

Margaret Greene – 3 minutes

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The problem

- Formal greeting of those present – madam chair, your highness, your excellencies, ambassador, distinguished representatives of xx, etc., I am honored to have this opportunity to speak to you today.
- Over the past two years of COVID-19 and the resulting global economic decline, progress toward full equality for women and girls has been sharply set back. Evidence from every quarter has documented increases in care inequalities, in child marriage, in men's violence against women and other areas during the pandemic.
- Globally, women perform three to ten times as much unpaid care and domestic work as men. They also make up 70 percent of the global paid care workforce but occupy only 25 percent of senior roles in that system. The *State of the World's Fathers* report produced by Equimundo and Sonke estimates that at the current rate of change, the world is at least 91 years away from achieving equality in unpaid care work between men and women.

One solution

- In this context, where progress has stalled or even reversed, it is imperative to ask: **Where are men on gender equality?**
- The value of engaging men and boys more fully in gender equality is captured in two **SDG principles**: First, universality, recognizing that norms of masculinity pose similar challenges in virtually every setting in the world, rich or poor, even if those challenges differ in degree of intensity. And second, synergy, recognizing that men's greater engagement in gender equality will improve outcomes across a **range of outcomes** in development and human wellbeing.

Role of data

- **Data from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey** (or IMAGES) global data set, led by Equimundo and the International Center for Research on Women, can drive progress toward more equitable, caring, and nonviolent versions of manhood. Fifteen years of data from 32 countries give us a global picture of men's gender attitudes and practices.
- **Families that model** household domination by men can often normalize the idea that men's dominance and prominence is the way "things should be." Conversely, families in which men practice equality in the home and where mothers model household authority and economic engagement outside the home are likely destined to enjoy more equitable relationships.

- Men's gender inequitable attitudes and behaviors are harmful to women and children. And the IMAGES data show clearly that these attitudes and the risks to which they expose men are **costing men** their quality of life, their relationships, their health and longevity –, causing them to die an average of 6 years earlier than women.
- Gender inequitable attitudes and practices are **commonplace and slow to change** – but they can change if men are willing. Indeed, masculinities are shifting but are also constrained by larger political and structural influences, including economic exploitation, social marginalization, nationalism, militarism and endemic violence.

Conclusion

- Just as gender inequality and restrictive gender norms slow progress across the Sustainable Development Goals, so too could **they contribute to catalyzing change** across a host of improved outcomes.
- Building back better from coronavirus to achieve the 2030 Agenda requires a **transformation of the unequal social relationships** that undermine sustainable development. Among the most promising – and readily available - strategies the world possesses is to engage men more fully in the transition to gender equality.