



The Secretary-General's Network of Men Leaders

Men must teach each other that real men do not violate or oppress women – and that a woman's place is not just in the home or the field, but in schools and offices and boardrooms.

– SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON

Too often, boys and young men are exposed to examples of sexist behaviour. Too often, boys and young men are taught to equate masculinity with the use of violence and dominance over women. Too often, such behaviour is met with silence and tolerated by other men, which serves only to normalize gender inequality and negative stereotypes.

However, many men are uncomfortable with stereotypical and violent behaviour towards women and would intervene if they believed other men would support them. Men can also be devastated by violence perpetrated against the women they care deeply about.

For many years, women around the world have led efforts to prevent and end violence, and today more and more men are adding their support to the women's movement. Men have a crucial role to play as fathers, friends, decision makers, and community and opinion leaders, in speaking out against violence against women and ensuring that priority attention is given to the issue. Importantly, men can provide positive role models for young men and boys, based on healthy models of masculinity.

As part of the growing effort to include men as part of the solution to ending violence against women, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is launching his Network of Men Leaders. The Network will support the work of women around the world to defy destructive stereotypes, embrace equality, and inspire men and boys everywhere to speak out against violence.

The Leaders in this expanding Network – current and former politicians, civil society and youth activists, religious and community leaders, cultural figures and other prominent individuals – will work in their spheres of influence to undertake specific actions to end violence against women, from raising public awareness, to advocating for adequate laws, to meeting with young men and boys, to holding governments accountable.

Reflecting the priority placed on ending violence against women and girls by the Secretary-General, the Network is just one initiative of his **UNiTE to End Violence against Women** campaign, which will run to 2015.

The Secretary-General will launch the Network at UN Headquarters in New York on 24 November 2009, at the official observance of the 10th anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.