

MenEngage Global Alliance Response to 2012-2016 evaluation

Introduction

An evaluation of MenEngage Global Alliance's multi-annual program 2012-2016 and proposal to Sida was conducted by Silvia Salinas Mulder and Patrick Welsh, independent consultants. The evaluators have summarized their findings in the report *"MenEngage Alliance - PROGRESS EVALUATION. Report on implementation of Sida proposal 2012 – 2016"* shared on 30 Sept 2016. The evaluation process took place from April-September 2016, the methodology and phases are described in the report.

The evaluation has provided MenEngage Alliance with valuable insights on the areas of success and future development for the network. In this document the MenEngage Global Secretariat summarizes the evaluation's key findings and recommendations, and provides a response. The outcomes of the evaluation have been integrated in the strategic plan and proposal to Sida for 2017-2020. The evaluation findings will be further discussed and appropriate strategies will be identified to address them, with the MenEngage Global Board at the next meeting in 2017.

Main progress findings

The external evaluation report 2016 highlights that over the last years "it has become increasingly clear (though there is still a long way to go) that the MenEngage Alliance is not a network of men/boys for men/boys, but brings together a broad range of actors and approaches, under the joint belief that transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys is relevant and necessary to advance women's rights and gender justice. Consequently, the MenEngage Global Alliance has advanced its partnerships with women's rights and social justice actors." The evaluation acknowledges that the 2012-2016 period has marked maturing of the MenEngage Alliance's political stance within the 'engaging men and boys' field. Milestones include the Delhi Call to Action and updated vision and mission statements, which "recognize that patriarchy is the systemic root-cause of gender injustice and that patriarchy is often expressed through harmful masculinities, and men and boys both have a responsibility to and benefit from addressing and transforming unequal power relations."

The external evaluation report 2016 furthermore highlights that "the Alliance has had considerable success in establishing a myriad of civil society partnerships in order to support the global advocacy initiatives of women's rights, SRHR, LGBTQI and youth movements, and position itself as an ally to these movements". The Alliance has strengthened its relationships and collaborations and a sense of interconnectedness between the different levels of the network. As highlighted in the report, MenEngage Alliance has reached commendable levels of personal and institutional commitment and political maturity in navigating complex power dynamics. The Alliance, with these strengths, is ready to establish itself as an unequivocal partner and ally of women's rights and feminist organizations not only within the "development paradigm" but also, and most importantly, within the "political/ideological paradigm", primarily around increased participation, awareness and responsibility among boys and men regarding gender equality, SRHR and HIV/AIDS.

The report recommends that, with its strong internal structures and capacities, the Alliance should – and is now better placed to - strategize and tap into the unique potential that it has to position itself politically, at the global, regional and country levels, and step up to the many strategic and operational challenges inherent in that.

Evaluation recommendations & responses by MenEngage Alliance

MenEngage appreciates that the evaluation outlines several concrete recommendations to strengthen the work of the Alliance. This section summarizes the recommendations in the evaluation report and responds with a reflection of the developments during 2012-2016 and how we plan to further address them in 2017-2020:

- ✓ *Mainstream a “feminist masculinity lens” in analysis of issues; and keep focus on power and privileges as key lens to guide planning, prioritize strategies, choose projects, approach thematic analysis and define external positioning: see Chapter 2 – Intervention logic, which includes our vision, mission and guiding principles; and the Glossary at the beginning of the document. These sections in particular outline how MenEngage Alliance understands men and masculinities work in gender-transformative approaches to advance SRHR, women’s rights and gender justice.*
- ✓ *Develop a Theory of Change that delineates the pathways MenEngage Alliance envisions to achieve social changes, that addresses the underlying assumptions and clarifies the specific roles and contributions of MenEngage Alliance as a network: see Output 5.1 under strategic and institutional development, where we commit to develop a ToC in 2017.*
- ✓ *Develop clear and inclusive mechanisms and criteria for thematic prioritization, keeping ongoing priority issues while keeping space for new, emerging issues; and in advocacy expand to potentially address other key issues less (explicitly) linked to the development agenda: see section 2.4, which outlines our priority issues - including SRHR for all - and emerging issues, reflecting the broadening perspective of the Alliance. The 2017-2020 program is designed to provide the systems and mechanisms for identifying issues and undertaking collective action, while the issues themselves can have a level of flexibility.*
- ✓ *Develop innovative, global, overarching training and capacity building alternatives using new technologies; and evolve from a capacity approach to a competency-based approach that includes competences in “being, knowing and doing” related to the MenEngage Alliance Code of Conduct and principles: see Output 1.3 where we commit to creating an online membership platform to facilitate connections between our members through a virtual space, and organizing e-dialogues, webinars and online meetings with members to share their experiences, knowledge, and lessons learned. While we use the phrase “capacity strengthening” throughout the multi-annual plan, MenEngage Alliance will have a bottom-up approach to it. We aim to strengthen our members’ capacity and skills based on strengths and needs assessments – see Result area 1. Through MenEngage Alliance’s regional, country and cross-members platforms – including online - we will facilitate members’ relationship building across the countries and regions, supporting each other with complementary skills, knowledge and strategies to strengthen their programmatic, communications and advocacy skills. Thus contributing to the “community of practice” model within MenEngage Alliance.*

- ✓ *Develop a knowledge management strategy that captures and capitalizes the essence and richness of a network; and design a consistent, crosscutting communication strategy including an infrastructure that feeds other strategies: promotes networking, strengthens advocacy, enhances accountability and transparency, contributes to greater ownership and enhances visibility and positioning: see Result area 3, in which we outline our commitment to develop a comprehensive KM&C strategy (Output 3.1); build and maintain an online community platform and library with the aim to become the go-to hub on men and masculinities work and resources worldwide (Output 1.3); develop case-stories (Output 3.3) based on members' and partners' promising practices; and develop knowledge products (Output 3.2) that assess how male roles and responsibilities manifest and influence specific issues, and how a gender transformative approach with men and boys can contribute to change. All activities have the purpose to provide key services to members to strengthen their visibility and capacities, and to inform programs and policies in the field of SRHR for all, violence prevention, unpaid care, peace and security, etc.*

- ✓ *Focus on quality (rather than quantity) membership and develop a membership strategy outlining rights and responsibilities, and taking into account the different needs of members: see Output 5.2 through which we commit to develop such a strategy, with the purpose to empower members to participate meaningfully in the Alliance and add value to their own work, as well as the work of the Alliance at a global level.*

- ✓ *Avoid NGO-ization and de-politicisation as a consequence of enhanced institutionalization, formality and fundraising needs; and strengthen participation, commitment, ownership and co-responsibility at all levels of the Alliance: We are conscious of this risk of NGO-ization, in particular in the context of shrinking civil society spaces, the ongoing struggle for resources and funding, and the challenges embedded in communicating the value-addition of network-building as different from program-and project-implementation with direct beneficiaries. We acknowledge these challenges for MenEngage Global Alliance as it is now an independent entity that requires financial sustainability, and in particular for the regional and country networks as they are only beginning to strengthen their mechanisms and collective work. For MenEngage Alliance, our accountability and credibility comes from our membership. Thus, we will consistently work with members and partners to assess our value to their work and to the broader field. See Result area 5 on how we aim to work towards MenEngage Alliance as an active, membership-led, democratic, sustainable and accountable learning organization that acts in solidarity with its members and partners. This is linked to another recommendation from the evaluation: Strengthen the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) strategy, which we commit to do under Output 5.1.*

- ✓ *Further modify and consolidate the MenEngage Alliance structure, roles and responsibilities towards a balanced and interconnected body of national, regional, and global levels, based on networking and participation mechanisms; and continue to address internal power issues and relations: strengthening country-regional-global connections (the "glocal" nature of the Alliance) is a cross-cutting objective throughout the multi-annual program 2017-2020, as is strengthening democratic practice and addressing power issues internally and externally – including through strengthening Accountable practices (see Result area 4). At a more institutional level, see Chapter 4 which describes how MenEngage Global Alliance's management and operation structure is organized, and Result area 5 where we describe how we will work over the coming years to strengthen this structure, and what results are to be expected.*

- ✓ *Be aware and respond with sensitivity and creativity to the concerns - including around power issues - that exist among feminist and women's rights organisations: this is a priority for MenEngage Alliance. We believe it is our responsibility to set standards of good practices, based on practices from our members and partners, and to support them in strengthening their agendas and work – thereby leading by example towards the broader field. Strengthening accountable practices and partnership building with feminist organizations and activists has emerged as a targeted strategic priority for MenEngage Alliance: see Result area 4 on how we aim to strengthen this work in the coming years.*

- ✓ *Create collaborative campaigns with women's rights organisations: this is one practical way to strengthen accountable practices and partnerships. Output 4.2 outlines how we will strengthen collaborative actions among MenEngage Alliance members and partners with leading CSOs/NGOs in the broader field of women's rights and gender justice on issues related to SRHR including HIV/AIDS, GBV, unpaid care, peace and security, LGBTQI rights, Youth rights, Child rights, etc. at national, regional and global levels. We are mindful though that not all SRHR and women's rights organizations may be open to this, and there are good and legitimate reasons why some may want to organize activities for and with women only, including as safe-spaces for women and girls. Others may be open to collaboration, and it is worth mentioning that MenEngage Alliance activities often do include work by and with SRHR and women's rights organizations: such organizations are on the MenEngage Global Board, and a significant number of members self-identify as women's rights organizations. For an elaboration on how we will approach campaigns in the coming years, see Outputs 1.2, 3.2 and 4.2, including how MenEngage Alliance supports existing women-led campaigns such as 16 Days, One Billion Rising, Safe and Legal Abortion Day; and how we work to strengthen accountable practices and partnerships with women's rights and SRHR organizations in MenEngage associated campaigns such as the "Men, Masculinities and SRHR platform", "MenCare Campaign" on fatherhood and unpaid care, and the "White Ribbon Campaign" on eliminating VAW.*

- ✓ *Expand the accountability concept to address expressions and movements of men that are contrary to MenEngage Alliance's essence and objectives; and be open to and participate in spaces to establish dialogues with critical, opposition voices: see Output 4.2 that includes MenEngage Alliance's commitments to organize public actions and processes to condemn individuals and groups of men that oppose women's rights, gender and social justice. The Alliance will abide by its core principles, code of conduct and accountability towards fellow women's rights and feminist activists, organizations and networks, and will work closely with them in such situations. As further detailed in the Risk Mitigation Register, over the coming years MenEngage Alliance and members, in cooperation with women's rights groups, will consult with the regional and country networks to identify best possible strategies to deal with opposition situations. In the case of religious fundamentalisms, the Alliance will mobilise members who work with faith-based/religious leaders and approaches to jointly hold harmful voices to account, and find ways forward. The Alliance will set up a Rapid Response Mechanism to deal with such situations using its comprehensive social media strategy.*

- ✓ *In advocacy, strengthen and interlink the national, regional and global advocacy efforts; and diversify and democratize representation and opportunities for exposure at global level: MenEngage Alliance recognizes that it is important to have a cohesive and strategic approach to advocacy and related capacity strengthening to jointly implement collective advocacy activities across the Alliance. Hence in 2017, recognizing and building on the expertise and capacities of the*

regional networks and members, MenEngage Global Alliance will develop a comprehensive advocacy strategy connecting global, regional and national advocacy efforts. See Result area 2, in particular Output 2.1, where we commit to the development of a comprehensive Advocacy strategy for the Alliance, including strengthening members' capacities in advocacy skills for policy reform on SRHR, women's rights and gender equality; and brokering/facilitating members' participation in advocacy fora at the global, regional and national levels.

- ✓ *Embrace a wide spectrum of partners at national, regional and global levels, based on affinity- and complementarity:* building partnerships based on accountability is a cross-cutting matter for MenEngage Alliance. See in particular Result area 4 outlining how we aim to strengthen this throughout our work; and Annex 2 pointing to some key strategic partners.
- ✓ *Address sustainability integrally, including strengths and challenges, such as the need for further diversification of funding sources, other donors, possible membership fees and alternative resource mobilisation strategies linked for example to corporate social responsibility:* see section 4.3 that describes our rationale behind MenEngage Alliance's current fundraising strategy, including how and why we distinguish between core-funding to safeguard the core-work of MenEngage Global Alliance to anchor and support the work of members, and regional-level and project-based fundraising to advance centralization and broad Alliance ownership. The effectiveness of this model to date is highlighted in the 2012-2016 resource mobilization mapping (see separate document). How we aim to strengthen resource mobilization and fundraising is outlined in Result area 5.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions or comment, please do not hesitate to contact the MenEngage Global Secretariat, through Joni van de Sand, Global Coordinator: joni@menengage.org.