

Ubuntu Symposium

THE 3RD MENENGAGE GLOBAL SYMPOSIUM, 2020-21

Summary of Concept Note & Partnership Proposal

Advancing feminist approaches to engaging men and boys and transforming masculinities

"We live in a world of profound inequalities and unbalanced power relations, where rigid norms and values about how people should behave fuel and exacerbate injustices."

"We have to change that."

- Delhi Declaration and Call to Action, 2014, MenEngage Alliance

Now is the time for those working and engaging in the field of transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys in gender justice, women's rights, LGBTIQ+ rights, SRHR for all, and other relevant issues, to come together to take stock of the current 'state of the field'.

We need to share learnings, promising practices and exchange experiences from across various areas of work, contexts and sectors.

Following the direction set by the 1st and 2nd MenEngage Global Symposia, the Alliance's members and partners developed and implemented numerous programs, projects, campaigns and initiatives to generate more knowledge and evidence for the work on 'engaging boys and men in gender equality'. As a result, we have seen the number and extent of policies and programs that include 'engaging men and boys' around the world grow. Yet, as more stakeholders take this on, we have a responsibility to strategically circumscribe the work of 'engaging men and boys for gender equality' into the women's human rights conceptual and political frame, and to prioritize the transformation of masculinities more broadly. The moment is ripe to move from programmatic and individual interventions to systems and structural changes that align with other social justice efforts to uphold human rights and democratic principles.

The Ubuntu Symposium - the 3rd MenEngage Global Symposium - seeks to advance the political agenda by affirming the need for greater alignment and



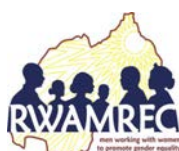
WHEN


Opening event: 10-12 November 2020

KEY THEMES

Feminisms
Intersectionality
Transformation
Accountability
Power-with

Given the current situation and the increased relevance of the issues amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the organizers have opted for a virtual kick-off event, with a smaller in-person hub in Kigali, Rwanda. This opening event in November will be followed by a series of events and ongoing mobilization worldwide throughout 2020-2021. This will be mostly virtual, as well as in-person locally at the national and regional levels, as circumstances allow. The Symposium will culminate in a closing event in the second half of 2021, at a date yet to be determined.





building common cause with social justice movements globally and nationally who are seeking to achieve a full social justice agenda.

By exploring the roles and responsibilities of the field of work on men and masculinities to the core-concepts of Feminisms, Accountability, Intersectionality, Transformation and Power with, we envision that the symposium will provide support to the field to clarify and reaffirm its political stance and set directions and ways forward for strengthening the transformative agenda of the work to 'transform masculinities and engage men and boys' in advancing women's rights, and gender and social justice.

Most importantly this series of events will be a key space for the Alliance, members and partners to strengthen collective movement-building efforts contributing to the larger feminist women's rights movement.



PHOTO BY: Yagazie Emezi/Getty Images/Images of Empowerment

The theme of the 3rd MenEngage Global Symposium is:

Ubuntu: Transforming Power to Benefit all Humanity.

Intersectionality, **feminisms**, **accountability**, **power-with**, and **transformation** have been identified as the cross-cutting themes for the Symposium. Together, they represent the event's overarching political framework.

The objectives of the Symposium are to...

1. Make 'men and masculinities' work **more effective and impactful** for gender justice through collective sharing, questioning, learning, and knowledge-strengthening.
2. Strengthen a **global community** that acts responsibly, purposefully, inclusively, and in solidarity with our partners, friends, and each other – across social justice movements.
3. Inspire, develop, and renew a **common political agenda** and strategy to meet the urgency of today's existing and emerging challenges.

For more detailed information, please refer to the concept note [here](#).

The thematic tracks for the Symposium include:

- **Ending Violence**
- **Peace and Security / Militarisms and conflict**
- **SRHR for all**
- **Unpaid Care and equitable parenting**
- **SOGIESC rights**
- **Climate Justice**
- **Economic Justice**
- **Social justice - including racial, ethnic, age, disability justice**
- **Countering backlash**

Who is involved?

The Symposium is organized by MenEngage Alliance, bringing together members and partners from women's rights and social justice organizations. MenEngage is a global civil society network working to transform masculinities and engage men and boys in women's rights and gender justice for all, within the broader context of advancing human rights and social justice. The Symposium is co-organized with the Rwanda Men's Resource Centre (RWAMREC), the Rwanda MenEngage Network (RWAMNET) and MenEngage Africa.

The Symposium will bring together participants from diverse sectors, including activists, researchers, practitioners and students from civil society and the international development sector, policy makers, private sector and the donor community.



MenEngage Alliance Strategy meeting, Beirut, June 2019

How will we organize?

As a network rooted in feminist principles and approaches of shared power and horizontal organizing, MenEngage Alliance seeks alternatives to top-down, prescriptive models of organizing.

The symposium is therefore organized through contextualized regional plans and processes that support the movement-building and mobilization of civil society membership and partners from academia, UN agencies and governments across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, North America, Latin America and the Middle East.

This bottom-up agenda-setting is being connected globally through one collective effort of organizing and holding the Ubuntu Symposium.

We warmly welcome your support and interest to be part of the momentum, from now, into 2021, and beyond!

Partnerships will be essential to the success of the Ubuntu Symposium.

By supporting the symposium you will build your knowledge, create collaborations, expand your network, and disseminate knowledge to key decision-makers in the field of masculinities and engaging men and boys in gender justice, women's rights, LGBTIQ+ rights, SRHR for all, and other relevant issues.



How you can support:

Contribute to the organizing costs of the event and local hubs, such as venues, catering, development of symposium branding and conference materials, conference logistics, platform development, translations and human resources. Any conference needs this kind of support to make it possible.

Sponsor participants to attend local events, for their travel, hotel stay and registration fees. (For example, if you work with a Global North country or UN office based in a Global South country with locals who want to attend the Symposium, you can support their participation)

Sponsor a thematic discussion during the symposium series of events, that is of particular interest to your work, for example around GBV, harmful practices, SRHR, unpaid care, etc. (see the list above)

Support knowledge development emerging from the symposium, by sponsoring experts who will keep track of thematic discussions and develop critical thought pieces on these topics, that will further strengthen the knowledge development in this field of work.

Support the virtual meeting infrastructure to allow for increased online participation. We are committed to offering engaging and interactive online participation opportunities to reduce the need for travel.

Support remote participation, by organizing a local or regional gathering to attend a plenary or specific session virtually. This can be followed by discussion with participants with calls to action focused on local needs and realities.



MenEngage Alliance Participants at the Symposium planning meeting in Kigali, Rwanda, February 2020

Contact

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MenEngage Alliance

working with men and boys for gender equality