



*Reclaiming the Narrative:  
Feminist Voices on  
Accountability from  
the Male Engagement  
Movement*

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Learning Brief

## Introduction

Over the past two decades, there has been growing feminist concern around the proliferation of male engagement work to end gender-based violence (GBV)/violence against women and girls (VAWG).<sup>1</sup> While male engagement is compulsory to end men's VAWG, the process through which it is done matters. The global community largely continues to endorse the male engagement agenda without appraisal, despite conflicting empirical evidence of some current programming's impact on reducing VAWG and concerns raised by some women's rights activists. Women's rights advocates have argued that spaces dedicated to male engagement for gender equality can have unintended negative repercussions such as diverting funding away from women-led organizations, reproducing gendered hierarchies that put men in control of movements, promoting victimhood competition, and legitimizing opportunities for men to discredit the notion that VAWG is gendered violence (Chant & Gutmann, 2002; Cornwall, 2014; COFEM, 2018). Some ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG) practitioners believe that these factors have contributed to stifled and depoliticized efforts to end VAWG, investment in programming with mixed results, and the decentering of women and girls. However, many bilateral and multilateral organizations continue to fund and prioritize male engagement work, sometimes at the expense of work that undercuts women and girl-led efforts to prevent and respond to violence. In the context of anti-gender equality movements and broader shrinking funding for feminist civil society organizations, where 99% of gender-related Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) fails to reach women's rights and feminist organizations directly, this male engagement agenda may further prevent feminist leaders from accessing sufficient funding (AWID, 2019).



*This learning brief aims to understand better how feminist practitioners, activists, and academics in the development and humanitarian fields are experiencing the drifting of EVAWG efforts to focus on men, particularly amid a far-right political agenda gaining traction across the world and decreased and/or stagnant funding for feminist movements (AWID, 2019; VeneKlasen, 2024). We hope this research will advance the discussion within the EVAWG field on emerging trends in the male engagement agenda and build upon COFEM's critical recommendations on how to conduct male engagement work ethically and accountably.*

<sup>1</sup> For this paper, COFEM uses the term VAWG. COFEM's use of VAWG is rooted in the analysis that violence against women and girls, in all their diversity, is driven and reinforced by globally occurring systems of oppression that privilege men over women. These systems of unequal power relations and structural gender inequalities not only perpetuate VAWG, but also make it difficult for survivors to access care and support. COFEM recognizes that the historic shift towards the use of the language of 'GBV' in place of 'VAWG' was a purposeful and strategic choice by women's rights activists to underline the gendered power differentials that drive VAWG, and to call on States to meet their responsibilities to prevent VAWG and respond to the needs of survivors. COFEM strongly supports working in allyship with groups seeking to understand and draw attention to various forms of violence, particularly when the violence is based on discrimination other than, or in addition to, gender inequality, such as discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, caste, race, and ability.

For more information on these points, see COFEM's Feminist Pocketbook [Tipsheet #2: Why does GBV programming focus on women and girls?](#) and [Tipsheet #8: Maximising impact: Understanding risks and benefits of coordinated efforts to address different forms of violence.](#)

Setting the scene at COFEM

Since 2016, one of COFEM’s central goals has been to address concerns around male engagement in the GBV/VAWG space. COFEM's groundbreaking [Feminist Pocketbook](#) and [SVRI Paper and Video Series](#) defined accountability to women and girls concerning male engagement concerns. Over five years later, we are reigniting this conversation by exploring what has changed, what challenges persist, and the current state of accountability in our feminist movements to EVAWG.

When COFEM first convened in March 2016, its organizers identified as women and included feminist academics, activists, and practitioners. COFEM embarked on a mission to assess the implications of engaging in efforts to end VAWG without a feminist analysis. Among the concerns was a heightened focus on “male engagement” in development and humanitarian settings. At this initial convening, COFEM members described several problematic, overlapping manifestations (see Table 1) of the male engagement movement that contributed to the depoliticization of VAWG (Lehmann, 2016). COFEM members detailed how these issues were reflected in donor agendas, research priorities, and program implementation. These concerns reflected a challenge within the male allyship agenda as both an empirical problem with implications for feminist movements and a political theoretical problem predicated on the notion that everyone has an equal interest in gender justice.

As COFEM expanded its membership and formalized its network, the conversation deepened to explore the shrinking space for feminist analysis in efforts to end VAWG. In 2017, COFEM published Feminist Perspectives on Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls, a collection of papers written by COFEM members to articulate concerns

Table 1: COFEM's 2016 Problem Analysis

- The rise of gender neutrality within humanitarian discourse and practice,
- The emergence of competition around victimhood; a shift from women and girl-led movements and activism to a technocratic approach to ending violence,
- Different interpretations of what "gender-based violence" (GBV) entails,
- A lack of clarity about how VAWG intersects with other forms of interpersonal and collective violence, and
- A lack of analysis of how to include men and boys in in efforts to eradicate VAWG in a way that is accountable to women and girls.

across five key topics, described in Table 2. In 2018, COFEM published the Feminist Pocketbook, a resource to support practitioners, researchers, and others working in humanitarian and development settings to articulate and implement feminist-informed approaches to addressing VAWG in the form of 10 tipsheets. These tipsheets ranged in topics from why a feminist perspective matters in work to end VAWG, why GBV programming focuses on women and girls, men as allies and activists and violence against men and boys. Across these tipsheets, COFEM reiterated its vision of a feminist perspective on VAWG, which emphasized the transformation of the social and structural dimensions of women’s inequality and subordination.

Table 2. COFEM SVRI 2017 Paper and Video Series Topic

1. How a lack of accountability undermines work to address violence against women and girls
2. Reframing the language of GBV away from feminist underpinnings
3. Findings the balance between scientific and social change goals, approaches and methods
4. Funding: Whose Priorities?
5. Eclipsed: When a broad protection agenda obscures the needs of women and girls

THIS LEARNING BRIEF ADDRESSES SOME OF THE INITIAL CHALLENGES POSED BY THE INAUGURAL LEADERSHIP OF COFEM, THROUGH THREE KEY OBJECTIVES:



To assess the male engagement landscape, including opportunities and challenges.



To explore the factors contributing to the current state of accountability from the male engagement movement to EVAWG work



To center the voices and experiences of women who are feminist practitioners in EVAWG about their experience with male engagement initiatives.

## Methodology

*Our methodological design and analysis lie in an epistemological commitment to intersectional feminism knowledge and practices and a deep political commitment to ensuring that women and girls in all of their diversity live free from violence.*

According to Sociology Professor Dr. Patricia Hill-Collins, epistemology is “why we believe what we believe is true.” Epistemology provides a grounding and justification for our scholarship claims (2002, p. 270).

In this research, we are committed to centering the voices and experiences of women EVAWG practitioners regarding the male engagement agenda to shed light on the power dynamics that shape the field at institutional, programmatic, and individual levels. We build upon a legacy of feminist activists, theorists, and movement builders who have conceptualized that violence against women is about gender and power, with critical attention to the racial, colonial, heteronormative, ableist, and class implications for those already living in the margins. As a result, we believe that women and girls have an indispensable perspective and role to play in determining how to end one of the most prevalent ongoing, gendered human rights violations.

Feminist standpoint theory undergirds this methodological decision, asserting that there is no universal “Truth.”



*A feminist standpoint rejects the notion of an “unmediated truth” but maintains that race, gender, class, and other social locations mediate one’s understanding of the world and that the perspective of the oppressed can lead to a more “comprehensive understanding of the world” (Hawkesworth, 2006, p. 56).*

Drawing on Marxist epistemology that knowledge comes from the everyday human struggle with the world, Nancy Hartsock argued that women have a specific “vantage point on male supremacy,” or feminist standpoint, and that this vantage point can serve as an epistemological device (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 61). Hill-Collins’ description of a Black feminist-informed standpoint further states that we do not just look at the individual level but also the structural level that can truly capture the complexities experienced by Black women – and other women of color – concerning structural oppression (1990). By understanding how various cultural, political, and social forces affect our community(ies), as researchers and practitioners, we aspire for a grounded, nuanced construction of multiple truths.

Our commitment to intersectionality—a concept coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw<sup>2</sup>—in the context of transnational feminism, we are urged to trace the methodological obligations put forward by Black women and women of color worldwide. Hill-Collins and Bilge define intersectionality as “an analytic tool that investigates how intersecting power relations influence social relations across diverse societies as well as individual experiences in everyday life” (Collins & Bilge, 2020, p. 2). Intersectionality is a critical social theory that enables us to think about the “problem of sameness and difference and its relation to power,” which enables oppression and privilege (Collins, 2019, p. 23). Transnational feminisms emerged in contrast to global feminism and imperial feminism, which have pushed forward gender as a single analytic, disregarding race, class, and imperialism, leading to the glorification of women as representing the nation, the integration of women into the military-industrial complex, and promotion of neoliberal policies and programs (Alexander & Mohanty, 2010; Briggs et al., 2008). Transnational feminism and intersectionality both serve as “anti-subordination analytics, frameworks, and politics that inform theory, politics, and feminist worldviews” (Falcón & Nash, 2015, p. 8).

*As a research team, we embarked on this review with a mindful and intentional*



*acknowledgment of our diverse backgrounds. Through our collective experiences, we have witnessed firsthand inequitable systems and power dynamics within our respective work environments and personal lives. Stating our positionality reminds us and readers that we come to this work with intersecting identities that influence our understanding of the world.*

Our positionality statements Annex 1.

<sup>2</sup> Intersectionality stems from a rich engagement with Black women’s expression of asymmetrical relationships with power in their daily lives. The concept of multiple oppressions has been fundamental in articulating intersectionality, calling to disrupt the single-axis thinking that has frequently characterized the whitestream feminist movements and Black masculinist movements. Francis Beales “double jeopardy”, Deborah King “multiple jeopardy”, and Patricia Hill Collins “matrix of domination” are among some of the Black feminists who laid the foundation for Crenshaw’s coinage of the term intersectionality (Guy-Sheftall, 1995). To read more about COFEM’s approach to intersectionality here: <https://cofemsocialchange.org/learning-advocacy-tools/cofem-learning-brief-series/brief-2/>



## Methods

This project employed multiple qualitative methods to explore the current state of accountability from the male engagement movement to EVAWG. We asked the following research questions:

*What challenges have arisen in ensuring accountability to women and girls in the GBV sector at the policy/advocacy and programming levels?*

*How can the principles for ensuring accountability be effectively integrated into GBV-related programming?*

*How can the male engagement movement promote allyship/co-conspiratorship and partnership instead of competition and disassociation from VAWG issues?*

### Brainstorming Sessions

3 sessions held with COFEM members

### Literature Review

Reviewed 40+ documents (white and grey literature)

### Key Informant Interviews

12 interviews with female-identifying EVAWG practitioners

### Survey

Survey shared with COFEM members

N=34

Table 3 summarizes all methods used, including a literature review to establish a theoretical framework and explore the evolution of the topic, initial brainstorming sessions with COFEM members to lay the foundation for the priorities of the project, a survey for COFEM members to provide a larger picture of their perspective on male engagement, and lastly, key informant interviews to provide richer insight into their experiences in ensuring accountability from the male engagement movement to EVAWG.

The survey was conducted online using Google Forms through MailChimp. Data collection occurred over three weeks, from May 13th to June 4th, 2024. 34 responses were received from 16 countries across the world. The racial makeup of the responses (including those who identified across multiple categories) included African (15), Black (4), Biracial/Mixed Race (1), Latina/Latinx (1), South Asian (4), White (9), as well as three individuals who chose not to identify. The data was analyzed using Excel, which

provided visualization through data tables, graphs, and charts. We took a thematic approach to our analysis through multiple readings of the survey responses and categorizing pertinent passages, words, paragraphs, and phrases by the themes and concepts. The survey data were imported into the Atlas TI, a qualitative data analysis software, and query reports were generated to closely analyze recurring themes and issues arising in the data. Twelve key informant interviews were held in June and July 2024. Recruitment was done through snowballing, self-reported survey interest, and recommendations from COFEM members. Qualitative data analysis of responses was conducted through a similar visualization and thematic approach as the survey. The regional breakdown of participants is as follows: North America (2), Latin America (1), Europe (1) West Africa, (2), South Asia (2), and East Africa (4).

## Limitations

*The research team limited the scope of the survey and key informant interviews to COFEM membership, the majority of whom are female practitioners, researchers, academics, and activists currently working on ending VAWG in the humanitarian and development fields. While these members come from diverse backgrounds, their perspectives are representative of this expertise. The research was also conducted entirely in English. Given the small sample from the survey and interviews, this research provides a snapshot of views on this topic that are not generalizable to a broader population.*

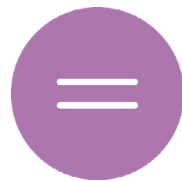
## Defining Male Engagement

*Male engagement programming refers to activities that seek to unpack the social, political, and economic roles that men and boys play in the lives of women and girls to promote gender equity and decrease VAWG.*

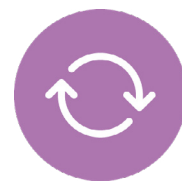
Glinski et al. (2018) describes male engagement's manifestation in three primary ways:



as gatekeepers with power in communities,



as co-beneficiaries who also benefit from gains in gender equality (in addition to women),



as well as agents of change who work toward transforming roles of men and boys (Glinski et al., 2018).

## Evolution

Male engagement campaigns emerged autonomously around the world, including but not limited to Brazil, Nicaragua, Mexico, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Flood, 2019; Glinski et al., 2018; Connell, 2003; Dobash & Dobash, 2000). The global conversations on male engagement began in key policy documents and convenings starting in 1979 with the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Article 5 of CEDAW urges state parties to the Convention to take steps to alter men's and women's conduct relating to notions about inferiority or superiority of either sex and accompanying stereotypes of roles for men and women (CEDAW, 1981). In the 1980s and 1990s, the HIV epidemic prompted more conversations and attention to the role men can play in preventing violence—both in the US and in several countries across Africa, where addressing HIV was taken up, particularly by men in faith-related organizations (Glinski et al., 2018; Wainaina, 2003). In 1994, The Beijing Platform for Action, the policy agenda from the Fourth World Conference on Women, used the language of “engaging men” to advance gender

equality (Glinski et al., 2018). In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the field of male engagement proliferated and led to the creation of organizations with fully dedicated missions to engaging men in gender equality, such as Equimundo (formerly Promundo), Men Engage, and the White Ribbon Campaign.

## Opportunities

Since the initial efforts to document VAWG and early (white) feminist explanations describing violence that women and girls experienced as solely a problem of men's power over women, the movement has more intentionally described the problem as one understood through structural analysis of both “intergender” (between women and men) and “intragender” (among women) issues (Merry, 2011; Crooms et. al., 2011). Ending VAWG is a problem of patriarchy and intersecting systems of oppression—such as colonialism, racism, neoliberalism, casteism, homophobia, and ableism—that create a hierarchy of value and privilege in people's lives, with those at the intersections of multiple vulnerable social locations being most affected (Crooms et al., 2011).

The theoretical edifice of male engagement can begin by exploring inter-gender issues. Connell canonically described the problem of “hegemonic masculinity” as the attitudes and behaviors among men that perpetrate and perpetuate gender inequality through men's power over women and men's power over minoritized men (1987). Connell's work evolved to explore the concepts of multiple masculinities, hierarchy, hegemony (including the implicit ways hegemonic masculinity can assert dominance), and collective masculinities (2000).

Male engagement, thus, invites us to consider who is responsible for solving “the patriarchy problem,” whose voices should be at the forefront of these efforts, and how men and boys can be engaged effectively, including by appealing to their stakes in patriarchy through acknowledging (and to what extent) how the system causes them harm. Architects of these initiatives argue that emphasizing the social, political, and economic roles men and boys play in the lives of women and girls is a better approach to promoting gender equality (Flood, 2001; Flood & Howson, 2015; Katz, 2014). Scholars and practitioners have described numerous opportunities for engaging men, including but not limited to:

- men largely perpetrate violence (Glinski et al, 2018; Flood, 2019),
- constructions of masculinity shape violence against women (Flood, 2019),
- men have a positive role to play in addressing VAW (Flood, 2019; Jewkes, 2015),
- women have historically been responsible for gender equality and men can share this responsibility (Chant, 2002; Kaufmann, 2004),
- male exclusion can provoke backlash (Chant & Gutmann, 2002; Glinski et al, 2018),
- men hold strategic decision-making power (Glinski et al, 2018; Wainaina, 2003),

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*"We need to work with both of them separately and then bring them together. If the power dynamics can be tackled, it will go a long way."*

– KII Respondent

- men are facing an identity crisis given changing gender relations that warrants their engagement (Chant & Gutmann, 2002); and
- historically, the field has perpetuated a false binary of women as victims and men as perpetrators that can be remedied through male engagement (Chant & Gutmann, 2002).

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*"If someone is engaging with men and boys, they should be conscious of the fact that the world is patriarchal and the gender hierarchy has been like this for centuries. So if we are engaging with them for gender justice... we have to deal with this historical challenge between men and women."*

- KII Respondent

## Challenges

As local and global conversations on male engagement proliferated, so did feminist concerns about its theoretical and practical implications. White (2000) summarized the rationale for male engagement in the gender and development (GAD) field through two trends: "men have problems or men are the problem," both of which "cause problems for women." While the latter contends that men have power over women in all spheres of life, the former includes three manifestations: efforts to reassert old rights that have been lost; if men have problems, women are to blame for it; and if men have problems, women are responsible for fixing them (White, 2000, p. 34).

The introduction of masculinity into GAD ostensibly gave the impression that women had been "done" in GAD; it was time to shift focus to the "discovery" of man since the GAD sector had, up until the 2000s, been preoccupied with women, so there was a need to focus on gendered lives of men (White, 2000). This notion not only sought to "re-exclude" women in a patriarchal sector but ignored the problems created by GAD related to the "woman question," including the perpetuation of racist, composite images of the third-world woman (Mohanty, 2003). Moreover, for men, GAD was much more "individualistic and personal," including theorizing multiple masculinities (versus femininity, which is rarely considered to have multiple formations), while GAD for women was materialist, focusing on social relations, rights, and responsibilities (White, 2000, p. 35).

Win (2001) expressed concerns about the "man question" in Zimbabwe, where she witnessed donors' excitement around

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*"(Male engagement) is such a buzzword for INGO donors and actually some other donors as well, to say that men must be involved. In some cases, we see a lot of men come into these spaces and take power, so you'll be in a meeting of women's rights organizations and men will take over and they will be heard. And then resources that should go to prevention work, women's rights organizations, this will go to methodologies that haven't been assessed enough, so they take away work and resources from feminist-led initiatives."*

- KII Respondent

including men which led to withholding money for women's organizations that chose to focus on organizing amongst themselves. Win noted the material impact of funding for women's rights in GAD while also pointing out the conceptual implications around GAD: "The political edge that characterized the women's movement has been curtailed by the 'gender' discourse, which casts negative light on those who choose to work only with and for women" (2001).

Male engagement became GAD's "new silver bullet" in which men became in charge once again, "only this time they're in charge of women's liberation struggles" (Meer, 2011, p. 2). Given the historical co-option and depoliticization of the feminist agenda in GAD through the new meanings given to terms such as "empowerment" and "gender mainstreaming," feminist concern was evident; "male engagement" might face a similar depoliticizing fate. The development field arguably took GAD to mean men and women and consequently "lost the meaning that feminism imbued it with" and created a perception "that men have been 'left behind' and need to be 'carried along'" (Meer, 2011; Adeleye-Fayemi, 2000).

Scholars have found further challenges in the male engagement field, conceptually and empirically. Some conceptual challenges include that male engagement initiatives: can be a sexist self-congratulatory endpoint (Flood & Howson, 2015; Glinski et al., 2018; Burrell, 2018; Macomber, 2012); lack critical self-reflection, accountability, and collective reflection (Macomber 2012); engage in the patriarchal or masculine displacement of women in spaces dedicated to addressing VAW (VicHealth, 2018); and serve as a way for men to discredit feminist VAW efforts and declare that men are just as likely to be survivors/victims as women (Leek, 2019). Empirical research has emphasized a gap between the development of male engagement programming on paper and its practical implications (Macomber, 2018). A review of studies on male engagement finds a range of outcomes of male initiatives, from promising to failing to decrease domestic violence and sexual violence (Ellsberg et al., 2015; Jewkes et al., 2020). Research on VAWG prevention programming also reveals that interventions that aim to work holistically with both women and men are more effective than interventions that only engage men or women independently (Ellsberg et al., 2015; Jewkes et al., 2020). Within the field, there are critical methodological gaps in studies on possible impacts, particularly given that change in attitudes seldomly translates to behavior change and that many studies rely on self-reported measures from men themselves, without necessarily consulting the women in their lives who may be impacted by such violence (Flood, 2019).

When looking at the impact of male engagement in practice, feminists and other scholars described not only an absence of change in some studies but also a reinforcement of patriarchal norms. In Sierra Leone, Ibrahim and Shepler (2022) discovered that implementation was rife with the reproduction of gender inequality through the paternalistic language of men as protectors. In Pakistan and Afghanistan, Wu (2019) found that enlisting men to end VAWG led to the dilution of feminist values around work on violence against women and the prioritization of experiences of middle-class men. In response to claims that men's gender-equitable attitudes correlate with gender-equitable practices, Lawson et al. (2021) cross-analyzed husbands' support for women's empowerment with their wife's perception of the same in northern Tanzania. The results

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*"I haven't seen allyship. I don't see it in the way that it would make meaningful change. I don't see them working with feminist organisations or woman-focused organisations to work on these programs they are implementing."*

- KII Respondent



revealed that men exaggerated their support of women's empowerment, with findings that wives reported that they had less decision-making authority than their husbands' claimed they had and that men exaggerated their disapproval of intimate partner violence (Lawson et al., 2021).

An exacerbation of these aforementioned issues largely inspired COFEM's inception as it related to male engagement in EVAWG, including:

- A depoliticized definition of GBV that evolved to mean violence against anyone, devoid of a structural analysis,
- Concern about the funding implications of increased donor interest and the consequent mission drift forced upon feminist organizations that may not choose to work with men,
- The implications of reducing women's leadership in a field already shaped and sustained by patriarchy, neocolonialism, racism, and other intersecting systems of oppression, and
- The risk of harm to women and girls due to absent accountability mechanisms.



## What's Accountability Got to Do With It?

*The "why" of male engagement is evident—we need everyone to end this violation of women's rights, but the "how" is not always clear.*

Accountability is frequently raised as the "missing puzzle piece" in male engagement programming. However the definition of accountability can be vague or underdeveloped in anti-violence work (Macomber, 2018). Ann Russo puts forward a praxis of accountability that attends to the "ways in which identities, cultures, and communities are produced through historical, structural, and systemic inequities" (2018). She further states that a praxis of accountability should look at how these systems of power create "identities and differences," show up in our relationships, and are internalized at the individual and collective levels, as well as our political analysis and actions. Due to her social location in the United States, Russo's analysis centers on the racialized response to VAW in the US and its implications for service provision, advocacy, and education, particularly the white, heteronormative, middle-class assumptions that advance carceral and imperial frameworks. She extends this analysis to international politics, where US military intervention relies upon tropes of "saving" the Third World woman in the name of advancing imperial and carceral foreign policy (Russo, 2018,

p. 183). COFEM (2017) has previously described accountability within the field of VAWG as composed of key characteristics including:

- Promoting and ensuring women and girls' leadership in work on VAWG;
- Listening to the demands and advice of diverse women and girls when undertaking male involvement efforts;
- Recognizing the existing gender hierarchy and striving to transform a system of inequality from which men have benefited and continue to benefit;
- Working at both individual and structural levels to change personal behavior while transforming patriarchal systems and norms;
- Ensuring that male involvement efforts demonstrably empower women and girls and
- Examining funding decisions to ensure that gender hierarchies are not inadvertently reproduced.

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*"Accountability can be looked at in a number of ways, most importantly, is unaccountability is to self, like your own actions... it's from the individual to family to community... and of course, at the political level is the government. You know, government institutions, people with responsibility to actually act and provide services and deal with people who are impacted by the issue. How is that? How does power play out in all those spaces"*

- KII Respondent

*While COFEM's definition is specific to the EVAWG field, Russo (2018) takes a more holistic view that critically engages with the racialized, classed, and structural analysis that attends to power in all of its manifestations and at all levels. Within the context of the (neo)colonial practice of international development, therefore, accountability practices must make visible the interconnected systems of oppression through an intersectional, transnational lens that attends to questions of colonialism, imperialism, religious fundamentalism, white supremacy, and capitalism (Falcón & Nash, 2015).*



## Insights from EVAWG practitioners

*Women have been on the frontlines of collectively working to end violence long before VAWG became a public issue.*

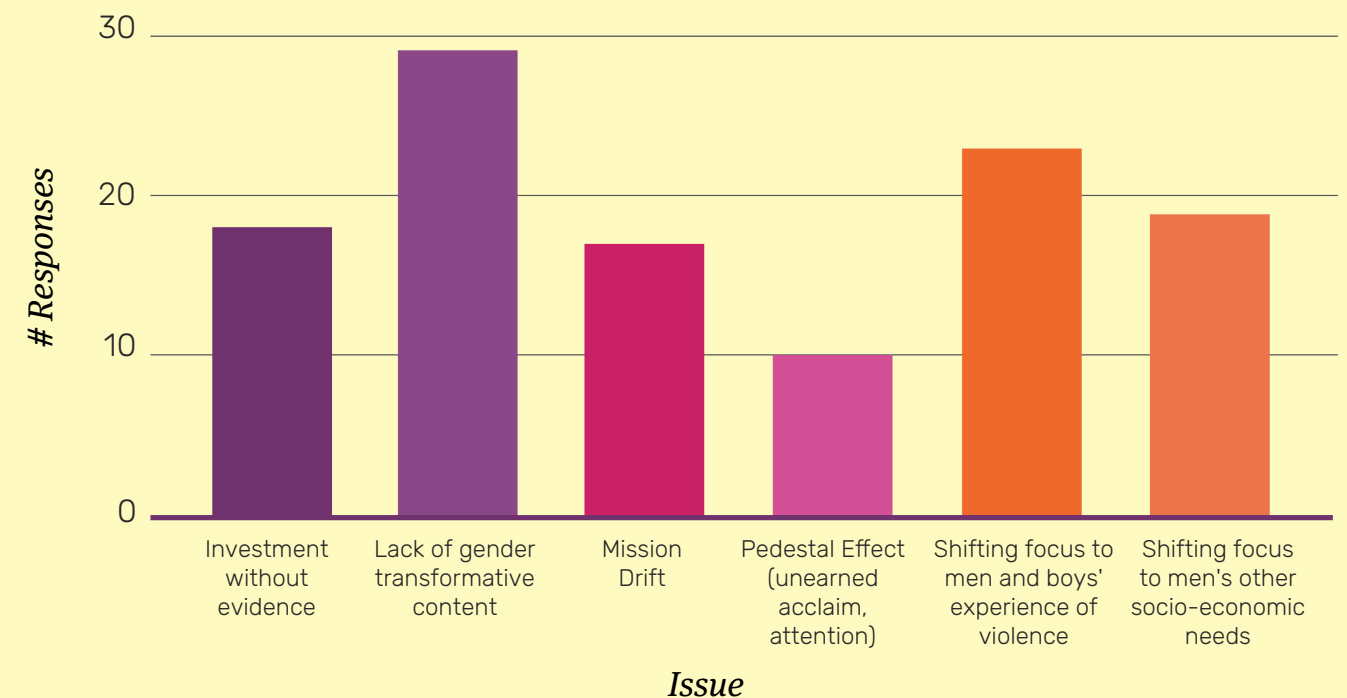
Over the past two decades, there has been an increase in funding and implementation of male engagement initiatives to prevent this violence. Efforts such as the What Works to End Violence Against Women and Girls program<sup>3</sup> have conducted rigorous evaluations, concluding mixed results for male engagement programs and that male engagement efforts as a standalone strategy do not prevent violence. While program impact is critical to assess, equally significant is the political impact of the emergence of the male engagement agenda on women-led feminist organizations. Women's rights leaders and feminists from the COFEM community engaged in this topic and, from their practice-based learning demonstrated more significant opportunities, strategies, and risks at stake for feminist movements in light of this growing agenda. Nearly all survey participants and 100% of KII respondents noted that they have experienced times when they have talked about violence against women and girls, and conversations shifted into a focus on men and boys.<sup>4</sup> Respondents identified the most common context(s) in which this occurred, particularly public spaces such as events and conferences and small groups (between 3 and 10 people). They also identified key issues encountered with the male engagement movement as lack of gender transformative content (85.3%), reinforcement of patriarchal norms (76.5%) and, shifting focus to men's and boys' experience of violence (67.6%).

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*"This is pretty common, whenever someone is bringing up or discussing the topic about violence against women or violence against girls, someone or one man has to ask: what about men and what about boys? It's really frustrating because this happens in professional settings even when we are meant to commemorate and acknowledge women's experience of violence, like the 25th of November (The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women); it's been pretty frustrating"*

- KII Respondent

Graph 1: What are the key issues you have encountered regarding male engagement in your work to EVAWG? (Select all that apply)



## How do practitioners define "accountability?"

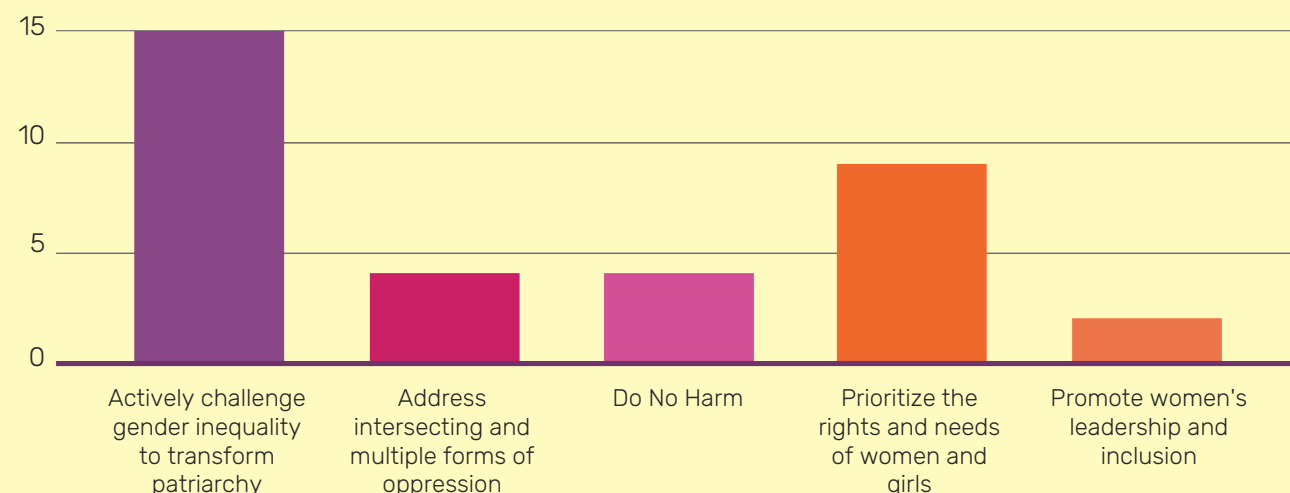
*When asked about what accountability means to them as activists and practitioners in the GBV/VAWG space, there was a singular thread running through every conversation: the importance of centering the voices and experiences of women and girls in all of their diversity. Respondents also highlighted the importance of being accountable to each other, as feminists, to acknowledge intersectionality and uplift and support one another's work. In this way, it is a wholehearted attempt to model the way movements envision the world working.*

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.preventvawg.org/>

<sup>4</sup>Curious about why this may be frustrating? Read COFEM's Tip Sheet 2: Why does GBV Programming Focus on Women and Girls, and Tip Sheet 7: Violence Against Men and Boys.

Graph 2: Survey respondents' Primary Principle for Ensuring Accountability

Which are the three most important principles that you believe need to be prioritised in accountability to women and girls? (First choice)



Moreover, accountability means holding one another accountable in our workplaces, among colleagues, and friends. One KII respondent shared a series of questions that anyone interrogating their role and that of their EAWG project can ask themselves:

- What are the accountability mechanisms for addressing VAWG?"
- "How do people exercise power?"
- "Do we interrogate how power is held?"
- "Who holds different types of power and invisible power, and who exercises it?"
- Who holds power within the community?"
- "And is your version of 'accountability' done in a way that perpetuates gender-based violence or in a way that actually promotes equal rights and equitable sharing of power and centers the people who are most affected by issues?"

Promoting gender equity is a critical factor in accountability. In the survey, 44.1% of the participants emphasized the need to actively challenge current gender norms to transform patriarchy to ensure accountability for women and girls. Lastly, data revealed that COFEM could improve its accountability work in a few ways, such as moving beyond binary understandings of gender and advocating for more gender diverse and trans-inclusive language and programming. 50% of the participants believed heterosexual people lead conversations around men and boys. Because of this, gender-diverse people are often left out of conversations on accountability.

## Do current male engagement programs practice accountability?

*Overall, participants responded that male engagement should mean that men are aware of the negative impacts of violence, are invested in changing the attitudes of other men in their communities, and are involved in the fight to end violence.*

In a best-case scenario, everyone in the community is engaged, with communities building a critical mass to ensure that violence is not tolerated. One important distinction is that survivors of violence not feel pressure to stand up to violence themselves.

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*"Male engagement means just that: engaging men, who are part of communities. So a lot of times this means engaging them as male gatekeepers for access and safety, and minimizing backlash, and why this engagement can be important in communities."*

- KII Respondent

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*"Rather, people who are perpetrators, who associate with perpetrators, can hold themselves and associates accountable so that the burden is not just on women. A critical mass that allows for violence to not be acceptable in a community. This is quite difficult to achieve at a practical level, at different dynamics with power and resources. So in reality, this isn't happening."*

- KII Respondent

For actual gender transformative change, some participants shared that it is necessary to work with and listen to women and girls first to inform programming on the needs of those most affected by violence; they expressed the need for the male engagement movement to create allyship rather than competition through genuine efforts to center the voices, interests, needs, and perspectives of women and girls. For anyone facing violence, what support do they have, and what is missing? What are their goals and dreams, and what are the barriers they face? Understanding the complete picture is the crucial first step in designing a program that

is informed by women and girls. Without this first step, any approach to male engagement risks remaining hollow and ineffective.

Some participants expressed that male engagement strategies are a slippery slope, and those without a strong gender justice framework have led to backlash in their communities. The popular approach of men engaged as "champions" for gender equality was called out

specifically as reinforcing patriarchal norms, taking a patronizing approach to viewing women in terms of their relationships to men (i.e., as mothers, sisters, daughters), and doing very little to end structural gender inequality.

Based on the results, participants noted that men, women, and gender-diverse people engage differently in EAWG efforts, especially in conversations around male engagement and ensuring accountability.<sup>5</sup> However, our findings also stressed that male engagement conversations are fronted more in the Global South, with heterosexual men leading these conversations.

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*“There is the so-called popular male engagement movement, which claims that it is doing all of the gender equality work, and it has caused men problems of feeling vulnerable. So instead, they reaffirm their position to save women and girls from violence, a superman sensibility, where they claim to be champions to set us free from whatever oppressions we are facing.”*

– KII Respondent

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*“I have seen attempts to engage men or to have men’s organizations champion women, and this would always have the complete opposite effect on us because men will spearhead others as “feminist allies” who are actually not; they are known aggressors (perpetrators of violence) themselves. Working in this field or in male engagement served as a cover for their actions.”*

– KII Respondent

Several participants discussed the large sums of money spent on depoliticized advocacy campaigns while women’s rights organizations were receiving very small amounts. In one instance, a UN campaign paid for a huge event in an open stadium and invited self-identified ‘male champions’ to parade in the streets in women’s clothing, high-heeled shoes, and accessories (including carrying babies on their backs), issuing an open invitation for crowds to mock the lives and appearance of women and gender-diverse people in their communities.

*“This is all money going to waste because this is not changing the lives of women, it’s not addressing structural inequalities. Often these groups fund traditional leaders; they are the champions because they are the custodians of traditions. Now you go and speak of ending GBV. So now they see this as their chance for men’s voices to be heard, and instead they will preach about gender roles and what makes you a woman. All of this is hugely funded without any kind of transformative training and no level of accountability.”*

– KII Respondent

<sup>5</sup> Check out COFEM’s Feminist Pocketbook to learn more about the opportunities and challenges with coordinated efforts to address different forms of violence here [Maximising impact: Understanding risks and benefits of coordinated efforts to address different forms of violence](#)

## Speaking of funding...

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*“When it comes to funding levels, we see a lot of non-feminist funders pushing the campaign about male engagement. I assure you, when they are even giving money, when major donors are funding women’s rights organizations or women-led organizations, they give them peanuts: 50k, 20k, and they are demanding that the women volunteer their time. They forget that these women’s rights organizations are sacrificing what little they have.”*

– KII Respondent

Survey and KII respondents emphasized the need for sufficient financing and resources, particularly for EAWG activities. Feminists urged funders and donors to conduct a gender-power analysis before contributing to any male engagement projects. Doing so can help them make informed decisions and understand the power dynamics and inequities within the communities and systems they are working to support. This insight is essential for funders to know where to allocate resources that will effectively tackle the most pressing issues in EAWG rather than pursue male engagement as a strategy on its own. One of the challenges introduced by respondents was that major international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and other donors have made it seem very important for programs to include a male engagement component, making it difficult for women’s rights organizations to access funding or operate without such a component, even if it is misaligned with their organizational vision and current activities. When prominent donors and organizations put a stamp of approval on these activities, they can compete with feminist organizing, creating more barriers for these groups to access funding.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, donors have shared that they have seen an increasing number of applications say that they are working on male engagement even when this is not part of the proposal. This increase could be due to organizations, thinking it is what donors want to fund and/or because constituents feel it is important in some way, although

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*“The fact is, many women’s organizations also don’t have a politicized understanding of engaging with men, and may see them [men] as the mighty power holders that will save us.”*

– KII Respondent

<sup>6</sup> Curious to learn more about GBV funding flows? Check out IRC and VOICE’s 2019 report [here](#). What about feminist organizing? Find AWID’s 2021 report [here](#). For donors, COFEM also has a Handbook on Feminist Grantmaking, which can be found [here](#).



applicants may not always know how to design these types of programs or the evidence of their impact more broadly. When women's rights organizations and feminist movements face backlash from men, sometimes they feel that their last resort is to propose working with men (ex: "maybe the men can 'save' us."). This example is just one area where the depoliticization of gender equality strategies has led to a proliferation of programs that are not grounded in a gender justice framework, and even women-led organizations can be affected. At the same time, without enough evidence to show that current male engagement programs will assuredly reduce violence, it is difficult to justify the funding outflow.

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*"I don't know that I've seen anything change; I have seen it become a forest fire. It started out small, and now it has engulfed everything. Because the focus keeps shifting, people start making excuses for men that violate women—it's a problem of alcoholism, or poverty, and this keeps weakening programming. It doesn't really help us to get anywhere, and it's worse when it's in prevention programming because then you aren't really working towards preventing violence; it's just participants giving case-by-case issues and excuses."*

- KII Respondent

## Has male engagement programming improved over time?

*Feminists have mixed views on the question of improvement. While some feel the climate is more favorable than it has been in the past to identify as a "feminist" and to talk about the issues discussed in this brief, this is due in large part to advocacy by feminist EAWG networks, such as COFEM.*

At the same time, there are some concerns in VAWG spaces that a desire to 'streamline' cross-cutting issues leads to less accountability to affected populations by drifting from a focus on gender transformation. This broadened agenda risks a failure of specific attention to not only women and girls but also addressing both the distinct – and overlapping – factors that drive violence in the LGBTQIA+ community and further risks invisibilizing VAWG at large during a troubling funding climate.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> For more on this topic, read COFEM's tipsheet [Maximising impact: Understanding risks and benefits of coordinated efforts to address different forms of violence](#)

Survey data shows that COFEM has supported participants in their work through resources on accountability and male engagement. However, participants note the need for more concrete examples and practical tools; a gap in practical applicability, indicates that EAWG stakeholders require more actionable resources to implement accountability measures and indicators effectively. These practical resources will make it easy to adopt and modify some of the best practices around male engagement and ensure consistency across different contexts.

Some participants have noticed an increase in backlash during technical training on violence prevention as participants move away from an attempt to understand gender inequality as the root cause of GBV. Instead, the focus shifts to contributing factors such as poverty and alcoholism, which do contribute to the severity and frequency of violence but cannot explain violence perpetration on its own. This misrepresentation has long been understood as an analytical hurdle to overcome. Still, it is worth noting that VAWG practitioners indicate that this discourse has not changed over the years and, in some cases, has worsened.

Other EAWG practitioners indicate that some male engagement initiatives have started to hold specific members accountable, acknowledge wrongs they have committed, and recognized how they have reinforced oppressive hierarchies of power and taken away women's spaces. 71.9% of survey respondents said they were familiar with programs that engage men in preventing VAWG while upholding accountability while 28.1% said that they were not aware of any programs that upheld accountability.

A few examples of programs mentioned were SASA! and EMAP, as well as MenEngage, although no participants did not identify a specific program from the latter.

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*"I think there is now a lot more conversation, it's been really interesting to watch organizations at least attempt to engage in the conversations on what they haven't done right and what has been difficult and problematic."*

- KII Respondent

## What is a feminist approach for male allies/co-conspirators?

*A feminist approach for men who wish to be allies to women, girls, and the LGBTQIA+ community in the difficult work of preventing violence means taking on the work of dismantling and transforming an entire ecosystem.*

By doing so, we create equitable ways of working together, breaking down structural oppressions, and stepping back to create an enabling environment for changing beliefs. Unfortunately, there is no magic wand to speed up a long-term process. However, COFEM members did share some examples of how the male engagement movement can promote allyship/co-conspiratorship and partnership instead of competition and disassociation from GBV/VAWG issues.

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*“We don’t want men to take our space, but to create more space, they need to relinquish some of their privilege and nurture equal power with women. This is the feminist way, and this is what they do not need to understand. They need to recognize their privilege, step back, create space, and this is allyship. This means commitment, this means humility, and that means you have to listen and listen well, and learn.”*

- KII Respondent

### SOME EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE ALLYSHIP INCLUDE:

*Listening to women and girls*

*Asking what support means, and how to support, rather than lead*

*Uplifting the perspective of women and girls at all decision-making levels*

*Directing more funding to women's rights and women-led movements and organizations*

*Crediting the work of feminist organizations*

*Standing beside women, girls and the LGBTQIA+ community and speaking out when their rights are challenged*

*Not questioning the experience of women and girls*

*Learning from evidence-based gender transformative programs*

*Recognizing oppression, privilege, discrimination, and the need to create agency for people who are oppressed*

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*“Men come with power, and by virtue of their identity they wield some power, because that's how society is structured. And so the question for me is, first, do they check their power? Do they hold each other accountable?”*

- KII Respondent

For men who consider themselves allies in preventing and responding to GBV/VAWG, how can they collaborate with male engagement groups in holding each other accountable to centering the needs of women and girls in their programming?

A few suggestions from participants on how to approach this include:

*Having honest conversations with other men about power dynamics, social norms, and what it means to be a true ally, including actioning everyday accountability practices in their ways of working.*

*Stepping up and condemning oppressive laws and policies when they are proposed or enacted instead of leaving this to under-resourced and overworked feminist groups to fight.*

*Monitoring risks, speaking up about any harm they see male engagement initiatives causing suggesting concrete remedial actions, and amplifying these to practitioners, donors and researchers.*

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*“Allies need to be at the forefront when oppressive laws are being passed. They need to step up and challenge this, not just leave it to the women to speak about it. When there are rapes, or women being killed, you hardly see men condemning these actions, they leave it to the feminist movements. Do they only want to come to conferences to get money to show that they are champions? To praise themselves? They need to address the controversial things. These are the ones we can call allies.”*

- KII Respondent

**“We should see male engagement as a strategy towards gender justice, not an outcome.”**

- KII Respondent

## Recommendations for Achieving Holistic Accountability

### For Researchers

- Conduct evaluations that look beyond attitudinal change to include behavior and norm change.
- Prioritize women's perspectives on male engagement programming, including cross-checking men's self-reported perspectives.
- Disseminate EVAWG research to practitioners using accessible formats and language(s).

### For Donors

- Prioritize funding to women and queer and gender diverse-led feminist movements.
- Fund male engagement initiatives that have comprehensive accountability agendas and programming.
- Be wary of funding male engagement as an outcome on its own rather than part of a broader strategy that works alongside women-led feminist organizations.
- Invest more in evaluations of male engagement programming, including women's perspectives and experiences.

### For Practitioners

- Understand the mixed evidence base for male engagement programming.<sup>8</sup>
- Ensure that male engagement is part of a larger, coordinated strategy to end violence against women and girls with clear and practical accountability mechanisms in the ways of working and programming processes.
- Embed learning into programming to monitor for possible backlash and unintended repercussions.
- Ensure that the language used in male engagement programming does not perpetuate male saviorism and/or harmful gender dynamics.
- Work together to promote intersectional approaches to ensure that programming addresses the diverse needs of women, girls, gender-diverse people, men and boys from different backgrounds, including considerations of race, class, and sexual orientation.

### For the Male Engagement Movement

- Make a clear commitment to feminist principles and ensure accountability to women and girls by connecting with and listening to women-led organizations and feminist movements.
- Adopt collaborative frameworks by fostering partnerships between male engagement programs and feminist, women-led organizations and movements to ensure alignment and shared goals.
- Encourage joint leadership roles where men step back to create space to work alongside women equitably, emphasizing collaborative decision-making and mutual respect in male engagement initiatives.
- Establish clear accountability structures to ensure men's involvement supports and does not overshadow the efforts of women and girls.
- Provide gender transformative training for men on feminist principles and the importance of supporting women-led initiatives to prevent reinforcing patriarchal norms.
- Focus on playing a supportive role by emphasizing men's roles as allies and co-conspirators rather than leading or dominating the space.
- Make genuine efforts to center women's and girls' voices, interests, needs, and perspectives in male engagement initiatives and processes.

### For COFEM

- Adopt a more trans-inclusive and gender-diverse approach to advocacy efforts.
- Develop a more expansive understanding of accountability that attends to racialized, classed, able-bodiedness, and other oppressive systems.
- Interrogate backlash more broadly in EVAWG, specifically documenting the "men have been left behind" narrative and its impact.
- Develop and support the uptake of more practical tools to assess the extent of accountability in EVAWG programs.
- Create bold spaces for members that safely cultivate debate, dialogue, and critical reflection.

<sup>8</sup>For example, check out the [What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls Program](#), which found male engagement programming on its own is ineffective for preventing VAW.



## Conclusion

*Engaging women, gender-diverse people, and men in their lived experiences and identities is essential to ending VAWG. While male engagement as a strategy is not inherently bad, some policies, programs, and mainstream rhetoric have had inadvertent repercussions for women-led feminist movements, including flattening discourse on gender-power analyses, redirecting funding to male-led efforts to end violence (and consequently reducing funding for women-led efforts), shifting the focus to men's needs and priorities, and placing men on pedestals for practicing non-violence, among others. For those committed to realizing non-violent realities for women, girls, and communities around the world, it is essential to practice discretion and remain cautious when pursuing male engagement initiatives to ensure that they are grounded in a gender-power analysis, do no harm, and prioritize the agency, perspectives, and leadership of women and girls.*

## Annexes

### Annex 1. Positionality Statements

#### EUNICE

I am a Ugandan female, mukiiga by tribe, currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Arts of Social Sector Planning and Management at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. As an academician in the field of male involvement in GBV prevention, I have conducted a study on the male involvement strategy in GBV prevention in Kampala, Uganda. Currently, as a researcher, I'm deeply influenced by my background as a practitioner in executing approaches like EMAP and SASA! This experience in communities and actively participating in national debates on male involvement sparked my desire to interrogate male engagement processes, methodologies, and approaches to preventing VAWG. I acknowledge that my professional and personal experiences shape my interpretations and interests in this field. As a feminist and a member of COFEM, I bring feminist perspectives to this research. In this specific project, I remain aware of any issues in the form of biases and hope to mitigate them through peer reviews with fellow consultants for a comprehensive understanding of the data collected and analyzed.

#### LAUREN

I am a white, cisgender, American woman. I have a bachelor's degree in International Studies, a certification in French to English translation, and a Master's degree in International Development and Humanitarian Assistance. I have over 8 years of experience working on gender equality, global sexual and reproductive health, and gender justice, and over three years of experience as a GBV in emergencies technical specialist and practitioner in humanitarian settings, most recently in central and eastern Europe. I acknowledge that my personal experiences shape not only my identity, but my interpretations in this field. I am aware of my positionality and the power that I hold in the spaces I occupy as a white woman from the global north in the humanitarian field,

which was founded upon white supremacist, colonialist, and heteronormative norms. I am mindful of my need to remain accountable to not only the communities that I work within, but also colleagues with structurally marginalized identities.

#### LEAH

I am a white, cis, queer, anti-Zionist Jewish woman. I have bachelor's and master's degrees, and I am currently pursuing a doctorate in Women and Gender Studies. My background is in global development and public policy, with over 10 years of experience working on violence against women prevention and response, global sexual and reproductive health, diverse SOGIESC, children's rights and gender justice at international and national levels. My identity as a white woman from the US is particularly salient in this field, given the historical and ongoing tensions with international development as a neocolonial tool, as well as the propensity for women in the Global North to homogenize racialized women as perpetual victims. As such, I attempt to ground my work in the scholarship and practice of transnational feminists to demonstrate a political commitment to a Majority World-driven theorization of gender equity, anti-racism, and decoloniality. I am committed to the lifelong process of unlearning white supremacist, colonialist, and heteronormative norms that undergird much of the global development sector.

## Annex 2: Survey Questions

### 1. Where do you call home?

### 2. How many years of experience do you have in the VAWG sector?

- Less than a year
- 1-4 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 16+ years

### 3. What is your race? (select all that apply)

- Arab
- African
- Black
- Biracial/Mixed Race
- East Asian
- Indigenous
- Latina/Latinx
- North African
- South Asian
- Southeast Asian
- Southwest Asian
- White
- I choose not to identify

### 4. What type of organization do you work for?

- Donor
- INGO
- NGO/CSO
- Multilateral Org
- Bilateral org
- Independent consultant

### 5. Have you ever experienced a time when you talked about violence against women and girls and the conversation shifted into a focus on boys and men?

- Yes
- No

### 6. If yes, In what context(s) has this situation occurred? (Select all that apply.)

- Private conversation between two people
- Small Group
- Public event/conference
- Public statement/policy/program (in written word form)

**7. What are the key issues you have encountered regarding the male engagement movement to end violence against women and girls? (Select All that Apply)**

- Mission drift (e.g. donors pushing for male engagement even when misaligned with organizational goals)
- Investment without evidence (e.g. calls for male engagement )
- Reinforcement of patriarchal norms (e.g. men as "protectors" of women; men leading work to end VAWG)
- Lack of gender transformative content (e.g. does not critically examine and seek to transform gender-power relations)
- Reinforcement of patriarchal norms
- Shifting focus to men and boys' experience of violence
- Shifting focus to men's other socio-economic needs (e.g. men's health, boy's education, etc)
- "Pedestal Effect" (Peretz 2008) (e.g. gratuitous/unearned acclaim, attention, instant credibility, career help and mobility, and extra erotic/romantic attraction)
- Other (write-in)

**8. How have you navigated tensions with any of the previous challenges regarding male engagement?**

- Raise issues directly with individual(s) who perpetuate some of these issues
- Raise issues with institutional leadership
- Vent in safer spaces
- I do not attempt to address any tensions
- Other (write-in)

**9. Are you aware of any ending GBV/VAWG programs incorporating male engagement that you believe have largely upheld commitments to women and girls?**

**10. In your opinion, how can the male engagement movement promote allyship/co-conspiratorship and partnership instead of competition and disassociation from VAWG issues?**

**11. Which are the three most important principles that you believe need to be prioritized in accountability to women and girls? [Ranked Question- first, second and third choices]**

- Actively challenge gender inequality to transform patriarchy
- Address intersecting and multiple forms of oppression.
- Do No Harm
- Prioritize the rights and needs of women and girls
- Promote women's leadership and inclusion

**12. Are there any major gaps you see in the current COFEM resources on accountability? Is there anything you would like to see?**

**13. Is there anything else that you'd like to share on this topic?**

**14. Do you notice any demographic patterns in who centers the conversation on men and boys? (Comment for all that apply)**

- Gender (e.g. are men/women/non-binary people more likely to do this?)
- Age (e.g. are there generational differences between younger and older people?)
- Sexuality (e.g. is this more common among heterosexual folx compared to queer folx?)
- Stakeholder (e.g. do you most often hear this from donors, INGOs, government, etc)
- Location (e.g. is this more dominant in the Global North or Global South?)
- Race (e.g. is this more dominant among white people?)

**15. Would you be interested in speaking further in a key informant interview?**

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

**16. (If yes or maybe) What is your email address?**

*Annex 3: Key Informant Interview Questions*

**1. Have you ever experienced a time when you talked about violence against women and girls and the conversation shifted into a focus about boys and men?**

**2. What does "accountability" mean in your work as a GBV? VAWG practitioner/activist/academic?**

**3. How do you define male engagement in the context of GBV/VAWG?**

**4. What challenges have you faced in ensuring accountability to women and girls in GBV/VAWG programming at:**

- The policy/advocacy discourse level
- The programming level
- The individual level

**5. In your time as a GBV/VAWG specialist, have you seen the narrative around male engagement change? If yes, how so?**

**6. Are you aware of any ending GBV/VAWG programs incorporating male engagement that you believe have largely upheld commitments to women and girls?**

- If YES: What are some of the intersectional approaches that you know in the male engagement movement, and how do they ensure accountability to women and girls?

**7. In your opinion, how can the male engagement movement promote allyship/co-conspiratorship and partnership instead of competition and disassociation from GBV/VAWG issues?**

**8. How can male allies to VAWG collaborate with male engagement groups in holding each other accountable to centering the needs of women and girls in their programming?**

**9. Do you have other ideas or concerns related to the concept of accountability that COFEM can address?**



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