

Concept Note

ASIA REGIONAL CONVENING 2026

MOVING BEYOND ALLYSHIP:

Masculinities and Systems Change in Asia



Accountability



Care



Resistance



Justice



7-9 December 2026



Kathmandu, Nepal



MenEngage Alliance South Asia

working with men and boys for gender equality

Background and Rationale

A moment of profound global contestation

We are living through a moment of profound global contestation over gender, rights, and power. Across Asia, feminist and social justice movements are gaining strength even as organised anti-gender forces seek to roll back hard-won gains, restrict bodily autonomy, and weaponise culture, religion, and tradition to reinforce patriarchal authority.



Power, Politics and Patriarchal Control

Heightened conflict, authoritarianism, and nationalist projects increasingly instrumentalise gender, sexuality, and religion as symbolic battlegrounds, reshaping political landscapes. Colonial and post-colonial legacies institutionalised hierarchies of caste, ethnicity, class, and authority, producing dominant ideals of masculinity tied to control and exclusion.

These masculinities regulate not only women and gender-diverse people but also men who do not conform, masking complex dynamics of dominance and subordination. Transformation therefore requires self-awareness and accountability, recognising that liberation is collective.

Intersecting Forces Today

Today, these dynamics intersect with nationalism, economic precarity, ecological crises, and social inequalities. Masculinities are systems of power embedded in institutions and structures, intensified by climate change, displacement, livelihood insecurity, and digital ecosystems that amplify misogyny and anti-rights mobilisation.

Rich Histories of Resistance

Against these forces, Asia also holds rich histories of feminist struggle, indigenous resistance, labour organising, queer movements, and community-led justice work.



The MEA and MEASA

The MenEngage Alliance (MEA), and its South Asia network (MEASA), have long anchored efforts to engage men and boys in advancing gender justice, grounded in accountability to feminist and LGBTQIA+ movements.

Co-created for Greater Impact

This Convening, co-created with feminist organisations, women's rights groups, LGBTQIA+ networks, and social justice movements, is part of a continuum of political organising leading to the 4th MenEngage Global Symposium in 2027.



We gather not only to respond to backlash, but to build futures where power is shared, justice is lived, care is collective, and liberation is possible for all.

Nature of the Convening

This Convening is a politically grounded, critically reflective and action-oriented space that brings together diverse movements and allies across Asia to deepen collective analysis, build solidarity, and strengthen strategies for systems change.



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To move beyond allyship and toward systems change by creating a politically grounded, critically reflective, and action-oriented space that deepens collective analysis of masculinities within intersecting structures of power across Asia; interrogates progress, gaps, and tensions in our work, and strengthens shared strategies rooted in accountability, care, resistance, and justice.

This Convening is grounded in the understanding that its value lies not only in what MenEngage Alliance South Asia (MEASA) and its partners produce as hosts and convenors, but in what it enables across the wider ecosystem of feminist, grassroots, and regional movements advancing gender justice in Asia and within the global MenEngage Alliance. Since [the Delhi Declaration \(2014\)](#) and [the Ubuntu commitments \(2021\)](#), the masculinities field has evolved alongside shifting political realities, changing movement landscapes, and unresolved questions. The Convening also builds on the lived experiences, strategies, and knowledge of grassroots and community-based movements, many of whom have long advanced this work before it was recognised or funded as “masculinities work.” Their leadership is essential to grounding the Convening in regional realities. This is an opportunity to reflect on our collective journey while expanding the conversation, strengthening grassroots leadership, centring voices historically excluded from regional masculinities discourse, and fostering deeper cross-movement collaboration beyond existing networks.



PURPOSE AND VISION

“Moving Beyond Allyship: Masculinities and Systems Change in Asia — Accountability, Care, Resistance, and Justice” names both the challenge and the political commitment of this Convening.”

Moving beyond allyship means refusing symbolic support or performative solidarity, and instead taking responsibility for transforming systems that reproduce patriarchal power. It asks how men and boys, and those working on masculinities, can act with accountability to feminist and queer movements, practise care as a collective ethic, resist authoritarian forces, and work toward justice that is structural, intersectional, and rooted in Asia’s realities.

SPECIFIC AIMS



Strengthen cross-movement solidarity and collaboration.



Advance strategies for systemic change and resistance to authoritarianism and anti-rights backlash.



Reaffirm our commitment to accountability, care, and justice in all we do.



Foster critical dialogue and reflection on masculinities, power, and systems of oppression.



Interrogate tensions and contradictions in masculinities work.

Cross-Regional Approach

The Convening will intentionally create spaces for cross-regional dialogue, bringing together experiences from across Asia in meaningful, collaborative ways, not tokenistically.



Outputs and Outcomes



REGIONAL CALL TO ACTION

A political statement feeding into the 4th MenEngage Global Symposium in 2027



ASIA REGIONAL STRATEGY

Shared priorities for masculinities work in Asia, 2027–2030



LIVING LEARNING DOCUMENT

An honest record of insights, debates and unresolved questions

STRATEGIC VALUE

- Stronger regional relationships
- Deeper cross-movement solidarity
- Sharper political analysis
- Shared strategies for action

The goal is not to end with Kathmandu.

Key Areas of Engagement



1

POWER, POLITICS, AND BACKLASH

Exploring masculinities shaped by political systems, nationalism, religious fundamentalism, and anti-rights movements, and building strategies for collective resistance.



2

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND EVERYDAY MASCULINITIES

Addressing domestic violence, child marriage, and harmful practices, moving beyond individual behaviour-change to systems change in institutions.



3

MILITARISATION, CONFLICT, AND PEACEBUILDING

Examining intersections of masculinities, militarisation, nationalism, and structural violence, while exploring pathways to peace and justice.



4

POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CARE, WORK, AND MASCULINITIES

Reflecting on economic structures, migration, climate crises, and care burdens, reimagining care as a shared social responsibility linked to justice.



5

BODIES, IDENTITIES, AND JUSTICE

Centring lived experiences of queer, trans, disabled, indigenous, Dalit, and caste-marginalised communities, challenging binary notions of masculinity and advancing dignity and inclusion.

Cross-Cutting Themes



Digital Spaces and Masculinities

Exploring how digital cultures shape masculinities, influence identities, and amplify both harm and possibilities for change.



Young People and Future Pathways

Centering young people's leadership, creativity, and visions for gender-just futures.



Climate Justice and Ecological Futures

Understanding the links between masculinities, climate crisis, ecological degradation, and community resilience.



Going Beyond the Gender Binary

Challenging rigid binary notions of gender and embracing the diversity of identities, bodies, and expressions.

Methodology

The methodology will be developed collaboratively with feminist partners to ensure the process reflects shared values of care, accountability, and justice, recognising that how we convene is as political as what we discuss.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND ORIENTATION



FEMINIST ACCOUNTABILITY

Grounding masculinities work in feminist movements and ensuring meaningful feminist representation in planning, facilitation, and agenda-setting.



POWER AND STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION

Addressing masculinities as systems of power embedded in institutions and histories, requiring collective structural change.



INTERSECTIONALITY AND INCLUSION

Recognising intersecting identities and building solidarity with broader human rights struggles.



CARE, DIGNITY, AND JUSTICE

Promoting care, dignity, and collective responsibility as foundations for just social, economic, and political relationships.



Participants

The Convening will bring together diverse participants from across Asia and beyond, including-



Feminist
Leaders



Civil Society
Organisations



LGBTQIA+
Networks



Researchers



Youth
Leaders



Artists



Grassroots
Actors

Feminist organisations and social justice movements will serve as active co-conveners with structural roles in agenda-setting and facilitation.

Format

The 2.5-day convening will include:



Panel
Discussions



Networking
and
Solidarity
Spaces



Artistic and
Cultural
Expressions



Research
Presentations



Small Group
Dialogues

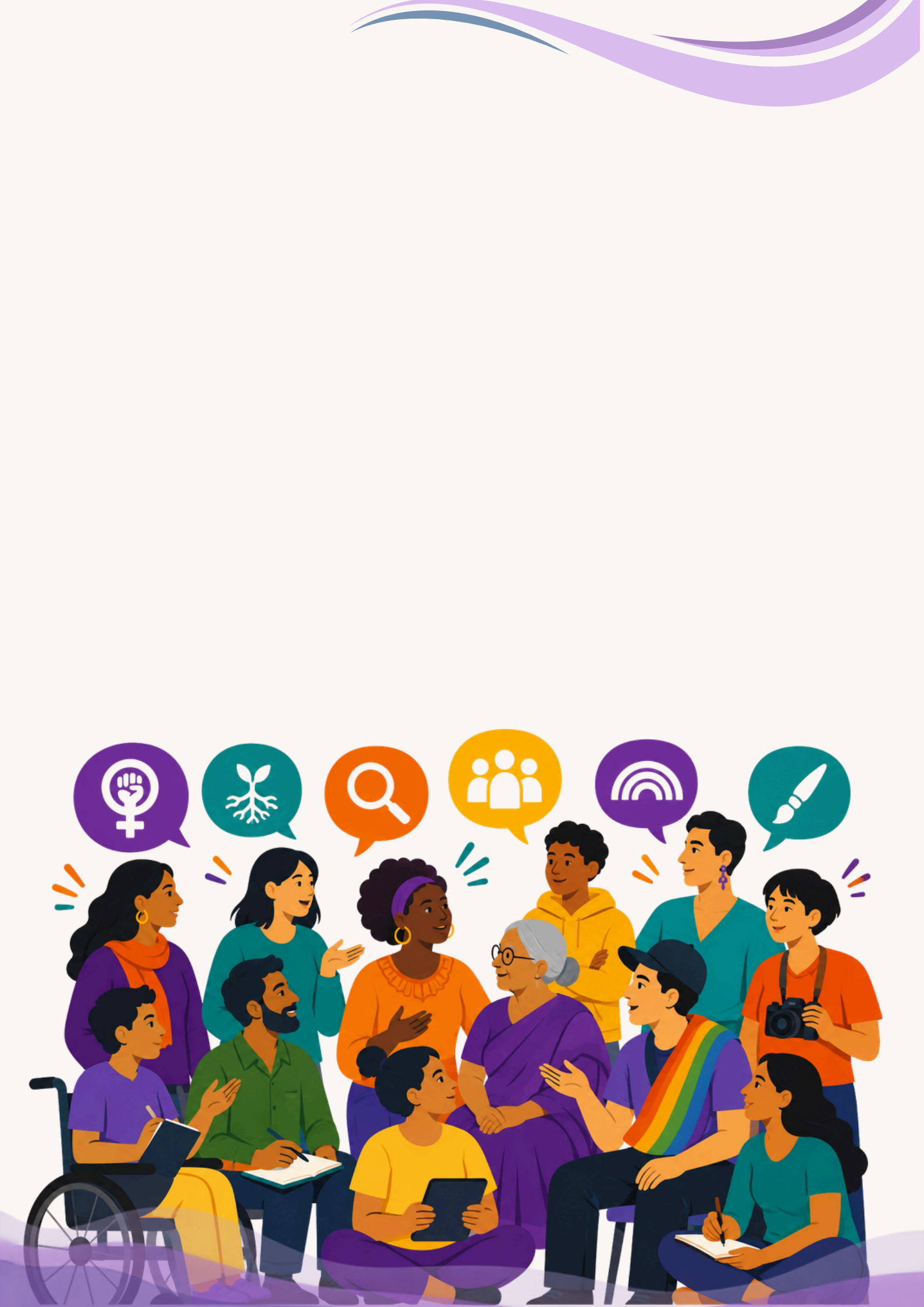


Critical Reflection
Sessions on the
State of
Masculinities
Work



Interactive
Workshops

The format is participatory, inclusive, and grounded in lived realities, enabling strategic thinking, collaboration, and creative imagination.



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