



What we believe

# Our Core Principles

We are an international community with a shared mission to end patriarchal power by working with men and boys and challenging harmful and rigid notions of masculinity, for gender and social justice.

Our Core Principles are an agreed set of commitments, values, and aspirations for the work we do.

As individuals, organizations, and as a collective, these principles affirm our beliefs and values, guide our efforts, and inspire our work for gender justice, social justice, and human rights for all. For a world where all people are equal and free from discrimination and oppression.

These Core Principles are intended to be seen in conjunction with the MenEngage Alliance **Code of Conduct** and **Accountability Standards**.



1

## We stand for women's rights and gender justice

We recognize that women and girls continue to face significant gender injustices and human rights violations around the world. This must urgently change. We work towards this change through dismantling the roots of gender-based violence and injustices.

We honor the historical struggles and achievements of feminist women's rights movements.

We commit to working in allyship with feminist women's rights organizations, networks, and movements. We respect feminist leadership, voices, and spaces. We support feminist demands and political agendas.

We seek to transform unequal gendered power relations. We strive to free women, men, and people of diverse gender identities from the impact of restrictive gender and sexual norms.

2

## We embrace intersectional feminism

We seek to understand how gender inequalities show up in relation to other injustices, such as homophobia, transphobia, racism, ageism, ableism, xenophobia, classism, or based on faith-based and/or religious beliefs or backgrounds. We recognize that people are impacted differently by oppression, and that some people are impacted in multiple ways at the same time. These layers of oppression and intersecting issues disproportionately impact women and girls, gender non-conforming people, people of color, disabled people, and ethnic minorities.

We aspire to be guided by those who have been disproportionately marginalized by various forms of oppression, discrimination, and injustices.

We work to inspire men and boys to explore how they can support intersectional feminist goals and take responsible actions for social justice.

We recognize the diversity of men and boys and that they do not all experience power and privilege in the same way.

### **We support human rights for all**

We abide by the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and other International Human Rights Instruments.

We commit to advocate and hold governments accountable so that they recognize, uphold, promote, and protect human rights for all.

### **We work to disrupt and end patriarchy**

We recognize that patriarchy is an oppressive system that affects everyone in all societies. We understand patriarchy as a system that values masculinity over femininity, and which collectively grants men and boys power over women, girls and gender non-conforming people.

We work to end patriarchal patterns of exploitation of people and the planet. We oppose extractive economic models and work to end their control over bodies, land, and livelihoods. We strive to transform the political systems of privilege and power that support them.

We believe in the universal bond of solidarity and interconnectedness of all people and the planet. We see ourselves as part of collective movements towards a future based on sustainability, care, and wellbeing for all people and the planet in all its biodiversity.

### **We celebrate and embrace diverse identities, expressions, and characteristics of sex, gender and sexuality**

We firmly support the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer individuals, in all diversities.

We recognize sexuality and gender identities as complex, flexible, diverse and fluid.

We work to transform harmful social norms that privilege cis-gender and heterosexual identities over diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sexual characteristics.

We work with men, boys, and people of all genders to call out homophobia and heteronormativity.

3

4



5



6

### **We strive to address racism and its root causes**

We acknowledge that we exist within, and are part of, histories and systems of white supremacy, colonialism and racism. We stand against colonialist, nationalistic, and ethnic oppression in any part of the world.

We recognize the urgent need to challenge racism in all its forms, including, anti-Blackness, and anti-Indigeneity globally.

We make space for ongoing collective reflection, education, and action for racial justice.

We go beyond being non-racist, to being actively anti-racist.

7

### **We believe in the capability of men and boys to actively support gender, social, and climate justice**

We believe in our shared humanity.

We believe that all men and boys, in all their diversities, can critically understand, reject and overcome dominant, controlling, restrictive, and harmful definitions of manhood. We strive to overcome patriarchal barriers so that men and boys can fully develop their capacities for empathy, care and peace.

We believe men and boys must act for rights, justice, health, and the wellbeing of women, girls, and people of all genders.

We understand that men and boys are both privileged and damaged by patriarchy. We believe that everyone – including men and boys – will benefit from a gender-just world.

8

### **We strive to decolonize our systems, practices, values, and mindsets**

We question, unpack and challenge how colonial, eurocentric, and dominant Global-North power structures continue to produce inequalities around the world. We work to transform these highly unequal global power structures and the patriarchal notions of manhood that support them.

We respect the leadership and wisdom of oppressed and indigenous cultures and voices.

We recognize the ways colonialism continues to have a profound impact on gender inequalities and other forms of oppression and exclusion around the world.

We strive to embody and promote inclusive structures in which power is equally shared across nations and communities. We critically examine how our work – including its funding – is embedded in oppressive and



9

exclusionary structures based on the legacy of colonialism, and how our words and actions risk reproducing its harmful dynamics.

**We believe that transformation must begin with ourselves**

We acknowledge that we exist within and as part of oppressive systems, and that transforming them means also transforming ourselves. Personal transformation is deeply interwoven into social change.

We promote ongoing reflective practices among men and boys for transformative awareness of themselves, of others, and of the systems from which complex social problems arise.

We strive to remain conscious of the harms inflicted by patriarchy, racism, colonialism, capitalism, religious fundamentalism, and their interconnected oppressive systems. We give space for personal and collective healing; self and collective care.

We bring our whole selves – our bodies, our emotions, our minds, and our values – to the work to eliminate patriarchy.

10

**We are accountable for our words, actions, and decisions**

We welcome criticism and feedback. We commit to taking it on board, and learning, growing, and responding in accountable ways.

We commit to listening to, consulting with, and partnering with feminist women's rights organizations, LGBTIQ rights groups, and diverse movements for racial justice, youth, economic and climate justice, peace, religious freedom, and many others. We hold ourselves accountable to these feminist partners in the contexts where we work.

We strive to be accountable to the communities, organizations, partners and groups that are impacted by our work, activism, behaviors, attitudes and practices. This includes accountability among ourselves and our leadership across MenEngage Alliance networks.

We foster democratic, transparent, and power-sharing approaches. We see accountability as fundamental to a world of shared power, equality, and justice.

