

Introduction

The parties signing this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) commit to work together to change norms around masculinity and to promote gender equality in Belarus. The project *Men in Belarus 2018-2021* is a continuation and development of the current project *New Men in Belarus 2013-2018*, and is planned to be carried out in partnership between MÄN, in Sweden, and Klub Lvov and Gender Perspectives, in Belarus, and carry on until December 2021.

Purpose of the project:

The overall purposes of the project are: To promote gender equality by engaging boys and men for gender equality, in cooperation with girls and women; A continued process to promote gender equality in the Belarusian society, both on the individual and the societal level; A decrease in men's violence against women and children and more gender equal relationships for persons in the project's target groups; Changes to traditional gender norms and redefinition of masculinity; Increased responsibility among fathers for children and care work and improved relationships between fathers and children.

The project objective is to have a coordinated support structure created and in use for men and youth in Belarus to be able to develop equal relationships, redefine masculinity norms and enhance gender equality in the Belarusian society.

Roles & Responsibilities

All three project partners, MÄN, Klub Lvov and Gender Perspectives, will share the responsibility for the goal fulfilment of the project. In addition to this Klub Lvov and Gender Perspective will have the main responsibility for implementation of activities in Belarus, with support from MÄN. MÄN, as the Swedish partner, is the main applicant in relation to Sida and will carry the overall responsibility for the financial control.

In order to create the best possible conditions for efficiency, stability and transparent communication between the three main partners, a six-person project team will be formed. It will consist of two persons from each organisation, where one of these two persons will be the appointed Project Manager. The project team will meet on a regular basis to do strategic planning, follow-up and monitoring of the project. In between meetings the project team will keep each other updated on planned activities and share other relevant information. In dealing with specific issues, others with relevant knowledge and skills working with parts of the implementation of project activities, may be invited to participate and give their advice.

MÄN is the main applicant in relation to Sida and carries overall responsibility for financial control and goal fulfilment of the project. MÄN will sign bilateral Agreements with LC and GP, agreements regulating the grants provided to their respective contribution to the project.

LC is responsible for project implementation of work with fathers in Belarus including registration and reporting to Belarusian authorities. LC reports according to Sida's guidelines and rules and to the Agreement between MÄN and Klub Lvov.

GP is responsible for project implementation of work with the support line for men and for work with youth in the project in Belarus including registration and reporting to Belarusian authorities. GP is a specialist and expert on gender equality and has extensive experience of the Belarusian context. GP will also be available as trainers of group facilitators for fathers. GP reports according to Sida's guidelines and rules and to the Agreement between MÄN and Gender Perspectives.

Guiding Principles

The partners signing this MoU agree to the Guiding Principles developed specifically for the Men in Belarus project. And since the project aims is to promote men's care and gender equality, the partners also agree to the leading principles of MenEngage Alliance. These Guiding Principles are integrated parts of this MuO:

Guiding Principles specific for the Men in Belarus project

- The project Men in Belarus has a strong foundation in a rights perspective with the focus on power and gender analysis on both individual and structural levels. The project aims to address structural discrimination as well as to target key stakeholders to achieve changes in how violence against women is understood and addressed. These stakeholders include both rights-holders and duty-bearers at different levels.
- The key principles of the human rights-based approach are important to the cooperating partners in the project, and all stages of the project management, implementation and monitoring will be guided by transparency, accountability, active and meaningful participation and active non-discrimination.
- The project aims to contribute in general to increased respect for human rights and specifically to women and men having, to a greater extent, the same power to shape society and their own lives.
- This draws upon the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Istanbul Convention, which states that the prevention of violence against women is essential to achieve *formal* and *de facto* equality between women and men, that violence against women is gender-based on a structural level and that violence against women is one of the main reasons for women's position being subordinate to men.
- In order to reach the project objective and contribute to the results strategy, a gender and power perspective and analysis is thus essential in all activities within the project.
- Internal work: The partners strive to lead by example, to “walk the talk” and to be the change that the partners want to see in the world. The partner organisations recognize the need to constantly work with power and gender analyses internally in our own organisations in order to identify internal power and gender imbalances and improve the level of gender equality and non-violent behaviour both in our internal and external relations. The partners will use the MenEngage Accountability toolkit as one of the tools in this process.

- Collaboration and Partnership: The partners seek to work in collaboration, dialoguing openly about institutional differences and achieving consensus whenever possible, sharing expertise and lessons learned. The partners seek to recognise each member's unique experience and strengths. The parties agree that they will not damage the reputation of, or in any other way bring the other parties into disrepute, through words or actions. The parties agree to only use each others' branding with the appropriate permission and in the agreed upon manner
- The project should take advantage of and build on the experience gained in the past, regarding fathers' groups, youth groups and support lines in Sweden, Belarus and Russia and utilize any existing expertise from previous projects in these countries.
- The parties agree that the information obtained or learned while working together is confidential. Potential conflicts must be declared, and any relationship that could jeopardize independence or impartiality must be disclosed before the signing of this MoU. These rules also apply to situations that arise during the mission.

The Global MenEngage Alliance Core Principles

The signing parties that are members of the Men Engage Global Alliance agree to work to fulfill the Men Engage Core Principles to ensure accountability towards women.

- **Gender as relational:** We believe that men, along with women, should be engaged in achieving gender quality and in advancing the rights, health and well-being of women and girls.
- **Questioning men's violence against women:** We are dedicated to engaging men and boys to end violence against women and to questioning or challenging violent versions of manhood.
- **Promoting existing UN mandates:** We are dedicated to engaging men and boys to fulfil the mandates, statements of action, and principles of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Commission on the Status of Women statements (48th session), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and working collectively to encourage governments to do the same.
- **Engaging men as caregivers:** We are dedicated to promoting more equitable participation by men and boys in caregiving, the care of children and domestic tasks.
- **Working as allies with existing women's rights organizations:** We are committed to working as allies with women and women's rights organizations to achieve equality for women and girls.
- **Sexual diversity and sexual rights:** We are dedicated to promoting cultures of masculinity that respect sexual diversity and the sexual reproductive rights of all, and that engage men so that concerns for reproductive health and contraception are more evenly shared between men and women.

The signing parties agree to contribute to the implementation of the CEDAW convention in Belarus, as well as Belarus' National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2017-2020.