



## 2022 Africa Regional Forum on the SDG

### Side event: Leveraging Positive Masculinities for a Green, Inclusive and Resilient Communities in the post COVID-19 Recovery Agenda

2 March 2021

#### Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has elevated the visibility of gender-based inequalities and exacerbated women and girls' experiences of gender-based violence in its various forms, pulling back critical progress made on the SDGs.<sup>1</sup> Patriarchy, toxic masculinities and harmful social norms are at the core of these inequalities, which operate from individual to structural levels of society and limit the engagement and inclusion of diverse women, men, girls and boys and all people in contributing to sustainable development and charting pathways for recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>2</sup> Shifting harmful social norms driving gender inequality and violence against women must be at the forefront of the efforts to end violence against women and girls and advance gender equality, ensure equity and respect in fulfilling women's rights. This perspective is embedded in the dual agenda for the African continent: the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda 2063, both of which call for a transformative approach which leaves no one behind. The need to address the root causes of violence against women, harness the power of all people across gender identities, and dismantle unequal structures in society has been reaffirmed in national, regional and global commitments. It has been an area of investment under the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative in Africa and a focus in the November 2021 African Union Commission Men's Conference on Positive Masculinity: "Galvanizing Positive Masculinity to end the scourge of violence in Africa." Toward moving from commitments to action, with the roadmap elaborated in the 2021 Generation Equality [Gender-Based Violence Action Coalition](#) and 2019 International Conference on Population and Development [Nairobi ICPD25 Commitments](#), UN Women and UNFPA in East and Southern Africa are collaborating to convene a critical dialogue on efforts and progress to promote positive masculinities in support of a green, inclusive and resilient recovery across the continent.

The joint virtual dialogue will bring together key actors from government, civil society, regional entities and development partners to showcase promising practices and opportunities in promoting more progressive forms of masculinity at individual, institutional and societal levels. The virtual discussion will

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<sup>1</sup> See: Women and girls left behind: Glaring gaps in pandemic responses (UN Women, 2021):

<https://data.unwomen.org/publications/women-and-girls-left-behind-glaring-gaps-pandemic-responses>

<sup>2</sup> See for example, Working with men and boys for gender equality: State of play and future directions. (UN Women, 2021): <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/11/policy-brief-working-with-men-and-boys-for-gender-equality>



contribute to key recommendations that can be taken forward by the Outcome Document of the Forum and showcase opportunities for accelerating progress across Africa and beyond.

### **Objective of the Virtual Dialogue**

The high-level virtual dialogue will be a candid reflection on innovative approaches and models to foster positive masculinity and meaningful engagement of men and boys at all levels of society to advance gender equality and women's rights within the context of a Green, Inclusive and Resilient Recovery.

The dialogue aims to a) shed light on the importance of positive masculinity to realize the targets of SDG5 and by extension all SDGs; b) discuss policy actions to accelerate innovative models, approaches and strategies on positive masculinity; c) highlight African Union member states' commitments to foster positive masculinity in the context of the SDGs and Africa Agenda 2063.

The panelists will share their perspectives and experience in advancing individual role modeling, institutional transformation and addressing structural inequalities through promotion of positive masculinity in the continent.

### **Format:**

The High-Level Dialogue will be structured as a moderated conversation involving member states, development practitioners, gender equality advocates and women's rights organisations. It will highlight Outcomes of the 2021 Men's Conference on Positive Masculinity: "Galvanizing Positive Masculinity to end the scourge of violence in Africa, priorities following the Men Engage Alliance's Ubuntu Symposium, call attention to best practices in partnerships with women's movements for promoting positive masculinities and the role of religious and cultural leaders and institutions in shaping more equitable norms.

The dialogue will take place virtually on 2 March 2021 in the afternoon (Kigali/ Nairobi time).

### **Tentative Agenda 1.5 hours**

**Opening Remarks** – Dr. Maxime Houinato, UN Women Regional Director for East and Southern Africa

### **Dialogue Discussants:**

- Representative from the African Union Commission
- Representative from the Democratic Republic of Congo
- Youth Representative from a Men Engage Africa Alliance Member
- Representative from Raising Voices, Uganda
- Representative from a Faith-Based Network, Malawi

Question and Answer with Participants

**Closing Remarks:** Dr. Bannet Ndyabangi, UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Director



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