

## **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 [2] of the alliance, including the individual/family level: advancing gender equality, human rights and social justice.

All institutional members, in accordance with Article 3 of the Memorandum of Understanding governing the MenEngage Alliance, must sign this Code of Conduct. This document is an effort to ensure a standard of accountability for 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.

### **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, engaging in open dialogue about differences (institutional or otherwise) and achieving consensus building.

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

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

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

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

## **4. Be Violence [3] Free**

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

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

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

the voices of local activists and organizations in program design, development and evaluation, as well as any other initiative that aims to engage the community.

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

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

MenEngage Alliance members have an obligation to do what is in the best interest of the network, in line with its mission and Core Principles. If a staff member is presented with a situation whose outcome creates personal benefit for him or herself, friends or relations, or the member organization, at the expense of the integrity of MenEngage, there may be a conflict of interest and it should be avoided. Carrying out transactions or situations that 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 their actions, including making public its sources of funding and annual budget and spending, except in cases where the donor requests to remain anonymous. Transparency also means working collaboratively with local organizations in places where a MenEngage member or network exists.

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

---

[1] Version approved on February 5, 2014 by the Global Steering Committee in Delhi, India.

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

[3] “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.