The **engagement with men and boys** is one of the crucial areas of work in UN Women. As part of a broader effort to mobilize necessary “new constituencies” and culture-changing, innovative approaches in strengthening the global social justice movement for gender equality, the strategic effort consists in strengthening men and boys’ role in transforming power dynamics that still perpetuate gender inequality at all levels, and to integrate this work with the work of other constituencies (faith based organizations, trade unions, youth) across the spectrum of areas of focus that pertain to the achievement of gender equality by 2030.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which was an outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), emphasized the principle of shared power and responsibility among women and men at home and in the workplace. Other landmark documents such as the outcomes of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and the 48th and 57th sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (2004, 2013) but not only, encouraged men and boys to fully participate in actions to achieve gender equality.

More than twenty years after Beijing, thanks to the multiple reviews that were organized for the Beijing +20 anniversary, we know that while the women’s movement must continue to lead the revolution for gender equality, engaging men in challenging the structures, beliefs, practices and institutions that sustain their own privileges and inequitable norms, has become an urgency.

UN Women’s efforts in engaging men and boys are anchored in the belief that achieving gender equality is about transforming unequal power relations among men and women and that this is an all- of- society endeavour. This involves challenging notions of masculinity and traditional perceptions of manhood and male privilege. It requires men to take responsibility for changing those dynamics recognizing that masculinities can and do change over time, across and within settings and are not a unique rigid pattern of social behaviours. This transformation frees both genders to make choices in life. Providing, care giving, community roles, responsibility, leadership, become shared endeavours towards a common idea of citizenship that ultimately benefits all. Transformation entails reframing the discourse of gender equality as relations *among* men and women, to be more egalitarian. Gender related power inequalities interact with other social inequalities: how gender norms affect both men and women help us better engage men and boys in reflections and actions about inequalities and change.

In this context, UN Women is engaging men and boys at all levels: normative, policy, advocacy and programmatic.

At **normative and policy level**, engaging men and boys in gender equality is integral to the new 2030 Agenda across goals and targets, promoting women’s empowerment and strengthening human rights, in respect of universality and leaving no one behind. Gender inequalities are defined by controlling formsof power, and power is shaped by social identities, including gender, age, religion, nationality, race, etc. Efforts to increase women’s empowerment and promote gender equality seek to promote alternative forms of power, utilizing individual and collective strengths to work towards common goals without coercion or domination.

To ensure a better coherence and integration of specific needs and contextual realities in the policy and programmatic approaches for engagement, rather than focusing on men and boys as a target group, UN Women’s work on men and boys is more deeply and organically integrated in a comprehensive approach

that addresses the main areas of work with stronger interlinkages. Through strong long-term partnerships with MenEngage Alliance and other civil society organizations, a series of initiatives on fostering dialogue, collaboration and commitment to action among constituencies and stakeholders in crisis affected countries on plurality, peace and solidarity are also part of these efforts.

UN Women’s **advocacy work** on men and boys is led by the [HeForShe campaign](http://www.heforshe.org/), launched during the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2014. The HeForShe solidarity movement was created by UN Women to provide a systematic approach and targeted platform where a global audience can engage and become change agents for the achievement of gender equality in our lifetime.

The campaign aims to mobilize men and boys globally to stand up and take action for the achievement of gender equality.

HeForShe mobilizes individual men and boys online and offline through the “sign up” approach that encourages increasing engagement, from initial awareness to advocacy to action, with actions being recorded and shared through the website. To date, men from almost every country in the world have signed up.

HeForShe also works closely with Member States, UN bodies, corporations, and non-governmental organizations to achieve the objectives of the campaign, targeting the actions, partnerships, and leadership that can achieve the greatest possible change momentum.

Through the [HeForShe IMPACT 10X10X10 pilot initiative](http://www.heforshe.org/strategy/), governments, corporations and universities were engaged as instruments of change positioned within some of the communities that most need to address deficiencies in women’s empowerment and gender equality and that have the greatest capacity to make and influence those changes.

UN Women has a number of **programmes and initiatives** addressing issues of masculinities and the role of men and boys. These programmes aim to move the agenda from changing individual masculinities to challenging the structures and institutions that sustain patriarchy and gender inequalities at different levels.

As an example, in 2017, across Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Georgia, Palestine, Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Niger, Kosovo, Brazil and Moldova, such programmes concentrated on legal and policy reforms and implementation of prevention of and response strategies and plans to eliminate violence against women; capacity building initiatives, trainings, awareness raising, sensitization activities and campaigns (related to HeForShe and the 16 days of activism), art therapy, media and advertising, and sports; strengthening of multisectoral coordinated response and accessibility to comprehensive services in stable and crisis settings, sexual and reproductive health, combating gender norms and stereotypes and harmful practices, promoting non violent masculinities, women’s political participation, access to land and education in schools. Such initiatives involve local and national institutions and work with men and boys in communities, police, judges, lawyers, firemen, teachers, officers in institutions and companies, ministries and local leaders.

In the **MENA region**, UN Women and Promundo launched the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES MENA), covering more than 10.000 women and men in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine - a first study of its kind to explore men’s and women’s attitudes and practices towards gender equality in the region, as well as the effects of conflict and displacement on masculinities.

The study revealed that while a majority of men surveyed in the four contexts have a traditional view of gender roles - where the man's duty is to provide for the family and the women’s duty is to take care of the home and the children - a sizable number acknowledge and support women’s equality in many aspects of public and private life.

The research findings were presented and discussed at a number of regional and international conferences, meetings and seminars, including by UN Women at the Global MenCare meeting in Belgrade in June 2017 and by both UN Women and Promundo at the “Development Talks” organized by Sida in Stockholm.

Based on the data and the key recommendations from IMAGES MENA, a number of programming, communication and advocacy tools, building on the research findings have been completed. Infographs for social media use and several films portraying “gender equal men’ have been produced mainly focusing on IMAGES findings. Furthermore, Virtual Reality (VR) films have been developed on fatherhood, “the cycle of violence/violence breeds violence” and on sexual harassment – which aims to put male viewers in women’s shoes. Viewers’ reactions on these films will be documented and compiled into a documentary.

Summary of key achievements include:

* Uptake by over 400 media outlets and received international attention including CNN, BBC, The Guardian, the Economist and the New York Times, and almost all key regional media outlets, along with national media coverage for the 2 IMAGES MENA launches;
* Already informed UN Women’s strategic documents and proposals;
* Referenced by other organizations (in the region and beyond) and included in their key documents such as concept notes, project proposals, etc;
* The National Council for Women in Egypt integrated engaging men and boys in gender equality in the National Women Empowerment Strategy- Vision 2030
* The Because I am a Man online campaign’s views and reactions crossed 2 million viewers (Egypt and Morocco) and has been endorsed by various public figures
* National research partners committed to incorporate IMAGES MENA into university courses and upcoming research.

As a follow up to the IMAGES MENA recommendations, UN Women is developing a media monitoring tool for examining how women, girls, boys and men are portrayed in the media followed by guidelines for engaging with media content producers. In addition, UN Women is holding discussions with key media

outlets to sensitize them on the key IMAGES MENA findings, which could be used as a starting point for further engagement with the media sector during the new phase of the programme.

A business case on “engaging men in gender equality” in the private sector is being finalized in early 2018, as a starting point for further engagement with the private sector and for identifying male business leaders to take actions for gender equality.

*Annexed Documentation – see files attached in the body of the email as pdf.*