



**MenEngage**

boys and men for gender equality

# MEN. MASCULINITIES. AND CHANGING POWER

ENGAGING MEN AND BOYS BEIJING+20

**NOTES ON DISCUSSION PAPER**



Since the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing the rights and well-being of women and girls have seen tremendous advances. However, the impacts of gender inequalities on women and girls continue to be devastating, and changes have been extremely uneven in terms of geography, social class, and other factors.

While many components are necessary to achieve full gender equality, **the Beijing framework envisions male engagement as a necessary piece to challenge the structures, beliefs, practices, and institutions that sustain men's aggregate privileges.**

It is a core piece of transforming gender norms and the underlying power relations, structures, and systems that sustain inequalities between and among women and men. Those power relations negatively affect men and boys and cannot be changed without their engagement.

To frame the discussion in this transformative approach to gender equality, MenEngage in collaboration with UN Women and the support of UNFPA developed a discussion paper that seeks to start a dialogue about moving forward with efforts that actively engage men and boys in challenging power dynamics.

You can download the paper here:

[www.menengage.org/resources/beijing20-men-masculinities-changing-power](http://www.menengage.org/resources/beijing20-men-masculinities-changing-power) (English)

[www.menengage.org/beijing20-hombres-masculinidades-y-cambios-en-el-poder](http://www.menengage.org/beijing20-hombres-masculinidades-y-cambios-en-el-poder) (Español)

**Report of the Secretary-General: Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly** (Based on national- and regional-level reviews by governments, 15 December 2014, E/CN.6/2015/3)

376. Discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes have long been recognized as major impediments to the achievement of gender equality and the realization of women's rights. As the review of the implementation of the Platform for Action has shown, even where equality before the law has been achieved, discriminatory social norms remain pervasive, which affects all aspects of gender equality, women's empowerment and women's and girls' human rights.

393. **The transformation of discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes must be a priority [...]** Policies and programmes across the critical areas of concern must change underlying discriminatory social norms, power relations and gender stereotypes and instead, promote positive norms of gender equality, human rights and social justice. Strategies should be context-specific, some examples of actions include: programmes, including public and media campaigns, to mobilize communities to reject violence against women; outreach and education campaigns supporting women's role in politics, public life and leadership; policies that support the redistribution of unpaid care work between women and men in the household; and policies to remedy discriminatory practices regarding inheritance and women's access to resources. Men and boys must take responsibility for challenging discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes and fostering positive norms of gender equality, non-violence and respect.

398. Achieving gender equality requires the involvement of women and men, girls and boys, and is the responsibility of all stakeholders.



## LESSONS LEARNED + RECOMMENDATIONS

Since Beijing, a significant amount of work has been done to engage men and boys in gender equality efforts. There have been important advances on many fronts, including a growing body of increasingly well-evaluated interventions and large-scale policy implementations that are leading to important changes in men's and boys' attitudes and behaviors.

**There is tremendous potential for positive impacts indicated by program-level efforts that engage men and boys and seek to transform attitudes, norms and power dynamics,** even as more impact evaluation is needed.

While some of the work with men and boys has applied a transformative framework, not all of it has been broad enough to affect comprehensive change. There is a need to more actively engage men and boys in examining and challenging power dynamics in their own lives as well as in their communities and societies more broadly. **We need to engage men and boys in change at individual levels, in their relationships with partners, children and friends, as well as at more structural levels, in their roles and capacities as teachers, corporate executives, union leaders, policy-makers, etc.**

Engaging men and boys in gender equality is integral to the new global Post-2015 Development Agenda, and to maintain momentum in addressing gender inequalities, strengthening human rights, and promoting women's empowerment.

### RECOMMENDATION 1

**Shift our normative understanding of men's role within the broader agenda for gender equality.**

Empowering women is essential to achieving gender equality. We must simultaneously engage men to be actively committed to redistributing power in both their personal lives and in larger spheres. Framing gender equality as something men have a stake in and can benefit from can be an effective way to motivate more men and boys to be involved. There is also a need for more research on the many ways in which men and boys are already moving toward gender equality in order to identify ways to support and accelerate the change that is already happening.

### RECOMMENDATION 2

**Build and maintain alliances between men's work for gender equality and the women's rights fields and other social justice movements.**

True social change requires working across the many intersecting issues that influence our lives and opportunities, including gender, class, caste, age, social orientation and gender identity. Leaders and organizations engaging men and boys have to maintain ongoing dialogue and collaboration with movements involved in promoting gender equality, particularly women's rights movements. Working with men and boys separately should be planned in consultation with women's groups and others working on related issues. This work should aim to build partnerships with progressive social movements, for example SRHR, labor rights.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3**

#### **Take work with men from the program and project level into policies and institutions.**

Accelerating change requires reaching larger numbers of men and boys and changing systems and institutions. Given the critical role of public institutions (e.g. schools, the health sector, and the workplace) in the creation and maintenance of gender norms, and their potential to reach large numbers of individuals, they provide particularly strategic locales for scaling up efforts to engage men and boys. Increasing the reach and impact of efforts with men and boys entails also mobilizing men to effect change via their leadership roles and holding them accountable to leading and supporting change through these roles.

engaging men as fathers and caregivers; engaging men in supporting women's economic empowerment; and engaging men as supportive partners, clients and positive agents of change in sexual and reproductive health and rights, and maternal, newborn and child health.

### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

#### **Develop, implement, and monitor policies to engage men in gender equality and build state capacity to implement them.**

In addition to extending the number and reach of well-designed interventions, we need to push forward with institutional and governmental policies that address the social and structural determinants of gender inequalities. Equally important is the training of staff to implement policies, as well ongoing public awareness campaigns to transform perceptions of gender roles among men.

The paper includes examples of specific policy recommendations for engaging men in prevention of gender-based violence; promoting gender-equitable socialization at all levels of education;



# A POST-2015 WORLD BASED ON GENDER JUSTICE

## MenEngage comments on the Open Working Group Draft Report on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

MenEngage recognizes that the Post-2015 Agenda must embrace a human rights-based approach and transform unequal power relations between women and men, as championed by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and believes that meaningful citizen participation should be built into every stage of the post-2015 process, from developing the agenda to the implementation, and all the way through the monitoring and evaluation.

MenEngage stands with women's rights advocates in the call for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and all women's and girls' rights and empowerment in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Gender equality must be a cross-cutting issue in all other development goals. To achieve gender equality it is essential to work with men and boys: for the benefit of women and girls, for men and boys themselves, and for a world that is just, peaceful and sustainable. MenEngage believes that engaging men and boys in the proposed SDG framework can contribute to achieving gender equality, women's rights and the empowerment of women through a transformative agenda, by addressing root causes of gender inequalities and speaking to the roles and responsibilities of men and boys to address these issues.

For the complete text of MenEngage's comments on the draft report, click here:

<http://menengage.org/resources/menengage-comments-open-working-group-draft-report-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs/>

GENDER GOAL 5	MENENGAGE PRIORITIES	MENENGAGE SUGGESTED INDICATOR
<b>Targets 5.1, 5.2, 5.3</b>  <b>Eliminate all forms of discrimination, violence and harmful practices against all women and girls</b>	<p>Evidence shows that men perpetrate the majority of GBV.</p> <p>Rigid gender norms socialize men to respond to conflicts with violence, to abuse alcohol and drugs, and to dominate their partners. Including having witnessed their own fathers or male role models using violence.</p> <p>It is essential to work with men and boys to transform social norms perpetuating GBV in all its forms, including understanding and addressing root causes of gender inequality, such as unequal power relations, practices and stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination against women and girls sexual minorities and on-gender conforming people and promoting alternative role models for boys.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rate of men who condemn rape supportive attitudes</li> <li>• Rate of men who support existing GBV laws</li> <li>• Rate of men seeking help to change violent behaviour</li> <li>• Number of national, regional, and global policies that clearly seek to engage men and boys for gender equality</li> <li>• Monitoring of the provision of psycho-social support for children affected by violence</li> <li>• Reduction in the use of corporal punishment or increase in the number of countries that implement a full ban on it</li> <li>• Number of men compliant with state regulations related to child support</li> <li>• Number of children under five with access to quality state-supported childcare</li> </ul>
<b>Target 5.4</b> <b>Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work</b>  <i>Target can be strengthened by adding "reduce and redistribute"</i>	<p>Need to promote the equal sharing of unpaid care work between men and women to reduce the disproportionate share of unpaid care work for women and girls and to change the attitudes that reinforce the gendered division of labour.</p> <p>Reducing and redistributing allows women in particular more time for other pursuits such as self-care, education, political participation and paid work; and redistribute care-work from poorer households to the state by financing, regulating and providing care services.</p> <p>Encouraging men's participation in care work contributes to the perception of caregiving and domestic work as a shared responsibility.</p> <p>Evidence shows that when fathers are involved with their children at an early stage, preferably from conception, there is a higher likelihood that they will remain connected to their children throughout their lives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of weekly hours men spend providing care for children and others</li> <li>• Number of countries with paternity and maternity leave</li> <li>• Number of men compliant with state regulations related to child support</li> </ul>
<b>Target 5.6</b>  <b>Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights</b>  <i>Target can be strengthened by including "sexual rights" (SRHR)</i>	<p>Throughout the world, SRHR is largely considered the sole responsibility of women while many men continue to neglect the SRHR needs and responsibilities their partners, their families and themselves.</p> <p>Evidence shows that men's lower utilization of SRH services, like HIV testing and treatment, is a result of both rigid gender norms as well as structural barriers such as clinics that are ill-prepared to address male-specific health issues.</p> <p>As a result, not only are women and girls left to bear much of the burden of their own and their families' SRHR, but men's lack of involvement in SRH also places expensive and unnecessary burdens on health systems.</p> <p>Interventions with men and boys on SRHR have been shown to effectively increase men's utilization of services, as well as support and respect for their partner's SRHR, which in turn improves the health of women, children and men themselves.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of men who seek and support access to HIV treatment and prevention services</li> <li>• Number of men who view contraceptive use as a joint responsibility</li> <li>• Number of men who accompany their partners to a prenatal visit</li> <li>• Percentage of contraceptive use that are male methods</li> <li>• Number of countries with paternity and maternity leave</li> <li>• Number of men compliant with state regulations related to child support</li> <li>• Access to comprehensive gender- and human-rights based sexuality education</li> </ul>



**2nd MenEngage Global Symposium 2014**  
**Men and Boys for Gender Justice**  
**10-13 November 2014 | India Habitat Centre | New Delhi**

## **MEN AND BOYS FOR GENDER JUSTICE: DELHI DECLARATION AND CALL TO ACTION**

We live in a world of profound inequalities and unbalanced power relations, where rigid norms and values about how people should behave fuel and exacerbate injustices. We have to change that. This is why more than 1200 activists/professionals coming from 94 countries and with a broad variety of organisational backgrounds, convened the second MenEngage Global Symposium in New Delhi, India, November 10-13, 2014.

Gender equality is an essential component of human rights, as upheld by international standards articulated, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We reiterate our commitment to implementing the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (1994), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), the outcomes of the annual United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (including at its 48th Session in 2004), and all other relevant agreements. We reaffirm our commitment to implementing the MenEngage Rio and Johannesburg Calls to Action (2009). We look forward to future agreements, including the development agenda beyond 2015, and to continue to uphold boys' and men's engagement as key to the achievement of gender equality and gender justice for all.

This Symposium reflected the full complexity and diversity of gender justice issues. It challenged us to reflect, think strategically, reach out across socially-constructed boundaries, and strengthen partnerships. There are gaps. As an outcome of this historic event, and as a shared commitment and Call to Action, we offer the following concerns and affirmations:

- 1 Patriarchy and gender injustice remain defining characteristics of societies around the world, with devastating effects on everyone's daily life.** No matter who we are, and no matter where we are in the world, these forces make our relationships less fulfilling, less healthy and less safe. From an early age, they introduce suffering, violence, illness, hate and death within our families and communities. They strip us of our fundamental human rights and hinder our ability to live a life with love, dignity, intimacy and mutual respect. They hamper the development of our economies and keep our global society from flourishing. These are the root causes of many barriers to sustainable development around the world.  
**We urgently need to overcome these immense threats to human well-being.**
- 2 Patriarchy affects everyone, but in different ways.** Women and girls continue to face significant, disproportionately high levels of gender injustice and human rights violation. Men and boys are both privileged and damaged by patriarchy, but are rarely aware of that fact. Men and boys are also gendered beings. Gender equality brings benefits to women, men and other genders.  
**We urgently need to acknowledge that gender inequalities are unacceptable no matter who is affected.**
- 3 We build on a precious heritage.** We owe our awareness of gender injustices, our efforts to promote equality, and the occurrence of this Symposium itself to the pioneering courage and vision of feminist and women's rights movements. We align with the work of women's rights organisations and recognise all achievements in the transformation of the social, cultural, legal, financial and political structures that sustain patriarchy.  
**Keeping its historical context in view, we shall continue our work with men and boys towards gender equality informed by feminist and human rights principles, organisations, and movements and in a spirit of solidarity.**
- 4 We believe in an inclusive approach to realise gender justice.** We are men, women and



transgender persons calling for everyone to participate in the gender justice movement. The importance of engaging men and boys in such efforts has often been overlooked. We seek to make visible the most effective ways in which men and boys can contribute to gender equality, without being used as mere instruments.

- 5 Patriarchal power, expressed through dominant masculinities, is among the major forces driving structural injustices and exploitation. We are particularly concerned about the many manifestations of militarism and neoliberal globalisation, including war; the proliferation of weapons; global and local economic inequality; violent manifestations of political and religious fundamentalisms; state violence; violence against civil society; human trafficking; and the destruction of natural resources.

We urgently need to expose the link between patriarchy and the exploitation of people and the environment, and to help boys and men change their behaviour from “power over” to “power with”.

- 6 Gender inequalities are related to inequalities based on race, age, class, caste, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ability and other factors. We value the diversity of our world, and cannot continue to address these intersecting injustices in isolation.

We commit to promoting social and economic inclusion through meaningful participation, deepened partnerships, and joint actions among social justice movements.

- 7 It is essential that each of us live the values of gender justice. This requires men and boys in particular to reflect critically on their own power and privilege, and to develop personal visions of how to be gender-just men. It requires all of us to base our work on deep personal and political convictions. Whenever and wherever any of us says one thing but behaves differently, it fundamentally undermines our cause. We must speak out both in private and in public when we see others acting unjustly; being a silent bystander to an unjust act means being complicit in that act.

Our beliefs, behaviours, relationships, and organisational structures must reflect those we want to see in the world. To this end we must hold ourselves, as well as our friends, relatives, colleagues and allies accountable.

- 8 Investment in engaging men and boys in gender-justice work makes this work more comprehensive. It should not detract from investing in other effective strategies, especially those undertaken by women’s rights organisations. We reject attempts to weaken our alliances or to put complementary gender justice approaches in competition with one another. We are representatives of diverse organisations, pursuing multiple complementary approaches. We stand in solidarity with each other and commit to strengthening our shared vision of comprehensive gender justice work. We call on policy makers and donors to dramatically increase the resources available for all gender justice work and to include effective gender justice strategies in all development programmes.

- 9 For specific policy areas and actions for engaging men and boys in gender justice work include: gender-based violence; violence against women; violence against girls, boys and trans-children; violence among men and boys; violence in armed conflict; violence against human rights defenders; caregiving and fatherhood; gender and the global political economy; sexual and reproductive health and rights; sexual and gender diversities and sexual rights (LGBTIQ); men’s and boys’ gender vulnerabilities and health needs; sexual exploitation; HIV and AIDS; youth and adolescents; the education sector; work with religious and other leaders; environment and sustainability; and strengthening the evidence base.

- 10 The Post-2015 Development Agenda must embrace a human rights approach and transform unequal power relations. We believe that achieving gender justice requires the engagement of men and boys – for the benefit of women and girls, for men and boys themselves, for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. For a world that is just, safe and sustainable. We advocate for all activists, civil society organisations, private sector partners, governments and UN agencies to actively promote these principles and ensure that the new international development agenda is just and inclusive.

## ABOUT MENENGAGE

MenEngage is an alliance of NGOs working together with men and boys to promote gender equality.

MenEngage members work collectively and individually toward advancing gender justice, human rights and social justice to achieve a world in which all can enjoy healthy, fulfilling and equitable relationships and their full potential. The network consists of hundreds of organizations across the world, as well as international organizations and UN partners. There are 34 autonomous country networks and 6 regional networks.

MenEngage seeks to provide a collective voice on the need to engage men and boys in gender equality, to build and improve the field of practice around engaging men in achieving gender justice, and advocating before policymakers at the local, national, regional and international levels.

We are committed to working as allies with women and women's rights organizations to achieve gender justice for women and girls, and are dedicated to promoting cultures of masculinity that respect sexual diversity and the sexual and reproductive rights of all.

### *Sharing information and resources*

Members of our networks bring unique skills to the table based on their experience in their communities and countries. We share ideas and resources in order to ensure that we all are stronger.

### *Changing perceptions*

In order for the world to change, people must change. Our member organizations work with individuals in communities around the world to create new ideas about gender, masculinity and to learn healthier ways to relate to each other.

### *Organizing & advocating*

To move forward on gender equality goals and objectives, it is critical to bring communities and governments along with us and change laws and norms in addition to hearts and minds.

### *Key issues*

MenEngage members advocate around key issues where gender directly affects the lives of women and men. These are topic areas in which MenEngage members exchange ideas and carry out joint advocacy activities, including:

- » Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights
- » Increasing HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment
- » Ending violence against women and girls
- » Combating homophobia/transphobia and advocating for LGBTI rights
- » Reducing forms of violence between men and boys
- » Preventing child sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and trafficking
- » Supporting men's positive involvement in maternal and child health, as fathers or caregivers
- » Addressing macro-level policies that perpetuate gender inequalities

Check out more information about our regions, including contact details, at:

[www.menengage.org/regions](http://www.menengage.org/regions)

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### **BECOME A MEMBER**

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