



MENENGAGE LEBANON NETWORK STRATEGY

2024 – 2027



MenEngage Alliance
working with men and boys for gender equality

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This Strategy is provided by SKI for Research & Consulting (SKI) for the MenEngage Lebanon Network as part of the contract between SKI and ABAAD-Resource Center for Gender Equality.



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Background

1.1 History of the MenEngage Network in Lebanon

The MenEngage Network is the National Network of the Global MenEngage Alliance that consists of dozens of organizations, collectives, or individuals spread in many regions of the world. MenEngage Lebanon Network members work collectively and individually to advance gender justice, human rights and social justice to achieve a society in which all are equal and enjoy healthy, fulfilling and equitable relationships.

The MenEngage Network in Lebanon seeks to raise collective awareness about the need to engage men and boys in the struggle for gender equality and justice, and to invite women and decision makers at the local, national, regional and international levels to design engaging and encouraging policies for men to work towards achieving gender equality.

The MenEngage Lebanon Network engages in the exchange of information and experiences on the latest methods and good practices to empower and engage men in the process of promoting peace and equality, and advocating for social change that are relevant to the context of the country. In order to achieve gender justice, the Network believes, fundamentally, that men and boys need to be

part of the solution as allies for women's rights and other social justice movements.

This strategy was developed in consultation with the Network members over the months of April and May 2024, and it aims to develop an action plan to launch the work within the MenEngage Lebanon Country Network in Lebanon during the years 2024 to 2027.



1.2 Network Governance

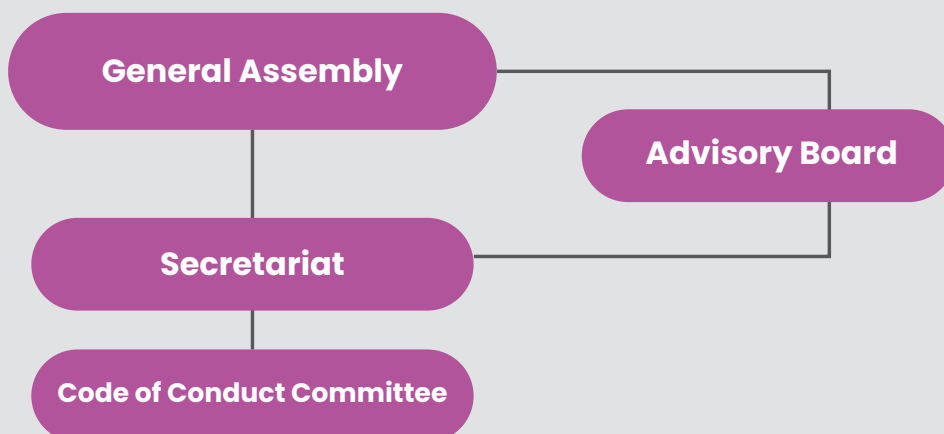
The work of the Network is based on a grassroots approach. The National Secretariat of the Network in Lebanon manages its day-to-day operations, is responsible for the Network's governance and coordinating the work of the MenEngage Lebanon Advisory Board that supports the Network, and coordinating the of the Code of Conduct Committee; in doing so, the National Secretariat is guided and supported by the National Assembly.

The Network was established in 2013 in Lebanon with .. organizations, throughout the years the Network grew and it currently consists of 17 organizations. The past 11 years led the members of the Network to realize that there was a need to institutionalize the collective work and learnings, yet still have the flexibility

to conduct its work easily; a characteristic that defines the Network's identity.

To ensure this flexibility, and at the same time make sure that the Network is sustainable, members decided that there must be a framework that governs its operations which led to the adoption of its Bylaws, Code of Conduct and this Strategy; these documents were drafted by following a feminist approach in a participatory process to draft them that included all current members in several consultations who gave their input and insights on several drafts until the final versions were adopted. These documents abide by international human rights law, good-governance principles and best practices from other similar entities.

MenEngage Network Lebanon Organogram



02

Study of the General Context

2.1 PESTLE Analysis

The emergence of women's movements in Lebanon began in the wake of the major historical changes that the Arab world witnessed – the processes of independence and modernization embodied in secular nationalism, Islamic modernity¹ and others – and in parallel with the emergence of similar movements in the West². Lebanese women's organizations reached their peak after the end of the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990), coinciding with the end of the Cold War era³.

In Lebanon, the public space is usually subject to mechanisms of control such as laws, customs and traditions, the powers of religious and confessional courts, military and security forces, and means of surveillance such as cameras, in addition to “the gaze of individuals in society,” especially men and boys who are more spread out in the public space and confirm their presence in different ways.

These behaviors, which sometimes take an aggressive and exclusionary nature, are met with justifications provided by society based on the principle of separation between the

public and the private, in order to maintain the dominance of masculine concepts over the public sphere. Their own “natural” space defined for them by societal norms or stereotypes; note that the concept of privacy in the Lebanese society is narrowed in favor of what is general so that the public sphere includes the largest possible number of individual liberties that this culture allows or permits interference in the private lives of others, especially women and girls.

This exclusionary control over the public space is one of the most prominent forms of political, economic, cultural and social marginalization of women historically. This can explicitly be noticed through the low percentage of women participation in the public life, politics and the economic activity. In addition to the direct and indirect material and moral violence against women and girls, harassment, theft, rape, arrest, or violence by the government and its agencies, especially with the widening of the movement margin for many women in Lebanon⁴, so that this expansion of movement and public space collides with the norms that still cling to societal

customs and traditions and even some legal provisions related to the masculine concept of dealing with the other; especially when it comes to civil status laws including marriage, divorce and custody that in several cases favor the interests of men over women.

The following is a situational analysis and presentation on gender equality in Lebanon:

On the Political Level

Under the political participation of women in Lebanon, the patriarchal privileges granted to men at the political, economic, cultural and social levels play a major role, and indeed constitute the most important factor in the decline of representation and political participation of women. Our society suffer under the weight of many inherited concepts that view women as subordinate to men and not equal to them. So that these values does not provide for equality between women and men in rights and even in duties, which may suggest that this part of society

is not ready to accept the idea of equal gender roles and is still discussing the axioms of matters such as the right of women to travel alone, equality in divorce rights, and the independence of women, equality in inheritance⁵.

In 2019, the Lebanese people took to the streets to protest the government's intention to apply a fee on WhatsApp calls. This trigger led to the widest national demonstrations in a decade across the country that transformed from protesting a tariff to protesting a decades-long policy of corruption, neglect, and denial of the Lebanese people suffering.

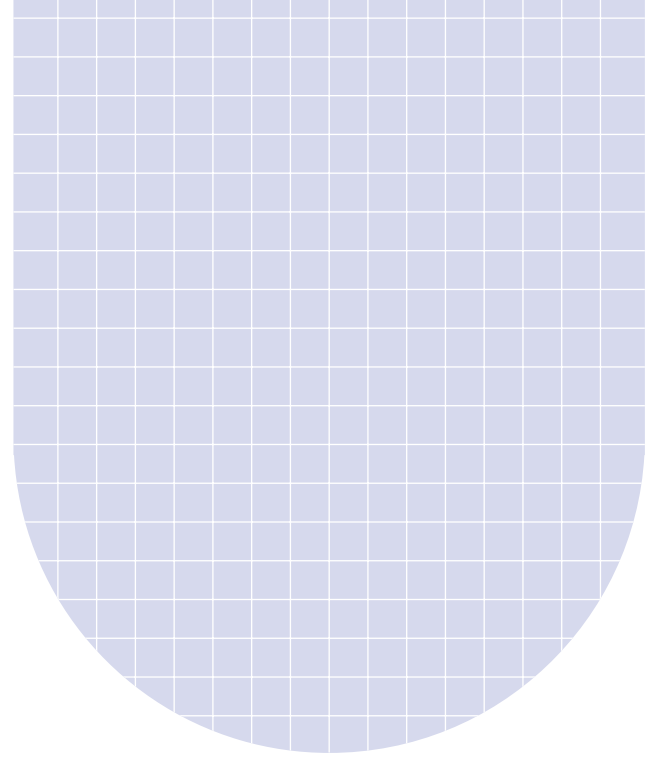
The comprehensiveness and geographical locations of the demonstrations unveiled the political class's inability to counter the challenges facing the Lebanese society, which, as described by the World Bank "the worst economic and financial crises since the 19th century". Amid this ongoing crisis, the COVID-19 outbreak paralyzed what was left of the economic activity in the country, and then came the Beirut Port Blast on August 4, 2020.



Since then, political gridlock have paralyzed the functioning of constitutional institutions with no president since October 2022, while two designated prime ministers were unable to form a government before that. Nonetheless, two governments were formed since 2019. However, the first government was unable to negotiate an economic recovery plan with International Monetary Fund, and the second government is struggling to sign an agreement even after reaching a Staff Level Agreement with the IMF. Considering that the IMF is strict in requiring major reforms on the institutional level, which addresses one of the main obstacles facing economic development in the country represented by the traditional political parties' interests, which in turn outlines the difficulty of applying concrete reforms as these reforms will negatively affect the political parties' grip over public administrations and public funds.

Also, due to the fact that the majority of political parties are either religious parties or represent a religious sect or faction, the official narrative(s) of these parties, wrongfully, views issues related to vulnerable people and groups as a threat to the public order. Recent developments that created nationwide campaigns against the LGBTQAI+ groups, which led to several incidents of violence against them by religious groups in Beirut, Tripoli and Tyre, combined with the misunderstanding of the notion and concept of gender equality, made gender equality efforts by organizations, initiatives and groups a target of the religious groups which undermines and creates an additional challenge and a threat for gender equality efforts, groups and individuals and requires the Network to clarify the notion of gender equality to the public using a sensitive approach.

In addition, the constant, ongoing, and consistent armed conflict engulfing Lebanon over the past number of decades, is currently exacerbated by unprecedented levels of imperialistic aggression by "Israel" and poses a major challenge to gender equality efforts in general and to the Network specifically. The lack of focus on the armed conflict and militarism



by official and non-official, national and international, stakeholders must be addressed by the Network as it is a cross-cutting issue that affects all other pillars under this strategy. These aspects will be considered continuously by the Network throughout the implementation the strategy and its activities.

While these challenges do create another cluster of challenges to achieving gender equality in Lebanon as they have restricting impact on women on the economic, social and technological levels, they also shift the priorities of policy makers and societal factions and individuals from addressing and focusing on gender equality issues directly.

This requires engaging political parties and other stakeholders in the discussion on gender equality by the MenEngage Network to make these stakeholders allies rather than obstacles in fight for gender equality by addressing the misconception of the notion and its importance on the political, economic and social levels. In addition, the Network will engage global organizations; especially economic and monetary entities such as the IMF, advocating them to require from the Lebanese government a commitment to gender equality as it can contribute to the economic cycle of the country and, therefore, increases Lebanon's gross domestic product (GDP) contributing to economic recovery.

On the Economic Level

Amidst the political challenges, unemployment rate reached 29.6% in 2022 according to the Central Administration for Statistics⁶, multidimensional poverty is at 82% and extreme multidimensional poverty is at 40% in 2021 according to ESCWA⁷, while the World Food Program recorded an increase of 340% in the price of the basic food basket⁸. These difficulties constitute not only challenges, but gross violations to economic and social human rights of the Lebanese people. Add to that the severe decrease in the gross domestic product (GDP) from 55.2 billion USD in 2018 to 23.13.7 billion USD in 2021⁹, and the inflation rate skyrocketing to approximately 221.3% in 2023¹⁰.

Economic potentials, hindered by the above-mentioned economic challenges, is a major factor that prevents many women from running for elections. In light of the economic gap, women are less able than men to finance their election campaigns, to name a few. In addition to this, the absence of laws that guarantee equality in the labor market, such as equal pay and policies that protect women in the workplace, such as a policy to combat harassment and the existence of a transparent and safe complaints mechanism, in addition to cultural legacies that

do not encourage women to work, which may sometimes even prevent them; for example, the Lebanese Parliamentary Elections Law of 2018 allowed electoral advertising within certain controls, and allowed the private media to practice electoral advertising, provided that a unified fee is imposed on all candidates without discrimination and that the media space is provided to everyone who is able and willing to pay this fee. This opened the door to the recovery of the advertising sector in Lebanon, and at the same time to the dominance of businessmen and those associated with traditional parties that remain linked in one way or another to the social legacies due to the sectarian nature of its representation in the public sphere, while in return it marginalized independent candidates, including women¹¹.

Also, due to the military operations in Lebanon and in Gaza, and the war in Ukraine, another economic challenge might face the Network due to the reallocation of funds by donors either for other regions or to fulfill other immediate priorities. This will be addressed by the Network through diversifying its sources of funds and collaborating with different stakeholders whether working with the private sector and/or through crowdfunding.



On the Social Level

In a study conducted by ABAAD – Resource Center for Gender Equality¹², it was concluded that parents participating in the study believe that children should adhere to the stereotypes of masculinity in order to integrate better into society. Stereotypical ideas of masculinity, according to their opinion, protect their children from bullying and being insulted and ridiculed, which result from non-compliance with traditional ideas committed to strict concepts of masculinity. By force in emotional terms and avoiding expressing feelings such as not crying or showing what they suffer from, behaving like males, not like girls...etc, which is often known as the “man's chest”, and it is an expression used by researchers describing the concept of masculinity in its dominant and patriarchal form. And since the hegemonic masculinity is hierarchical, it marginalizes men who do not quite fit the description of the “real man” either.

The study considered that adolescents and young males in Lebanon and the Middle East and North Africa can make an effective contribution to the pursuit of gender equality. And that they must be involved in it from an early stage so that their role is effective and proactive. It is essential that adolescents and young males participate in promoting and ensuring gender equality to limit and prevent harm to women and girls due to prevailing notions of masculinity.

This comes with a crackdown by the government on the fundamental rights of the Lebanese people; especially the Right to Peaceful Assembly and the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, while they are trying to express themselves and protest the government's policies.

In addition, the competent authorities and direct official stakeholder represented by the Ministry of Social Affairs – which has a major role to play in the fight for gender equality –, is rather an obstacle than a solution for gender equality issues in Lebanon. The Ministry follows

a donor-oriented policy; meaning that when there's no funding provided by international donors to advance gender equality in Lebanon, the Ministry does not address any related issues which enhances the negative impact of the government's roles in the fight for gender equality. This shows the lack of political will to advance gender equality, a challenge that must be addressed and countered by the Network throughout its activities and advocacy efforts.

On the Technological Level

On another level, the economic and social disadvantages for women and girls reflects negatively on their access to technology. This is happening while digital technology is an important factor in our daily lives; technology is an important element in development across different dimensions and/or areas such as education, access to information, health support, engaging in cultural practices, expressing opinions, communication, employment, etc., due to the economic and social disadvantages for women and girls they have limited access to technology which eventually leads to them being left behind on the development level.

In addition to the existing barriers to technology access faced by women and girls, recent advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) offer both opportunities and challenges in advancing gender equality. AI technologies have the potential to automate tasks, enhance decision-making processes, and improve the efficiency of various operations within the MenEngage Network and its partner organizations. For instance, AI-powered data analytics can provide valuable insights into gender dynamics, helping identify patterns of inequality and inform more targeted interventions. Moreover, AI-driven tools can facilitate personalized support services, such as online counseling or skill-building programs, tailored to the specific needs of women and girls. However, it is essential to address potential biases and ethical

concerns inherent in AI algorithms to ensure that these technologies do not perpetuate or exacerbate existing gender inequalities. Moreover, the digital divide must be bridged to ensure equitable access to AI technologies, particularly for marginalized communities, thereby maximizing their potential benefits for advancing gender equality within the MenEngage Network's initiatives and advocacy.

On the Environmental Level

The environmental aspect of the PESTLE analysis focuses on the ecological factors that impact the operations and initiatives of the MenEngage Network. As climate change continues to pose significant challenges globally, it intersects with gender dynamics in complex ways. Environmental degradation disproportionately affects women and girls, particularly in low-income and marginalized communities, who often bear the brunt of climate-related disasters and resource depletion. For example, women are frequently responsible for (unpaid work/care) securing water, food, and fuel for their households, making them more vulnerable to the impacts of environmental degradation. Additionally, the degradation of natural habitats can exacerbate existing gender inequalities by limiting women's access to livelihood opportunities and essential resources.



Furthermore, environmental sustainability is intricately linked with gender equality and social justice. The MenEngage Network recognizes the importance of adopting environmentally sustainable practices in its operations and advocating for policies that promote both environmental protection and gender equality. By integrating environmental considerations into its programs and initiatives, the Network can contribute to building resilient communities and addressing the intersecting challenges of climate change and gender inequality.

However, it is essential to acknowledge that environmental issues are often complex and interconnected with other socio-economic factors. As such, the MenEngage Network must adopt a holistic approach that considers the intersections between environmental sustainability, gender equality, and social justice in its advocacy and programming efforts. By addressing environmental challenges through a gender-responsive lens, the Network can contribute to creating more inclusive and sustainable societies for all.

All the above challenges are limiting the potential of women and girls and contributing to widening the gender equality gap, which is why the Network must focus on addressing and countering these challenges through its work to advance gender equality.

In addition, the Network acknowledges that the military operation conducted by "Israel" against Lebanon at the time of drafting this strategy, poses a serious challenge and a threat to the country as a whole and to advancing gender equality efforts and that it will have a lasting impact on the long-term; especially in the South of Lebanon. The Network will navigate through its activities to address and counter the impact of the operation within the south and throughout Lebanon.

2.2 SWOT Analysis: Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Challenges and Opportunities

Strengths

The Network enjoys a number of strengths that can be put into use to achieve its vision. The capacities of some of the Network members such as ABAAD especially, on both levels, knowledge production and practical implementation of projects advancing gender equality, can help in advancing the Network's abilities and its other members.

Also, the wide reach of the Network members that is distributed among the nine Provinces in Lebanon can play a major role in the outreach operation to cover all regions and make sure that men and boys from all factions of society are engaged in advancing gender equality.

Some of the Network members also play a major role in advocating for gender equality, which will enable the Network to have more impact in its advocacy activities.

Weaknesses

Although some of the Network members' capacities are an advantage to it, however, the greater number of members needs their capacities to be developed in working towards advancing gender equality. This, combined with the lack of funding for the members and the Network itself constitutes a major weakness to Network and will have to be developed in order to build the capacities of the Network and add another safeguard to its sustainability.

Threats (Challenges)

A major challenge to the Network and its members when conducting their operations is the social and cultural norms that might not just disagree with what they are promoting but can also stand against them and try to prevent them from advancing gender equality.

Additional internal challenges specific to the Network is electricity and internet shortages, in addition to understaffed and overwhelmed members which leads to weak and/or lack of communication affecting the effectiveness and efficiency of the Network.

Opportunities

The correlation between the Network and the Global MenEngage Alliance is a major opportunity for the Network to build on best practices and success stories from across the world, especially from countries that share similarities with the social context to the one in Lebanon, that tries to prevent agents of change and human rights defenders from advancing gender equality.

On the other hand, the achievements of women mobility in different areas in Lebanon can be built upon to advance gender equality through cooperating with these women to have better outreach planning and operations in engaging men to promote gender equality.



2.3 Stakeholder Analysis

The Network enjoys an advantage that its members are present in all areas in Lebanon, this can be combined with the cooperation with other stakeholders to strengthen the outreach of the Network and ensure that a wider target audience is engaged in the process of advancing gender equality through engaging men and boys.

These stakeholders are both, national and international, on the latter level there are international organizations such as the United Nations and its agencies; a major player in advancing gender equality especially under the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals Agenda, in addition to foreign governments that are active in Lebanon through their funding tools that aims at advancing human rights in general.

On the national level, there are several entities that could be both a positive or a negative player, these entities are: The Lebanese Parliament, Council of Ministers, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, Municipalities, Universities, Schools, Trade Unions, Formal and Alternative Unions/Associations, Religious Institutions, the Private Sector and Women's movements and CSOs in Lebanon.

Below is an elaboration on international and national stakeholders:

International Level:

- 1. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** Besides the United Nations and its agencies, there are numerous international NGOs working on gender equality and human rights issues. Partnerships with NGOs specializing in women's rights, youth empowerment, and humanitarian aid can expand the Network's reach and resources.
- 2. Donor Agencies:** Apart from foreign governments, multilateral donor agencies such as the World Bank, European Union, and various bilateral aid organizations play a crucial role in funding development projects in Lebanon. Engaging with these donors can provide financial support and technical assistance for gender equality initiatives.
- 3. International Development Banks/Monetary Institutions:** Institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) also influence development policies and programs in Lebanon. Collaborating with these entities can facilitate access to financial resources for gender mainstreaming projects.

National Level – Positive and Negative Players:

1. **Media Outlets:** Television Networks, newspapers, and online platforms shape public opinion and discourse on gender issues. Building partnerships with media outlets can amplify the Network's advocacy efforts and raise awareness about gender equality.
2. **Legal and Judicial Bodies:** The judiciary, law enforcement agencies, and legal advocacy groups play a crucial role in enforcing gender-responsive laws and policies. Collaboration with legal experts and human rights organizations can strengthen the Network's legal advocacy and support mechanisms for survivors of gender-based violence.
3. **Local Communities:** Grassroots organizations, community centers, and neighborhood associations are essential stakeholders in promoting gender equality at the local level. Engaging with community leaders and influencers can foster grassroots mobilization and social change.
4. **Academic Institutions:** Universities and research institutions contribute to knowledge production and capacity-building in the field of gender studies. Collaborating with academic partners can support evidence-based advocacy and facilitate the integration of gender perspectives into educational curricula and research agendas.
5. **Healthcare Providers:** Hospitals, clinics, and healthcare professionals play a vital role in addressing reproductive health issues, including maternal mortality. Partnerships with healthcare providers can enhance access to gender-sensitive healthcare services and promote reproductive rights.
6. **Private Sector:** Businesses and corporations have the potential to advance gender equality through corporate social responsibility initiatives, gender-inclusive workplace policies, and supply chain practices. Engaging with the private sector can leverage resources and expertise to promote gender mainstreaming in the workplace and marketplace.
7. **Youth Organizations:** Youth-led organizations and student groups are key agents of social change and innovation. Collaboration with youth Networks can empower young people as advocates for gender equality and promote intergenerational dialogue on gender norms and stereotypes.
8. **Cultural and Religious Institutions:** Religious leaders and cultural influencers have a significant influence on societal norms and values related to gender roles and relationships. Engaging religious and cultural institutions can promote gender equal and peaceful masculinities and challenge harmful gender norms rooted in tradition and belief systems.



03

Institutional Capacity

Strengthening institutional capacity is crucial for ensuring the effective operation and increased visibility of the MenEngage Network at the national, regional, and international levels. This involves enhancing the organization's internal structures, processes, and human resources to better fulfill its mission and objectives.



Key Components of Institutional Capacity Building:

1. **Governance and Management:** Following the transparent and accountable governance structures enshrined within the Network's bylaws is essential for guiding its strategic direction and ensuring efficient decision-making processes. This includes following the defined roles and responsibilities within the National Secretariat and the mechanisms for oversight and accountability.
2. **Human Resources Development:** Investing in the professional development and well-being of staff members is critical for building a capable and motivated workforce. This may involve providing training opportunities, mentorship programs, and career advancement pathways to enhance employee skills and retention.
3. **Research and Knowledge Management:** Building a robust research and knowledge management system will enable the Network to generate evidence-based insights and best practices in the field of gender equality and positive masculinities. This includes conducting research studies, collecting data, and disseminating findings to inform advocacy efforts and programmatic interventions.
4. **Communication and Outreach:** Effective communication strategies are essential to enhance the visibility and impact of the Network's work. This involves maintaining an active presence on various communication channels, including social media platforms, websites, and newsletters, to engage with stakeholders and amplify key messages related to gender equality and gender equal and peaceful masculinities.
5. **Fundraising and Resource Mobilization:** Diversifying funding sources and mobilizing resources are essential for sustaining the Network's activities and expanding its reach. This includes developing fundraising strategies, cultivating donor relationships, and pursuing grant opportunities to secure financial support for programmatic initiatives and operational expenses in addition to exploring the possibility of crowd funding.
6. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will allow the Network to assess the effectiveness and impact of its interventions and identify areas for improvement. This involves setting clear performance indicators, collecting data on program/activities outcomes, and conducting regular evaluations to measure progress towards organizational goals.
7. **Partnerships and Collaboration:** Fostering partnerships and collaboration with other organizations, both within and outside the gender equality sector, can enhance the Network's collective impact and amplifies its advocacy efforts. This includes establishing strategic alliances with government agencies, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and private sector partners to leverage resources and expertise towards shared objectives.

04

Vision, Mission, Values, and Work Fields

4.1 Vision

A Lebanese society in which gender equality and gender equal and peaceful masculinities prevail, free from discrimination on the basis of gender, identity, or sexual orientation, as a society that promotes and respects gender justice and human rights.

At the Network, we believe that men can be part of the push for gender equality, by adopting a feminist approach and respecting, ensuring and promoting human rights that would reduce stereotypical notions of masculinity in patriarchal regimes.

4.2 Mission

Working to reach a joint Lebanese society for men by pushing towards achieving gender equality by popularizing the concept of gender equal and peaceful masculinities, as well as by engaging the Network in the process of exchanging experiences and information on ways to involve men in this movement.

4.3 Values

By values, we mean the ethical framework that guides and defines the work of the Network. At the forefront of the values is gender equality, which is equality between different social types in rights and duties, and non-discrimination according to gender. That is, there should be an equal distribution of economic capabilities, within the framework of equal distribution of opportunities and the ability to influence public life, social power, non-discrimination on the basis of identity or sexual orientation, and respect for diversity, through the openness of the Network to include individuals from different social, cultural, religious and identities backgrounds.

The Network also prioritizes the ethical standards, safety and well-being of all – including women and girls, and generally focuses on the most vulnerable groups and works to integrate them, with full commitment to the principle of no harm, and to create peaceful and equal professional environments, through the design of policies based on providing opportunities with fairness, and equal, without discrimination, and by providing a work environment that protects women and girls and encourages them to engage more in all fields, in addition to anti-harassment policies in the workplace, and avoid conflict of interest, by avoiding any situation or situation in which its objectivity and independence of decision is affected by personal interest, whether material or morale.

In addition, the Network is committed to a number of core values such as acknowledging the universality, inclusivity and interdependence of human rights with each other, social justice, transparency, privacy, accountability, Networking with various stakeholders, civic participation, and promoting the value of active citizenship; in order to achieve gender equality and gender equal and peaceful masculinities.

4.4 Areas of Work

In addition to the main areas of work such as involving men, spreading gender equal and peaceful masculinities and addressing the root causes of violence against women and all forms of gender-based violence, the Network works in intersectional areas of work such as intersectional rights, social justice, gender equality, defending sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, and transforming gender stereotypes and the paternalistic definition of masculinity, raising awareness about unpaid care work, advocating the LGBTQAI+ community, and engaging all social types in raising awareness about the importance of education and upbringing in building gender-equal societies.

05

Strategic framework

5.1 General Objective

Empowering individuals of all genders and identities by challenging patriarchal norms, promoting gender equal and peaceful masculinities, and fostering gender equality and social justice in Lebanon. Through collaborative partnerships, research-driven initiatives, and advocacy efforts, the Network aims to create a culture of inclusivity, fairness, and respect, where individuals can thrive and contribute to building a more equitable and balanced society.

5.2 Strategic Goals

In addition to the general objective, the Network adopts specific, realistic and measurable strategic objectives, which are:

1. Engaging Men in Promoting Gender Equality:

Goal: Actively involve men in Lebanon in efforts to promote gender equality and challenge patriarchal norms. This involves creating inclusive spaces for men to critically reflect on their roles and responsibilities in advancing gender justice and fostering positive relationships with individuals of all genders.

2. Promoting Awareness of Gender Equal and Peaceful Masculinities:

Goal: Raise awareness across Lebanon about the nature and importance of gender equal and peaceful masculinities through targeted advocacy campaigns, media initiatives, community meetings, and awareness-raising discussions. By challenging stereotypes and promoting healthier, more inclusive notions of masculinity, the Network aims to inspire positive behavioral change among men and boys.

3. Advocating for Engaging Approaches Based on Feminist Principles:

Goal: Advocate for the adoption of engaging approaches for men and boys rooted in feminist principles and human rights. Building on the work of feminist organizations and the feminist movement, the Network seeks to promote intersectional approaches that address the diverse experiences and needs of individuals across different genders and identities.

4. Integrating Men and Boys into Social Norms Development:

Goal: Involve men and boys in Lebanon in co-creating social norms that align with the principles of the 2030 Agenda and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. By actively engaging men in conversations about gender norms and expectations, the Network aims to foster collective responsibility and accountability for promoting gender equality and social justice.

5. Strengthening Network Members' Capacities:

Goal: Enhance the capabilities and roles of Network members in engaging men in Lebanon through targeted capacity-building initiatives. This includes organizing workshops, training sessions, and skill-building activities to equip members with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to effectively promote gender equality and positive masculinities within their communities.

6. Empowering Network Members through Education:

Goal: Empower Network members through education and training programs that deepen their understanding of gender dynamics and equip them with the tools and resources to enact positive change. By investing in the professional development and well-being of its members, the Network can enhance its collective impact and sustainability.

7. Reducing Violence through Gender-Transformative Approaches:

Goal: Reduce violence in Lebanon by engaging both men and women in gender-transformative approaches that challenge harmful norms and behaviors. By addressing the root causes of violence and promoting respectful and equitable relationships, the Network aims to create safer and more supportive environments for all individuals.

8. Producing Knowledge and Educational Materials:

Goal: Produce knowledge and educational materials on gender equal and peaceful masculinities and effective strategies for engaging men in gender equality initiatives. This includes conducting research studies, developing educational resources, and disseminating best practices to inform advocacy efforts and empower individuals and communities.

9. Strengthening the Network and its Members:

Goal: Strengthen the MenEngage Network and its members through capacity-building, Networking opportunities, and strategic partnerships. By fostering collaboration and solidarity among members, the Network can leverage collective expertise, resources, and influence to advance its mission and objectives effectively.

10. Enhance the Network and its Members' Position and Role in Lebanon and the Region:

Goal: Enhancing MenEngage Lebanon Network members' position and comfort with their roles as 'on the ground' experts of the unique brand of militaristic masculinities that are emerging in Lebanon and the middle east.

5.3 Strategic Projects and Activities

To achieve the general objective and the specific strategic objectives, fulfilling its vision and mission, the Network will conduct a series of projects, activities and campaign over the span of three years as follows:

During the first year, the Network will conduct:

1. Establishing Working Groups:

In accordance with Article 19 of the Network bylaws, the Secretariat, with the approval of the National General Assembly, can establish working groups/committees (WGs) based on the needs of the Network to support the Secretariat in its work. The WGs can be established on the basis of thematic areas and/or geographic locations to involve and engage members as much as possible, which also allows the latter to fulfill their commitment to support the Network on the technical level.

At the first stage each WG will be headed by a member of the Secretariat, at a later stage, if the need arises and there are more than five WGs, a Head of the WG can delegate their responsibilities to member of the Network.

WG reports to the Secretariat and make its decisions by voting if unanimity is not possible. If members of the WG were not able to attend its meetings, the Head of the WG will communicate with them the discussions and decisions and will annex their comments, if any, before reporting to the Secretariat.

During the first year, the Secretariat will establish, at least the following working groups: Fundraising Working Group and Advocacy Working Group..

2. Awareness Campaign on Gender equal and peaceful masculinities:

Develop and implement a multimedia awareness campaign to promote gender equal

and peaceful masculinities and challenge harmful gender stereotypes.

3. Training Workshops for Network Members:

Organize training workshops for Network members on gender-transformative approaches, feminist principles, and effective strategies for engaging men in gender equality initiatives.

4. Research Study on Gender Norms and Behaviors:

Conduct a research study to explore prevailing gender norms and behaviors in Lebanese society and identify opportunities for promoting gender equality and positive masculinities.

5. Capacity-Building Initiative for Network Staff:

Implement a capacity-building initiative for Network staff to enhance their skills in project management, communication, and strategic planning.

During the second year, the Network will conduct:

6. Advocacy Campaign for Policy Change:

Launch an advocacy campaign to advocate for policy changes that promote gender equality and address issues related to gender equal and peaceful masculinities, such as parental leave policies, gender-based violence prevention programs, and inclusive education initiatives.

7. Community Engagement Forums:

Organize community engagement forums and discussion sessions to facilitate dialogue and knowledge exchange among diverse stakeholders on topics related to gender equality, gender equal and peaceful masculinities, and social justice.

8. Resource Mobilization Training for Staff:

Provide training for staff members on resource mobilization strategies, donor engagement, and grant writing techniques to enhance the Network's fundraising capacity.

During the third year, the Network will conduct:

9. Youth Engagement Program:

Launch a youth engagement program aimed at empowering young people to become advocates for gender equality and positive masculinities through leadership development, skill-building workshops, and community action projects.

10. Institutional Strengthening Initiative:

Implement an institutional strengthening initiative to enhance the Network's governance structures, administrative processes, and financial management systems.



06

Communication Plan

To implement an effective and efficient communication plan, the Secretariat will coordinate between members of the Network to outline the time and effort dedicated by each member to support the Network communication objectives and strategies. Considering the ongoing political and armed conflicts faced by the Lebanese society, the Secretariat, in close coordination with the members, will work on tools that facilitate the fulfillment of the communication objectives in a conflict setting.

The Communication Plan Objectives:

- 1. Enhancing Cooperation and Participation:** The primary objective of the communication plan is to foster cooperation and participation among different genders and gender identities. This involves establishing partnerships with civil society organizations, the feminist movement in Lebanon and the region, and local authorities to promote gender equality and justice through collaborative initiatives and advocacy efforts.
- 2. Promoting Research and Innovation:** The communication plan aims to encourage research and innovation for gender equality and justice. This includes leveraging partnerships with think tanks and research institutions to generate evidence-based insights and develop innovative solutions to address gender-related challenges and promote positive masculinities.
- 3. Mobilizing Advocacy:** The success of the communication plan depends on the Network's ability to mobilize civil society organizations and think tanks to advocate for policy positions that advance gender equality. This involves conducting advocacy campaigns, organizing policy dialogues, and leveraging media and communication channels to raise awareness and influence decision-makers at the local, national, and international levels.

4. **Knowledge Production:** Producing and disseminating knowledge about gender equality and gender equal and peaceful masculinities is identified as a critical gap that the Network seeks to address. This involves conducting research studies, publishing reports and policy briefs, and organizing knowledge-sharing events to build a robust evidence base and inform advocacy efforts and programmatic interventions.
5. **Awareness Initiatives:** The communication plan includes implementing awareness initiatives to promote gender equality and gender equal and peaceful masculinities among diverse audiences. This may include public awareness campaigns,

educational workshops, training sessions, and community engagement activities aimed at challenging gender stereotypes, promoting gender-sensitive attitudes, and fostering behavior change.

6. **Stakeholder Engagement:** The Network recognizes the importance of building partnerships and engaging stakeholders from various sectors and levels. This involves holding conferences, forums, workshops, and partnership-building meetings between civil society organizations, government agencies, international bodies, and relevant United Nations entities to facilitate knowledge exchange, collaboration, and joint action towards common goals.

Communication Strategies

1. **Multi-channel Communication:** Utilizing a mix of traditional and digital communication channels, including social media, websites, newsletters, press releases, and multimedia content, to reach diverse audiences and amplify key messages related to gender equality and gender equal and peaceful masculinities.
2. **Targeted Messaging:** Tailoring communication materials and messages to specific target audiences, including policymakers, civil society organizations, youth groups, media outlets, the general public, etc., to ensure relevance and resonance with different stakeholder groups.
3. **Capacity Building:** Building the communication capacity of Network members and partners through training workshops, skill-building sessions, and knowledge-sharing platforms to enhance their ability to effectively communicate, address, and advocate for gender equality issues.
4. **Participatory Approaches:** Adopting participatory communication approaches that involve engaging stakeholders in the communication planning and implementation process, soliciting feedback and input, and fostering ownership and buy-in for communication initiatives and campaigns.



5. Conflict-Tailored Communication Tools:

Establishing communication tools that navigates potential challenges that might negatively affect fulfilling the communication objectives of the Network. Such tools, include but are not limited to:

6. **Crisis Communication Plans:** by outlining clear procedures for communication during political or armed conflict, ensuring that all team members and members know their roles and responsibilities; clarifying the chain of command, key messages, contact lists, and protocols for internal and external communication to ensure security

and privacy, relying on solar-powered charges and batteries, using e-sim cards, pre-designating meeting locations and safe spaces where team members and members can regularly gather for updates and coordination.

7. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the effectiveness and impact of communication activities, measure reach and engagement metrics, and gather feedback for continuous improvement and adaptation of communication strategies and tactics.



Funding the Strategic Plan

This plan is to develop and implement a resource mobilization strategy that addresses sustainability in the short, medium and long term, by developing and training the Network's human resources on funding mobilization methods and techniques, surveying potential donors, developing an outreach plan, supporting and implementing fundraising activities; as follows:

- 1. Sustainability Planning:** The resource mobilization strategy aims to ensure the sustainability of the Network's operations and initiatives in the short, medium, and long term. This involves developing a comprehensive plan that outlines specific goals, objectives, and action steps for mobilizing financial resources from diverse funding sources.
- 2. Human Resources Development:** Investing in the capacity building of the Network's human resources is essential for effective fundraising. This includes providing training and professional development opportunities to staff members and volunteers on fundraising methods, techniques, and best practices. By equipping the team with the necessary skills and knowledge, they can effectively identify funding opportunities, cultivate donor relationships, and secure financial support for the Network's activities.
- 3. Donor Research and Engagement:** Conducting thorough research to identify potential donors and funding opportunities is a critical step in the resource mobilization process. This involves surveying potential donors, including government agencies, multilateral organizations, philanthropic foundations, corporate sponsors, and individual donors, to understand their funding priorities, eligibility criteria, and application processes. Building relationships with donors through targeted outreach and engagement efforts is essential for cultivating partnerships and securing financial support for the Network's programs/activities and initiatives.
- 4. Outreach Plan Development:** Developing an outreach plan is essential for effectively communicating the Network's vision, mission, and impact to potential donors and stakeholders. This involves crafting

compelling fundraising messages and materials, including grant proposals, fundraising appeals, and impact reports, tailored to the interests and priorities of different donor audiences. Implementing a multi-channel outreach strategy, including direct mail, email campaigns, social media, and Networking events, can help expand the Network's reach and visibility among potential donors.

5. **Supporting Fundraising Activities:** Providing ongoing support and guidance to staff members and volunteers involved in fundraising activities is essential for ensuring their success. This includes offering mentorship, coaching, and technical assistance to help them navigate the fundraising process, overcome challenges, and maximize opportunities for securing financial support. Implementing fundraising activities, such as events, campaigns, and crowdfunding initiatives, can also generate funds and raise awareness about the Network's work within the community.



08

Key Performance Indicators

The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are based on the time period specified for the general strategy, which is set at three years, and includes the following sections: Strategic Activities and Projects, Communication Plan, and the Funding Plan.

To measure the performance of the Network in applying this strategy and fulfilling its objectives, the following KPIs are adopted.

8.1 Strategic Activities and Projects

Year	Indicator	Status (In Progress/Delayed/ Partially Completed/Completed)
Year1	Establishing Working Groups	
	Establishing the Fundraising Working Group	
	Establishing the Advocacy Working Group	
	For each awareness Campaign	
	[Specific No. of] Impressions/Views	
	[Specific No. of] Likes	

[Specific No. of] Shares (Reposts)

[Specific No. of] Comments

Capacity Building for Network Members

[Specific No. of] Workshops/Trainings
based on a needs assessment survey
conducted by the Secretariat

Conducting Pre-Post Tests for
each capacity building activity

Conducting Participant Satisfaction Survey

Capacity Building for Network Staff

[Specific No. of] Staff Trained

Conducting Annual Staff
Performance Review

Research

Conducting a research study to explore
prevailing gender norms and behaviors
in the Lebanese society and identify
opportunities for promoting gender
equality and positive masculinities.

Advocacy

[Specific No. of] Policy Briefs
(with their specific topics as
adopted by the Secretariat)

[Specific No. of] Meetings
with Decision-makers

Year 2

[Specific Policy Change to
be Implemented]

Community Engagement

[For Each Event Specific
No. of Participants]

[For Each Event Working Paper Produced
Including Recommendations]

Resources Mobilization for Network Staff

[Specific No. of] Staff Trained

[Specific No. of] Successful
Grant Applications

Youth Engagement

[Specific No. of] Youth Engaged
through the Network's Events

[For Each Event] Conducting
Impact Assessment

[For Each Event] Documenting
and Publishing Success Stories

Year 3

Institutional Capacity of the Network

Annual report highlighting and
identifying improvement in governance
effectiveness of the Network
including administrative processes
and financial sustainability.

Endnotes

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- 3 Dalya Mitri, *From Public Space to Offices: Women's Movements in Lebanon Have Shifted to the Nature of Non-Governmental Organizations and Its Impact on Women's Mobilization and Social Change* (En-Ar), "Civil Society Knowledge Centre, Lebanon Support, 2015-07-01.
- 4 Lynn Hashem, the struggle of women and Feminism in "popular mobility" in Lebanon: Public and private intersections. Heinrich Boll Stiftung, April 27, 2017.
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- 10 Central Administration for Statistics. Available at: <http://www.cas.gov.lb/index.php>
- 11 Sarah Elsheikh Ali, Really Why Don't Women Run, Khateera, November 11, 2020, <https://khateera.com/article/95>
- 12 Understanding Masculinities: Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (Images) – Middle East and North Africa – Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine. Promundo – UN Women. May 2017. Available at: <https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Arab%20States/Attachments/2017/IMAGES-MENA-Multi-Country-Report-EN-16May2017-web.pdf>

Notes



MenEngage Alliance
working with men and boys for gender equality

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