

Recommendations for the Media

To be effective you will need to consider:

Undertaking auditing for gender inequality and gender stereotypes and taking action to remedy

- Audit the organisation for the reinforcement of patriarchal gender norms through its media messages, including stereotypes relating to violence against women, the sexualisation of women, and the construction of men as leaders and women as unfit for leadership or as only fit for motherhood. Audit too the representations of men that draw on gender-inequitable and unattainable masculinities. Ensure ongoing monitoring in order that progress may be assessed.
- Take action to challenge gender-inequitable masculinities at the business level of the organisation, including: developing a code of conduct on gender representations in messages and images ('gender portrayal' guidelines); building the capacity of journalists and photojournalists to produce non-stereotypical images and stories; monitoring gender representations in media outputs to assess the problem, and building a baseline against which progress is measured.
- Audit the organisation's human resource policies and practice for gender representation, and in particular gender portrayals relating to women's management and leadership potential as less than men's. In any audit, review for potential impacts such as: fewer women employees than men; a 'glass ceiling' whereby women fail to progress beyond a certain level; and a gender pay gap.
- Take action to challenge such stereotyping and initiate human resource policies to counteract their impact, such as leadership training for women, gender awareness training for women and men, and 'family friendly' work policies that benefit women and men, lessening the expectations on men to be the breadwinner of the family and to encourage more even collaboration between men and women regarding unpaid care work.

Engaging and collaborating with others working in order to reframe and transform masculinity in the media

- Engage with initiatives from government bodies, universities, schools and civil society that seek to transform gender-inequitable portrayals of masculinity in the media. Examples of efforts to build new forms of masculinity representation might be curriculum reforms in media training courses; development of gender portrayal guidelines; development of guidelines of good practice for journalists and photojournalists; media literacy initiatives; monitoring of news reporting and advertising; capacity-building for journalists on, for example, reporting sexual and gender based violence perpetrated by men, or reporting on women political candidates and women's leadership and so on.
- Form a community of practice of people working in the media professions that are seeking to engage men and boys towards gender equality. The work of such a group could document existing interventions including good practice in identifying and combating gender-inequitable, dominant forms of masculinity and creating non-stereotypical, alternative portrayals of men and boys, women and girls.
- Work with research institutions to: further understand portrayals of negative masculinities in the media, including those that intersect with other stereotypical portrayals including race, age, disability and so on; assess the effectiveness of existing interventions to engage men and boys and create alternative images; and develop media monitoring methodologies that draw on qualitative as well as quantitative techniques.

Developing self-regulation mechanisms

- Develop self-regulation mechanisms that seek to drive out the gender-inequitable representation of men and boys, women and girls in the media profession, and do so in collaboration with government and civil society. Draw on existing frameworks.

Becoming champions for gender-equitable forms of masculinity and gender equality in general

- Address the current imbalance in how the media portrays and presents male and female characters in programming and advertising. This includes challenging gender stereotypes that associate manhood with superiority, dominance, leadership, efficiency, violence and control.
- Provide positive role models - male and female - by increasing the portrayal of women and men in non-stereotypical roles including men as carers.
- Challenge the contradiction highlighted in the study about views held on women and leadership by demonstrating that leadership is not about being male or female but about developing and applying a set of leadership skills that can be acquired and practiced by both men and women.
- Communicate to audiences and readers on the gaps between perceptions and realities of men across contexts and the importance of transforming gender-inequitable masculinity.
- Promote coverage of gender equality and women's human rights stories, including the role of men in promoting gender equality, in newspapers, news broadcasting and documentary filmmaking.