



POLICY REPORT LAUNCH AND WORKSHOP ON ENGAGING MEN IN HIV AND GBV PREVENTION, SRHR PROMOTION AND PARENTING

Concept Note

INTRODUCTORY BACKGROUND

Evidence shows that effectively engaging men and boys is a key strategy for achieving gender equality, addressing HIV and gender based violence (GBV), improving sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and creating peaceful families and societies that protect human rights. Rigid gender norms can encourage men to engage in a variety of high-risk, negative and violent behavior patterns. These increase the vulnerability of both men and women to HIV infection and poor sexual and reproductive health; expose women and children to violence; serve as a barrier to women accessing their basic human rights; and damage relationships between men and women and between parents and their children. All too often, however, strategies for male engagement are not sufficiently integrated into national policies and plans.

In light of this, the Rwanda Men's Resource Centre (RWAMREC), with technical support from Sonke Gender Justice Network and funding from the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, conducted a scan of selected national laws, policies and plans related to HIV, GBV, SRH, and Family promotion. The scan analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of these documents in terms of promoting the engagement of men and boys. The findings of this analysis have been captured in the Policy Report *"Engaging Men in HIV and GBV Prevention, SRHR Promotion and Parenting"*.

The Policy Report shows that Rwanda's policies and plans compare favorably with many other countries in the region, in particular with regard to addressing gender-based violence. When it comes to addressing gender norms as one of the causes of HIV, GBV, poor SRH and family promotion, however, most policies and plans do not go beyond recognizing the issue and its negative impact on women and girls. The fact that men and boys, too, are negatively affected by rigid gender norms is not regularly formulated. Furthermore, few documents identify achievable strategies to address the issue of gender norms and inequality.

To this end, the Policy Report provides concrete recommendations on how HIV, GBV, SRH and Family Promotion policies can improve the way they include men and boys, account for their needs, enable them to support their partners, children and peers and facilitate their role as advocates for change. It can be used as a **policy advocacy and programming tool** by policy makers, decision makers and civil society to further strengthen Rwanda's efforts to build a gender equitable society with healthier gender roles for women and men.

ABOUT THE MENENGAGE POLICY REPORT LAUNCH AND WORKSHOP

On the morning of **Monday 14 October 2013**, RWAMREC, the Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC) and Sonke Gender Justice Network will organize a **high-level launch** of the Policy Report *“Engaging Men in HIV and GBV Prevention, SRHR Promotion and Parenting”* at Umubano Hotel. This event will enable key stakeholders to learn more about the policy analysis conducted, the strengths and weaknesses identified and the recommendations for improving the active engagement of men and boys in achieving gender equality.

The launch of this policy report comes at an opportune time – when the Government of Rwanda is updating its National Strategic Plan (NSP) on HIV/AIDS and Gender Based Violence. Special attention will therefore be given to the results of the policy analysis with regard to HIV and GBV. Participants will get the chance to reflect on the content of the draft NSP and identify further opportunities for mainstreaming MenEngage approaches.

Following the launch, a **technical workshop on policy advocacy** will be organized. This workshop will last for 1.5 days (Monday afternoon and the whole day Tuesday), and will benefit from the inputs of the **internationally renowned Sonke Gender Justice Network from South Africa**. Participants will be able to learn from the experiences of RWARMEC and Sonke Gender Justice Network on MenEngage approaches, their practical application, and how to use the Policy Report as a tool for policy advocacy and programming. During this workshop, specific attention will again be given to the draft NSP as a case study and real opportunity for policy advocacy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE HIGH-LEVEL LAUNCH AND WORKSHOP

The overall aim of the high-level launch and workshop is to engage key stakeholders in their commitment and ability to promote the active engagement of men and boys in national responses on HIV, GBV, SRHR and Parenting.

The specific objectives for the High-Level Launch are as follows:

- Strengthen the political commitment towards engaging men and boys in national HIV, GBV, SRHR and Parenting responses;
- Increase awareness among key stakeholders of the strengths and areas for improvement of selected laws, policies and plans, with regard to engaging men and boys for gender equality;
- Identify concrete opportunities for further mainstreaming MenEngage approaches in the new NSP on HIV/AIDS and GBV.

The specific objectives for the technical workshop on policy advocacy are:

- Increase knowledge among government, civil society and media representatives on the rationale of engaging men and boys, and international and national good practices;
- Support stakeholders in identifying priority interventions, gender-transformative language, appropriate monitoring for mainstreaming MenEngage approaches in laws, policies and plans.
- Strengthen capacity of stakeholders for effective policy advocacy and programming, using the case of the draft NSP on HIV/AIDS and GBV

EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE POLICY REPORT LAUNCH AND WORKSHOP

- Stakeholders in the country have increased knowledge on current strengths, areas for improvement and opportunities for mainstream MenEngage approaches in relevant policies and plans;
- Stakeholders in the country have increased capacity for policy advocacy and programming on promoting the engagement of men and boys for achieving gender equality;
- Gaps in HIV and GBV policies and interventions with regard to engaging men and boys are identified and addressed through the new NSP; and
- Strengthened partnerships among stakeholders contributing to the national responses to HIV, GBV, SRHR and Parenting, on promoting the role of men and boys for achieving gender equality.

WORKSHOP ORGANIZERS

The workshop is organized by RBC and RWAMREC with technical support from Sonke Gender Justice Network, and financial support from the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women.

About RBC: Rwanda Biomedical Centre was created by the law no. 54/2010 of 25th January 2011. Its mission is to promote quality affordable and sustainable health care services to the population through innovative and evidence based interventions and practices guided by ethics and professionalism. The RBC hosts the Institute of HIV/AIDS, Disease Prevention and Control, which is leading Rwanda's national response against HIV.

About RWAMREC: Rwanda Men's Resource Centre is a non-governmental organization that aims to mobilize Rwandan men to support women's leadership; contribute to the eradication of men's violence against women; and serve as role models for the promotion of positive masculine behaviors. RWAMREC implements a variety of programs throughout the country that work to strengthen the implementation of MenEngage approaches in Rwanda and promote positive masculine behaviour among men and boys.

About Sonke Gender Justice Network: Sonke Gender Justice Network is a South African, non-partisan, non-profit organisation. It works to create the change necessary for men, women, young people and children to enjoy equitable, healthy and happy relationships that contribute to the development of just and democratic societies. Sonke pursues this goal across Southern Africa and plays an active role internationally. It has received international Awards and Recognition for its pioneering and innovative work with men and boys.

About the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women: The UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, administered by UN Women, is a leading global grant-making mechanism exclusively dedicated to addressing violence against women and girls in all its forms. It supports effective initiatives that demonstrate that violence against women and girls can be systematically addressed, reduced and, with persistence, eliminated.

Tentative agenda for the Policy Report Launch and Workshop

Dates: Monday 14 and Tuesday 15 October

Location: Umubano Hotel, Kigali

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<i>Day 1 – High-Level Launch of the Policy Report “Engaging Men in HIV and GBV Prevention, SRHR Promotion and Parenting”</i>	
Time	Activity
08:30 – 09:00	Registration : RWAMREC
09:00 – 09:15	Welcome remarks: RWAMREC
09:15 – 09:30	Keynote remarks: RBC
09:30 – 09:45	Keynote speech: Guest of Honor
09:45 – 10:00	Background on the Policy Scan and Report: RWAMREC
10:00 – 10:45	Presentation of the findings of the policy scan report: Sonke Gender Justice
10:45 – 11:15	Coffee/ Tea break
11:15 – 12:00	Presentation of the new NSP on HIV/AIDS and GBV: RBC
12:00 – 12:45	Plenary Discussion on the opportunities for further strengthening MenEngage approaches in the new NSP on HIV/AIDS and GBV: Moderator
12:45 – 13:00	Closure of the High-Level Launch
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch

<i>Day 1 – Workshop on Policy Advocacy around “Engaging Men in HIV and GBV Prevention, SRHR Promotion and Parenting”</i>	
14:00 – 14:15	Welcome remarks: RWAMREC
14:15 – 14:30	Objectives, expectations from the workshop: RWAMREC
14:30 – 15:00	Overview on MenEngage – the concept, rationale, situation worldwide and trends: Sonke Gender Justice Network
15:00 – 15:30	What is policy and why do policy work?/ Sonke Gender Justice Network
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee/tea break
16:00 – 16:45	What is advocacy and what is policy advocacy Moderator
16:45 – 17:00	Closing: Moderator

Day 2 – Workshop on Policy Advocacy around “Engaging Men in HIV and GBV Prevention, SRHR Promotion and Parenting	
Time	Activity
08:30 – 08:45	Arrival & Welcome
08:45 – 09:00	Recap of Day 1: Moderator
09:00 – 09:30	The role of Policy in Engaging Men in HIV and GBV Prevention, SRHR Promotion and Parenting: Sonke Gender Justice Network
09:30 – 10:30	Group work – Review of NSP for MenEngage mainstreaming: RBC and RWAMREC
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee/Tea break
11:00 – 11:30	Presentations of Group Work: Moderator
11:30 – 13:00	Key concepts of and strategies for Policy Advocacy: Sonke Gender Justice Network
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:15	Group Work : Developing Policy Advocacy efforts for the new NSP on HIV/AIDS and GBV : Sonke Gender Justice and RWAMREC
15:15 – 15:45	Tea Break
15:45 – 16:30	Plenary and recommendations: Moderator
16:30 – 17:00	Next Steps & Closing: RWAMREC