Core Standards for Efforts to Engage Men
in Preventing Gender-Based Violence[i][ii]

Efforts to engage, mobilize and organize men to work to prevent gender-based violence have grown in scope and variety over the past 25 years. As these efforts have developed, significant lessons have been learned about effectively engaging men and boys *and* about how to do so in ways that meet some standards. These standards have not, to date, been spelled out in any one place. The standards provided here are gathered from a number of sources and are offered as a recommendation for practitioners, campuses, organizations and coalition as they develop or expand engaging men initiatives.

1) Engaging and mobilizing men and boys should not be done in a way that increases the risk to women, girls, men or boys; that minimizes the potential threat of men and boys; or which promotes or encourages victim-blaming.

2) Engaging and mobilizing men and boys needs to be done in ways that are accountable to feminist leadership and feminist-led efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

3) Engaging and mobilizing men efforts need be grounded in feminist principles and a feminist analysis of gender-based violence.

4) Engaging and mobilizing men in prevention efforts should utilize the social ecology and the spectrum of prevention as integral parts of these efforts (this is not to suggest that individual activities provided towards engaging or mobilizing men need necessarily engage the social ecology or the spectrum of prevention, but the overall engagement initiative does need to be based on both perspectives).

5) Engaging and mobilizing men and boys needs to use a gender transformative framework – that is, efforts focus on gender equality, support and encourage men who are being engaged or mobilized to critically explore their understanding and expression of gender norms, and challenge the gender binary.

6) Engaging and mobilizing men and boys should not engage in efforts or activities that rely on gender stereotypes or gender restrictive methods.

7) Engaging and mobilizing men and boys need be done in ways that are survivor-centered.

8) Engaging and mobilizing men and boys should be done in a way reflecting the understanding that the problem of gender-based violence is in the social environment and social norms, not within men and boys. In other words, men and boys are not the problem, gender-based violence is the problem.

9) Efforts to engage and mobilize men and boys should be done in ways that recognize that becoming "engaged" is a process and make allowances for men and boys who are becoming engaged to grow in this process. This means, in part, allowing for men and boys to develop their understanding, awareness and knowledge; and deepen their compassion over time. Men, as they become engaged, will likely a) make "mistakes" and b) recognize some of their own behaviors and attitudes (either current or past) as problematic.

10) Engaging men and boys should focus on emphasizing men's compassion with women and girls, and with each other as men and boys, as a major factor to influence and promote deeper levels of commitment and engagement.

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[i] [i] These Standards come from a variety of sources. See: Barker, G., Ricardo, C. and Nascimento, M. (2007) *Engaging Men and Boys in Changing Gender-Based Inequities in Health: Evidence from Programme Interventions* (World Health Organization);

Global MenEngage Alliance, (2017). "Accelerating Efforts to Prevent Violence Against Women: Engaging Men and Boys in Preventing and Responding to Violence Against All Women and Girls" Policy Brief, Inputs to the 35th Session of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations.

Human Rights Council of the United Nations (2018). *Review of promising practices and lessons learned, existing strategies and United Nations and other initiatives to engage men and boys in promoting and achieving gender equality, in the context of eliminating violence against women.*

Jewkes, R., Flood, M., and Lang, J. (2014) "From Work with Men and Boys to changes of Social Norms and Reduction of Inequities in Gender Relations: A Conceptual Shift in Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls" available at http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/SO140-6736(14)61683-4.

Peace, B. (2017). *Men as Allies in Preventing Violence Against Women: Principles and Practices for Promoting Accountability.* (White Ribbon Australia).

Peacock, D., and Barker, G. (2014) "Working with Men to Prevent Gender-Based Violence: Principles, Lessons Learned and Ways Forward" *Men and Masculinities* 15(5), pp 578 – 599.

[ii] For more information about these standards, or for assistance in ways to integrate these standards into your engaging men efforts, contact Rus at rus@rusfunk.me; or the North American MenEngage Network at https://namene.menengage.org.