

MenEngage Alliance South Asia

Terms of Reference

Who Are We

We, the men, women and people with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities (SOGI), practitioners, activists and academics working on gender equality, ending violence against women and children, transforming masculinities, and social justice, from the countries in South Asia working side by side with respect and shared goals, have come together in our common agenda of Gender Justice. We are outraged by the pandemic of violence and discrimination against women, girls and persons with diverse SOGI face at the hands of some men, by the relegation of women & girls to “second class” status, and the continued domination by some men and boys of our economies, of our politics, of our social and cultural institutions, in far too many of our homes. We have seen and been part of the increasing global understanding that it is important to work with men and boys for achieving gender equality and preventing violence against girls, boys, women, differently identified persons and other men.

Our unity stems from the common understanding that boys and men are not born violent and a strong belief that boys and men have the capacity to change, care and love, cherish, and work for justice for all. We also believe that it is necessary to implement gender transformative interventions, starting through the process of socialization in which boys and girls are brought up within various social institutions, in order to reshape people’s behavior and attitudes including family, the media, religious and educational institutions and the State. After discussing issues pertaining to work regarding men and gender equality as also relevant experiences and practices in South Asia, we reached the conclusion that despite the shared history of the region (colonialism, cultural & religious practices, conflicts and militarization, institutional and social divisions, social justice movements, fundamentalism / nationalism and communalism, and social/ cultural norms) we do not have adequate, proper and context specific resources of our own to initiate our interventions both at the country and regional levels. We seek to address these concerns collectively by constituting the Regional MenEngage Alliance in South Asia.

Vision

Creation of a gender-just society in the region where all men, women, differently identified persons and children enjoy equal rights, opportunities, and value regardless of caste, class, ethnicity, nationality and religion.

Mission

Ensuring engagement of boys and men to achieve a gender just society in South Asia

Goal

To strengthen the South Asia process towards engaging men and boys for gender justice.

Core Principles

The Proposed Core Principles are:

1. **Zero Tolerance towards Gender based violence:** We will have zero tolerance towards all kinds of violence against people on the basis of gender, sexuality, caste, class, ethnicity, nationality and religion.
2. **Gender as relational:** We believe that men and boys should be engaged in achieving gender equality and in advancing the rights, health and well-being of women, girls and people with diverse identities.
3. **Questioning men's violence against women:** We are dedicated to engaging men and boys to end all forms of violence and to challenging dominant constructs of masculinities.
4. **Working as allies with existing women's rights processes:** We will work as allies with women and women's rights organizations to achieve gender equality.
5. **Promoting existing international instruments for Human Rights:** We are dedicated to engaging all persons and institutions to fulfil the mandates, statements of action, and principles of all the international and regional Human Rights instruments and covenants.
6. **Sexual diversity and sexual rights:** We are dedicated to promoting cultures of masculinities that respect sexual diversity and sexual and reproductive rights of all, and that engage men and boys responsibly so that reproductive health and rights are more evenly ensured.
7. **Non-discrimination:** We will actively question, advocate against, question and seek to overcome, sexism, social exclusion, homophobia, racism or any other forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviours.
8. **Democracy:** We will practice and promote inclusive democratic norms and values in all our work and processes in the region and beyond.
9. **Transparency:** We will be transparent and ethical in all our actions, and would make public our sources of funding and annual budget.
10. **Collaboration:** We seek to work in collaboration, dialoguing openly about institutional and individual differences to achieve consensus. Further the Alliance will strengthen the learning and sharing environment, and provide a platform to the alliance members and partners.
11. **Constant critical reflection on privilege:** We will engage in a process of constant critical reflection and cultivate the habit of questioning our own works at regular intervals to create a strong alliance at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Membership

Organizations, institutions, and individuals who adhere to the principles of gender equality and non-violence and MenEngage Alliance South Asia's core principles, and are willing to take

a public stand on these principles may join this process through the country alliances in their respective countries. The country alliances will have the responsibility to update and inform the regional secretariat about their membership base. UN Agencies, Donor agencies, Media and Government can only be strategic partners of the Alliance.

The formal process of membership will be confined to each country level alliance. It will involve submitting a duly filled application form (available both online and in print) along with an agreement form embodying the principles of the alliance. The steering committee of each Country Alliance will take the decision on membership through the in-country agreed transparent process. It's up to the Country Alliances to decide whether or not to institute the necessary fee or in-kind structures.

General Body:

- All registered members of each Country Alliance will constitute the General Body of the Country Alliances.
- Membership criteria will be finalised by each Country Alliance in keeping with the principles and guidelines laid down by the Regional alliance.
- The General Body will constitute a Steering Committee at the Country level.
- The Steering Committee of each Country Alliance will nominate/elect members to represent the Country Alliance in the Steering Committee of the Regional Alliance as per the Guideline/ToR of the Regional Alliance.

Terms of Reference for the Regional Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is mandated to take the overall responsibility to implement the decisions regarding the following matters in close coordination with the Regional Secretariat of the regional alliance:

- Set the agenda of the Regional Alliance in consultation with the Country alliances
- Identify and appoint representatives to the global steering committee.
- Decide on representation of the Regional Alliance at global and regional forums on equal opportunity basis.
- Develop Strategic Planning and Plan of Action for the Regional Alliance and monitor their progress. Coordinate to generate resources and funds for the implementation of the action plan at the regional level along with the secretarial expenses.
- Formulate guidelines and principles for the alliance at the regional level from time to time.
- Amend the structure, strategic plan and make policy decisions on behalf of the Regional Alliance.
- Be accountable to the Global, Regional and Country Alliances.
- Make and support a regional secretariat to build linkages with regional, governmental/ intergovernmental institutions in the region, like SAARC, UN etc. Build a relationship with

other similar and like-minded organizations and networks to foster a constructive relationship with other gender justice movements.

- Designate task groups as and when required for the Regional Alliance.
- Provide technical support to the secretariat and Alliance members as and when required in order to facilitate the implementation of the action plan of the Alliance in the region and to publish reports or other publications.
- Support the secretariat in expanding the alliance and promoting engagement of boys and men for gender equality in the countries in South Asia region.
- Act as liaison between the Country, regional and global MenEngage Alliance and the Global Board and Secretariat of MenEngage Global Alliance.

The quorum of the Steering Committee will be two-thirds, but the quorum should have at least one member from each of the participating country. Participation through Skype and telephone shall be treated as part of the quorum.

Terms of Reference for the Regional Secretariat

The secretariat of MenEngage Alliance South Asia will be rotated every two years through a democratic process, either by general consensus among its members or through an election process. The major role and responsibilities of the Regional Secretariat will be to implement the action plan as decided by the Regional Steering Committee including the following:

- Coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan in the region.
- Coordinate with the steering committee members as well as the general members to organize regular meetings and preparation and distribution of the minutes
- Coordination within and between the region/s.
- Maintain communication between the Board, Global Secretariat and the Country alliances. Facilitate regular communication with the general members and steering committee members as and when required.
- Facilitate communication with the global and country alliances.
- Coordinate the regional meetings and facilitate the documentation process.
- Collect and disseminate relevant information within the region and beyond.
- Liaise with the Country secretariats or coordinators to maintain regular communication and information sharing
- Facilitate fund-raising for the activities of the alliance, reporting, maintaining communication and dealing with donor agencies in close coordination with the steering committee.
- Be responsible for the financial management of the alliance subject to monitoring by the Steering Committee.
- Facilitate the collaboration of the MenEngage Alliance with various like-minded institutions, organisations and networks.
- Continually update the information and data base of the Country initiatives.

Fund Channelling & Control Mechanism

There will be a single door channel for the funding mechanism of the Regional Secretariat, unless this is rendered impossible due to some unavoidable circumstances. Funds for the Regional Alliance will be channelled through the regional secretariat or, as decided by the regional steering committee. The Alliance will continuously endeavour to raise funds for the implementation of the strategic plan of the Regional Alliance and/or for the Steering Committee meetings. The Regional Secretariat will ensure compliance with the rules and regulations of the donor agencies subject to monitoring by the Steering Committee.

Communication Mechanism

Every communication “from or to” the country and global levels will be through the regional secretariat. Regional Coordinator will be responsible to maintain the overall communication with the Global Alliance & the Secretariat, Global Board and the Country alliances (at the regional level), and such communications will be copied to the Regional Steering Committee.

Regarding communication among the thematic task groups (if there are any), the leader of the task group will be responsible to communicate within and among the task groups. Such communications will be done in coordination with the Regional Coordinator; so that the coordinator will be informed about the communication happening among and within the regional thematic task groups. Further, the task group leaders can directly communicate with the Steering Committee members and such communications should be copied to the Regional Coordinator.

Affiliation and Logo of the Regional Alliance

MenEngage Alliance South Asia will have direct affiliation with the Global MenEngage Alliance and hence will retain the same name for the Regional Alliance, which is “**MenEngage Alliance South Asia**”. The logo of the Regional Alliance is modelled on that of the Global Alliance; as below:

