy Norms to Prevent Violence and Abuse: The Social Norms Approach" in Keith Kaufman, ed. The Prevention of Sexual Violence: A Practitioner's Sourcebook, Holyoke MA

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oppose violence against women are encouraged and supported to speak out when they see other men use violence. In numerous impact evaluation studies, such approaches - whether implemented in schools, communities, the workplace, or via sports – have shown effectiveness in changing men’s attitudes and enhancing existing community norms that affirm the unacceptability of VAW<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Banyard, V. L., Moynihan, M. M., Plante, E. G. (2007). Sexual Violence Prevention Through Bystander Education: An Experimental Evaluation. *Journal of Community Psychology*. 35 (4), 463-481

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## Issue-Based Approaches

### Prevention and Eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination

- Design and implement, as appropriate, policies and programs that seek to address the **root causes of all forms of violence including social norms, stereotypes, beliefs and attitudes towards power, privileges, stemming from structural injustices and patriarchal power structures.**
- Providing context around the social systems at large as an overall framework for ending all violence towards all women and girls. This violence is manifested in many ways including sexual violence, institutional violence, economic violence, homophobic violence and violence between men and boys, but by providing a model for combating the root causes, we **avoid separating these approaches into silos.**
- Carry out evaluations and audits on laws related to ending GBV, domestic violence and violence against all women and girls that are not properly implemented and develop interventions that **tackle the barriers to their implementation, including social norms.** Encourage governments to see their role in social norms transformation, not just in the implementation of policies and laws.
- Carry out **gender audits of military, law enforcement, and the justice and security sectors** to assess whether they perpetuate violence or progress toward respecting human rights, and to provide recommendations accordingly.

### SRHR for all

- Implement **Comprehensive Sexuality Education** in schools, that provides accurate information in addition to a focus on **gender, masculinities and healthy relationships.**
- **Target men in maternal health programs,** as an entry point to encourage them to be more involved in their partner's health as well as their own.
- Create **youth-friendly health services,** and **spaces for peer-to-peer conversations** and learning between and among boys and girls in order to break taboos around sexuality.

### Unpaid care & women's economic empowerment

- **Work through the health system to change social norms around caregiving,** for example by involving men more in pre and post-natal care, and using these visits as an entry point into fatherhood programs etc.
- At the state level, implement laws supportive of men's caregiving, including **paid, non-transferable parental leave, and childcare provisions.**

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- Introduce **caring as a key competency in education systems** and promote diverse job skills for all, as well as transform the stereotypical gendered division of labor.
  - Work with the media to promote **non-stereotypical, caring depictions of men.**

### **Peace, Security & active non-violence**

- Provide **psychosocial support to boys and men in conflict and post-conflict situations**, particularly ex-combatants, in order to deconstruct ideals of masculinities that encourage them to use violence and train them on active non-violence and alternative masculinities.
- **Identify and work with male allies in political systems** to support the increased participation of women in political and peacebuilding processes.
- **Address militarism as a cause and consequence of patriarchy** and work to redefine security and protection towards a human security model.

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## 5. Challenges

### Accountable practices to advancing a transformative agenda on dismantling patriarchy

We have observed the growing mobilization of some men against women's rights (so-called "men's rights groups") over the last decade. These groups speak to grievances over their perceived loss of rights as men, as women's rights effort continue to successfully achieve clearer measures of gender equality globally. MenEngage Alliance, **does not support, affiliate or partner with, but rather, actively takes a stand against such groups, organizations, and individuals** which are not centered on women's rights and feminism, believing this rhetoric to be dangerous to the rights of all women and girls.

As well, there is risk involved when well-intentioned initiatives that do work with men and boys are **neither feminist-informed nor gender transformative**. This brings us to the need to ensure that policies targeted at men and boys are both gender transformative in nature as well as informed by feminist approaches. **Recent knowledge-generation shows it is essential that work with men and boys is done critically, and tackles holistically the issue of male power and privilege as part of the process of transformation<sup>23</sup>**. There is a need to ensure that equity, rights and justice remain central in the development agenda, and that the agenda fully challenges unequal power structures. International human rights frameworks such as CEDAW and the Human Rights Council (HRC), are increasingly recognizing that development cannot be discussed in isolation from human rights, gender equality and social justice. Thus there is a need and opportunity to continue targeting the UN development frameworks such as the SDGs, CSW and CPD; as well as to target binding international human rights agreements.

**A number of concerns have emerged around the work for engaging men and boys in gender equality.** Some of these concerns are around lack of accountability to women's rights movements; use of approaches that reinforce male domination; emphasis on men as victims of patriarchy; insufficient recognition of women's rights movements' work; unbalanced attention, visibility and access of those actively working with men and boys; competition for limited resources; and inequalities between small- and large-scale organizing and activities. These concerns are furthermore related to the professionalization, dilution and de-politicization of feminist agendas, and linked to larger issues of development and activist work, which many of our civil society organizations are facing. For the road ahead of the work on men and masculinities, it is important to take these concerns into account and to address them as needed. In our experience, there is a lot of support among the women's rights and gender justice field on men and masculinities work, and many women's rights organizations have been carrying out this work for years. The concerns that have emerged underscore the need for continued dialogue with women's rights and other social justice movements and to ensure work with men and boys is truly gender transformative and done in collaboration with women's rights groups.

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<sup>23</sup> Edström, J., Hassink, A., Shahrokh, T. and Stern, E. (eds) (2015) Engendering Men: A Collaborative Review of Evidence on Men and Boys in Social Change and Gender Equality, EMERGE Evidence Review, Promundo-US, Sonke Gender Justice and the Institute of Development Studies

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**MenEngage Alliance has made it a priority to take a firm stand on what good-quality work with men and boys looks like: gender-norms transformative, feminist-informed, and in partnership with women's rights and other social justice partners.** Accountability towards women, girls and women's rights movements, and the feminist agenda is a fundamental pillar of our work as an Alliance, and we have taken measures to ensure accountability in all our approaches and at all levels of our interventions. Accountability when working with men and boys, who are beneficiaries and holders of both privilege and power, is imperative to guard against male protectionism or the reinforcement of male supremacy within our partnerships with women, girls and women's rights organizations.

MenEngage Alliance has developed **Accountability Standards and Guidelines**<sup>24</sup> and **the Accountability Training Toolkit**<sup>25</sup> which help guide and inform efforts across the membership towards full accountability in programmatic, advocacy and partnership efforts with women's rights organizations, and present ways to respond effectively when concerns emerge regarding the conduct of members in collaborating with women's right organizations. These documents, combined with the **Code of Conduct**<sup>26</sup>, are instruments that help members remain consistent with the values and principles of the Alliance, both in their personal lives and in our professional and public work.

These documents provide concrete guidelines on how work with men and boys can be done effectively while holding central the rights and leadership of women and girls, which include: seeking regular feedback from women's-rights organizations for work carried out to engage men and boys, involving women in decision-making processes for interventions on engaging men and boys, allocating a certain number of board seats to members of women's-rights organizations, creating 'advisory councils' of women's organizations, inviting women's-rights organizations to conduct programs together with efforts on men and boys, or contributing in solidarity to women's rights organizations through joint advocacy or activism.

## **Challenges in ensuring individual to institutional transformation**

**It has become increasingly evident that - while there are many components necessary to fully achieve gender equality - challenging the structures, beliefs, practices, and institutions that sustain privileges and inequitable norms is essential.** It is critical that boys and men be made aware of how gender norms affect themselves and others, and that they are mobilized to take action - so that they become genuine change agents for gender justice. The process of self-awareness, often intangible and tenuous, and constantly shifting, is a critical foundation for transformation. An essential challenge is to situate this work

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<sup>24</sup> MenEngage Alliance (2014) 'Accountability Standards and Guidelines': [http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/MenEngage\\_Accountability-Standards-and-Guidelines.pdf](http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/MenEngage_Accountability-Standards-and-Guidelines.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> MenEngage Alliance (2014) 'Accountability Training Toolkit': <http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/MenEngage-Accountability-Toolkit.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> MenEngage Alliance (2014). 'Code of Conduct': <http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/MenEngage-Global-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

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of engaging men and boys within the larger gender justice and women’s rights movement, as well as other social justice movements, so that it contributes and forms part of this broader agenda.

Some of the operational challenges faced in implementing gender-transformative approaches to engage men and boys include defining interventions that are relevant to the target audience, in order to secure their participation and ongoing commitment to program participation. **MenEngage Alliance has become a leading innovator in identifying key entry-points for male involvement**, from programming focused on fatherhood, to creating interventions in locations frequented by boys and men such as schools, through sports programs, work-places, health-care centers, bars, and clubs, to campaigns, mass media and community outreach efforts that present positive masculinities in appealing ways, while ensuring that these initial strategies of engagement are coupled with substantial training and reflection components which facilitate men and boys to question their socialization, power and privilege in order to achieve social norms change.



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## 5. Next Steps: Recommendations for further action

We welcome further collaborative action with the CEDAW Committee towards advancing the joint agenda of the realization of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women and girls, through:

- Development of strategic lines of inquiry for Member States during CEDAW Review processes and special procedures, on the assurance that policies and programs to engage men and boys are being carried out in “women and girl-centered ways”.
- Progressing global discourse-setting on the articulation of men and masculinities work as a strategy for the realization of CEDAW’s mandates, across all of the Committee’s issue-based areas
- Further deepening of the global normative framework on engaging men and boys and transforming masculinities responsibly, through the inclusion of nuanced language within upcoming Recommendations and General Observations, on the link between work with men and masculinities and social norms transformation.
- Further deepening of the global normative framework on engaging men and boys and transforming masculinities responsibly, through the inclusion of nuanced language within upcoming Recommendations and General Observations, on the necessity for these efforts to remain accountable to women’s, girls’ and SOGI rights.
- Driving forward the request for Member States to report on efforts to engage men and boys in gender justice, building on the body of evidence present as a means to build further consensus on what works and what doesn’t – critically informing global efforts by the international community

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## 6. Resources

**MenEngage Alliance, 'Critical Dialogue on Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Justice':**

[http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/e-Dialogue-Report\\_V5.pdf](http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/e-Dialogue-Report_V5.pdf)

**Engaging Men and Boys to Reduce and Prevent Gender-Based Violence, by White Ribbon Campaign:**

[http://whiteribbon.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/wrc\\_swc\\_issuebrief.pdf](http://whiteribbon.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/wrc_swc_issuebrief.pdf)

**Increasing Development of Men & Boys in Gender Equality: Development Trends (SIDA 2015):**

<http://www.sida.se/contentassets/91a4a12e753a4fc88f6d1e91bf78c7cf/fbfae07d-ea8b-4550-84e5-aa476fdd00a6.pdf>

**International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES), Promundo:**

<http://promundoglobal.org/programs/international-men-and-gender-equality-survey-images/>

**10 Point Call to Action on engaging men & boys in eliminating violence towards women, by MenEngage Alliance:**

<http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/MenEngage-10-Point-Call-for-Action.pdf>

**Engaging Men, Changing Gender Norms: Directions for Gender-Transformative Action, by MenEngage Alliance and UNFPA**

<http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/Advocacy%20Brief-%20Gender%20Norms-1.pdf>

**Partners for Prevention: The Gender-based Violence Prevention and Masculinities Research Project, Collaborative Research Project for Asia and the Pacific, by UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV regional program**

[http://partners4prevention.org/sites/default/files/documents/p4p\\_gbv\\_masc\\_research\\_project\\_leaflet.pdf](http://partners4prevention.org/sites/default/files/documents/p4p_gbv_masc_research_project_leaflet.pdf)

**Engaging men and boys in changing gender-based inequity in health: Evidence from programme interventions (WHO):**

[http://www.who.int/gender/documents/Engaging\\_men\\_boys.pdf](http://www.who.int/gender/documents/Engaging_men_boys.pdf)

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**Engaging men and boys in changing gender-based inequity in health: Evidence from programme interventions (WHO):**

[http://www.who.int/gender/documents/Engaging\\_men\\_boys.pdf](http://www.who.int/gender/documents/Engaging_men_boys.pdf)

**Men, Masculinities, Changing Power. A discussion paper on engaging men in gender equality from Beijing 1995 to 2015, by MenEngage Alliance, UN Women and UNFPA:**

<http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Beijing-20-Men-Masculinities-and-Changing-Power-MenEngage-2014.pdf>

**State Of The World's Fathers, a MenCare Advocacy Publication, 2015:**

[https://sowf.men-care.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/06/State-of-the-Worlds-Fathers\\_23June2015-1.pdf](https://sowf.men-care.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/06/State-of-the-Worlds-Fathers_23June2015-1.pdf)

**Accountability Standards and Guidelines, by MenEngage Alliance**

[http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/MenEngage\\_Accountability-Standards-and-Guidelines.pdf](http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/MenEngage_Accountability-Standards-and-Guidelines.pdf)

**Reflections on the 2015 Barbershop Conference, by MenEngage Alliance**

<http://menengage.org/resources/hurray-barbershop-conference-men-gender-equality-will-include-women/>

**Working with Men and Boys to End Violence Against Women and Girl (USAID 2015):**

[https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/Sector-5-SocialDev\\_MenandBoys.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/Sector-5-SocialDev_MenandBoys.pdf)

**Men and Boys for Gender Justice: Delhi Declaration and Call to Action, by MenEngage Alliance**

<http://menengage.org/resources/delhi-declaration-call-action/>

**Critical Dialogue on Engaging Boys and Men in Gender Equality: Accountability & Partnerships, by MenEngage Alliance:**

[http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/e-Dialogue-Report\\_V5.pdf](http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/e-Dialogue-Report_V5.pdf)

**EMERGE Policy Brief: Evidence on Routes to Gender Equality Institute of Development Student, UK Aid (2016)**

<https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/9709/FINAL%20DESIGNED%20VERSION.pdf?sequence=1>

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## 7. Glossary

Transform and end patriarchy: We seek to engage men and boys, along with women, girls and people of diverse gender identities, to redress structural power imbalances and inequalities, male domination and their manifestations upheld by systemic male supremacy ideologies, and to reform such dualistic and sexist gender orders.

Transform masculinities: We seek to destabilize stereotypical male gender roles and hegemonic expressions of manhood, and support manifestations of non-violent, equitable and inclusive notions of manhood, by changing social norms that shape boys' and men's behavior.

Engaging men and boys: We seek to work with men and boys to encourage their active involvement in ending gender inequalities, advancing women's rights and transforming masculinities as allies with women, girls and people of diverse gender identities. Recognizing that some men and boys question the harmful notions of manhood and the privileges that society grants them, we provide them with ways to take transformative action. We work with men in power in all spheres of society to promote progressive policies and institutional practices in favor of women's rights and gender justice.

Gender transformative approaches (GTA): Policies, processes and strategies that seek to critically reflect on and transform social norms and institutional practices that create and reinforce gender inequalities. GTA do not view the engagement of men and boys as an end in itself, rather as a means to transform social norms and gender power relations at their roots. GTA are part of a 'gender integration continuum' that classifies interventions as gender exploitative, gender neutral, gender sensitive or gender transformative. MenEngage seeks to support the increased uptake of gender transformative approaches with men and boys through the work of the Alliance.

Intersectionality: We acknowledge that oppressive institutions (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, classism, etc.) are interconnected and cannot be examined separately from one another. This interplay of multiple identities can increase vulnerability and inequalities in privilege and power, and further entrench inequalities and injustice. We seek to contribute to an intersectional understanding of men and boys' roles and responsibilities, and enhance an intersectional perspective in the work of the Alliance and its members.

Feminist approach: We acknowledge that we build on the heritage of feminist women's rights organizations and movements and ground our work firmly in feminist principles. We seek to strengthen our work by embracing a women's rights perspective and feminist analysis, including placing inequalities in privilege and power that result from patriarchy at the heart of our work with men and boys. We commit to listening to and being accountable to women's rights voices; and to institutionalizing democratic and inclusive decision making processes within the Alliance.

Enabling spaces for dialogue and joint action: MenEngage Alliance, being informed by a feminist approach, engage in strengthening partnerships, networks and alliances as a political act to change and a tool for empowerment within movement building. We work 'glocal': where ideas from the local to the global are jointly identified, shared, negotiated, changed, and disseminated.

Partnerships: We seek to foster concrete and equal associations and collaborations with various actors and agencies in the field of women's rights, gender and social justice, climate justice, child rights, youth empowerment and rights, sexual and reproductive health rights, civil and political rights, indigenous population rights, human rights, among others.

Working as allies with women's rights organizations: We are committed to working as allies, and to fostering healthy relationships, with women and women's rights organizations, movements and networks to achieve equity and equality for women and girls, and justice for all, as a political act to strengthen the collective struggle for human rights and social, economic and environmental justice

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## 8. About MenEngage Alliance

**MenEngage Alliance is an international network of over 700 civil society organizations (CSOs) working across 70 countries, in 8 regions of the world,** who implement, research and advocate for gender transformative approaches to engage men and boys in advancing women’s rights and gender justice for all. The Alliance seeks to add value to existing initiatives, by engaging men and boys, alongside women, girls and people of diverse gender identities, in transforming masculinities, unequal power relations and patriarchal systems. **We believe in a world where all people are equal and free from discrimination, and in which gender justice and human rights are promoted and protected.** At our core, we are a social justice Alliance committed to gender-transformative, human rights-based, feminist-informed work with men and boys, carried out in partnership with women’s rights organizations and movements.

**MenEngage Alliance consists of many, if not most, of the leading voices on men and masculinities in the world,** including practitioners, service providers, researchers, activists and donors. The vast majority of organizations within the Alliance identify as women’s rights, SRHR, gender justice and human rights organizations, having adopted strategies to engage men and boys out of a necessity to further advance their efforts towards achieving gender equality. The Alliance plays a pivotal role in shaping the global discourse and normative framework on men and masculinities, in particularly in the areas of GBV prevention, advancing SRHR for all, redistributing unpaid care-work, and peace and security. Emerging issues for the Alliance include an analysis on how masculinities affect climate change and macro-economic systems.

Aside from the wide-ranging expertise of the global membership, the Alliance counts on the thought leadership of prominent voices within the gender field through its **Global Board of Directors**<sup>27</sup>. In addition, MenEngage Alliance partners with a diverse range of actors at the global, regional and national level, such as **UN Agencies**<sup>28</sup>, **development partners**<sup>29</sup>, **donors, and Member States** from around the world, providing technical expertise on gender-transformative approaches to engaging men in boys in women’s rights and gender justice.

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<sup>27</sup> Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom – WILPF (International); International Planned Parenthood Federation – IPPF (International); Athena Network (International); Breakthrough (International); Centre for Health and Social Justice - CHSJ (South Asia); CARE International; White Ribbon (International); African Men for Sexual Health and Rights – AMShER (Africa); Promundo US (International); Save the Children (Sweden); Sonke Gender Justice (Africa).

<sup>28</sup> UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, WHO

<sup>29</sup> SIDA (primary funder of MenEngage Alliance and global leader in advancing gender transformative work with men and boys), Netherlands MoFA, NORAD, [DFID](#), [USAID](#), [DFATD-Canadian Development Agency](#), [World Bank](#)



## **Vision**

A world where all people are equal and free from discrimination, and in which gender justice and human rights are promoted and protected.

## **Mission**

The MenEngage Alliance works to transform unequal power relations and patriarchal systems by:

- **Transforming masculinities**
- **Working with men and boys through intersectional feminist approaches**
- **Building inclusive Alliances from local to regional to global levels**
- **Fostering joint actions in partnership with women's rights, gender- and other social justice movements.**

## **Our Beliefs**

We focus on gender-transformative approaches that address root causes of gender inequalities, working towards transforming the social systems that perpetuate stereotypes, unequal power, and privilege. We believe that within the larger framing of attaining gender justice for all women and girls, the work of engaging men and boys plays an important role as a supplemental strategy in the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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