



# Networks Building Toolkit

A Toolkit on creating and strengthening networks, especially affiliated  
or aim to affiliate to MenEngage Alliance

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We encourage organizations affiliated with the MenEngage Alliance to pilot this living version of the Toolkit and send any inputs, feedback and suggestions to [laxman@menengage.org](mailto:laxman@menengage.org) in order to improve the toolkit.

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## **Acronyms**

CHSJ	Centre for Health and Social Justice
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSO	Civil society organization
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GS	Global Secretariat
INGO	International non-governmental organization
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Intersex
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organization
SC	Steering Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VAW	Violence against women
WHO	World Health Organization
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

## **Network Building Toolkit: Background**

Working with men and boys for advancing gender equality and women's rights has been widely recognized as an important strategy within the gender justice movement. Increasingly, spaces have opened up to talk about men's and boys' own gendered-ness, and about the roles of men and boys in advancing the rights of women and girls, and people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. We have learnt from feminist movements that any large scale social transformative process requires the spread of counter ideas as well as a critical mass of people who will translate these ideas into practice. Furthermore, if this process is to be transformative then the agents of change leading these efforts should be the people who are embedded within the issues at stake. At the same time, many of us are struggling with setting up collectives of organizations and/or individuals that aspire to or already include "transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys in gender equality" as one of their key strategies, while ensuring non-hierarchical, non-patriarchal, inclusive and transparent institutional mechanisms.

This toolkit aims to provide guidance on the steps and processes involved in setting up network/s that collectively work towards transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys<sup>1</sup> in gender equality. The primary objective of this toolkit is to support network formation and development processes, and build a strong foundation from which to meaningfully and accountably implement strategies to transform masculinities and engage men and boys, including programs, campaigns, communication and advocacy. The toolkit outlines the key roles of country networks and steps for setting up functional networks, that may or may not wish to be affiliated with the MenEngage Global Alliance. However, please be mindful that this toolkit is an attempt to provide diagnostic framework to networks development and strengthening, so will not necessarily have solutions to all the queries or challenges those may come up<sup>2</sup>.

### **"Who is this Toolkit for?"**

This toolkit is developed keeping in mind the civil society organizations and NGOs (as well as UN agencies and donor agencies) that are interested on gender transformative approaches to engage men and boys for gender equality and are rooted in feminist principles and/or considering joining or associating with MenEngage Alliance. However, this is also useful for others interested in developing or strengthening collective actions to advance women's rights and gender justice.

We suggest that this toolkit be read, understood and interpreted in relation to the local realities, context and gender landscape, as we are aware that we live in an extremely diverse world and that one size never fits all. We would strongly suggest that the readers take into consideration current local and national socio-political and economic contexts, discourses around men, masculinities and their gendered expressions, prevalence and attitude towards violence against women and girls, existing legal and policy frameworks around gender equality, national and regional women's rights and feminist movements, and other relevant factors.

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<sup>1</sup> "Gender as Relational" is one of the key principles of MenEngage Alliance, hence we use the phrase 'engaging boys and men in gender equality', we always mean "engaging boys and men, along with girls, women and trans-people, in gender equality".

<sup>2</sup> We would love to learn from you! Please don't hesitate to [contact us](#), should there be any such opportunities or you have some suggestions, inputs and guidance to further strengthen the toolkit

## **Why Network and/or Alliance?**

Any efforts geared towards achieving gender justice and dismantling patriarchy, including transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men in women's rights and gender equality, requires *gender transformative approaches* that seek to reshape gender and power relations, by freeing women, men, and people of diverse gender identities from the impact of harmful gender and sexual norms. It requires individuals and organizations working in various sectors to come together with their knowledge and expertise to work with boys and men in different positions of power, with the understanding that power works in complex and often conflicting ways, including in boys' and men's lives. Hence, any large-scale social transformative process requires the spread of ideas as well as a critical mass of people who will translate these ideas into practice in their everyday lives and the building of new institutions.

The work with boys and men at the local, national and regional levels has generally been small in scale and quite limited in scope. While an increasing number of organizations are developing and implementing programs designed to reach men and boys through transformative lens, these programs tend to be implemented in a sporadic and ad-hoc manner, and unfortunately there is very little collaboration or lessons shared between organizations. In an effort to effectively reach out to men and boys at a national (and regional) level there is a need for organizations to create synergies that not only enable the scaling up of efforts to engage men and boys but also ensure the sustainability of these efforts in the long run.

In order for this work to carry weight at a global scale, within the GLOCAL purview, there is a need to have some cohesive collectives and network/s. This realization led to a number of organizations coming together as MenEngage Alliance, with the vision to strengthen the field of working with boys and men for gender equality.

## **Connecting the Dots: National, Regional and International Perspectives**

Diverse experiences across the world have led to deeper knowledge on how different contexts intersect with masculinities and have demonstrated that involving men and boys in justice programs requires approaches that involve a range of interventions that go beyond the individual, to structural and institutional drivers of masculinities. This has required a confluence of organizations and individuals across countries and regions to create a global community, that maintains national and regional specificities, and is decentralized, democratic, transparent, inclusive, and horizontal in nature, with full of trust and ownership.

MenEngage Alliance, based on the diverse experiences of its global membership, have realized the importance of constant dialogue around theory, experience, intervention and change. The Alliance has realized the importance of developing several nodes of resistance and deterrence, a rainbow coalition capable of addressing the multi-faceted agenda of gender inequality from different angles. This calls for organizations not only to come together at the global level but also at sub-regional, regional/continental, country and local levels, while using a collective, bottom up approach to meaningfully contribute to the gender justice movement.

## MenEngage Alliance: An Introduction

MenEngage Alliance is an international network of civil society organizations (CSOs) working with men and boys (along with women and people of diverse sexual and gender identities) for gender justice, promoting health and reducing violence by challenging structural barriers to women's rights and gender equality. The Alliance, since its inception in 2007, has grown significantly in numbers, connecting more than 700 CSOs, (international) non-governmental organizations (INGOs), research institutions and UN agencies, through its presence in over 70 countries, organized through 6 regional and 40 country networks. MenEngage Alliance is a decentralized network which values and affirms the importance of regional and country-specific priorities and activities.

There has also been simultaneous investment in building knowledge on men and masculinities, which has not only provided better understanding of how boys and men negotiate the territories of gender, violence, power, etc. but has also contributed to sharpening the skills of those developing ground level programs, campaigns and advocacy efforts. The evidence collated through these experiences clearly showed that this required a different approach from work with women and girls to end gender-based violence. A certain language that enabled men and boys to articulate their gendered experiences needed to be discovered to enable the level of reflexivity that is so critical in any movement for change.

The Alliance affirms that the 'engaging men and boys' agenda stems from and honors the pioneering work and leadership of women's rights organizations and movements. The Alliance stands in solidarity with the ongoing struggles for women's empowerment, equality and rights. The Alliance brings to the fore the relevance of transforming masculinities and patriarchal structures, and engaging men and boys in gender justice work, including in preventing violence against women and other forms of GBV. We underline that working with men and boys is never an end in itself. When we use the summarized phrase "men and masculinities" we always mean "transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys for the advancement of women's and girls' empowerment and rights, and gender justice for all." We see this work as providing added value to the joint struggle to end patriarchy, within the broader agenda of human rights and social justice.

During the last decade the Alliance's approach, activities and partnerships have deepened and its governance structures strengthened. MenEngage Alliance has grown and matured, and has carved out a space for reshaping masculinities and engaging men and boys in the broader field of women's rights and gender justice. As such, the Alliance brings together significant social capital to address the pressing women's rights and gender justice issues of our time, in partnership with other organizations and activists in the field. The 2<sup>nd</sup> MenEngage Global Symposium, held in New Delhi in November 2014, marked the maturing of the MenEngage Alliance's political stance. It resulted in the [Delhi Declaration and Call to Action](#), which serves as the compass for the Alliance's mobilisation and political advocacy agenda.

A deliberate effort has been made in recent years to identify the most suitable long-term operating model for the Alliance, in order to best represent its identity as a decentralized, membership-based network, informed by democratic governance principles and mechanisms. The Alliance brings together partner organizations working on gender equality, gender-based violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, women's rights, youth and child rights, transforming masculinities, HIV/AIDS, men and unpaid care work, fatherhood, sexual and reproductive health and rights, peace and security, LGBTQI rights, and social justice, among many other issues. MenEngage Alliance networks at the regional and country levels strive to have strong working relations with regional, national and local governments, UN agencies, the women's and youth movements (who generally form part of the network), non-governmental agencies and grassroots organizations.

For more information about MenEngage Alliance's vision, mission, principles, code of conduct and structure, please refer to [the Annexures](#) of this document.

## **SETTING UP NETWORKS OR COALITIONS**

In order to have a strong social justice movement, as we have learnt from Women's Rights Movement as well as social justice movements, its imperative that we create spaces for people to come together with others to find innovative and sustainable solutions to deal with any problems and develop knowledge, skills and union. One vital step here will be to develop and generate own analysis, evidence and understanding of the context, history, experiences and the current state. This helps as a foundation of shared political analysis and to inform an alternative vision and action plan.

MenEngage Alliance, members and partners, are focused on transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men in women's rights and gender justice. Hence the point of interrogation here is the aspect of "what it means to BE A MAN, Masculinities" in a particular context and how patriarchy operates to reinforce gender inequalities. If one wants to interrogate this, it's imperative to engage with boys and men, being informed by feminist analysis<sup>3</sup> and together with their support, to deconstruct the patriarchal understanding of masculinities. For this, men and

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<sup>3</sup> While one question that usually comes up is "which feminism are we talking about?", we also realize that there is no simple answer to this either. As the Alliance we believe our work is anchored around inter-sectional feminist analysis. However, this will depend on the existing relationships and nature of the feminist groups those exist in the particular context who feel the importance and are open to working with boys and men, together with girls, women and people with diverse gender identities, with the lens of 'transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men in women's rights and gender justice'. Irrespective of how the local women's groups identify themselves, we always encourage our friends to listen to the concerns, questions and suggestions from women's rights leaders. However, this doesn't mean that we cannot raise questions towards the initiatives or project those are not gender-transformative in nature. So being part of MenEngage Alliance also means that we challenge the ongoing programs those are either gender exploitative and insensitive, and are reinforcing gender stereotypes which foster gender inequalities and gender based violence.

boys need support and space to discuss the socio-political aspect of being engaged in the work of dismantling patriarchy and transforming masculinities. As we all know that any processes aimed to achieve profound social change are neither linear nor simple, and are many-a-times difficult, confusing and long-term endeavour. Once any individual or a group (of men and boys) start to work on the transforming masculinities field, there will be numerous instances where one may feel lost and challenged to find ways forward to continue with the work. Since this engagement and journey for everyone involves self reflections and challenging own perceptions (unlearning them) around gender issues, its very likely that one will find themselves lost at times and personally challenging as well as challenged. Hence its always recommended to have a group of people and create a “Safe, Inclusive, Respectful and Transformatory Space” where one can share the articulations, reflections, fears and confusions so that they can receive peer-support and re-energize themselves to continue this work. In fact, if anyone or a group finds this work so linear and easy, then one need to realize that there is a problem in itself and there needs to be some mechanisms to check and ensure things are being done in an appropriate and accountable manner. For this reason, its important that we create a group at the community level, including together or with support from the existing women’s rights and social justice groups.

At the spirit of the Alliance are the local and concrete actions, activities and initiatives which aim to create community mobilization and engage boys and men in critical reflection on their own power and privileges. We strongly believe that this work needs to move beyond the mere “social developmental project” to focus on social change and movement building across all the levels. This work needs to be well connected or mainstreamed across all the sectors and connect individuals who have the zeal for dismantling patriarchal system and unequal power relationships by transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men in gender justice through accountable practices and joint collaboration and partnership. Without this approach in mind, the network building around any gender and social justice issues will not be meaningful at all.

While doing so, some questions we are still trying to explore and understand further are:

1. With this work with boys and men are we “empowering boys and men”, and if so what does the “empowerment” mean in this context? Would the same approach to “women’s empowerment” apply in case of boys and men?
2. What does intersectional collaboration look like?
3. What politics exist that influence and are strategically relevant to the social change models those are there in place? Taking leadership role and solidarity are two different aspects of the movement building among boys and men and their role.
4. What kind of structure should a network have, so that it doesn’t fall into the trap of recreating one of the forms of patriarchal structure, thus reinforcing the same system that we are trying to dismantle?
5. How does one or a group becomes conscious about the challenges and concerns those are there around the work on transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men for gender justice?
6. What does it mean when we say horizontal and decentralised network? What are the practical parameters around that?

7. How are the roles, positions and responsibilities distributed and delivered among the leadership group of a network? How is the leadership group decided?
8. How to move beyond the individual activist or an organization centric mobilization to become a community-owned-and-lead process? How do we ensure equal ownership and contribution among all the members?
9. How to make sure the quality of work still remains intact even if the network grows, in terms of number and diversity of participants or organizations involved?

**How does a feminist movement building look like?** An example from Just Associates (JASS) of how the feminist movement building is envisioned and modeled

*Source: Making Change Happen: Power\_Concepts of Revisioning Power for Justice, Equity and Peace*

With the power of our numbers – organized around common agendas - women can better challenge inequality and violence, transform power, and make strides in ensuring justice and peace for all. From this premise, JASS equips women individually and collectively by structuring and sustaining safe spaces where women:

- deepen their analysis of power and injustice in their lives and their world;
- gain and generate new tools, information, and strategic skills;
- renew energy and spirit;
- spark and deepen their organizing;
- practice and innovate new forms of power, leadership and organization;
- strengthen political relationships of trust;
- develop common agendas to address needs, rights, and safety; and
- build vertical and horizontal links across identities, sectors, issue silos, and locations.

Once women are equipped in these ways, JASS believes that they are better able to:

- mobilize and amplify political influence;
- generate and demand resources and freedom from violence;
- respond to urgent situations, and protect frontline activists; and
- resist injustice and ultimately transform power in both the personal and public arenas.

Activists from these issues highlight the following ideal characteristics of women’s movements to work toward:

- a. Creative capacity to think and act beyond the confines of existing rules
- b. Autonomy and ability to overcome competitiveness
- c. Respect for inclusion and diversity with clarity about multiple interests
- d. Defined vision and shared ideology (that recuperates feminisms)
- e. Specific demands in relation to changes in the political context
- f. Political and social activists and the ability to encourage action
- g. Alliances with other social movements
- h. Generational and collective leadership to ensure continuity and reflect our diversity

## **Start from your community**

The foremost step in making women's human rights and gender equality (and social justice at large) real, meaningful and enforceable, anywhere in the world, is to educate ourselves about women's rights, gender inequalities and injustices, men and masculinities issues, and to explore ways to incorporate gender transformative approaches, documents and strategies into the programs, initiatives and advocacy work in our own communities. Hence MenEngage Alliance strongly believes and recommends individuals and organisations who plan to setup or connect with already existing network on 'transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men in women's rights and gender equality', to start such organising or networking from the local community where they are rooted. Every social change processes or initiatives will only be successful and sustainable if it is rooted in the societies and communities where one comes from. By building a strong grassroots base, one brings authenticity to our activism and movement building in order to have stronger advocacy and lobby efforts with the (local) authorities and governments to fulfill their existing obligations under international law and push for proper implementation of the laws those exist, as well as in our recommendations for them to repeal existing discriminatory laws and policies, devise progressive laws and policies that protect and promote women's rights and equality, including nuanced analysis on 'transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men in gender justice'.

Another important step of organizing for gender and social justice is to engage around some concrete action or initiatives at the community level. It is always advisable that such process or initiatives be connected with local activists and women's rights organizations from multiple sectors in the community; child rights, human rights, social justice, environmental justice, education rights and others as applicable.

Another essential step is to familiarize (if needed and felt necessary) each one of the group or network members to have understanding of the subject matter, transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men in gender equality issues in this case. If there is a need for support to strengthen and build capacity of the group members on gender transformative approaches to engage boys and men in gender equality, please feel free to reach out to either to an existing MenEngage network in the country or region where you reside (can be found in the [MenEngage website](#)), or to the Global Secretariat, MenEngage Alliance, [info@menengage.org](mailto:info@menengage.org)

Once there is a common understanding about the importance and feasibility to form such community or country network, it is advisable to identify 1 or 2 people who will act as liaison or coordinator. At the same time its also advisable to create a core-group of members who can play the mentoring and guiding sub-group for the community group. Such group would consists of experts on women's rights and gender equality, and gender transformative approaches to engage boys and men. The roles and responsibilities of the coordinators and core group members will have to be developed jointly and in a clear manner, including processes of decision making.

Such community groups or, clubs should be designed or structured in such a way that enables individual growth, strengthens group's collective knowledge and actions on prevention and response activities, grassroots community interventions and on the creation of a 'community of

practitioners' which utilizes the expertise of some of the most experienced activists and researchers from the community. Such community groups or, clubs and subsequent mobilization should be marked by a spirit of volunteerism and social work.

Should there be an interest among any community group, club or network to associate and connect with MenEngage Alliance, the following three possible circumstances will apply:

- In countries where there is already an existing country network associated with MenEngage Alliance, then such community groups or, clubs will be connected to the national network for further association and support.
- In countries where there is no country network but regional network, then such group will be connected to the regional network.
- In the country in a region where there are no country and regional networks, then the Global Secretariat, together with the coordinator or liaison of the community group, will identify steps towards creating a country network.

## **SETTING UP, AND STRENGTHENING, A COUNTRY NETWORK: GENERAL STEPS**

Since the inception of MenEngage Alliance, it has been envisioned that its national networks or affiliates are self-directed, decentralised and independent networks guided by the [core principles](#) and [code of conduct](#), which function as the primary 'glue' that binds the diverse membership of the Alliance together. A country network is a cluster of [civil society organisations](#) and relevant stakeholders, working in the sector of women's rights, gender equality, social justice, child rights and engaging men and boys within a particular country, organised in a structured way. Given the enormous diversity of national contexts, as well as varying levels of organization of MenEngage Alliance in different regions, the Alliance believes that there can be no universal 'blueprint' for setting up a national network.

A national network is responsible for managing its own membership and initiatives. However, it can receive guidance and support, if required, from the regional and global networks. National networks are the foundational unit of the regional and global networks of MenEngage Alliance. Hence, the Alliance takes the development and strengthening processes of national networks as a foundational aspect of our work and a core priority for continued development and strengthening of the Alliance. As such, its important that anyone involved in this process review and reflect on the following functional and structural issues.

An important clarification to bear in mind is that MenEngage Alliance affiliated networks are not standalone NGOs or organisations, but rather a collective of various organisations, from various sectors related to women's rights and gender justice, coming together with the purpose of transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys in gender justice. However, the collective can have its own model based on its local context that will best facilitate its operation as a network. This results in stronger coalitions within the country and creates a platform where members can share knowledge and learn from each other.

## Functional Elements of a National Network

Below are some points that can help understand and consider as a first step while thinking about setting up a local community group or a network. Also in envisioning the role of the national network so that it can strengthen its collective contributions towards achieving gender justice.

- *Connecting the field through networking, information sharing and discourse building:* The sharing of experiences, lessons and materials/resources, both within and between countries, is a critical function for the Alliance. In this way, the Alliance can relieve the isolation felt by many groups working on these issues and help to improve their work. Crucially, it can help to foster the sense of an emerging engaging men and boys field.
- *Strengthening the field through collective capacity building:* One major function of a national network is to help build the capacity of its members, by facilitating peer-to-peer sharing and exchange among its members. The country network secretariat itself is not the body solely responsible for capacity building, rather the secretariat's primary role is to facilitate peer-to-peer sharing, and organize for organizations with specific expertise, whether inside or outside the network, to provide training to the members.
- *Generating knowledge:* The Alliance has a critical role to play in generating knowledge and evidences to strengthen the field of engaging boys and men in gender justice, and national level networks have a role to play in supporting such knowledge generation.
- *Influencing policy and public opinion at the national level:* National networks should look at opportunities to leverage their strength in numbers and speak as a unified voice to influence policy and public opinions through collective advocacy, campaigning and activism. A key function for national networks is to use multiple forms of activism, including media work, direct protest action, as well as legal campaigning, to shift public opinion, shape social norms and hold policy makers to account for their commitments on gender justice.

### **Key experiences in the contextualization of the MenEngage Code of Conduct in Nicaragua**

By Douglas Mendoza Urrutia and Ana María Bermudez

The Masculinity Network for Gender Equality (RedMas) is a Nicaraguan network of 20 civil society organizations that recently celebrated its ninth anniversary. Among its members are feminist organizations, organizations working children, adolescents and youths and men's groups. The network in Nicaragua went through a process that led to build their own Code of Conduct.

1. **Dialogues with the feminist movement:** The compañeras (female comrades) asked us questions that challenged us.
2. **MenEngage Code of Conduct:** The second experience influencing the decision to build our Code of Conduct was our Network's decision to adhere to the MenEngage Global Code of Conduct.
3. **Regional Workshop on Accountability:** The third experience was the regional workshop on accountability, which was held in Nicaragua in 2015, facilitated by the MenEngage Global Secretariat.
4. **The Replication Workshop with the REDMAS Assembly:** The workshop on accountability with our members, also held in 2015, was the fourth experience in this process. We naively believed that all people within the network establish respectful and equitable relationships, since we are activists with a commitment to equality and human rights. In addressing accountability during the workshop, problematic situations within the network that had not been addressed emerged. Some of the male members of the network were behaving in sexist ways toward female members. Some educational interventions were being implemented using inappropriate approaches.

To be accountable is to share with transparency what we do and be willing to be questioned. It is urgently important to listen and take action when others point out practices that violate our principles. We concluded that these practices could no longer be allowed. However, we did not know how to proceed. It was easier to resolve the theoretical case analyses of violations of the Code of Conduct offered in the workshop than to tackle similar cases in real life.

We had to set a precedent, so as not to leave the wrong impression, that REDMAS was concerned about such situations, but did not address them. We were very afraid that the situations would be made public and we would lose our credibility. Ultimately, our commitment to coherence between discourse and practice prevailed.

For more, please see the full blog <http://menengage.blogspot.com/2017/01/key-experiences-in-contextualization-of.html>

- *Setting and upholding standards by creating processes for peer review and accountability:* A key role for a national network in strengthening the field is to serve as a standard-setting body, within which network members agree on a set of principles and standards and agree to hold themselves and each other accountable to these principles and standards. MenEngage Global Alliance has its [accountability standards and guidelines](#) which serves as a good reference for this function.
- *Strengthening collaboration and partnership with other movements:* Another important function for a national network is building relationships with other movements (e.g. women's rights movement, LGBTQI movements, labor unions, etc.) by forging common agendas and collaborating in joint actions. This is important especially in relation to efforts to shift policy and public opinion.
- *Taking collective actions:* Any activity undertaken by the network as a whole must be based on a collectively determined agenda with clear processes and structures for collective decision-making. The national network, primarily the secretariat, should not be engaged in program implementation as this can lead to situations in which the network starts competing against some of its own members for funding and resource mobilization. Some examples of such activities could be the celebration at the International Women's Day 8<sup>th</sup> March and the 16 days of activism.

## **Structural Elements of a National Network**

While developing and strengthening a national network, it is important to decide upon an appropriate structure that can best facilitate the fulfillment of the network's roles in a democratic, transparent and accountable manner. Below are some broad issues to consider and reflect on while deciding upon or strengthening the structure of a network.

- *Identity:* MenEngage Alliance believes that its strength is rooted in its national level networks, and local 'ownership'. Further strengthening these roots is a clear priority for MenEngage Alliance, in part by clarifying and emphasizing the identity of the Alliance at national level - as a civil society network, that works with government and collaborates with international organizations and UN Partners. The role of international organizations in the network has been seen as primarily to facilitate and strengthen this national rootedness, and as agreed among the members at the national networks; while being mindful of the power they hold in a particular context.
- *Membership:* MenEngage Alliance, besides emphasizing its civil society identity, envisions a broad-based diverse membership, that reflects the work going on in all parts of the country, not confined to the capital city or major urban areas. It is important to be inclusive of a wide range of civil society organizations, from grassroots community associations to national NGOs, as well as a range of constituencies (women's rights, LGBTQI rights, environmental

justice, labour unions etc.), and not merely those who work explicitly on men and gender equality. In order to guide the development and membership expansion of national networks, it is suggested that they develop national level sets of principles and standards that reflect local contexts, and through a process of dialogue for moving towards the principles adopted at the global level.

- *Decision-making:* MenEngage Alliance strongly suggests that national networks have a democratic mechanism for electing representatives or coordinators and a document that outlines its structure and decision-making roles and responsibilities. It is to be noted that while certain priorities and directions for the work of the Alliance as a whole have been set at the global level, these priorities and directions must be interpreted locally, depending on local contexts and priorities. It is strongly suggested that national networks create a process by which the membership as a whole has a voice in determining the network's major priorities and direction. The structure of the Alliance has been set up to facilitate a representative mechanism by which national networks, through representatives at regional levels and onwards to the global level, can express a voice in global level decision-making.
- *Leadership:* It is important that the leadership of national networks moves. This may be hosted by different organizations, and on a rotational basis. As far as possible, national network secretariats be managed by national CSOs with support from international organizations or UN partners, as applicable. The Global Secretariat of the Alliance is also available to provide any support, including training country and regional secretariats and coordinating and strengthening organizational structures to enhance long term viability. The executive functions of the national network should be held by this secretariat, which can be sort of hosted by an organisation for a longer period of time, who reports to a national steering committee responsible for overall governance of the network. At the same time, the convenership of the network (which is separate from secretariat) can also be thought to be different that the secretariat which can rotate as per the networks' policy. Decisions on how the secretariat and national steering committee be composed and relate to each other should be taken locally, with support and guidance from the regional and global levels, if necessary.
- *Links to regional & global bodies:* For a national network to have better connection with the respective regional (as well as global) network, it is crucial to clarify and strengthen the links to regional (or sub-regional, where applicable) bodies of the Alliance. The overall structure of the Alliance globally has been established to facilitate the participation of national networks, in selecting or electing regional representatives. The regional (or sub-regional) bodies have a critical role to play in facilitating the exchange of experiences and lessons between countries as well as in providing updates from other regions and identifying and meeting shared training needs. For this purpose, at the global level, there is a [Regional Networks Working Group](#) in place coordinated by the Global Secretariat.

## Creating a National Network: Key Steps

Before setting up a national network, it's extremely important to have common understanding on the above mentioned functional and structural elements among all stakeholders.

The following general steps might be helpful in the creation of a national network using a bottom up approach (that is, ensuring proper ownership of local organizations rather than following directions from external or regional/global bodies):

1. An initial step could be to hold a series of stakeholder consultations and workshops about 'gender transformative programming', 'transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men' and 'networks development'. This can be determined by the participants themselves depending on the needs and interests. Participants can also share their expectations in forming a network, why they think it is necessary, what they want to achieve and how. Such a process helps build a foundation for personal commitment and can help members find a niche for their organisations within the network. These consultations can also lay out a foundation to develop an action plan for setting up the network, which can be followed up more structurally. It is also important to discuss and agree on the type of relation they want to have with the MenEngage Alliance. An important question that comes here is "whether the new network wants to be formally affiliated to MenEngage or they want to be more loosely connected as partners in the wider field of engaging men and boys for gender equality?"<sup>4</sup>
2. If the new network aspires to formally join the Alliance, they should **reach out to MenEngage Alliance, its regional or global contact persons (visit our website for the contacts)**, to express interest in affiliating with the Alliance. This will spark a communication among the parties to clarify the requirements and the level of support the new network needs from MenEngage Alliance respective focal persons.
3. As next step, it is advisable to **organize an orientation or introductory session with the involved stakeholders** in the country on MenEngage Alliance, its values, principles and code of conduct. It is extremely important for all to have a clear understanding about the core principles and values and what it means to be associated with the Alliance from the very beginning. It may require to organize more than one such sessions depending on the needs and context, before embarking on the process of setting up a network.

In case of the effort to establish/develop affiliation or association with an already existing network, it is advisable to **organize the orientation/introductory session with all members of the network** so that everyone is on the same page from the beginning.

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<sup>4</sup> It is to be noted that, MenEngage Alliance can provide (depending on availability of suitable member or staff) technical support on capacity development/strengthening efforts and information about the Alliance without any prior commitments to get affiliated with the Alliance. In other words, there is no pre-condition about getting support when only the group or network will be affiliated with MenEngage Alliance.

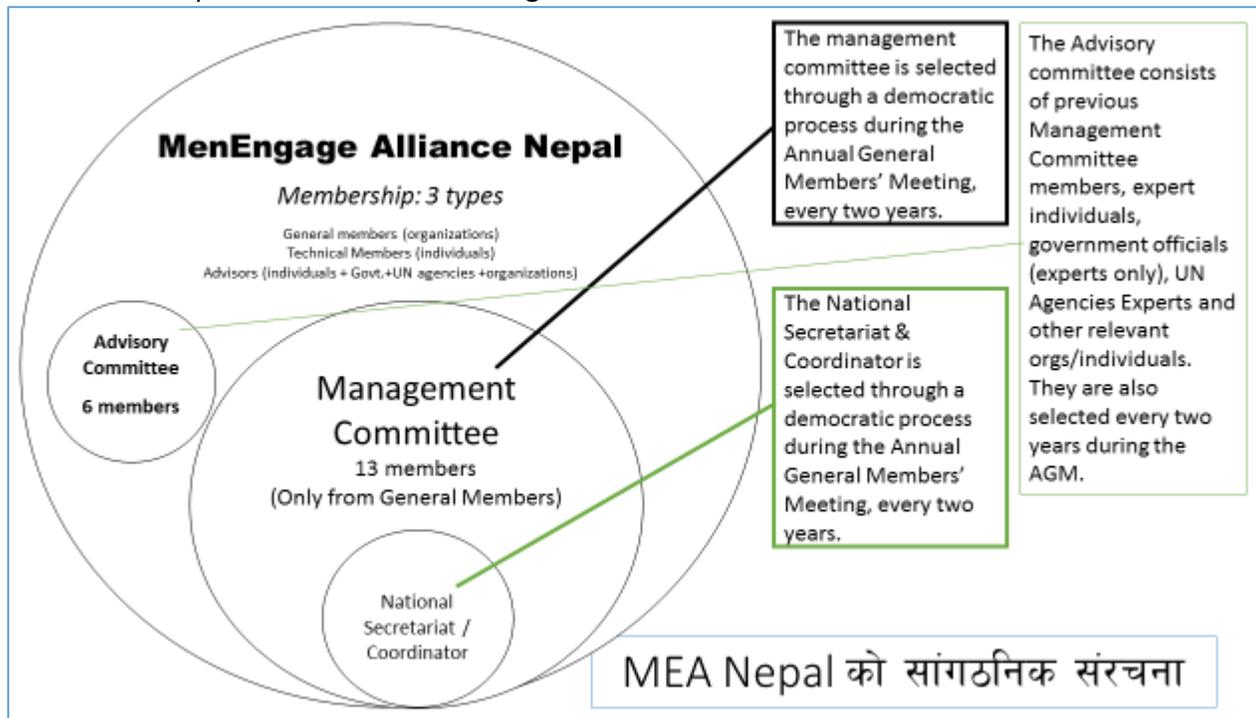
4. It is important to **conduct stakeholders' analysis**, and understand the key stakeholders relevant to the field of women's rights and gender justice, social justice and engaging boys and men field. Some of these organizations may be women's rights organizations, organizations with a strategic focus on gender equality issues, UN agencies, government authorities, social justice movements, among many others. At the same time, it's also advisable to **gain an understanding of the groups or organizations in the country that might oppose or be hostile to** the work with men and boys for gender equality.
5. As a next step, it is important to **reach out to other organizations in the country that work on gender equality**, sexual and reproductive health and rights, women-peace-security, domestic violence, socio-economic empowerment and rights of women and girls, child rights, etc.
6. It is advisable to **form a 'working group', or 'coordinating group' of members of the organizations and individuals** interested in forming a country network, with the MenEngage Alliance representative playing the role of mentor. This step is essential to ensure ownership and clarify the role that each group member will play. It is easier to identify members to be part of the working group if you have already conducted a stakeholders mapping. Choosing working group members should be voluntary, and members should be fully informed of the roles and responsibilities, as well as time and resource commitments, involved. *It's advisable to try and get women's rights organization or activist to join the working group, if possible.*
7. It is advisable to **identify one or two organizations or individuals who can play the role of anchors** for the working group. They will serve as the key points of contact for the MenEngage Alliance representative supporting this process. It is important these anchors are identified democratically and by consensus, including with your stakeholders.
8. It is always advisable to **organize a meeting among the key women's rights stakeholders in order to introduce the network and its mission as well as to understand and listen to the concerns** of these organizations and individuals around the formation of such a network. *While doing so, it is also advisable that the group extend an invitation to the women's rights groups to join the network and provide guidance.*
9. The next step is to **organize a planning meeting with all relevant stakeholders to identify next steps for the creation of the network**. During this meeting it is important to have the functional and structural issues (mentioned above) as the basis. This meeting, depending on the what comes out of the previous consultation, may result in setting up various working groups who will lead different aspects of the development process. For example, a working group on network structure, a working group on functional issues, a working group on governance model, a working group on membership procedure, a working group on democratic procedures, etc.

10. While the work of each working group progresses, it is important to ***constantly share updates among all stakeholders involved in this process and have collective agreement on the ways forward for the network's development.***
11. Once the functional and structural issues are discussed and agreed upon, the next step is to ***develop its strategy and collective work plan for a certain period of time*** (which can be for 6 months, a year or more than a year) which should be endorsed by all members. This collective plan should also have a resource mobilization plan, so that the collective activities can be implemented.

## Structure of a National Network

Every country network should have its own structure defined by its members collectively, that is appropriate for their local context. Ideally a national network should have a Steering Committee (different terminologies may be used for this, such as Management Committee or Coordinating Committee) that is selected through democratic procedure. Further, it is recommended to have a national coordinator or co-coordinators who is/are also democratically selected by the national steering committee and/or members, for certain a period and based on agreed selection criteria. The activities of the national networks are set by the networks themselves, and may extend beyond, or be more limited than, the roles and scope of the Regional and/or Global Alliances.

Below is a sample structure of an existing national network:



**Figure 1: Organizational Structure of MenEngage Alliance Nepal (Sample National Network Structure)**

## **Roles and Responsibilities for various structures**

### **General Members**

It is up to each national network to decide who can be the general members of the Alliance. In principle, the major criteria for membership of the Alliance is to have strong zeal for gender justice, stand against any forms of violence against others, and to adhere to and sign on to the core principles and code of conduct of the Alliance. Anyone, who is active in the areas of women's rights, gender and social justice, in any area of program implementation, research, activism, academia, and so on in any type of public and non-governmental institutions including individual practitioners and professionals irrespective of their sex, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, can become a member of the Alliance. The major role of the general members is to be ambassadors of the network and take part in the collective activities of the network and its decision making processes, when necessary including monitoring of the network.

### **National Secretariat and Coordinator/s**

It is collective responsibility of the national network to discuss and agree on roles and responsibilities of the national secretariat and coordinator (or co-coordinators). However, the major role and responsibility of the secretariat is to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the collective work-plan as decided by the general members (sometimes referred to as the 'general assembly'), in cooperation with the national steering committee.

Roles and responsibilities of the national secretariat and coordinator(s) may include, but not limited to:

- Representing the network in various forums at national and regional levels
- Maintaining the day to day affairs of the network, based on the agreed work-plan and strategy
- Coordinating with the steering committee members as well as the general members to organize regular meetings and preparing and distributing the minutes
- Coordinating and leading various activities of the network, as decided by the steering committee and general members
- Maintaining regular communication with all members and steering committee members
- Leading fundraising for the network's activities, reporting, maintaining communication and dealing with donor agencies in close coordination with the steering committee
- Acting as liaison with network members and other stakeholders and disseminating information about the network and its activities
- Facilitating the process for new membership of the network
- Facilitating and coordinating interaction with national, regional and global MenEngage Alliance, and other stakeholders
- Leading the promotion of capacity development and institutional strengthening of the network

- Coordinating, monitoring and evaluation of work on gender justice by various actors
- Coordinating and facilitating technical support to network members with capacity development on gender, men and masculinities issues, and engaging men and boys for social justice

## **National Steering Committee and Members**

The National Steering Committee is a smaller group of members of a national network who form the main engine of the network. They are ideally identified or selected through a democratic process by the members during the members' gathering or annual meeting. The selection process and methodology should be agreed upon by the membership.

The steering committee usually is mandated to take the overall responsibility to implement decisions made by the members and guide the network, in close coordination with the national secretariat and coordinator. It's up to the members to agree on frequency of regular meetings (of all forms, online, face-to-face, etc.) that will be required in order to implement the work of the network.

Roles and responsibilities of the national steering committee may include, but not limited to:

- Coordinating, liaising and sharing progress regularly among the general members
- Coordinating with the secretariat to organize meetings, conferences and other activities
- Supporting members to come to a consensus on issues around working and engaging boys and men in gender equality and violence prevention
- Recommending and approving interested stakeholders for membership and sharing news of new members with the general membership
- Working as ambassadors of the network, maintaining regular communication and providing information to others
- Helping the secretariat in preparing and managing correspondence, reports and documents with donors and other agencies
- Providing technical support to the secretariat and alliance members in order to facilitate the implementation of the network's work plan
- Supporting the secretariat in expanding the network and promoting the mainstreaming of engaging boys and men for gender equality
- Providing guidance to the coordinator/secretariat on implementing their work-plan.
- Leading the alliance in terms of sustaining the momentum for 'transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys for gender justice' in the country
- Building relationships with likeminded organizations and networks to foster relationships with other social justice movements
- Representing the alliance in advocacy work to influence the national policy agenda and discourse on the importance of transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys
- Coordinating with the regional and global steering committees, in order to shape regional and global strategies

## Membership Application and Approval Procedure

It is advisable to set up an agreed procedure for membership recruitment and approval. Within MenEngage Alliance, we have a bottom up approach to organizing our membership.

### Membership Application Process

Generally, an organization or individual can send in their application for membership through the global website or by filling out a manual (MS Word) application form (see [Annexure VI](#) of this document). In order to apply for membership one must follow the following steps:

- **Review and familiarize themselves with the Alliance's core principles and code of conduct**, including the implications for their organizations and themselves. For support with this, they can reach out to either regional or global secretariats or any members. Once they understand these principles and code of conduct, they must sign them.
- **Submit a one-page profile of their organization**, providing a summary of their mission, vision, objectives, contact information, number of staff, and potential contact person.
- If using the word application form, they must **submit the form to the respective secretariat or coordinator** for further steps to get their membership application approved.

### Membership Application Handling Process

The applications are generally handled as follows:

- Once the new membership application is received, the respective contacts will share the application with the relevant national network. If the application has been received at the global secretariat, then the relevant staff member will share the application with the respective national network coordinator or secretariat.
- The coordinator/s will then share the application with the Steering Committee members for review and assessment, as per the procedure established by the national or regional networks.
- Once the application review and assessment procedure is completed the applicant will be informed by the respective coordinator/s about the approval or denial of the membership application and provide with an explanation of the decision reached, if applicable.

### Countries & Regions without existing Networks

In cases when an application is received from country or countries where there are no existing regional or national networks or, from a country/ies from a region where there is no regional network, the applications will be handled as follows:

- Once the new membership application is received, the Global Secretariat will share the application with a summary of the applicants to the Co-Chairs for their guidance.
- Based on the suggestions from the Co-Chairs, the Global Secretariat will take a decision to approve such membership applications based on the examinations about the organizations.

- The Global Secretariat will further work with the members in a country in a region where there are no country and regional networks to set up country network, following the steps mentioned above.

### **Maintaining Membership Database and Sharing**

The global secretariat of MenEngage Alliance has a template that it follows and encourages national & regional networks to use the same template so that it is compatible at the global level. The global database is dependent on how well national and regional membership databases are maintained and updated. National networks share their database with the regional networks who maintain a database, in similar template, for all the countries in the region. The regional coordinator or focal person then shares the regional database with the Global Secretariat. All regional databases are then put together to create (or update) the Alliance's membership database. This global database is usually referred as "MenEngage Membership Database" and is maintained at the global secretariat level.

Please refer to the [Annex IV](#) for the details about the format.

### **REGIONAL NETWORKS: CONNECTING THE NATIONAL NETWORKS**

As mentioned above, MenEngage regional networks are decentralized and independent and may choose their own unique structure that best enables them to carry out their work, provided it aligns with the core principles and code of conduct of the Alliance.

Usually, each regional network has a Regional Steering Committee and a coordinator (or co-coordinators), identified through democratic process. In regions where there are national networks, the steering committee consists of representatives of all the national networks within the region. In regions where there are no national networks, the steering committee consists of members selected through some democratic processes. It is important that international members who join the regional steering committee have a way to contribute with the networking happening at national or local level.

Regional networks are coordinated by a regional coordinator (or co-coordinators) who are also democratically selected by the regional steering committee, for certain period and based on the agreed selecting process within the regions. The activities of the regional networks are set by the region, and may extend beyond, or be more limited than the roles of the Global Alliance. Depending on the resources available (e.g. human resources, time and funds), the regional networks can take on all or some of the above functions. Likewise, if their funds allow, Regional Networks may also establish Regional Secretariats with paid staff.

## **Functional Elements for Regional Network**

Many of the functional elements described for the National and Global Networks are valid for the regional networks. Below are some additional components to be considered for a Regional Network:

Connecting the global and national through serving as a conduit of information and communication between membership nationally and the global structure. This also includes, making connections among members and with other relevant stakeholders in the region, which include coordinating joint initiatives that go beyond one individual country.

Strengthening national networks: The key role for MenEngage Alliance at the sub/regional level was to act as a resource for strengthening national networks and facilitate processes to create and sustain national networks based on fair, accountable and democratic leadership structures and strategies. This would include providing technical assistance and capacity building on all aspects of national network development, including leadership development and mentoring, organizational strengthening and technical skills building, including enhancing the capacity brokering the provision of technical assistance. MenEngage at the sub/regional level would provide/share examples of effective projects being implemented by other countries and facilitate exchange of lessons and experiences between countries.

Advocacy and policy monitoring: MenEngage sub/regional entities have an important role in: supporting advocacy and campaigning at the national level, especially on more politically contentious issues where solidarity between countries could help push change at the national level; monitoring policy implementation across the region, especially in relation to national/regional commitments to global conventions and agreements (e.g. CEDAW); and in liaising with inter-governmental and international institutions at the regional level. The regional networks can also play the role in influencing regional policy agenda and discourse through a range of advocacy and campaign activities, including producing and disseminating knowledge and evidences among the members and beyond.

Fundraising through identifying opportunities for leveraging regional funds to support work at the national level, as well as supporting the regional advocacy and campaign activities.

## **Structural Elements for Regional Network**

Decision-making: The work of the Alliance at the regional level is usually guided by a steering committee, comprised of representatives of the national networks and/or sub-regions, depending on the size of the region. The steering committee is vested with responsibility for major decision-making on the priorities and directions for the Alliance in the given region.

Leadership: The regional network can be coordinated or managed by regional coordinator (or co-coordinators) who will be responsible to manage the day-to-day activities as the regional secretariat, which would report to the regional steering committee. The Steering Committee will consist of representatives from the national network and few international organizations working

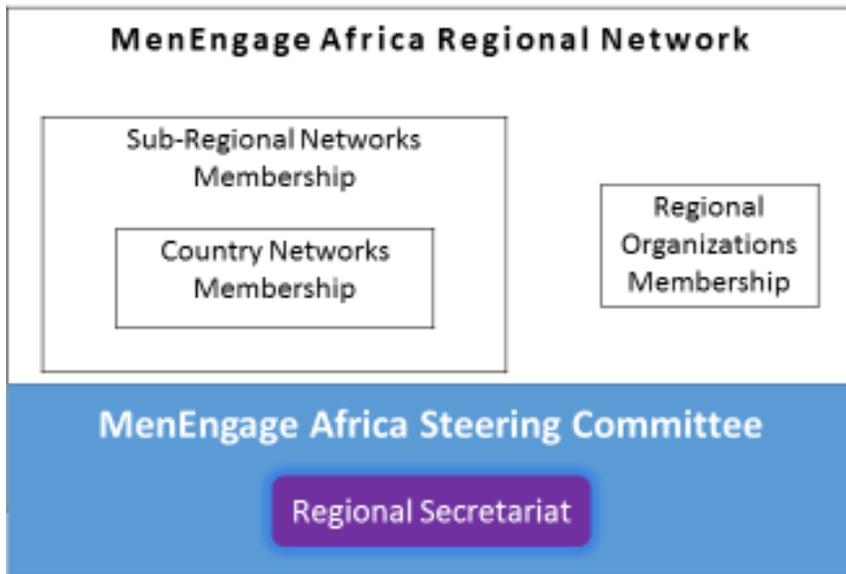
regionally. The role of international organizations in regional structures should be to play in fostering the network's development through appropriate role as agreed by the Steering Committee and depending upon their expertise on the agenda, including supporting the regional network on resources mobilization.

*Bridge to MenEngage Global Alliance*: The regional steering committees will have representatives identified to represent their respective regions at the Global Board. This will be identified collectively by the regional steering committee. Hence a major function and role for the regional network is to serve as a liaison of the regional (and country) network to the Global Network.

### Structure

The structure of the regional network is comprised of the national and sub-regional networks, and based on the best model agreed on among the members in a particular region. The appropriate structure for the regional network will be developed in consultation with the steering committee. Ideally the regional network should consist of a Regional Steering Committee, Regional chairs or Coordinators and a Secretariat.

Below is a sample of a regional network organogram.



### Steering Committee

The Steering Committee of the regional network is the main decision making body, and its members identified through agreed democratic procedures guided by MenEngage Core Principles. Ideally the membership on this steering committee should be rotational, ensuring that a given organization could only serve for a specific period of time. *The Steering Committee will also be responsible to identify the representative of the regional network to the Global Board of MenEngage Alliance.*

The roles and responsibilities for the regional steering committee will be around:

- Set the agenda of the Regional Alliance in consultation with the national alliances

- Identify and appoint representatives for the global steering committee.
- Decide on representation of the Regional Alliance at global and regional forums on equal opportunity basis
- Provide leadership to the Regional Alliance at the Regional and International levels
- Develop Strategic Planning and Plan of Action for the Regional Alliance & monitor the progress of the same
- Coordinate to generate resources & funds for the implementation of the action plan at the regional and national levels along with the secretarial expenses
- Setup guidelines and principles for the alliance at the regional level
- Support to national Steering Committee in taking decisions and actions against any member/s or organizations who try to go beyond the principle and spirit of the alliance. This is to make sure the uniformity among the national alliances in the region
- Make and support regional secretariat to build linkages with regional governmental and intergovernmental institutions in the region, like SAARC. Build relationship with other similar and likeminded organizations and networks to foster relationship with other social justice movements
- Support the regional secretariat in expanding the alliance and promoting the mainstreaming of the approach of engaging boys and men for gender equality.

The roles and responsibilities for the regional coordinator or secretariat will be as follows:

- Coordinate and facilitate the implementation of strategic plan in the region and monitor the same
- Coordinate with the steering committee members as well as the general members to organize regular meetings and preparation and distribution of the minutes
- Maintain communication within the steering committee and the national alliance to lead and maintain regular communication with the general members and management committee members as and when required
- Maintain and work as liaison for the communication with the global and national alliances
- Liaise with the national secretariat to maintain regular communication and information sharing
- Coordinate fund raising for the activities of the alliance, reporting, maintaining communication and dealing with donor agencies in close coordination with the management committee
- Facilitate and coordinate the interaction of national, regional and global MenEngage alliance, and other stakeholders
- Coordinate and facilitate/provide technical support to the network members/organizations on capacity development on gender, men and masculinity issues, and engaging men & boys for social justice

The regional coordinator will work very closely with the Global Secretariat of the MenEngage Alliance in operationalization of the national, regional and global strategies in the respective region.

### **Memberships and Application**

The membership for a regional network will comprise of the members of the country networks within the particular region. In addition, there may be situations that regional organizations and networks working regionally also be the members of MenEngage affiliated regional networks. The decision about the approval of the membership of regional organizations and networks will remain with the regional steering committee.

### **Membership application**

The steps for membership application and dealing procedure ([see above](#)) stated under the National Network will be valid for the regional membership and application processes.

### **Maintaining Membership Database and Sharing**

The regional networks will maintain the membership database as described under the National Network ([see above](#)).

## Annex I: Information about MenEngage Alliance

### Vision and Mission of MenEngage Alliance

#### Vision

A world where all people are equal and free from discrimination, and in which gender justice and human rights are promoted and protected.

#### Mission

MenEngage Alliance works to transform unequal power relations and patriarchal systems by transforming masculinities, working with men and boys through intersectional feminist approaches, building inclusive Alliances from local to regional to global levels, and fostering joint actions in partnership with women's rights, gender- and other social justice movements.

MenEngage Alliance [Core Principles](#) (see [Annex II](#)) inform all its work, irrespective of change in the outcomes, strategies, priority-issues, or governance of the Alliance. They form the compass for the political agenda and joint actions of the Alliance members. MenEngage Alliance has a [Code of Conduct](#) (see [Annex III](#)) which is used as a guiding framework for regional and country networks and the wider membership. This instrument supports members to be consistent with the values and principles of the Alliance, both in their personal lives and their professional and public works. Please refer to [Annex IV](#) for descriptions on MenEngage Alliance's understanding and application of the concepts that are at the core of our Vision and Mission.

### Structure of MenEngage Alliance

MenEngage Alliance's structure and functioning is guided by its Core Principles ([Annex II](#)) and Code of Conduct ([Annex III](#)). The Alliance at the global level plays the following roles:

- Building the capacity of the Alliance through brokering the provision of technical assistance to regional and national networks, in order to strengthen their technical and organizational capacities and political consciousness
- Influencing global policy agenda and global discourse through a range of advocacy and campaigning activities
- Generating and disseminating new knowledge and evidence among its membership and beyond
- Facilitating processes to create networks based on fair, accountable and democratic leadership structures and strategies that will help increase possibilities for scale up and sustainability, and
- Coordinating and facilitating systems and processes for democratic, well-functioning and sustainable global, regional and country networks.

MenEngage Alliance at the global level sees it having an important role to play in addressing critical concerns and supporting work with men and boys that is transformative, based on feminist and human rights principles, and aims to challenge power, privilege and patriarchy.

For this, the MenEngage Global Alliance has the following structure in place:

At the global level, MenEngage Alliance is governed by the Global Board<sup>5</sup>, led by two co-chairs<sup>6</sup> who are democratically appointed by the board at its annual meeting through an established procedure. The Board consists of international leadership of MenEngage Alliance, with dedicated seats for one representative per regional network (currently six), and organizations from the at-large membership representing key constituencies, approaches and networks at an international level. A deliberate commitment to diversity has been made in the Board membership, which includes seats for key constituencies such as a women’s rights, youth and LGBTQI organizations.

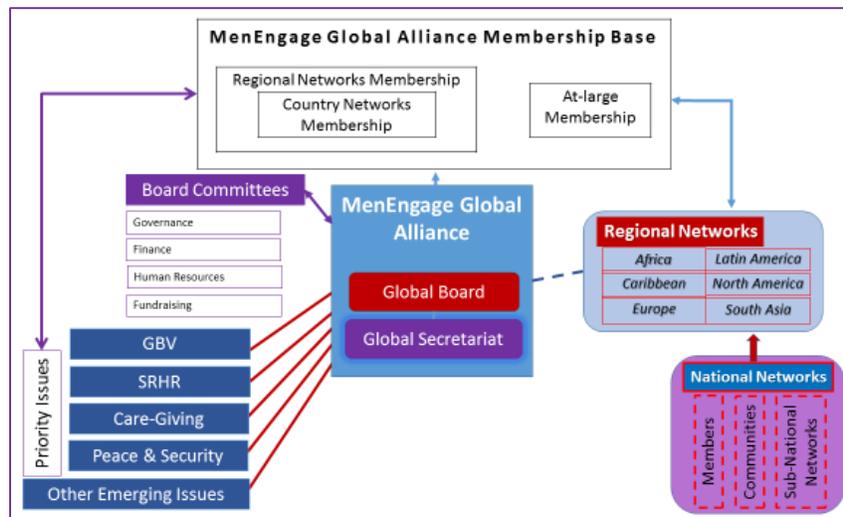


Figure 2: MenEngage Global Alliance Organogram

The Board is responsible for the governance of the Alliance at the Global level. It guides the Alliance’s overall strategic direction and acts as its decision making body. The Board has four standing committees: governance, finance, human resources (HR) and fundraising, and three thematic working groups: GBV, SRHR and men and unpaid care work. These working groups include members beyond the Board, thus facilitating the participation of expert members across the regions. The Global Secretariat is based in Washington D.C. and coordinates the implementation of the Alliance’s strategic priorities and plan. This includes coordinating and overseeing the thematic working groups.

The Board has a dedicated space for all the regional networks, which form the cornerstone of the Alliance, represented by the regional coordinator or focal person, and ensure an important connection with the reality on the ground across the regions. This is further strengthened with a Regional Networks Working Group that consists of all regional coordinators/focal persons and is coordinated by the Global Secretariat.

MenEngage national and regional networks are decentralized and independent and may choose their own unique structure that best enables them to carry out their work, provided it aligns with the core principles and code of conduct of the Alliance. The intent is to create democratic, participatory structures at regional and country levels in keeping with MenEngage Alliance’s guiding principles, and to ensure an appropriate proportion of women and feminists in the governance structure.

For more information about MenEngage Alliance, please visit [www.menengage.org](http://www.menengage.org)

<sup>5</sup> The Alliance’s Board members are: Advocates for Youth, African Men for Sexual Health and Rights (AMSHR), Athena Network, Breakthrough, CARE, CARIMAN\*, Center for Health and Social Justice\*, Cultura y Salud\*, EngenderHealth, Gender Violence Institute Minnesota\*, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Men for Gender Equality –Sweden\*, Promundo, Puntos de Encuentro\*, Save the Children Sweden, Sonke Gender Justice\*, White Ribbon Campaign, and Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). [Those marked with \* are the Representatives of Regional MenEngage Alliances to the Global Board]

<sup>6</sup> The co-chairs are: Abhijit Das, Center for Health & Social Justice (CHSJ) & Todd Minerson, White Ribbon Campaign

## Annex II: Core Principles

MenEngage Alliance globally has a set of Core Principles and its member organizations are encouraged to work collectively based on those.

1. **Working as allies with existing women's rights processes:** We are committed to working as allies with women and women's rights organizations to achieve equality for women and girls.
2. **Gender as relational:** In their daily lives, women and men together experience and shape gender roles and relations. MenEngage believes that to transform gender relations, men and women must work together to redefine build a more just and gender equitable world.
3. **Engaging men from a positive perspective:** We believe that women and girls, boys and men and society more broadly would benefit from recognizing the consequences of gender inequality and engage in appropriate action to transform non-equitable and violent versions of manhood and redress power inequalities related to gender. We seek to provide spaces and support for men already acting in more gender-equitable and non-violent ways.
4. **Challenging men's violence against women:** We are dedicated to positively engaging men and boys to end violence against women and in questioning or challenging violent and detrimental versions of manhood.
5. **The vulnerabilities of men:** We believe that the specific needs and experiences of men and boys have often not been well understood nor taken into account in the development of public policy or professional practice across a wide range of areas. We believe that some men and boys are made vulnerable by non-equitable and violent versions of manhood, and we seek to address those needs without negating the health and rights of women and girls.
6. **Engaging men as caregivers:** We are dedicated to promoting more equitable participation by men and boys in caregiving, the care of children and domestic tasks.
7. **Sexual and reproductive health and rights:** We are dedicated to promoting respect and the actualization of the sexual and reproductive rights of all, and want to engage men so that reproductive health and contraception are more evenly shared between men and women.
8. **Sexual diversity:** We recognize and celebrate the diversity of sexualities, including heterosexual, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/intersexed men and women
9. **Non-discrimination:** We actively advocate against, and question and seek to overcome sexism, social exclusion, homophobia, racism or any form of discriminatory behavior against anyone, or on any other basis.
10. **Transparency:** We are transparent, honest, fair and ethical in all of the actions of MenEngage, including making public its sources of funding and annual budget.
11. **Collaboration:** We seek to work in collaboration, dialoguing openly about institutional differences and achieving consensus whenever possible.
12. **Human rights perspective and life cycle approach:** We recognize the need to apply a human rights perspective in all their activities and to take into account a lifecycle and ecological approach that incorporates both the individual as well as the broader social and structural contexts that shape gender inequalities.
13. **Participation:** We strive to include and be informed by the voices of men and women, boys and girls at the community level, including community-level NGOs.
14. **Promoting existing UN mandates:** We are dedicated to engaging men and boys to fulfill the mandates, statements of action, and principles of ICPD, CEDAW and CSW statements, and CRC and working collectively to encourage governments to do the same.
15. **Evidence base:** We seek to build on and contribute to evidence-based approaches to engaging men and boys and promoting gender equality.

## Annex III: MenEngage Alliance Code of Conduct

MenEngage Alliance members must conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the values and principles<sup>7</sup> of the alliance, including the individual/family level: advancing gender equality, human rights and social justice. All institutional members must sign this Code of Conduct in order to get membership of the alliance. This document is an effort to ensure a standard of accountability for all member organizations to others with whom we work, as well as an adherence of individual employees and volunteers of member organizations to the core principles of MenEngage.

### Code of Conduct

This section outlines a set of institutional and personal principles for membership. Should a member witness, or personally experience, a breach of any of these codes of conduct, please review the situation with individuals in your country or regional network and from your organization and seek their input.

In some cases, those organizations that violate this Code of Conduct may face expulsion from the MenEngage Alliance, and, for criminal behavior, may face legal repercussions in accordance with local laws.

#### 1. Create Peaceful (and Equal) Professional Environments

MenEngage Alliance members spend countless hours every day, week and year working to achieve social justice in local communities and around the world. This same work ethic also applies to our own professional environments. MenEngage Alliance members do not tolerate harassment or threats in any form – verbal, physical, psychological, sexual or visual – that make others feel otherwise unsafe.

Organizationally, this means treating others (including women, children, LGBT individuals, persons with disabilities, etc.) as equals inside the office as well as in communities impacted (directly, as well as indirectly) by our activities, programs and projects. MenEngage Alliance members seek to work collaboratively, engaging in open dialogue about differences (institutional or otherwise) and achieving consensus building.

#### 2. Promote Gender Equality and Social Justice Outside the Workplace

The purpose of the MenEngage Alliance is to promote gender equality and social justice, thus it is imperative for the proper functioning of the MenEngage Alliance, and for the maintenance of its integrity and good reputation, that members work with their staff to ensure they uphold principles of gender equality not only in their professional, but also personal lives. This means, but is not limited to, building relationships with women, children, transgender individuals and men founded upon respect, speaking out against violence and injustice in your community, sharing decision-making power with others, respecting human diversity in all its forms, and recognizing and upholding the rights of others in all circumstances, including humanitarian crises situations. It also means being critically aware of the interconnections between gender inequality and other prevalent social and structural injustices such as classism, racism, economic inequality, and homophobia.

#### 3. Do Not Discriminate Against Others

No member of the MenEngage Alliance will discriminate against others for reasons pertaining to national origin, race, color, religion, gender, age, language, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation,

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<sup>7</sup> The Core Principles of the MenEngage Alliance are available here <http://menengage.org/about-us/our-core-principles/>

socioeconomic or marital status, nor for any other reason. Members who come across such instances of discrimination will actively question and challenge them both inside and outside the workplace.

#### **4. Be Violence<sup>8</sup> Free**

MenEngage Alliance members are committed to the principle of non-violence, under all circumstances, and work to prevent and combat violence in all its forms, including sexual and gender-based violence, violence against women and children and male interpersonal violence. Violation of this principle of non-violence may adversely affect the efforts of MenEngage and lead to the tarnishing of the Alliance’s beliefs and principles. Thus, member organizations must hold all of their staff members accountable to a rigorous antiviolence standard. Violation of this provision may lead to the removal of the member’s affiliation with MenEngage.

#### **5. Prioritize Ethical Standards and the Safety and Well-Being for All – including Women and Children**

MenEngage Alliance members take a “do no harm” approach to the work they do in communities around the world. For this reason, it is important to be aware of how patriarchal structures highlight men’s and boys’ vulnerabilities, and largely place women and children in situations that often cause them the most harm. Members should work on how to prioritize the safety and wellbeing of all individuals impacted by their programs and projects. This includes striving to include and take into account the voices of key stakeholders including men, women, boys, girls, and transgender individuals at the community level, and the voices of local activists and organizations in program design, development and evaluation, as well as any other initiative that aims to engage the community.

Members will also follow international ethical principles and guidelines on research and program implementation such as ensuring participation is always voluntary and informed consent is given. Acquiring consent from children and those in “captive” areas (i.e. schools, prisons) require additional safeguards to ensure participation is always voluntary.

#### **6. Avoid Conflicts of Interest**

MenEngage Alliance members have an obligation to do what is in the best interest of the network, in line with its mission and Core Principles. If a staff member is presented with a situation whose outcome creates personal benefit for him or herself, friends or relations, or the member organization, at the expense of the integrity of MenEngage, there may be a conflict of interest and it should be avoided. Carrying out transactions or situations that favor certain organizations or individuals over others can lead to the tarnishing of the MenEngage Alliance’s beliefs and principles.

Additionally, MenEngage Alliance members strive to work transparently and collaboratively across countries with regional and national members of the network wherever they are present.

#### **7. Hold One Another Accountable**

MenEngage Alliance members are aware that both their positive *and* negative actions reflect back upon their organization and the network as a whole. For this reason, while MenEngage aims to recognize the successes of its members, members must also work to hold one another accountable for actions that go against the Principles of the Alliance. Accountability can mean different things depending on the context. It may mean confronting a colleague who makes a sexist comment about women’s bodies, or holding

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<sup>8</sup> “Violence” shall be understood as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation (WHO – Violence Prevention Alliance definition). This definition encompasses the use of physical punishment and emotional violence against of children.

quarterly meetings with key stakeholders such as LGBT groups to ensure that the implementation of an HIV-prevention project is carried out in a collaborative and transparent way. The most important thing to remember is that the integrity of the MenEngage Alliance is dependent upon individuals who are critically aware of their actions as well as those of others, including close friends and colleagues.

A minimum package of requirements is now available for the MenEngage Alliance on accountability that includes how to create strong workplace policies (i.e. child protection, sexual harassment, equal opportunity hiring, etc.), an accountability protocol and a training to ensure that members' standards of accountability are in line with those of the MenEngage Alliance. These are available now on [www.menengage.org](http://www.menengage.org).

#### **8. Ensure Transparency at All Levels**

MenEngage Alliance members will strive to be transparent, honest, fair and ethical in all of their actions, including making public its sources of funding and annual budget and spending, except in cases where the donor requests to remain anonymous. Transparency also means working collaboratively with local organizations in places where a MenEngage member or network exists.

**All member organizations of the MenEngage Alliance must sign this Code of Conduct.**

## Annex IV: Concepts

MenEngage Alliance understands and applies the concepts that are at the core of our Vision and Mission as follows:

**Transform and end patriarchy:** We seek to engage boys and men, along with girls, women and people of diverse gender identities, to redress structural power imbalances and inequalities, male domination and their manifestations upheld by systemic male supremacy ideologies and to reform such dualistic and sexist gender orders.

**Transform masculinities:** We seek to destabilize stereotypical male gender roles and hegemonic expressions of manhood, and support manifestations of equitable, inclusive and positive versions of manhood, by changing social norms that shape boys' and men's behavior.

**Engaging men and boys:** We seek to work with men and boys to encourage their active involvement in ending gender inequalities, advancing women's rights and transforming masculinities as allies with women, girls and people of diverse gender identities. Recognizing that some men and boys question the harmful notions of manhood and the privileges that society grants them, we provide ways for them to take transformative action. We also work with men in power in all spheres of society to promote progressive policies and institutional practices in favor of women's rights and gender justice.

**Intersectional approach:** We acknowledge that oppressive institutions (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, classism, etc.) are interconnected and cannot be examined separately from one another. This complex interplay of multiple identities can increase vulnerability and further entrench inequalities and injustice. We seek to contribute to an intersectional analysis of men and masculinities issues and enhance an intersectional perspective in the work of the Alliance and its members.

**Feminist approach:** We acknowledge that we build on the heritage of feminist women's rights organizations and movements and ground our work firmly in feminist principles. We seek to strengthen our work by embracing a women's rights perspective and feminist analysis, listening to and being accountable to women's rights movements; and institutionalizing democratic and inclusive decision making processes within the Alliance.

**Enabling spaces for dialogue and joint action:** We, being informed by a feminist approach, engage in alliance building as a political act to change and a tool for empowerment within the paradigm of movement building, informed by strategies that can be identified as 'glocal', where ideas are initiated, circulated, changed, operated, negotiated and disseminated.

**Partnerships:** We seek to foster concrete and equal associations and collaborations with various actors and agencies in the field of women's rights, gender and social justice, climate justice, child rights, youth empowerment and rights, sexual and reproductive health rights, civil and political rights, indigenous population rights, human rights, among others.

**Working as allies with women's rights organizations:** We are committed to working as allies, and to fostering healthy relationships, with women and women's rights organizations, movements and networks to achieve equity and equality for women and girls, and justice for all, as a political act to strengthen the collective struggle for human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.

## Annex V: Membership Database format

MenEngage Alliance wishes to keep up its membership database consistent across the countries and regions so that all the database are compatible with each other and it's easier to collate them at a centralized database that is maintained at the global secretariat level. The Global Secretariat maintains the global membership database, and supports the regional and country networks with their membership registration, as requested by them. The Global Secretariat is planning to work actively with the Regional Networks to include all relevant information required to support the membership base. We envision that this will enable better brokerage by the Global Secretariat, when requests for expertise or promising practices reach our office. This information will also be made publicly available on the website, so that individuals can find out the organizations working with men and boys in their country and others.

It is advisable that the national networks get in touch with the regional and/or global secretariats to share the Excel Format that is generally recommended to be used by the national networks. Broadly the format consists of the following information:

<b>Items</b>	<b>Description</b>
Organization	Full name of the member organization, including acronyms they usually use. Leave it blank in case of an individual.
Representative's Name	Full name of the representative of the member organization
Role within the network	Role of the member organization within the network (e.g.: member, steering committee member, national coordinator and so on)
Title at the organization	Full title or designation of the representative within the member organization
Email ID	Email id of the representative for communication purpose
Phone number	Contact number of the representative for communication purpose
Skype	Skype id of the representative or the member organization for communication purpose
Twitter	Twitter handle of the member organization or the representative that can be used in the social media
Website	Website of the member organization
Constituency	The constituency the member organization represents within the network (e.g.: Women's Rights & Empowerment,

## Annex VI: Membership Application Form



# MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM

### Introduction

MenEngage Alliance is a global network of civil society organizations, uniting activists, academics, UN agencies and other stakeholders, from continents around the world on transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys in gender justice. As a network, MenEngage Alliance counts among its 700 members (organizational) many of the leading voices on transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys work - researchers, practitioners, advocates, funding partners, and activists across 66 countries globally through its 36 country and 6 regional networks. MenEngage Alliance members and partners work collectively and individually toward advancing gender justice, human rights and social justice to achieve a world in which all can enjoy healthy, fulfilling and equitable relationships and their full potential.

Specifically, MenEngage Alliance members must be:

- A registered NGO working in health, violence prevention, social development, gender equality or related area
- Willing to sign the statement of core principles (see below)
- Willing to fill out a simple questionnaire describing activities (specifically focusing on activities related to engaging men and boys)
- Willing to have this information made available on the MenEngage Alliance website

By registering as a member you are signing on to our [Code of Conduct](#) as well as our [Core Principles](#). We ask that you take the time to review both before filling out your registration form. We will put you in touch with your corresponding regional coordinator within two weeks of you joining. Please note that regional networks may have additional membership requirements.

## Certification of Core Principles

By becoming a member of MenEngage Alliance, you pledge to uphold in your individual/family, local, national and/or international actions following core principles. The general assembly of MenEngage Alliance reserves the right to refuse membership status to any organization that is perceived as acting against the principles by its public actions, its publications or the actions of its staff.

### Core Principles are:

- 1. Gender as relational:**  
We believe that men, along with women, should be engaged in achieving gender equality and in advancing the rights, health and well-being of women and girls.
- 2. Questioning men's violence against women:**  
We are dedicated to engaging men and boys to end violence against women and to questioning or challenging violent versions of manhood.
- 3. Promoting existing UN mandates:**  
We are dedicated to engaging men and boys to fulfill the mandates, statements of action, and principles of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Commission on the Status of Women statements (48th session), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and working collectively to encourage governments to do the same.
- 4. Engaging men as caregivers:**  
We are dedicated to promoting more equitable participation by men and boys in caregiving, the care of children and domestic tasks.
- 5. Working as allies with existing women's rights organizations:**  
We are committed to working as allies with women and women's rights organizations to achieve equality for women and girls.
- 6. Sexual diversity and sexual rights:**  
We are dedicated to promoting cultures of masculinity that respect sexual diversity and the sexual and reproductive rights of all, and that engage men so that concerns for reproductive health and contraception are more evenly shared between men and women.
- 7. The vulnerabilities of men:**  
We believe that the specific needs and experiences of men and boys have often not been well understood nor taken into account in the development of public policy or professional practice across a wide range of areas. We believe that men and boys are made vulnerable by non-equitable and violent versions of manhood.
- 8. Engaging men from a positive perspective:**  
We believe that all people would benefit from recognition of these issues and appropriate action to transform non-equitable and violent versions of manhood and redress power inequalities related to gender. We seek to build examples of men already acting in more gender-equitable and non-violent ways.
- 9. Participation:**  
We will strive to include and take into account the voices of men and women, boys and girls, at the community level, and the voices of community-level NGOs.
- 10. Non-discrimination:**

We will actively advocate against, question and seek to overcome, sexism, social exclusion, homophobia, racism or any form of discriminatory behavior against women or gay/bisexual/transgender men and women, or on any other basis.

11. **Transparency:**

We will be transparent, honest, fair and ethical in all of our actions, including making public our sources of funding and annual budget.

12. **Collaboration:**

We seek to work in collaboration, with open dialogue about institutional differences and achieving consensus whenever possible.

13. **Evidence base:**

We seek to build on evidence-based approaches to engaging men and boys.

14. **Human rights perspective and life cycle approach:**

We recognize the need to apply a human rights perspective in all activities and to take into account a lifecycle and ecological approach that incorporates both the individual as well as the broader social and structural contexts that shape gender inequalities.

I/We have read and understood the MenEngage Alliance Core Principles and pledge to follow.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Full Name (Representative):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Designation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Certification of Code of Conduct

This section outlines a set of institutional and personal principles for membership. Should a member witness, or personally experience, a breach of any of these codes of conduct, please review the situation with individuals in your MenEngage Alliance and from your organization and seek their input.

In some cases, those organizations that violate this Code of Conduct may face expulsion from the MenEngage Alliance, and, for criminal behavior, may face legal repercussions in accordance with local laws.

### **1. Create Peaceful (and Equal) Professional Environments**

MenEngage Alliance members spend countless hours every day, week and year working to achieve social justice in local communities and around the world. This same work ethic also applies to our own professional environments. MenEngage Alliance members do not tolerate harassment or threats in any form – verbal, physical, psychological, sexual or visual – that make others feel otherwise unsafe.

Organizationally, this means treating others (including women, children, LGBTIQ individuals, persons with disabilities, etc.) as equals inside the office as well as in communities impacted (directly, as well as indirectly) by our activities, programs and projects. MenEngage Alliance members seek to work collaboratively, engaging in open dialogue about differences (institutional or otherwise) and achieving consensus building.

### **2. Promote Gender Equality and Social Justice Outside the Workplace**

The purpose of the MenEngage Alliance is to promote gender equality and social justice, thus it is imperative for the proper functioning of the MenEngage Alliance, and for the maintenance of its integrity and good reputation, that members work with their staff to ensure they uphold principles of gender equality not only in their professional, but also personal lives. This means, but is not limited to, building relationships with women, children, transgender individuals and men founded upon respect, speaking out against violence and injustice in your community, sharing decision-making power with others, respecting human diversity in all its forms, and recognizing and upholding the rights of others in all circumstances, including humanitarian crises situations. It also means being critically aware of the interconnections between gender inequality and other prevalent social and structural injustices such as classism, racism, economic inequality, and homophobia.

### **3. Do Not Discriminate Against Others**

No member of the MenEngage Alliance will discriminate against others for reasons pertaining to national origin, race, color, religion, gender, age, language, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic or marital status, nor for any other reason. Members who come across such instances of discrimination will actively question and challenge them both inside and outside the workplace.

### **4. Be Violence Free**

MenEngage Alliance members are committed to the principle of non-violence, under all circumstances, and work to prevent and combat violence in all its forms, including sexual and gender-based violence, violence against women and children and male interpersonal violence. Violation of this principle of non-violence may adversely affect the efforts of MenEngage Alliance and lead to the tarnishing of the Alliance's beliefs and principles. Thus, member organizations must hold all of their staff members accountable to a rigorous antiviolenace standard. Violation of this provision may lead to the removal of the member's affiliation with MenEngage Alliance.

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Members will also follow international ethical principles and guidelines on research and program implementation such as ensuring participation is always voluntary and informed consent is given. Acquiring consent from children and those in “captive” areas (i.e. schools, prisons) require additional safeguards to ensure participation is always voluntary.

## **6. Avoid Conflicts of Interest**

MenEngage Alliance members have an obligation to do what is in the best interest of the network, in line with its mission and Core Principles. If a staff member is presented with a situation whose outcome creates personal benefit for him or herself, friends or relations, or the member organization, at the expense of the integrity of the Alliance, there may be a conflict of interest and it should be avoided. Carrying out transactions or situations that favor certain organizations or individuals over others can lead to the tarnishing of the MenEngage Alliance's beliefs and principles.

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different things depending on the context. It may mean confronting a colleague who makes a sexist comment about women's bodies, or holding quarterly meetings with key stakeholders such as LGBT groups to ensure that the implementation of an HIV-prevention project is carried out in a collaborative and transparent way. The most important thing to remember is that the integrity of the MenEngage Alliance is dependent upon individuals who are critically aware of their actions as well as those of others, including close friends and colleagues.

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### **8. Ensure Transparency at All Levels**

MenEngage Alliance members will strive to be transparent, honest, fair and ethical in all of their actions, including making public its sources of funding and annual budget and spending, except in cases where the donor requests to remain anonymous. Transparency also means working collaboratively with local organizations in places where a MenEngage member or network exists.

I/We have read and understood the MenEngage Alliance Code of Conduct and pledge to follow.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Full Name (Representative):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Designation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

# ORGANISATIONAL DETAILS

1. Do you accept the MenEngage Core Principles and Code of Conduct?

- Yes
- No

2. Organizational Details

a. Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Acronym (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

c. Registration Number (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

d. Date of Establishment: \_\_\_\_\_

e. Website: \_\_\_\_\_

f. Social Media Handles:  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

g. Short Description

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h. Mission

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i. Organizational Partners

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j. Does your organization offer capacity development workshops/training?

Yes

No

k. Organization Type (tick one or more)

National Non-Profit / Not-for-Profit

International Non-Profit / Not-for-Profit

For profit oriented service

UN Agency

Government agency

Faith based organization

Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

l. Operational level (tick one or more boxes, as applicable)

Community/local level

National level

Regional level (Continent)

International level

Others (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

m. Mailing address

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**3. Organization’s Representatives**

Organizational Head	Focal Person for the Alliance
Name (first, last)	Name (first, last)
Designation	Designation
	
	
	
	

**4. Primary Constituency that you or your organization is affiliated to (Check one or more)**

- Women’s Rights / Movement
- Child Rights
- Youth Movement
- LGBTIQA
- Environmental Justice
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**5. What is your organization’s core focus? (Check one or more)**

- Child Rights
- Conflict and violence prevention

- Gender-based Violence prevention
- Gender Equality / Gender Justice
- Humanitarian and emergency relief
- Men and Masculinities
- Maternal and Neonatal Child Health
- Men & Caregiving / Fatherhood / Positive Parenting

- Men's health
- Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
- Social and economic development
- STI / HIV / AIDS
- Women's Right
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Which other areas does your organization focus on?**

- Child Rights
- Conflict and violence prevention
- Gender-based Violence prevention
- Gender Equality / Gender Justice
- Humanitarian and emergency relief
- Men and Masculinities
- Maternal and Neonatal Child Health
- Men & Caregiving / Fatherhood / Positive Parenting
- Men's health
- Promotion of gender equality
- Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
- Social and economic development
- STI / HIV / AIDS
- Women's Right
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Does your organization have materials to share with other members?**

- Yes If so, where can other members access your materials? \_\_\_\_\_
- No

**8. Is your organization affiliated to other networks/alliances? If yes, list the names**

<u>Names of network/alliance</u>	<u>Core Area of Focus / Issue(s) of Concern</u>

We undersigned officials of our organization commit ourselves and pledge to actively work for MEA mission

<b>Head of the Organization</b>	<b>Contact person</b>
Name	Name
Signature	Signature
Date	Date

Please send the membership application/registration form by email (preferred) or fax or regular mail to the Secretariat, MenEngage Alliance at regional or national level (whoever is relevant)

