



MenEngage Alliance

working with men and boys for gender equality

Evidence, lessons learned and critical perspectives on engaging men and boys within a feminist framework

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SVRI Forum - 23 October 2019

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**Towards men & masculinities approaches
that are feminist-informed
and accountable**

About

MenEngage Alliance

Who we are

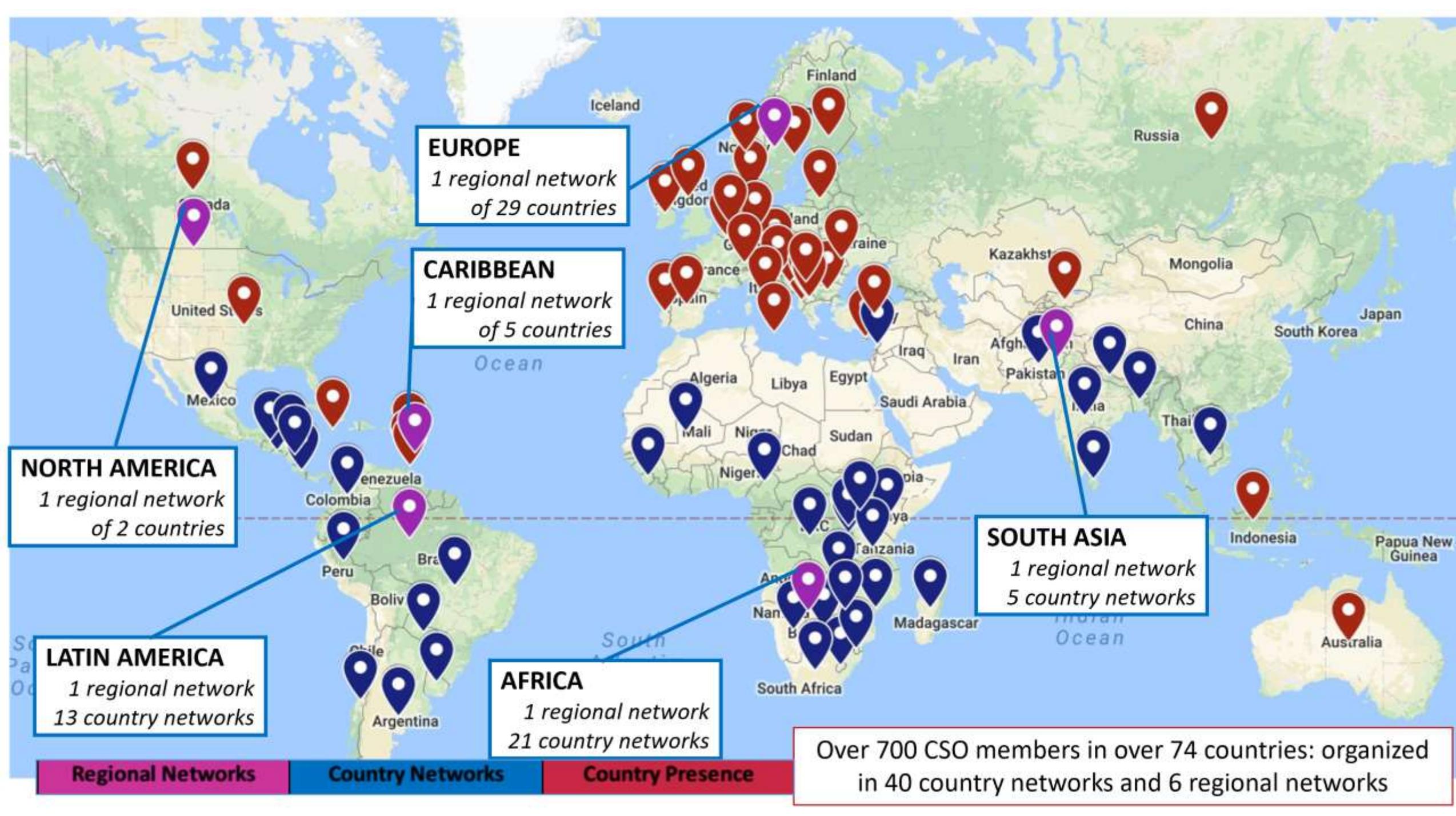
We are a **global network** of activists, experts, practitioners, researchers, CSOs and NGOs, made up of women's rights, SRHR, gender justice and engaging men and boys-focused organizations.

MenEngage Alliance works to transform patriarchal masculinities & engage men and boys **to contribute to advancing women's rights, SRHR and gender justice for all.**

We are a **platform** to critically discuss men and masculinities in women's rights and gender justice: it's benefits, it's risks, it's challenges, its promising practices.

We honor and build on the pioneering work and on-going leadership of **feminist and women's rights and SOGI/LGBTQI** organizations.

We do **not** support anti-feminist men nor "men's rights" groups.



Trends

Critical assessment of trends

Shrinking spaces for women's rights and civil society organizing: political & financial

Increased backlash towards women's and girl's rights, LGBTQIA+/SOGI rights, SRHR - rising religious/political fundamentalisms, nationalism, conservatism.

Increased interest in and uptake of engaging men and boys by civil society, UN, governments and researchers

Feminist coalitions reporting lack of accountable practices in engaging men and boys field of work (COFEM)

Challenges, concerns and potential risks involved with this increased uptake – if it is not carried out in a human-rights based, feminist-informed, gender transformative way, fully accountable to women's and girls.

TRENDS



- Global uptake (**UN Agencies, Governments, Development Agencies and Civil Society**)
- Steady uptake of language across **international, regional and national human rights instruments/policy frameworks**
- Going beyond 'need to engage men and boys' toward articulating a more nuanced framework for **how to transform harmful social norms around masculinities**
- With more stakeholders on board, imperative need to advance a **transformative framework**

OPPORTUNITIES

Work with men and boys is necessary. As major perpetrators of VAWG and SOGIESC peoples, the target audience for primary prevention, holders of the social norms and positions of power and influencers on other men, men need to be engaged.

Work with men and boys can be effective. The evidence base is growing on the effectiveness of engaging men and boys when done in gender-transformative manners **which seek to dismantle harmful norms, attitudes, customs, stereotypes, inequalities in power and privilege.**

Work with men and boys can have a positive, transformative impact on the lives of women and girls. This work can serve as a complement the many decades of continued work and activism done by feminist women's rights organizations and activists.

CHALLENGES



SILVER BULLET

COMPETITION FOR RESOURCES

OVERTAKING FEMINIST AGENDA/POLITICAL SPACE

LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY TO FEMINIST/WRO

DE-POLITICIZED WORK 'WITH MEN & BOYS'

PROTECTIONIST/PATERNALISTIC IMPLEMENTATION

CHAMPIONS/REINFORCEMENT OF PATRIARCHY

OVERT FOCUS ON MEN'S VULNERABILITIES

Evidence & lessons learned



<https://menandboys.ids.ac.uk>

Engendering Men: Evidence on Routes to Gender Equality' (EMERGE) was a two-year project from 2014-2016 to build an openly accessible basis of evidence, lessons and guidance for working with boys and men to promote gender equality.

CSO & Research institute partnership: A consortium led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Promundo-US and Sonke Gender Justice - involving MenEngage members worldwide - collaborated in **reviewing and analyzing existing evidence, documenting lessons from the field, and developing guidance for improved learning, policy and practice.**



Relational and inclusive

- Avoid replicating gender stereotypes, such as framing females as vulnerable or males as perpetrators.
- Systematically make visible, and interrelate, a greater range of male and female roles and contributions.

Intersectional

- Link gender inequality and other social inequalities.
- Improve gender mainstreaming to focus on the most marginalised women and men.

Linking the personal and political

- Use a range of approaches on gender in communities and institutions. Don't just try to change individuals.
- Support alliance building and institutional work.

Long term and adaptive

- As changing gender norms is slow, support longer term strategies that are adaptive to changing realities.
- Use longer term means of evaluation and look for 'contribution' to change, over 'attribution' of impacts.

Sufficient, consistent financing

- Protect good work by women's groups, but ensure enough funds for gender equality, irrespective of sex.
- Invest in collaborative planning, building relationships, networks and learning between actors.

Accountability

- Guard against male protectionism or the reinforcement of male supremacy.
- Support collaboration between women's movements and men and boys working for gender equality.



General Assembly

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Human Rights Council

Thirty-fifth session

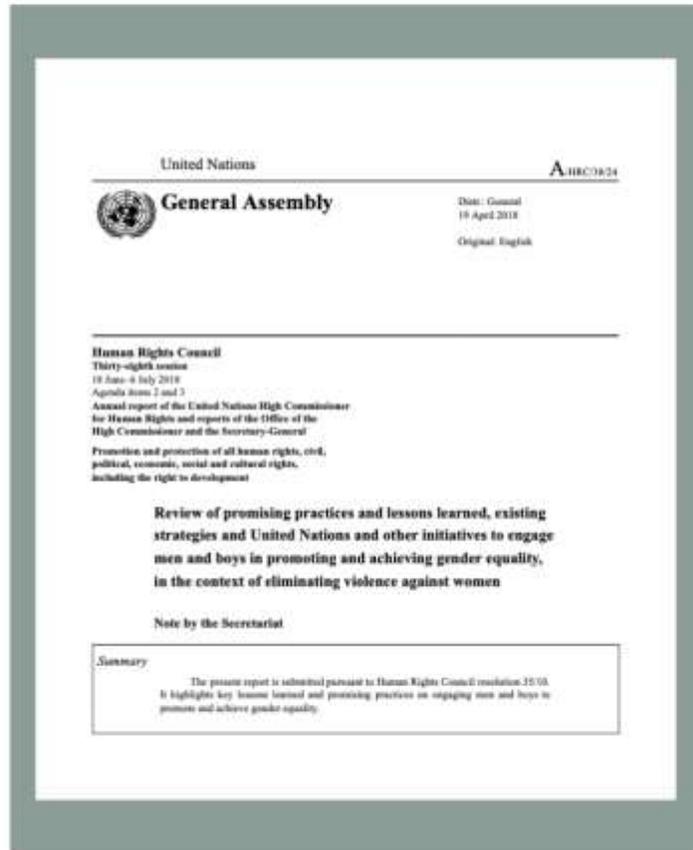
6–23 June 2017

Agenda item 3

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 22 June 2017

- 35/10. Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: engaging men and boys in preventing and responding to violence against all women and girls**

OHCHR REPORT FINDINGS



A/HRC/38/24

Review of promising practices and lessons learned, existing strategies and United Nations and other initiatives to engage men and boys in promoting and achieving gender equality, in the context of eliminating violence against women

2. In preparation for this report, OHCHR called for submissions and received contributions from 19 member States, 10 national human rights institutions, 3 United Nations entities, 1 public-private partnership and 21 civil society organizations and other stakeholders.² OHCHR also conducted research on the relevant jurisprudence of the United Nations human rights mechanisms and the relevant strategies and initiatives of the Organization and other entities.

Political agenda

KEY MESSAGES

What do we advocate for?

How good quality work to transforming masculinities and engage men and boys towards women's rights and gender equality should be carried out:

- Feminist-Informed
- Gender Transformative
- Human-Rights Based
- Fully accountable to all women, girls and SOGIESC peoples
- Working at all levels of society across the socio-ecological framework

For MenEngage Alliance, being “accountable” means:

- ✓ Building **gender equality in all we do** and ensuring that our work with men and boys **contributes to the empowerment** of women and people from other oppressed genders
- ✓ Being **critically aware of one’s own power and privilege and open to constructive criticism** --> creating cultures of reflection
- ✓ **Taking action to address personal and institutional practices** that go against the principles of gender equality and human rights, acknowledging any harm caused and making amends
- ✓ **Respecting and promoting women’s leadership** in the gender equality movement
- ✓ Creating structures of **consultation and partnerships with women’s rights organizations**

Gender- Transformative

- Always be clear: Engaging men is not a goal in itself, it's a means to an end
- Working at both individual and structural levels to change personal behavior while transforming patriarchal systems
- Beyond interventionist approaches (men protecting women): Requires introspection and internalization on the side of men and boys

NOTE

- Work with women for women can be *preventative*, and it can be *transformative*, and it can stand on its own
- Engaging men should never be an obligation from donors to anyone, including not to women's organizations, etc.



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Feminist- Informed

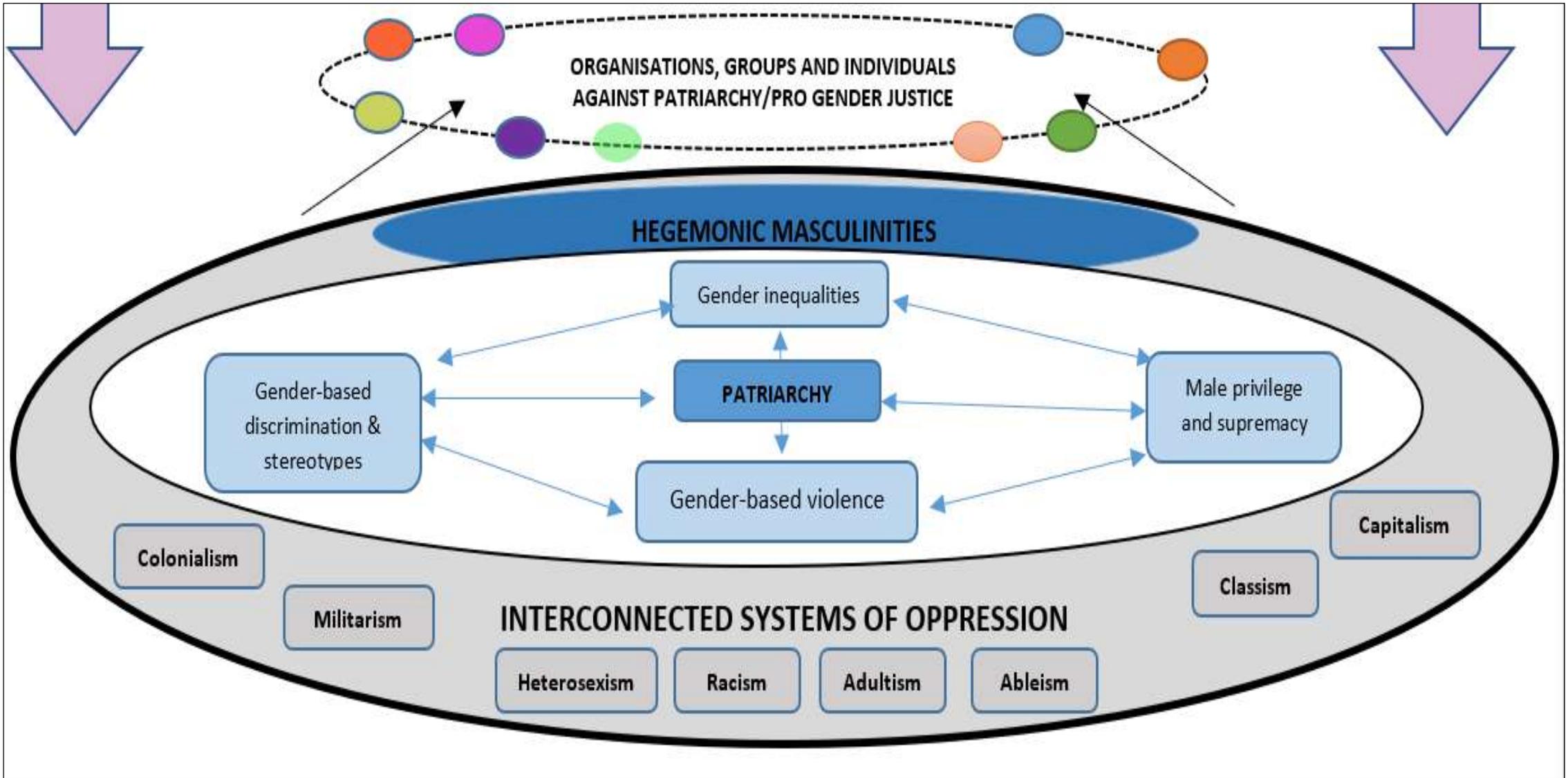
- Gendered-power analysis: inequalities in privilege and power that result from patriarchy at the heart of work with men and boys
- Actively prevent to reinforce male dominance and unequal power-relations
- Critical examination of how intersectional inequalities of gender, race, ethnicity, ability, color, and sexuality impact power and identity

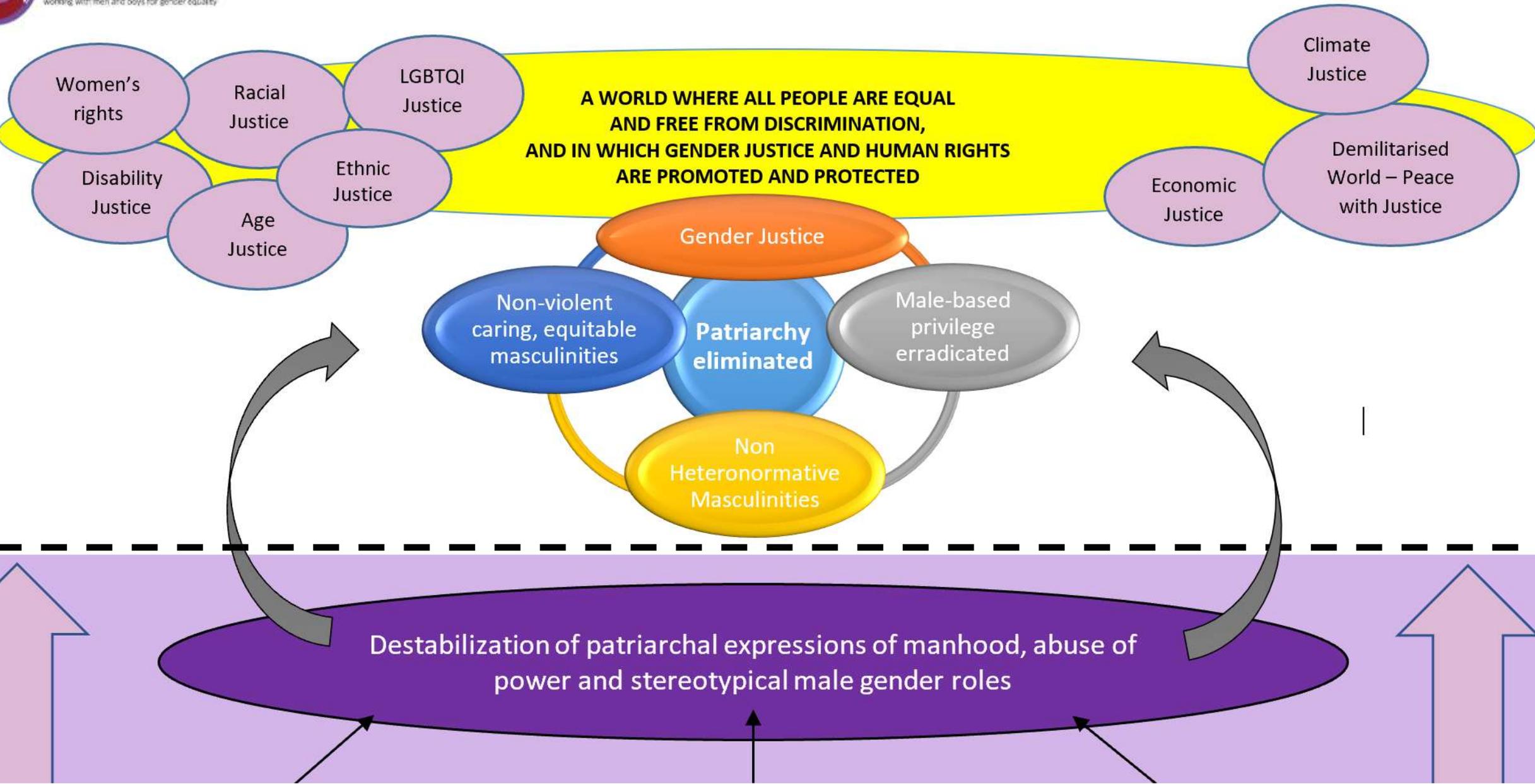


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Theory of Change





In conclusion:

“Men’s engagement and activism for gender equality needs to go beyond speaking out on the violation of women’s rights, to men actively supporting women’s participation in politics and public life, or demanding reform of patriarchal social, political and economic institutions.”

(source: EMERGE)

Women In Development (WID) → Gender And Development (GAD)

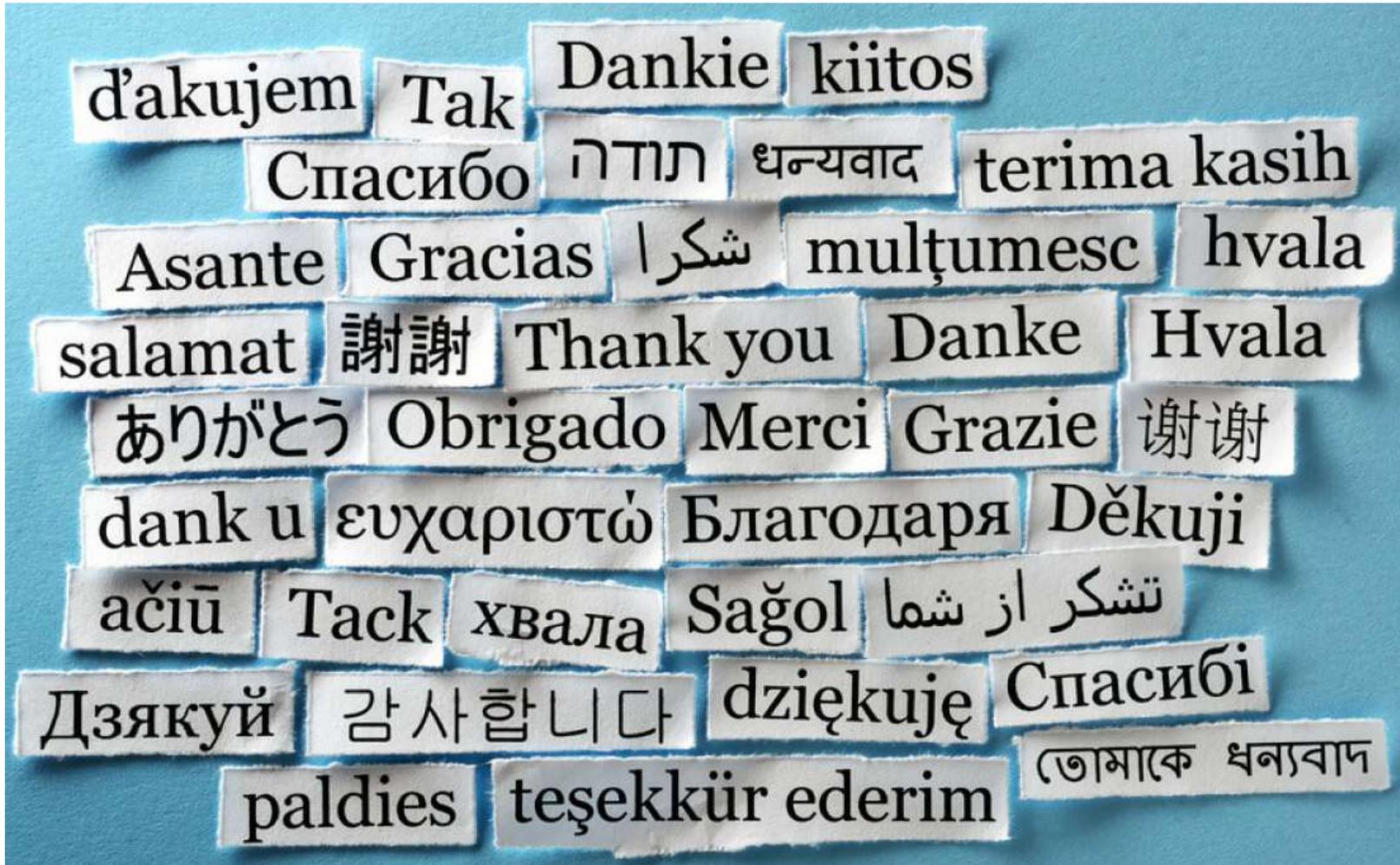
**From “engaging men in development” (MID)
to “men/masculinities in feminist activism” (MIFA)**

Accountability partnership:

MenEngage Alliance, ATHENA network, The Equality Institute, COFEM, Raising Voices and SVRI will organize a facilitated discussion among participants of the SVRI Forum on challenges and tangible ways to improve accountable practices of the men and masculinities work towards women's girls' and SOGI voices:

***"Accountable practices in engaging men and boys
to end gender-based violence:
a critical dialogue"***

Friday Oct. 25 from 09:00 – 12:00



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