




**MenEngage**

Working With Men and Boys For Gender Equality

The MenEngage Alliance

# ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES



MenEngage is an alliance of NGOs working together with men and boys to promote gender equality. The network consists of over 600 organizations across the world, as well as international organizations and UN partners. There are 32 autonomous country networks and six regional networks. These Accountability Standards and Guidelines aim to help individual members, organizations and networks who belong to the Alliance to put into practice the commitments and principles set out in our Memorandum of Understanding and in our Code of Conduct.

Website: [www.menengage.org](http://www.menengage.org)

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**4** Background and Introduction

**8** The MenEngage Accountability Standards

**11** **SECTION I:**  
PREVENTING THE BREACH OF MENENGAGE'S  
PRINCIPLES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

**29** **SECTION II:**  
RESPONSES TO BREACHES OF CODE OF CONDUCT

**36** APPENDIX  
Global MenEngage Code of Conduct

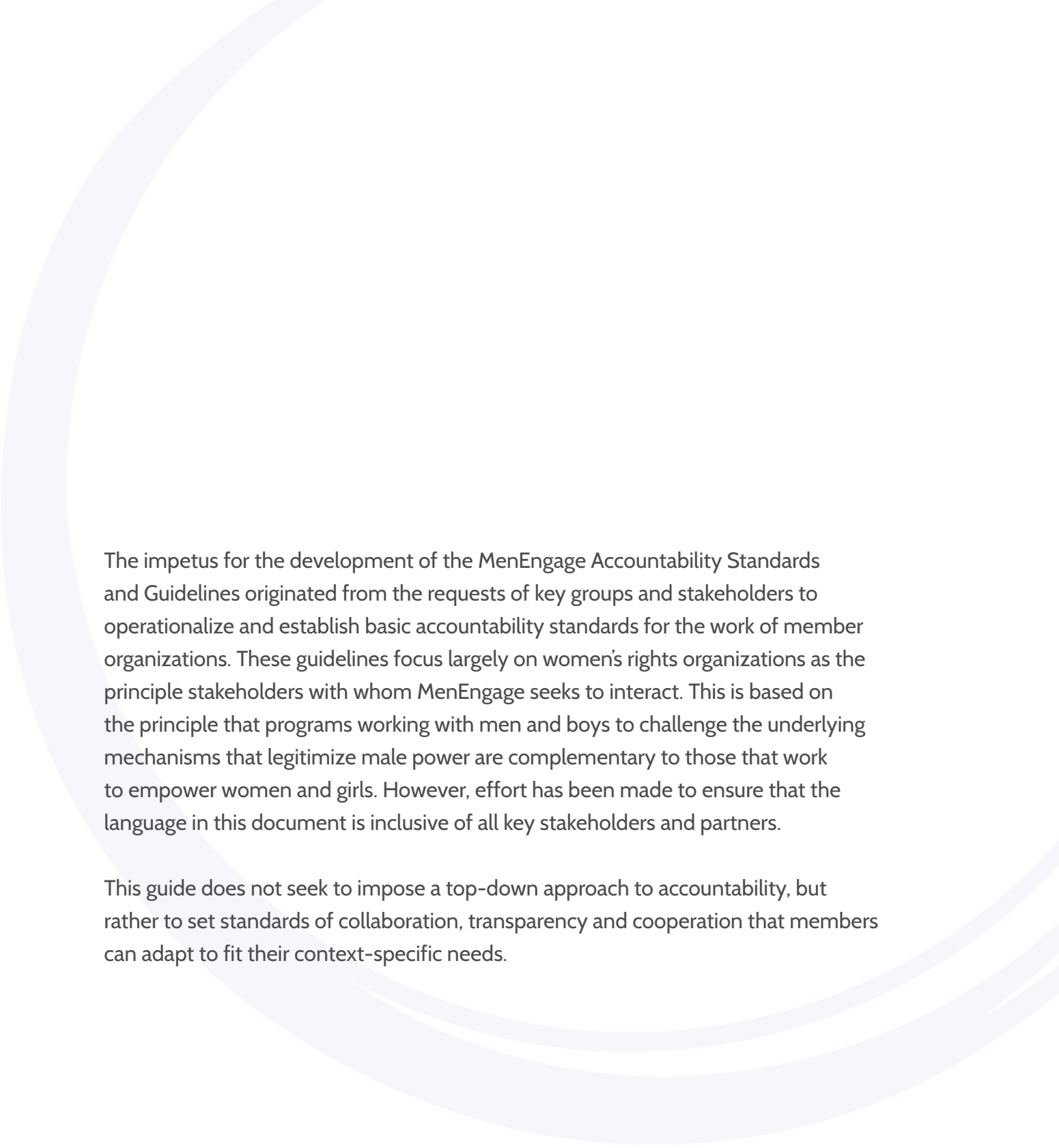
# BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The goal of MenEngage is to be a global, unified voice and network for advocacy, information-sharing and capacity-building around the engagement of men and boys in gender equality in collaboration with existing efforts to promote the rights of women and girls. As a network of activists, civil society organizations, and UN partners, MenEngage recognizes that its work was born out of a feminist tradition and that women-led organizations have carried out the foundational gender work. MenEngage strives to follow this foundational work, collaborating with women's right groups and contributing to the women's rights field. But some have questioned whether the work with men contributes to the goals and objectives of women's rights organizations and the broad cause of gender equality. This requires us to ask, "What does it mean to say that MenEngage is *accountable* to women's rights organizations, and other key groups?"

Within the context of the MenEngage Alliance, being "accountable" means:

- » Being critically aware of one's own power and privilege;
- » Being open to constructive criticism;
- » Being responsible for one's actions;
- » Following through on what is said will be done;
- » Taking action to address behavior or beliefs of individuals and groups both inside and outside the workplace that go against the MenEngage Core Principles;
- » Openly acknowledging any harm caused, and developing and implementing solutions to make amends.

This definition emphasizes that being accountable is a *proactive responsibility*, meaning that the onus falls on the individual to behave in a manner consistent with the MenEngage Principles and Code of Conduct.



The impetus for the development of the MenEngage Accountability Standards and Guidelines originated from the requests of key groups and stakeholders to operationalize and establish basic accountability standards for the work of member organizations. These guidelines focus largely on women's rights organizations as the principle stakeholders with whom MenEngage seeks to interact. This is based on the principle that programs working with men and boys to challenge the underlying mechanisms that legitimize male power are complementary to those that work to empower women and girls. However, effort has been made to ensure that the language in this document is inclusive of all key stakeholders and partners.

This guide does not seek to impose a top-down approach to accountability, but rather to set standards of collaboration, transparency and cooperation that members can adapt to fit their context-specific needs.

## PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This guide seeks to formalize a set of practices and affirmations for how the MenEngage Alliance will proactively promote a culture of accountability among its members. It complements the MenEngage Global Code of Conduct by providing standards and guidelines to:

**PREVENT** the violation of<sup>1</sup> or infringement upon MenEngage’s Core Principles and Code of Conduct;

**RESPOND** effectively if concerns emerge regarding the conduct of a member; and

**COLLABORATE** openly with women’s rights and other social justice organizations.

By implementing these standards and guidelines, the MenEngage Alliance aims to demonstrate that members are not set above the communities they serve, nor are they immune to scrutiny from other organizations within the same network. Additionally, the MenEngage Alliance believes that **developing a more systematized accountability process will enhance their network’s ability to ensure that members embody their principles, and do not act in a manner that undermines their collective work or the integrity of the alliance.**

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<sup>1</sup> “Breaches” include: (1) Incidents of any type of gendered abuse by staff or other persons affiliated with NGO members (e.g., sexual harassment); (2) “Fly-by-night” or opportunistic groups working in post-conflict, humanitarian crisis settings and others who claim they work with men from a gender-equality perspective but who act in ways that exclude women from decision-making or otherwise fail to embody a gender-equality perspective; (3) Publication of materials and other public statements that are linked to MenEngage but that are contrary to the principles of MenEngage.

## HOW THIS DOCUMENT IS ORGANIZED

This document is divided into three main sections: First, a summary of the MenEngage Accountability Standards; second, means of preventing the breach of MenEngage's principles and Code of Conduct; and third, ways of responding to breaches of principles or when concerns/allegations are raised.

Within the second section, the guide is divided into four further sections, taking into account the levels at which MenEngage members work. These include the following:

**GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL** refers to the responsibility of MenEngage Global Executive, Steering Committee and other members in positions of leadership to address questionable behaviors and promote accountability.

**NATIONAL LEVEL** refers to the political accountability of MenEngage members to groups external to their organizations (women's rights organizations, in particular, as well as other social justice groups). It also includes members' responsibility to promote accountability with fellow MenEngage organizations.

**ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL** includes the need to develop and put in place institutional policies and ethical practices that reflect the organization's mission to achieve gender equality.

**INDIVIDUAL LEVEL** refers to the individual accountability of activists and staff members within a MenEngage member organization, group or network.

## THE MENENGAGE ACCOUNTABILITY TOOLKIT

*Need to know how to talk about accountability with your colleagues? Want practical tools that will enable you to do so? Check out the new MenEngage Accountability Toolkit, downloadable from the MenEngage website. This toolkit was designed to complement the MenEngage Accountability Standards and Guidelines by providing practical tools (4 group sessions and accompanying ME tool) for putting these standards into practice.*

# THE MENENGAGE ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS

The Alliance has developed a “gold standard” of accountability within the network. We recognize that there is enormous variation in local practice and circumstances, so it is important that organizations work with their staff to adapt the standards and guidelines to fit contextual needs. A summary of the MenEngage Accountability Standards is provided in the table below. The rest of this guide will go into greater depth in addressing the practical application of the standards to your organization.



# MENENGAGE ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS

## SUMMARY TABLE

#	Standard	Method of Accountability	Means of verification
<b>GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL</b>			
1	MenEngage members in positions of leadership shall promote mutual accountability. They shall hold all members to the highest levels of accountability to stakeholders, particularly women's rights groups, and they shall remain accountable as well.	<p>1) Sign MenEngage Code of Conduct.</p> <p>2) Disseminate and raise awareness, within the network, of the MenEngage Code of Conduct and the Accountability Guidelines</p>	<p>1) Sign MenEngage Code of Conduct.</p> <p>2) Written communication about the dissemination of Codes of Conduct and Accountability Guidelines.</p>
2	MenEngage leadership shall work together to support other members in finding solutions to issues of accountability.	<p>1) Include contact information in an "Accountability" section of the global and regional versions of MenEngage's website where groups can file complaints</p> <p>2) MenEngage Regional or Global members address individual complaints and queries regarding questionable behavior.</p>	<p>1) Documentation by relevant MenEngage members.</p> <p>2) Documentation by MenEngage Global and relevant Regional Coordinator</p>
<b>NATIONAL LEVEL</b>			
3	MenEngage members shall seek collaboration, open dialogue and constructive criticism from women's rights organizations and other key stakeholders.	<p>1) MenEngage national steering committees include at least two women's rights organizations.</p> <p>2) Hold at least bi-annual meetings with key stakeholders (e.g., women's groups, children's rights groups),</p>	<p>1) Signed MOUs with women's rights groups.</p> <p>2) Minutes from these meetings, or other documentation that specifies the presence of key groups.</p>
4	MenEngage members shall engage women's rights groups and other key stakeholders to improve programs and initiatives on gender equality.	When planning programs or initiatives, invite key stakeholders, especially members of women's rights organizations, to be steering committee members or technical advisors.	Partnership agreements with key groups.
5	MenEngage members shall work with other social justice organizations to promote accountability and support the Core Principles.	<p>Dialogue and seek to increase the capacity of organizations both within and outside the network by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing the MenEngage Core Principles and Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Hosting online discussions</li> <li>• Conducting accountability trainings</li> <li>• Using teachable moments</li> <li>• Sharing materials and resources</li> </ul>	Documentation of any and all of these strategies.

#	Standard	Method of Accountability	Means of verification
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL</b>			
6a	MenEngage members shall establish a basic set of institutional policies that reflect respect for and commitment to an equitable work environment.	Establish institutional policies that address the following: 1) Alcohol and drug use 2) Child protection 3) Sexual harassment 4) Nondiscrimination 5) Parental leave (not standard, but highly recommended)	Personnel or Human Resources handbook.
6b	MenEngage members shall ensure that all staff are aware of and understand the organization's institutional policies.	Disseminate these policies widely within the organization.	MenEngage members decide how they will ensure that staff understand all institutional policies.
7	MenEngage members shall promote women's leadership within their organizations, and/or include representatives from women's rights organizations on their boards of directors or similar governing bodies.	1) Develop policies that promote women's leadership, such as a requirement that 50 percent of members of the Board of Directors shall be from women's rights organizations.  2) Appoint women to positions of leadership within the organization.	1) Institutional policy stating that a certain proportion of members of the Board of Directors shall be from women's rights organizations.
8	MenEngage members shall ensure that staff working with men and boys understand the MenEngage Code of Conduct or its regional/national adaptation.	As an organization, sign on to the MenEngage Code of Conduct.	Copy of signed MenEngage Code of Conduct.
9	When applicable, MenEngage members shall abide by international ethical standards and principles on research.	1) Have the organization's staff take IRB training <sup>2</sup> , and/or 2) as a MenEngage member, work with a reputable research institution that has experience in international research.	1) Copy of IRB training certificate. and/or (2) Agreements that show partnership with research institution.
<b>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</b>			
10	All MenEngage members shall agree to and sign on to a code of conduct that outlines expectations of gender equitable behavior.	Sign on to a Code of Conduct.	Copies of signed Code of Conduct.
11	MenEngage members shall be knowledgeable of and put into practice the MenEngage Standards and Guidelines of Accountability.	Take part in the MenEngage accountability training.	Attendance lists from accountability training.
12	MenEngage members shall implement initiatives that promote critical self-reflection and challenging of social views.	1) Setting aside time in the staff meeting agenda to discuss staff's personal experiences with accountability, ethics and power related issues..  2) Carrying out periodic values clarification activities with staff,	Minutes from meetings and documentation of activities.

.....  
 2 Institutional Review Board (IRB) Training. These are training courses for research teams to ensure responsible and ethical conduct when conducting research with human participants.

# SECTION 1:

## PREVENTING THE BREACH OF MENENGAGE'S PRINCIPLES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

# GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL WORKING WITH MENENGAGE MEMBERS ACROSS THE GLOBE

MenEngage members in positions of leadership, in particular, are responsible for representing the network as a transparent body internationally. Below are the standards of accountability for MenEngage Alliance members working at this particular level:

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #1:** MenEngage members in positions of leadership shall promote mutual accountability. They shall hold all members to the highest levels of accountability to stakeholders, particularly women's rights groups, and they shall remain accountable as well.

*Ensure that all members sign the MenEngage Code of Conduct*

The MenEngage Code of Conduct is the first step in ensuring accountability both to the MenEngage Alliance and to the field in which we work. Since its release in March 2014, all members across the globe have had the opportunity to adapt and sign the Code

of Conduct. It is the responsibility of MenEngage leaders to follow up with members and ensure the document is disseminated and signed by all member organizations within their particular region or country.

*Work with members to disseminate the MenEngage Code of Conduct and Standards of Accountability*

It is the responsibility of MenEngage members in positions of leadership (Regional Coordinators, members of the Steering Committee, etc.) to ensure that all members are aware of MenEngage Code of Conduct and Accountability standards. Raising awareness includes:

- » Sharing the Code of Conduct and Accountability Standards in your next regional meeting (whether it is in person or via Skype);
- » Setting aside time to collaborate with members from national and/or regional networks on the adaptation of the Accountability Standards to your context;

- » Following the dissemination of the guide, encouraging members to participate in a MenEngage Accountability training; and
- » Taking time to interview individual members on how they plan to implement the standards.

Below are strategies to encourage accountability with other MenEngage members, as well as with other organizations outside the network.

**Share the MenEngage Core Principles, Code of Conduct and Accountability Standards.** For example, Men for Gender Equality (Mfj) in Sweden shares their *Ideological Platform*—a document which outlines their beliefs about and outlook on the work with engaging men—with prospective members.

**Conduct a training on accountability.** A set of training materials on accountability is available on the MenEngage website. The purpose of this training is to raise awareness around MenEngage’s standards of accountability and how to incorporate

these standards into the organization’s work. In addition to carrying out this training within your own organization, make it a goal of your work plan to organize similar event(s) with other organizations whose members would benefit from this action-oriented dialogue.

**Begin a debate on Facebook either by challenging a questionable post or by posting material intended to generate discussion.** In many cases, MenEngage members do not have sufficient resources or time to host trainings or meetings intended to instill gender sensitivity and awareness. As a result, many organizations have turned to social media not only to disseminate positive messages, but also to create spaces where individuals can discuss and debate social issues.

For example, CariMAN in Jamaica hosts closed Facebook groups for men to discuss views that are not necessarily consonant with the principles of the network. This space allows CariMAN

to meet these men “where they are” and challenge those views in an online space. CariMAN member Peter Weller notes that it is important when hosting a closed space to post a disclaimer stating that the views expressed on the page are not representative of those of the host organization. He also notes that it is important to regulate who can post content to the page.

Apart from hosting groups, many other MenEngage members note that it is important to challenge any questionable material posted online by others, including friends and colleagues.

**Use teachable moments.** Whether it is at a roundtable with other professionals, a casual discussion with colleagues in the kitchen, or any other kind of interaction, there may be a moment in which questionable or even sexist comments are made. It is important to recognize that everyone, especially those new to the field of engaging men and boys, is in a constant state of learning. Many times, those making shortsighted or otherwise ignorant comments did not intend for their comments to be malicious. Use occasions of disagreement as “teachable moments” to instill cultural, racial, and gender sensitivity. In other words, rather than seeking to exclude or shame others, which may provoke anger and embarrassment, or a silencing of harmful but still prevalent

views, seize upon the opportunity to discuss it, and challenge it respectfully. On the other hand, a comment made to hurt or provoke discomfort in others goes against the MenEngage Code of Conduct. In this case, discuss the right disciplinary solution with the MenEngage colleagues in your country or region.

**Stay in touch.** Share resources and invite organizations to your events and activities. Promote continued learning by sharing publications and online materials. Invite partner organizations to participate in your events or to observe activities being carried out in the community modelling the type of approach you would want others to take. If it is not possible for them to come to an event, share the agenda and content for discussion and get their input. This is a proactive way to stay in touch with organizations and also to monitor their own engagements with the community.

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #2:**  
**MenEngage leadership shall work together to support other members in finding solutions to issues of accountability.**

MenEngage members in positions of leadership will be responsible for working with organizations in their region to address any concern or allegation of violation of the Code of Conduct and Core Principles and will be involved in finding appropriate solutions. MenEngage will appoint specific individuals to be in charge of receiving complaints and grievances. These appointees will have their contact information posted on the MenEngage global website and regional sub-pages so that they can be reached. Strategies for addressing violations are provided in the next section of this guide.

# NATIONAL LEVEL

## WORKING WITH WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND OTHER SOCIAL JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS

In working in the field of engaging men and boys, it is essential to be clear about 1) how your work will promote the goals of women's rights organizations, and 2) how your organization will strive to enter into mutually beneficial collaborations with these groups. Here are the standards for working with women's rights groups, which are also applicable to other social justice groups such as children's and LGBT rights groups.

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #3:**  
**MenEngage members shall seek collaboration, open dialogue and constructive criticism from women's rights organizations and other key stakeholders.**

To achieve this accountability standard, MenEngage members can:

*Include at least two representatives from women's rights organizations on MenEngage National Committees.*

This method of achieving accountability is written into the bylaws of the Global MenEngage Alliance, but it must also be applied at the national level. Including women's rights organizations on steering committees ensures that women and girls are given a permanent space to present their perspectives on MenEngage's work. It also provides reassurance to these groups that our work with men and boys is complementary, not oppositional, to the work with women and girls. Many MenEngage members sign Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with these partners that outline the expectations as well as goals of these steering committee partnerships.

*Organize at least bi-annual meetings or forums with key members of women's rights organizations to create opportunities for reflection, constructive criticism and collaboration.*

The purpose of these meetings is to create an environment of transparency so that women's rights organizations



have a clear understanding of the work being implemented, and feel engaged and consulted. MenEngage advises that if a member is organizing a forum or meeting with women's rights organizations for the first time, they must address the concerns about work with men and boys, such as:

- » That initiatives with men will compete for funding with other initiatives that are severely under resourced but critical to addressing the needs of survivors/victims;
- » That initiatives with men will dilute the feminist agenda;
- » That men will manipulate the gender discourse to their own agendas; and
- » That men will take over the role of women in this work.

These meetings should also clearly communicate how your organization is accountable for its actions in the gender-equality field by addressing the following questions<sup>3</sup>:

- » What is your organization's mission?
- » What is your organization able to do with respect to promoting gender equality, and how does it go about accomplishing it?
- » What are your organization's core principles?
- » What are the minimum expectations for good practice that your organization commits to fulfilling?

### *Join and actively participate in women-led networks and initiatives for gender equality*

MenEngage members will join forces with women's rights groups and networks, participating in their initiatives and campaigns. They will consult with these organizations about how our members can best support such initiatives.

.....  
3 Adapted from the HAP Standards of Accountability

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #4:**  
**MenEngage members shall engage women's rights groups and other key stakeholders to improve programs and initiatives on gender equality.**

To achieve this accountability standard, MenEngage members can:

*Appoint women as technical advisors and in other positions of leadership for specific projects or campaigns.*

Most MenEngage members consult with women's organizations and other key stakeholders, depending on the focus area, prior to the implementation of a new project. Not only does this

promote buy-in from key partners but women and other groups such as those from the LGBTQ community bring a strong gender perspective based on their considerable personal and professional experience in the area. Such consultations also provide opportunities for these groups to present valid concerns, such as those regarding violence against women. This decreases the potential for future friction and resistance.

Below are a couple of case study examples of MenEngage organizations engaging and successfully collaborating with other social justice groups on activities.

## CASE STUDIES ON WORKING WITH WOMEN'S RIGHTS GROUPS

### CASE STUDY #1:

The network MASVAW (Men's Action to Stop Violence Against Women), in coordination with the Centre for Health and Social Justice in Delhi, India, invited key feminist actors from Jagori, a feminist resource center, to facilitate gender sensitization workshops. One key resource person from these workshops was asked to join MASVAW's advisory group so that she could continue to provide her input on the network's evolving structures and processes. Following these collaborations, a joint workshop on masculinity was carried out with Jagori, with participants from both organizations that split 50 percent of men and 50 percent women. This, in turn, led to further collaborations, including during the 16 Days of Activism, when MASVAW asked other women's rights groups to conduct independent evaluations of MASVAW's work.

### CASE STUDY #2:

When the White Ribbon Campaign (WRC) in Canada first considered implementing a “Walk A Mile In Her Shoes” event (a men’s march to stop rape, sexual assault and gender violence), they had concerns regarding how it would affect the transgender communities in the city of Toronto. So the organizers decided to consult them directly. As a result of these consultations, the WRC learned about the ways in which the event could potentially negatively affect transgendered individuals, and discussed ways in which to mitigate those risks. The measures taken included being careful not to be transphobic in the marketing of the event, and preparing volunteers to engage men who participated in transphobic ways. The WRC reports, “*What we also learned was there was tremendous support for our work, and that was only bolstered by our proactive effort to engage the community in conversation, and really listen. We now have tremendous support for the trans community in this event and others.*”

### CASE STUDY #3:

When Promundo and partners decided to create the Program H materials for promoting gender equality with young men, they were careful to build a team of women and men, including female and male staff from the four partner organizations (Salud y Genero, ECOS, Papai, and Promundo). They also developed materials with buy-in from, and in consultation with, young men and women, asking women and men about both men’s and women’s realities. The materials developed included approaches for engaging young women and young men in a joint process of critical reflection about gender injustices and taking collective action to end them.

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #5:**  
**MenEngage members shall work with other social justice organizations to promote accountability and support the Core Principles.**

To achieve this accountability standard, MenEngage members can:

*Dialogue with and seek to increase the capacity of other organizations that engage with men and boys around gender equality (both within and outside of the MenEngage Alliance).*

*Identify these other social justice organizations (e.g., groups organized around children’s rights, LGBTI rights, antipoverty groups, land rights, environmental rights, etc.).*

# ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

## CREATING GENDER EQUITABLE AND ACCOUNTABLE SPACES IN THE WORKPLACE

Equally important are the processes in place that hold MenEngage partners accountable for how they treat their staff, implement their programs and promote a gender equitable work environment. The following section provides guidance on standard workplace policies, how to promote the voices of women within an organization, and how to abide by international research standards.

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #6A:** MenEngage members shall establish a basic set of institutional policies that reflect respect for and commitment to an equitable work environment.

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #6B:** MenEngage organizations shall ensure that all staff are aware of and understand the organization's institutional policies.

To achieve this accountability standard, MenEngage members can:

*Implement a comprehensive set of workplace policies that reflect that the organization internally values gender equality.*

Workplace policies should reflect an organization's commitment to the rights of their staff and, to a larger extent, of the stakeholders they work with. These policies should be included in employee handbooks, on the organization's website, and in other observable locations. They must also be concrete and easy to understand, and all new and existing staff must be required to sign on and adhere to them.

Table 2 provides an overview of the standard set of policies that all MenEngage member organizations should have in their personnel handbook. Organizations intent on creating new or updating existing policies may look to Annex X for examples.

**TABLE 2. MENENGAGE STANDARD WORKPLACE POLICIES**

Policy	Definition	Why This Policy?	Want More Information on Developing this Policy?
Alcohol and Drug Use	This policy limits the possession, use, distribution, or manufacture of alcohol or controlled substances in the workplace and all premises used to further programmatic objectives.	Members of the MenEngage Alliance are representatives of MenEngage at all times, and must behave in a manner appropriate to this status. Substance abuse, including the abuse of prescription drugs, is incompatible with the health and safety of individual members and with MenEngage’s Core Principles.	Management of Alcohol and Drug-Related Issues in the Workplace by International Labor Organization (ILO)  <a href="http://www.ilo.int/wcmsp5/groups/public/-ed_protect/-protrav/-safework/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms_107799.pdf">http://www.ilo.int/wcmsp5/groups/public/-ed_protect/-protrav/-safework/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms_107799.pdf</a>
Child Protection	This policy ensures that the rights and welfare of children are respected, that adequate safeguards are in place to protect children from harm, and that effective mechanisms for the reporting of actions that compromise a child’s safety are established.	MenEngage is committed to safeguarding the rights and welfare of children. Moreover, MenEngage promotes the equitable participation of men and boys in caregiving of children and in creating supportive environments for all children.	Keeping Children Safe: Toolkit for Child Protection  <a href="http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk">www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk</a>
Sexual Harassment	This policy addresses unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile, offensive and otherwise unsafe work environment. Strong policies on sexual harassment lay out the steps for reporting sexual harassment, describe what the organization should do about the complaint, and state the disciplinary consequences of harassing any employee.	MenEngage Alliance members work to achieve social justice around the world. This same work ethic applies to the professional environment. MenEngage Alliance members do not tolerate harassment or threats in any form—verbal, physical, psychological, sexual or visual.	Developing and Implementing Effective Sexual Harassment Policies, by the Alberta Human Rights Commission  <a href="http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/DevImplHarassPolicy.pdf">http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/DevImplHarassPolicy.pdf</a>
Workplace Non-discrimination	This policy of non-discrimination typically covers conditions of employment including hiring, promotion, salary, termination, and compensation of individuals, not on the basis of sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, mental or physical handicap, or for any other reason.	According to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, all people are entitled to equal protection from discrimination. MenEngage actively advocates against any form of discrimination, including sexism, social exclusion, and homophobia.	Workplace Discrimination: Policies, Laws and Legislation, by the Human Rights Campaign  <a href="http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/Workplace-Discrimination-Policies-Laws-and-Legislation">http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/Workplace-Discrimination-Policies-Laws-and-Legislation</a>
<b>Not standard, but strongly recommended*</b>			
Parental Leave*	This policy recognizes the rights of men and women to take leave of absence (preferably paid) before, during and after the birth or adoption of a child.	Providing paid maternity and paid paternity leave reflects an organization’s affirmative recognition of caregiving—a historically unrecognized and undervalued form of work. Providing paternity leave also emphasizes the importance of men’s roles as nurturers and as equally responsible for the health and well-being of children.	Workplace Solutions for Childcare, by the International Labor Organization (ILO)  <a href="http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms_110397.pdf">http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms_110397.pdf</a>

## **ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #7:**

**MenEngage members shall promote women's leadership within their organizations, and/or include representatives from women's rights organizations on their boards of directors or similar governing bodies.**

To achieve this accountability standard, MenEngage members can:

*Develop policies that promote the active leadership of women, by stating, for example, that 50 percent of members of the Board of Directors shall be from women's rights organizations.*

This standard attempts to go beyond promoting tokenistic inclusion of women in the workplace by recommending the development of policies and practices that recognize the invaluable contributions women make to the work of engaging men.

*Appoint women to positions of leadership within the organization.*

Though men are still the primary decision makers in a majority of NGOs around the world, women are participating in increasing numbers in areas of public life where they were not previously visible. MenEngage is committed to working alongside women to achieve social justice in the communities in which we work; this includes appointing women to positions of leadership within our own organizations. In some countries, hiring women as leaders is not difficult as social norms make it acceptable for women to be in positions of power and

decision-making. In other countries, though windows of opportunity are beginning to open, women still face unequal access to education, as well as discrimination. Women frequently report difficulty “climbing the ladder” because of childcare obligations and the sexism of employers who will not hire women who plan to have children. Young women, minority women, women from lower-income backgrounds and non-heterosexual women face additional barriers to succeeding in the workplace.

Here are some ways to support women leaders within MenEngage:

- » Promote institutional participation of women on boards of directors, as executive directors, project directors, portfolio managers, and media and advocacy representatives.
- » Seek out opportunities to mentor women into positions of leadership through continuing education (i.e., managerial courses, deepening knowledge in areas they are interested in that also contribute to the goals of the organization) or having them shadow someone senior in the organization.
- » Develop family-friendly workplace policies that promote work-life balance and value care work. These also serve to do away with the myth that pregnancy will jeopardize the career trajectory.

For context-specific reasons, this standard may not be applicable to all organizations, but every MenEngage member must pursue opportunities to institutionalize the voices of women as an integral part of their gender equality work.

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #8:**

**MenEngage members shall ensure that staff working with men and boys understand the MenEngage Code of Conduct and Core Principles or its regional/national adaptation.**

To achieve this accountability standard, MenEngage members can:

*Ensure that all staff within the organization working with men and boys understand and agree to the MenEngage Code of Conduct.*

Though individual staff members working with men and boys are not required to sign on to the MenEngage Code of Conduct, they should nonetheless understand that they are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct as well as to the MenEngage Core Principles.

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #9:**

**When applicable, MenEngage members shall abide by international ethical standards and principles on research.**

To achieve this accountability standard, MenEngage members can:

*Ensure that all staff have training in human-subjects research and are aware of international ethical standards and principles on research, when applicable.*

According to the MenEngage Code of Conduct, members will follow international ethical principles and guidelines on research and program implementation, such as ensuring that participation is always voluntary and informed consent is given. Obtaining consent from children and those in “captive” areas (i.e., schools, prisons) requires additional safeguards to ensure that participation is always voluntary. The purpose of having appropriate protections in place is to prevent possible physical and psychological harm to those engaged with a research project or program. These protective measures include Institutional Review Boards (IRBs), also known as independent ethics committees, which have been formally designated to monitor and approve research conducted with human participants. IRBs are most commonly used for studies in the fields of health and the social sciences, such as clinical

trials of new drugs or devices; studies of personal or social behavior, opinions or attitudes; or of the ways in which health care is delivered and might be improved.<sup>4</sup>

Given that human-subjects protection in research is a well developed and widely disseminated set of practices, this document will not go into detail about standard ethical procedures in human-subjects research. Instead, it will provide resources to learn more about IRBs and information on existing ethical standards in research and online training.



<sup>4</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institutional\\_review\\_board](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institutional_review_board)



# INDIVIDUAL LEVEL ACCOUNTABILITY

*“As men working in social justice, gender justice and anti-oppression work, there are a continuous series of learning/un-learning opportunities... They are a reminder that we must be vigilant against our own bias, we must be open to criticism, we must be in a constant process of checking our own privilege... Our approach is to put aside any defensiveness, and be open to modeling the kind of behaviors we ask men to do themselves.”*

Todd Minerson, White Ribbon Campaign

This sub-section provides standards for promoting the accountability of individual staff members. These standards include the use of organizational codes of conduct, promoting opportunities for continued learning and creating work environments that promote critical self-reflection.

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #10:**  
**All MenEngage members shall agree and sign on to a code of conduct that outlines expectations of gender equitable behavior.**

To achieve this accountability standard, MenEngage members can:  
*Ensure that all staff and individual members sign on to a code of conduct.*

At the individual level, an institutional code of conduct is essential for outlining, and holding staff accountable for, proper behavior in the workplace.

In Annex X, you will find the Code of Conduct for the MenEngage Alliance, which may be used as a guide if your organization does not already have one. The MenEngage Regional Coordinators will also have examples to use.

Here are some other tips on writing codes of conduct<sup>5</sup>:

- » **Think in terms of values, beliefs and expectations.** Make sure that your code of conduct reflects the shared beliefs of your organization..
- » **Keep it simple.** Your code will benefit from common language usually employed in your organization and understood readily by employees at all levels. Use this tone throughout the document, and avoid unnecessary formal language
- » **Be concise and to the point.**
- » **Use the active rather than the passive voice.** For example, “You are required to read the code annually,” (active), rather than, “The code is required annual reading,” (passive).
- » **Have others read what you have written.** Once you are satisfied that what you have written makes sense and looks good, obtain the opinions of others. This includes other members of MenEngage.

#### **ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #11:**

**MenEngage staff shall be knowledgeable of and put into practice the MenEngage Accountability Standards and Guidelines.**

To achieve this accountability standard, MenEngage members can:

*Conduct training and offer continued learning opportunities on accountability.*

For support in meeting this standard and working with staff to promote a culture of proactive accountability, check out the new MenEngage Accountability Toolkit, which is now available on the MenEngage website. This toolkit contains four sessions, which create a space for organizations and MenEngage networks to reflect on issues of accountability, on how to integrate these accountability standards into everyday work, and more.

Prior to doing an accountability training, the organization will need to think about the following:

- » A way of identifying staff needs (e.g., gaps in knowledge and skill, desire for more training)
- » A budget for the training of staff after needs have been identified
- » A list of people who can provide training

.....  
<sup>5</sup> From the Ethics Resource Centre ([www.ethics.org](http://www.ethics.org))

**ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD #12:**

**MenEngage members shall implement initiatives that promote critical self-reflection and challenging of social views.**

To achieve this accountability standard, MenEngage members can:

*Promote work environments of openness and critical self-reflection.*

A part of promoting accountability of individual staff is fostering a work environment that creates opportunities for addressing views that are incompatible with the mission of MenEngage, but in ways that do not discourage future dialogue. This means that everyone, regardless of their position, is valued for their contributions to the organization's mission. Positive work environments also cultivate trust, ensuring that staff feel comfortable sharing opinions and views, knowing that their counterparts will be discreet.

Every member within MenEngage is on a learning curve, and at some point in our lives we were all blind to the depths of gender and social injustice. The path to gender transformation is far from linear. It can be said with near certainty that members of MenEngage still encounter situations that challenge our notions of gender justice. We must all keep this in mind when we

hear gender inequitable comments in our workplaces coming from our own staff. Our movements are stronger when we seek to bring more men and women over to “our side” rather than discourage or isolate those who express views that are incongruent with ours. As stated earlier, we must use occasions of disagreement as “teachable moments” to instill cultural, racial, and gender sensitivity and open ourselves, as well, to be sensitized. In our workplaces, it is vital to:

- » Set aside time during staff meetings to discuss and debate ethical and accountability-related issues that come up related to our work
- » Perform values clarification activities such as “Vote with Your Feet” to provoke debate
- » Invite external experts or facilitators to do presentations on a topic related to a social issue unfamiliar to your organization.

## A NOTE ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

MenEngage acknowledges the difficulty of obtaining funding for gender transformative work, but believes that the positive male engagement approach and the women's rights movement share a common goal: gender equality. As a result, MenEngage member organizations work in partnership with individual women and with the women's rights movements in their setting. MenEngage members should be open to dialogue with women's rights organizations to ensure that their work does not in any way impinge upon existing programs and initiatives led by those groups. Finding ways in which funding can mutually benefit both men's engagement groups and women's rights groups, such as through joint funding applications, is always the ideal. MenEngage member organizations should likely not pursue the funding that is available for direct services such as women's shelters and rape crisis centers. Instead, MenEngage members should contribute to fundraising efforts for these services.

# **SECTION 2:**

## **RESPONSES TO BREACHES OF CODE OF CONDUCT**

Sometimes it is not possible to prevent violations of accountability. This section provides basic guidance for MenEngage Alliance members in responding to such violations. It should also be noted that this is a living document, and more guidelines will be added to this section as necessary. The following are general recommendations since the specific content and nature of the problem may require a different course of action.

**OBJECTIVE:**

MenEngage members promise to hold themselves accountable to the highest standard of accountability to the Core Principles and to the Code of Conduct. MenEngage also realizes that accountability requires the establishment of a mechanism for receiving questions or complaints about the actions of its members vis à vis the operationalization of the Core Principles and the Code of Conduct.

The overall purpose of this protocol is developmental, i.e., to improve the existing practice in member organizations. The protocol provides a mechanism to inquire into and establish the nature and validity of such questions and complaints and to recommend remedial action, if necessary, to the organization concerned. In extreme circumstances the membership of the organization concerned may be terminated.

MenEngage is a global alliance and its members, while upholding the highest

standards, are working in specific country contexts. MenEngage will emphasize strengthening in-house and in-country mechanisms and procedures and will restrain itself from conducting primary inquiries into such complaints. However, MenEngage at the global level has the responsibility to ensure that regional and country networks are implementing the necessary responses to complaints or concerns.

**LIMITS:**

This protocol is not intended to replace any domestic statutory/official procedures that may be in place in the countries concerned, or to supplant governance mechanisms, personnel policies, or standard operating procedures of the member organizations.

## PROCEDURES FOR RECEIVING AND PROCESSING QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

The complaints will initially be processed by the coordinators of the MenEngage network at the national, regional or global level. As a general guideline, the complaint must be dealt with at the lowest level possible. MenEngage is a global Alliance and realizes that complaints need to be reviewed with country level realities and perspectives around gender equality and gender justice in mind. The coordinators will determine the exact nature of the violation of the Code of Conduct that is specified in the complaint.

The coordinators may seek additional information about the question or complaint. Once the coordinators are satisfied as to the specific nature of the question/complaint, they will inform the complainant that the complaint has been received and that it will be investigated and dealt with according to this protocol.

The coordinators will then communicate with the concerned MenEngage partner, coordinator or staff member that a complaint has been received and ask for an explanation. After the response is received the complaint can be dismissed or taken ahead, depending on the nature of the complaint and the response received. The decision for further action remains with the coordinators who may consult the other governing bodies of MenEngage.

If the question/complaint is taken forward, a face-to-face or phone/Skype meeting for clarification can be set up by the MenEngage coordinators. The clarifications sought will include:

- » whether there is a relevant Grievance Redress Mechanism in the organization;
- » whether any complaint was received locally;
- » whether an inquiry was set up; and
- » whether a report is available.

If there is no Grievance Redress (GR) mechanism, the ME secretariat should facilitate the process of setting one up.

If there is a GR mechanism but no complaint was received locally then the MenEngage member will be advised to set up a time-bound GR process immediately. If a complaint was received and inquiry is pending then the report related to the complaint should be sought when available.

The MenEngage coordination team will form a three to five-member inquiry committee to review the complaint and the documentation.

In order to facilitate this, the members of the committee will include one person from the regional/country-level network, a local women's rights activist who has been in touch with the network, and a member of the MenEngage International Board.

The committee will review the relevant documentation and determine:

- » whether the complaint constitutes a violation of the Code of Conduct;
- » whether the MenEngage constituent in question has complied with the locally relevant due processes to address the complaint; and
- » whether the complainant was informed about the local GR process and its results.

If the response of the MenEngage member/constituent is found satisfactory, i.e., that the complaint is not a violation of the Code of Conduct, or that local 'due processes' have been satisfied, then the complainant will be informed of the results of the inquiry.

If the committee requires more information, it may consult with feminist/social justice activists of the said country. The respondent MenEngage member will propose a list of five national experts and the list will be shared with the complainant, who may ask for any of the names to be removed from the list, giving sufficient reason for such a request for removal. The committee will choose any two of the agreed upon activists to support it in its inquiry. These two persons will be familiarized with the objective of the inquiry and the documentation that has been collected which is related to the complaint.

The two will be requested to provide their considered opinion as to:

- » whether the complaint (as described by the complainant and responded to by the MenEngage member) constitutes a violation of the Code of Conduct, using legal- and gender-equality and social justice-related standards, which are specific to the country context; and
- » whether the procedures set up to investigate the complaint were in accordance with the best practices in the specific country context.

Once the opinions of the experts have been received, the review committee will make its decision.



The complainant will be informed of the decision of the review committee. The entire process shall be conducted in a timely manner. All proceedings shall be kept confidential. The decision of the review committee alone may be shared with any organization or person who makes a specific request.

The resolution of the inquiry committee is not binding. A complainant who is dissatisfied with the final determination of the internal grievance procedure can seek other recourse, including by filing a lawsuit.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SETTING UP AN INTERNAL MECHANISM FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS AGAINST MENENGAGE MEMBERS:**

If the organization has not developed an internal process for dealing with complaints, MenEngage must support the member organization in doing so. ME emphasis should be on promoting good practices and ensuring compliance through strong systems and processes. We should also strengthen local accountability mechanisms. In some exceptional cases, the MenEngage global, regional or national steering committee will have to directly investigate the complaint and, ideally, will work in collaboration with the local organization for this purpose.

There are various types of internal dispute resolution options. Here we will refer to a formal grievance procedure, with a review committee composed of various board and staff members.

The purpose of an internal mechanism is to provide an objective review of the complaints and assure that all parties involved in the dispute are fairly treated, have an opportunity to provide their version of what happened, and abide to the results.

The members of the organization are informed about the grievance procedure and encouraged to submit any complaints to the leaders of the organization or to an appointed review committee.

Complaints are submitted (usually in writing) either by the persons directly affected or by others who have reasonable concerns about the misconducts of other members. In exceptional cases,

it is understood that the person raising the concern or complaint requests to remain anonymous.

It should be clear who will review the complaint and make the determination.

Retaliation against any person who brings a complaint is prohibited and will subject the retaliator to disciplinary actions.

The organization will report back to the complaining party in a timely fashion.

The resolution of an internal grievance procedure is not binding in most cases, which means that a complainant who is dissatisfied with the final determination of the internal grievance procedure can seek other recourse, including by filing a lawsuit.

An alternative in these cases is the referral of the dispute to an impartial party who is not connected with the organization and who can serve as arbiter. This individual must have the respect of all parties and must be perceived to be neutral, unbiased, and credible.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PEOPLE APPOINTED TO REVIEW COMPLAINTS:**

Interview everyone involved, starting with the person who has raised the concern and/or made the allegations. Separately interview the person accused. Find out all of the precise concerns. Obtain and document all details such as what was said or done, when, where, who else was there or was aware, and what the consequences were. (Keep a journal of your investigation, including dates and places of the interviews conducted and names of documents reviewed.) Interview any witnesses in the case and obtain any relevant documentation, emails or written data. Look for corroboration or contradictions in the information gathered.

Keep this process confidential and consider that some persons raising concerns or making allegations of misconduct may wish to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation. Respect that desire.

Determine the most appropriate moment to inform the person accused that a complaint has been received and that an investigation will be or is being conducted. In some instances, informing the accused person at the outset is not recommended as this may obstruct the investigation.

If the results of the investigation by the committee confirm the complaint, a governing body within the organization or within MenEngage will decide what actions should be taken against the accused. In the least serious cases, a dialogue with the person involved, to help him/her take responsibility for their mistake and make amends or apologize for the harm they caused, may suffice. A written warning may also be appropriate. Disciplinary actions for more serious misconduct may include removal from leadership positions or relieving of responsibilities within the organization or the MenEngage Alliance, termination of and reporting the accused to local authorities associated with the judicial system, and/or removal of the member from the MenEngage network.

The entire process shall be conducted in a timely manner.

# APPENDIX

## THE MENENGAGE ALLIANCE CODE OF CONDUCT

### INTRODUCTION

MenEngage is a global alliance of NGOs and UN agencies that seeks to engage boys and men to achieve gender equality. As such, all existing and incoming institutional members of the MenEngage Alliance 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.

As institutional members, and in accordance with Article 3 of the Memorandum of Understanding governing the MenEngage Alliance, all must sign this Code of Conduct. This document is an effort to ensure a standard of accountability of all member organisations to others with whom we work, as well as an adherence of individual employees and volunteers of member organisations to the core principles of MenEngage.



6 Version approved on February 5, 2014 by the Global Steering Committee in Delhi, India

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

## 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 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, dialoguing openly about differences (institutional or otherwise) and achieve consensus building.

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

The purpose of 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 against women, children, LGBT, or any others 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 antiviolenence 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.

.....  
<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, maldevelopment, or deprivation (WHO -Violence Prevention Alliance definition). This definition encompasses the use of physical punishment and emotional violence against of children.

## **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 favour 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 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 its 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.

**SIGNATURE**

As a member of the MenEngage Alliance, my organization and I agree to conduct ourselves in a manner that is in accordance with the mission and principles of the Alliance.

..... Name of MenEngage Alliance Member Representative	..... Name of MenEngage Alliance Member Witness
..... Signature	..... Signature
..... Date	..... Date
..... Name of Organization	..... Name of Organization







**MenEngage**

Working With Men and Boys For Gender Equality