



## 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: 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.

# DELHI CALL TO ACTION :

## EXAMPLES OF HOW TO ADDRESS GAPS



### BRING WORK WITH MEN AND BOYS FROM THE PROGRAMME AND PROJECT LEVEL INTO POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS.

The personal is political, and vice-versa. Accelerating change, moving from the personal to the structural, requires reaching larger numbers of men and boys. We have to put systems in place which ensure that institutions and individuals are held accountable for gender equality. We must change systems and institutions, including government, schools, families, the health sector, and the workplace, because they play a critical role in creating and maintaining gender norms and have the potential to reach large numbers of individuals.

We call for the reexamination of systems and institutions, including education and training, workplace behaviours and policies, legislation, management of public spaces, operation of faith-based institutions, and prevailing social norms.

Policies and legal reform can institutionalise more gender-equitable relations in homes and offices, factories and fields, in government and on the street. Therefore we must:

- » Develop, implement and monitor policies to engage men and boys in gender equality, and build state capacity to implement those policies.
- » Actively advance institutional and governmental policies that address the social and structural determinants of gender inequalities, including through advocacy work.
- » Train staff to implement these policies.
- » Create public awareness campaigns to transform men's and boys' perceptions of gender roles.

### PROMOTE GENDER EQUITABLE SOCIALIZATION

We are deeply concerned about the gender socialisation of girls and boys that begins at a very early age, hindering the achievement of their full potential and inhibiting full realisation of their rights. We strongly believe that all parents—especially fathers—must demonstrate sensitivity and equitable and just behaviour, especially to boys, starting at home and school.

Reaching out to boys during their critically important formative stages will contribute to realising a new generation of men with more positive behaviours toward women, children, men and trans-people. It is vital to sensitise and involve boys and girls from early childhood and continue involving them as adolescents, preparing them to become gender sensitive, equitable and caring adults.



Examples of specific policy areas and actions for engaging boys and men in gender justice include:

- » Empowering children and young people to develop and foster gender transformative behaviour to help break the cycle of violence; and mobilise them as agents of change.
- » Developing comprehensive sexuality education and primary prevention of gender-based violence (GBV) as an integral part of school curricula, including human rights, gender equality, and sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- » Creating curricula that challenge gender stereotypes and encourage critical thinking.
- » Training teachers and administrators to provide gender-sensitive learning environments.
- » Utilising life-cycle and socioecological based strategies, beginning in early childhood and continuing with adolescents, to prepare them to be gender sensitive, equal and caring adults.

## **ENGAGE BOYS AND MEN IN THE PREVENTION OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)**

Men and boys perpetuate the majority of GBV, even as they themselves are harmed by it. Rigid gender norms socialise boys and men to respond to conflict with violence and to dominate their partners. Men and boys are simultaneously victims of violence and perpetrators. A frequent contributing factor to men's perpetration of GBV is having experienced or witnessed violence while growing up; the effects of this on men and boys must be addressed. Moreover, it is essential to work with men and boys to transform the social norms that perpetuate GBV, and to understand and address the root causes of gender inequality. These include unequal power relations, practices and stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination against women and girls, sexual minorities and non-gender conforming people, and promoting alternative role models for boys.

- » Engaging men and boys to be more equitable in their own lives and to reject all forms of violence, including domestic violence and harmful practices such as child marriage and forced marriage, gender-biased sex selection, and female genital mutilation.
- » Encouraging men and boys to question pervasive and structural inequalities.
- » Promoting policies that integrate engaging men and boys into primary prevention of GBV.
- » Developing policies to engage men and boys in making public spaces free of violence for women and girls.
- » Designing programmes for male perpetrators that are integrated with the judicial sector and victim advocacy and provide legal, financial and psychosocial support for survivors and witnesses of violence.
- » Implementing gun control.



## ENGAGE MEN AS FATHERS AND CAREGIVERS AND IN TAKING EQUAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNPAID CARE WORK:

Evidence shows that when fathers are involved with their children at an early stage, including in the prenatal period, the likelihood is greater that they will remain connected to their children throughout their lives. Given that women and girls carry out two to ten times more care work than men and boys, there is a need to achieve men's and boys' equal participation in care work; and women's participation in the paid work force with equal pay. This can only be accomplished when care work is fully shared.

Examples of specific policy areas and actions for engaging men in taking equal responsibility for unpaid care work include:

- » Promoting shared responsibility within the household and families, and via public services and social protection policies that support families.
- » Reducing and redistributing unpaid care work, to allow women, in particular, more time for other pursuits such as self-care, education, political participation and paid work; redistributing care-work from poorer households to the state by financing, providing and regulating care services.
- » Promoting the equal sharing of unpaid care work between men and women and to change the attitudes that reinforce the gendered division of labour, to reduce the disproportionate share of unpaid care work for women and girls.
- » Promoting more progressive paternity leave policies.
- » Implementing public awareness campaigns and education to transform men's perceptions of caregiving roles.
- » Supporting fatherhood preparation courses and campaigns that focus on men's roles in the lives of children can address fathers' reported feelings of being unprepared for caregiving and help them see the benefits of greater participation.



## ENGAGE MEN AS SUPPORTIVE PARTNERS, CLIENTS AND POSITIVE AGENTS OF CHANGE IN SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR)

Throughout the world, SRHR are largely considered the sole responsibility of women. At the same time, many men neglect their own SRHR needs and those of their partners and their families. Men's lower use of SRH services, such as HIV testing and treatment, is a result of rigid gender norms as well as structural barriers, such as clinics that are ill-prepared to address male-specific health issues. 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 places expensive and unnecessary burdens on health-care systems. Interventions with men and boys around SRHR have been effective at increasing men's use of services, as well as their support and respect for their partner's SRHR. This involvement, in turn, improves the health of women, children and men themselves.

Examples of specific policy areas and actions for engaging men as supportive partners, clients and positive agents of change in SRHR include:

- » Promoting accessible sexual and reproductive health services and rights for women.
- » Engaging men and boys in the transformation of rigid norms that shape sexual and reproductive health outcomes, and enabling them to seek information and services that address their own sexual and reproductive health needs.
- » Providing comprehensive sexuality education that promotes critical reflection about gender norms, healthy relations, and power inequalities.
- » Promoting men's and boys' shared responsibilities around sexual and reproductive behaviour and rights.
- » Expanding the availability and use of male contraceptive methods and STI-prevention.
- » Creating spaces for men to take their share of responsibility in prenatal and child health services.



**MenEngage**

Working with boys and men for gender equality

[www.menengagedilli2014.net](http://www.menengagedilli2014.net) and [www.menengage.org](http://www.menengage.org)