The 60th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) was held from 14-24 March 2016, at the UN Headquarters in New York.

CSW60 was a vital opportunity for those working for the realization of gender equality, human rights and empowerment of all women and girls to share experiences, learn about others’ approaches and gain inspiration, build partnerships, and influence government delegates and UN agencies to contribute to real change in the lives of women and girls around the world. MenEngage was well-represented through the participation of members of the Global Secretariat, the Alliance and partners.

We acknowledge that there are many people around the world who were unable to attend the event. We have compiled this report to share the experience of MenEngage Alliance at CSW60 with our members and partners. Through links to materials such as outcome documents, speeches and videos, we hope to bring the CSW to life and enhance the access of everyone around the world to what happened at the event.

Thanks for reading this report, and do not hesitate to reach out by sharing more of your own news, your thoughts, your suggestions, your next points of action.

**SUMMARY**

- Broad support from governments around the world for progressive approaches, including the recognition of the contribution of feminist organizations, commitment to increased financing for gender equality and the inclusion of several paragraphs on engaging men and boys in the commissions agreed conclusions, which reference the need to work with men and boys as partners, to transform harmful social norms and attitudes and to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work. Page 1

- Active participation of young people in this year’s CSW. The first ever CSW Youth Forum took place and resulted in a Youth Declaration. The forum included a panel on engaging boys and young men, and MenEngage Alliance was represented by Hassan Joumaa, a young activist from Lebanon. Other important contributions by young people were the first ever oral statement to the commission by a youth representative and a written statement by the Young Feminists Caucus. Page 6

- A number of successful side events organized by MenEngage Alliance together with members and partners such as ABAAD, AWID, Breakthrough, DAWN, MenCare campaign, Rutgers and WILPF. Page 9
This year’s priority theme was “Women’s empowerment and its link to sustainable development”. It was a relevant test of world leaders’ commitments to the implementation and financing of the Agenda 2030, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), agreed upon last September. Particularly the specific goal to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (SDG-5), and the commitment to the systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Agenda (paragraph 20 of the SDGs). The Agenda is relevant to all of us, as it will heavily influence governments’ domestic and foreign policies in the coming years, including what financial resources they will devote to gender equality programming.

MenEngage Alliance Written Advocacy Statement

In advance of the meeting, MenEngage shared the Alliance’s key advocacy messages in a written statement, developed in partnership with Rutgers. We formulated concrete recommendations to strengthen a gender transformative framework for sustainable development, including:

• Scale up evidence-based gender-transformative interventions to prevent violence against women and girls while working in strategic partnerships with key public sector actors and civil society.

• Scale up programmes and policies to reduce and redistribute unpaid care work, encourage greater contributions to caregiving by men and boys, and improve parental leave and other state support for child care.

• Integrate attention to engaging men and boys as partners and allies in the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

• Improve attention to men’s health and needs within national policies and guidelines, as well as UN and international agreements.

• Ensure implementation of SDG target 4.7, which states that all learners need to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including education about human rights and gender equality.

• Implement, as part of SDG targets 3.7 and 4.7, comprehensive sexuality education, with reference to gender and engagement of boys and young men, alongside empowerment of girls and young women.

• Ensure positive roles for men and boys in changing attitudes towards male and female survivors of gender-based violence in interventions in conflict and post-conflict settings.

We encourage you to use these messages in your advocacy with government and civil society at country and regional levels.
Negotiations & Advocacy

Throughout the two weeks government representatives and feminist civil society groups emphasized that the goals will not be achieved without the full empowerment of all women and girls and stressed the importance of leaving no one behind in the implementation of Agenda 2030. In their country statements, several government representatives brought up issues such as the need to ensure the human rights of the growing number of refugee and migrant women, increasing women’s contribution in peace and security efforts and combatting religious and political fundamentalisms that deny women their human rights.

Several countries, such as Iceland, Colombia and Sweden, mentioned the important role of men and boys in their speeches, and Brazilian Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, the Chair of the commission in his opening statement remarked:

“Realizing gender equality is a truly universal task, a common challenge for men and women in all corners of the world. Women’s activism has successfully reshaped their reality worldwide. As a man, I support this cause and feel encouraged by the increasing number of men working alongside women towards our common gender equality goals.”

Agreed Conclusions on “Women’s empowerment and its link to sustainable development”

The CSW has resulted in a set of Agreed Conclusions in which governments commit to stronger laws, policies and institutions, better data and increased financing for gender equality. They span a wide variety of themes related to sustainable development and commit governments to a gender-responsive implementation of all 17 goals, and across government programmes and policies at all levels.

“The Commission welcomes the commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognizes that women play a vital role as agents of development and acknowledges that realizing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is crucial to progress across all Sustainable Development Goals and targets. The Commission stresses that the achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if women and girls continue to be denied the full realization of their human rights and opportunities”. (Paragraph 7)

Transforming unequal power relations & engaging men and boys

We were pleased to see that the need to engage men and boys in women’s rights and gender equality is included, as well as the need to transform harmful social norms and attitudes, and the need to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work.

“The Commission recognizes the importance of fully engaging men and boys as agents and beneficiaries of change in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and as allies in the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, as well as in the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and in the gender responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” [Paragraph 22]

The Commission called on governments to:

“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 both in 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 equal sharing of
The Commission acknowledged that Agenda 2030 requires the full inclusion of women in the formal economy which involves changing the current gender-based division of labor to ensure that unpaid care and domestic work is shared equally between men and women. It urges governments to:

“Undertake all appropriate measures to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work by prioritizing social protection policies, including accessible and affordable quality social services, and care services for children, persons with disabilities, older persons and persons living with HIV and AIDS, and all others in need of care, and promote the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men”. [paragraph 23.g]

MenEngage also organized and participated in an official side event on this topic called Sharing the Care during CSW.

Read the full text of the Agreed Conclusions here.

Resolutions on HIV/AIDS, Palestinian Women and CSW working methods

The commission adopted a resolution on ‘Women, the Girl Child, and HIV/AIDS’ in which it calls for stepped up efforts and financing to end the global epidemic, including through the reduction of obstacles that limit the capacity of low and middle-income countries to provide affordable and effective HIV prevention and treatment products by 2030. The declaration acknowledges the links between gender inequality, unequal power relations, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS, which falls disproportionately on young women and girls, and highlighted the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality.

Read the draft of the full text here.

We welcome the attention at CSW for engaging men and boys as part of the agenda for transformation of harmful social norms and unequal power relations as a valuable contribution to the realization of gender equality, human rights and empowerment of all women and girls. MenEngage Alliance continues to believe that work with men and boys is not a ‘silver bullet’ for achieving gender equality. It should not replace work with women and girls, or divert funds from women-focused and/or women-led activities, including in particular support for small- and medium-size women’s rights organizations.

Programs and policies that engage men and boys should be developed in dialogue and collaboration with women’s rights organizations. To that end, MenEngage has initiated its Accountability & Partnership Building Programme, and organized events at CSW such as It Takes Two to Tango.

For the Platform for Action, please see here.

Another adopted resolution addresses “Multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women” in which priority and review themes are agreed on for the coming three years. MenEngage Alliance welcomes the priority theme for 2017: “Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work”. We hope this theme will lead to a fruitful discussion including on how to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work.

You can read the resolution here.

A third resolution was adopted on “The Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women”, which you can read here.
Despite a number of positive outcomes mentioned above, we share the concerns voiced by feminist organizations and activists about the lack of progress in some areas, and the fact that several governments continue trying to backtrack on previous commitments and water down progressive language.

The lack of recognition of sexual and reproductive health and rights is particularly contentious. Several conservative delegations such as Russia, the African bloc of countries and the Holy See (the representation of the Vatican at the UN) inhibited the inclusion of the rights of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. This is particularly worrying as the UN Human Rights Council and the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights have previously recognized these rights, for example in resolutions here and here. The reference to abortion in the agreed conclusions is also extremely disappointing, as it calls on governments to ensure access to quality sexual and reproductive health services, including ‘safe abortion, where such services are permitted by national law’. This is very disheartening, particularly as abortion has been recognized as a universal human right by the UN Human Rights committee earlier this year in this landmark case. Reference to Comprehensive Sexuality Education is also absent from the agreed conclusions, although it is included in the declaration on HIV/AIDS.

Based on the difficult political landscape at this year’s CSW, we call on all governments to fulfill international human rights standards and strive harder to uphold the human rights of all citizens. We are committed to organizing ourselves, working together with women’s rights and other social justice movements, supporting governments to develop and implement progressive agendas and holding them accountable.

We truly believe that when men can see the patriarchal roles they have been given, how much violence has taken a place in their lives, and when they can rid themselves of these roles they will benefit and the women in their lives will benefit.

- Anthony Keedi (ABAAD)
2. YOUTH PARTICIPATION

CSW Youth Forum
One of the most exciting features of this year’s CSW was the first-ever CSW Youth Forum, a two-day event which brought together more than 300 young people from around the globe to share ideas on achieving gender equality and encourage governments to take the needs of the world’s youth into account in their negotiations. Delegates discussed the key theme ‘Advancing Agenda 2030 - Empowered Young Women and Young Men as Partners in Achieving Gender Equality’.

“This is a defining moment when women and youth make an alliance... with the potential to change the world,” said UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka in her opening remarks. The Youth Forum comes as increased efforts are being made to engage the world’s 1.8 billion young people aged 10-24 in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Throughout the forum delegates stressed the urgency of achieving gender equality and the Sustainable Development Goals and emphasised that young people are not simply ‘the leaders of tomorrow’, but leaders who are already advocating for, and achieving, real change in their society.

Our MenEngage Alliance youth representative, Hassan Joumaa from Lebanon, participated in the forum. Hassan, pictured below (center), is a community outreach mobilizer with ABAAD-Resource Centre for Gender Equality in Beirut. He participated as a panelist in the "engaging boys and young men in gender equality" session held on the first day of the CSW Youth Forum, and supported the ManUp campaign representative on the second day. These constructive and reflective sessions dealt with how young men understand masculinities and their own vulnerabilities vis-à-vis gender norms throughout their lives. Hassan shared his own personal and professional experiences and discussed how to change the media and the private sector’s perpetuation of gender stereotypes, how to use technology to raise awareness and enhance activism among youth, and the need to engage boys from an early age in gender equality and provide them with positive role-models of men in non-traditional roles.

Read Hassan's own reflections on his CSW experience here.
Youth Declaration

The forum concluded with the adoption of a Youth Declaration, which encompass a wide range of themes, from ending gender-based violence to preventing climate change to gender inequality in sports. It is a progressive and inclusive document, which emphasizes the rights and needs of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, as well as other minority groups such as indigenous peoples and the disabled. It calls for universal access to sexual and reproductive health services including safe and legal abortion and calls on faith-based leaders to reassess religious beliefs and practices that degrade women and girls.

The declaration highlights the importance of youth representation and participation in decision-making at all levels to ensure the development of youth-friendly policies. It also places importance on the active participation of boys and young men in achieving gender equality, and the need to eliminate harmful social norms and gender stereotypes, and promote positive masculinities and femininities. The forum encouraged governments to:

"Recognize that young men and boys can use and share their power and privilege to end patriarchy, shift socio-cultural norms, and adopt, promote and respect an intersectional approach to gender equality that recognizes the intersecting nature of racism, sexism, colonialism, patriarchy, ableism and gender inequality in order to achieve gender equality, social justice, and the human rights of all young women and girls."

The critical role of the education of young men was also highlighted. The forum called on governments to:

"Support and resource formal, non-formal, and informal education that supports all young men and boys to act in solidarity to achieve gender equality and all human rights of all young women and girls, to practice healthy relationships based on consent and end gender-based and sexual violence in all its forms, and to promote positive masculinities and femininities. Take the example from youth-led and feminist organizations that are doing this work and ensure meaningful mentorship for young men and boys who are engaged in solidarity work for gender equality."

Young Feminist Statement

Another important contribution from young people was the written statement by the Young Feminist Caucus. The statement also emphasizes diversity, the importance of sexual and reproductive health and rights, and the importance of youth participation. It urges governments to:

"Ensure the full realization of sexual and reproductive rights through the repeal of discriminatory laws and policies such as parental and spousal consent laws, laws that criminalize abortion, and laws that criminalize individuals on the basis of age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sexual practices, HIV status and transmission, and labour choices, including sex work."

And concludes:

"We call on governments to recognize that we, as young people, are rights-holders as well as experts in our own experiences. We are not "vulnerable", we are not a "dividend" to cash in on, we are not "the future"; we are here. We ask that our voices be heard and that our agency over our bodies, our lives, and our communities be acknowledged."

Read the full statement here
The SDGs are about our lives NOW and our collective tomorrow......we stand with you in finding innovative and lasting solutions to achieve gender equality by 2030. HER-story was created now!

- Vanessa Anyoti
3. EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

MenEngage Alliance Caucus Meetings

The Alliance organized three ‘caucus meetings’ for members and partners to get together during CSW, on Monday 14, Thursday 17, and Tuesday 22 March. These sessions were spaces for MenEngage Alliance members and partners to meet, reflect on trends at CSW, develop joint advocacy messages and strategies and strengthen the outcomes and the discourse of this year’s commission. For example, we assessed specifically the language in the agreed conclusions on engaging men and boys, and collectively decided to advice against the inclusion of “men as beneficiaries” because the term could be misinterpreted at country level and justify programs which focus on engaging men and boys as beneficiaries in isolated manners, while we would like to enhance gender transformative programmes with men and women, girls and boys. Furthermore, there is already more action oriented language in paragraph 7 of the Agreed Conclusions.
The panel highlighted the need to recognize unpaid care and domestic work in a fair economic system, reduce the burden of this work through the provision of child care and flexible working policies, and redistribute equally between men and women. The event was well-attended and prompted discussion on how to get the issue of unpaid care on the agenda of finance ministries, as well as how to shift cultural norms to value care work. Panellists also highlighted the importance of working with the private sector to develop childcare and flexible leave policies and of raising children, both girls and boys, to take part in domestic and care work from an early age.

The event included the official launch of the MenCare Parental Leave Platform: "Ten ways to leave gender inequality behind and give our children the care they need", which you can read in full [here](#). In order to show broad support for this initiative, we encourage you to include your organization’s name/logo on the Parental Leave Platform and its webpage (info@men-care.org).
Implementing the Women, Peace & Security Agenda: A Roadmap for the 1325 Global Study Recommendations
Tuesday March 15th, 2016

This half-day conference brought together more than 150 participants to discuss the recently-conducted global study on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, map obstacles and build strategies to strengthen implementation and accountability on the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Madeleine Rees called for a paradigm shift on militarism and action for transformational rather than incremental change.

MenEngage members including Dean Peacock (Sonke Gender justice, plenary reporter), Abhijit Das (CHSJ and MenEngage Global Co-Chair) and Joni van de Sand (MenEngage Global Coordinator) actively participated in the working group on "Addressing Militarization and Violent Masculinities". This group suggested a range of recommendations, including encouraging educational and leadership training for men, women, boys and girls, which reinforces and supports non-violent, non-militarized expressions of masculinity.

The Power of Stories in Preventing Violence Against Women: from Local to Global
Friday March 18th 2016

This inspiring event brought together activists from all over the world to share their stories of how they became active to transform gender norms, and launched 'The G Word', an online global storytelling platform organized by Breakthrough. The panel included a story from the daughter of Honduran human rights defender Berta Cáceres, who was brutally murdered earlier in the month. James Itana, coordinator of MenEngage Namibia, represented the Alliance and shared his vision of a patriarchy free world. Lynn Harris from Breakthrough then spoke about how to use personal stories as a tool for social change and audience members shared their stories.
It Takes Two to Tango: A Conversation About How to Work Together on a Joint Agenda for Gender Justice with Women’s Organizations and Engaging Men & Boys Field
Friday March 18th 2016

The conversation focused on partnership-building between those working in the field of women’s rights and empowerment, and those working with men and boys. These approaches are often combined and carried out by the same organizations and actors. Panelists discussed the changing landscape of the field of gender justice and their own experiences with partnership and made recommendations for the formation of a joint agenda.

Key takeaways include that the two movements are working on the same agenda and should not be separated; programs should engage men and women together; there remains a concern about work with men and boys taking financing and political space from work with women and girls; programs that work with men and boys should be accountable to women’s organizations; and trust-building is needed between the two groups in order to enhance joint impact.

In Nigeria after training women on peacebuilding they asked us “What is next? Now we have our space to interact, but how does that bring us to the decision making table, if we are not working with the men? We learned that we can’t advance empowerment of women, if we don’t work through their relations, including with men.

- Joy Ada Onyesoh (WILPF)

Organized by:
- MenEngage Alliance

Together with:
- the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Breakthrough, the Center for the Study of Men and Masculinities and the Resource Centre for Gender Equality (ABAAD).

Moderator: Joni van de Sand (MenEngage Global Coordinator)

Panelists: Phoebe Schreiner from Breakthrough; Joy Onyesoh from WILPF; Cliff Leek from Stony Brook University; Anthony Keedi from ABAAD; Kerryn Rehse from MenCare+ Mosaic and Wessel van den Berg from Sonke Gender Justice.

WATCH THE FULL EVENT HERE
Expert session on Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA); link and learn from reflections and lessons learned from MenCare+
Monday March 21st 2016

The session included interactive discussions with academics, program managers and advocates in the field of gender justice including Nikki van der Gaag, author of 'Men and Feminism', Kate Doyle from Promundo and Jeroen Lorist, Siska Dewi Noya and Ilze Smit, all from Rutgers. It explored how Gender Transformative Approaches (GTAs) that seek to reshape gender relations and eliminate harmful social norms can contribute to sustainable development and gender equality. Panelists discussed some of the challenges in implementing GTAs and made recommendations to policy makers seeking to implement such programs. The event also showcased MenCare+, a three-year, four-country program based on GTA which engages men ages 15-35 as partners in maternal, new-born, and child health and in sexual and reproductive health and rights.

When Women's Health & Empowerment Meets Masculinities: An Intensive, Interactive Case Study Course in Africa to Build Advocacy and Leadership Skills,
Monday March 21st

This event presented a training course on 'Women's Health, Masculinities and Empowerment' organized by MenEngage Africa, Sonke Gender Justice and the University of California's Centre of Expertise on Women's Health Empowerment. The short course took place over two weeks from 1 – 16 September at Kenyatta University, Nairobi, and attracted 30 professionals, trainers and activists from the health, legal, research and human rights disciplines. All participants had a specific focus on advocating for improvements in women's health, advancement and gender transformation.
Empowering Women and Men to Prevent Violence and Promote Health Together

Monday March 21st

This event examined current practices and the latest research on a new generation of “gender synchronized” programs that are engaging young and adult men and women to challenge gender norms and catalyze the achievement of gender equality and improved sexual and reproductive health. Margaret Greene spoke about this concept – the intentional intersection of gender-transformative efforts reaching women, girls, men and boys of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Fabio Verani described a study developed by EngenderHealth in Ethiopia that is measuring the impact of a gender transformative group education approach applied together with the traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony. Jenifer DeAtley of shared preliminary results of the Gender Matters Project, an intervention study taking place in Austin Texas with 14-16 year old urban youth of color, that applies a gender-synchronized approach to young peoples’ sexual health and relationships. Ruti Levto presented about a Bandebereho/MenCare+ couples’ intervention in Rwanda which engages new and expecting fathers and their partners in a 15-week gender-transformative group education process. Read more about gender-synchronized approaches

From the Istanbul Convention to implementation:
addressing violence against women with different approaches and at different levels,

Tuesday March 22nd

On this panel about the Istanbul Convention on violence against women, Juliana Nikolova spoke about her work campaigning for the government of Macedonia to sign and ratify the convention. Patricia Olamendi gave an insight into the high levels of violence against women in Mexico and called for a Latin American, or even global, version of the convention. Fouzia El Bayed spoke of a commission she has started to develop a convention for the Arab world, and Jeroen Lorist spoke about Rutgers’ new Prevention+ program and stressed the importance of involving men in the fight against gender-based violence at an individual, family, institutional and policy level. All participants agreed that international legislation is necessary, but at the same time education and a change of attitude in local authorities is also crucial in order to prevent violence against women.
In Conversation with #ImamsForShe Champions: Workshops on Tackling Violence against Women and Girls Together, Wednesday March 23rd

This series of interactive workshops brought together #ImamsForShe champions and women’s rights defenders and activists who were tasked to resolve real case studies of discrimination and violence against women. Participants discussed issues such as stoning, early and forced marriages, inheritance, female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C), interpretation of Islamic scripture and traditions that have led to human rights violations carried out in the name of Islam against women and girls, and demonstrated that women’s rights can be promoted using international human rights law and Shari’a. The critical importance of working with Islamic leaders to achieve gender equality and preventing extremism was underlined. Speaker Khadija T. Moalla stressed that “we can afford not to work with religious leaders”, and “creating safe spaces & building trust is key when working with religious leaders”.

For more information about the MenEngage Alliance please go to:

www.menengage.org
@menengage
contact@menengage.org

The MenEngage Alliance is dedicated to working collectively and individually for gender justice, human rights, and social justice.

We are a global alliance made up of dozens of country networks spread across many regions of the world, hundreds of non-governmental organizations, as well as UN partners.

Through our country-level and 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.