



## MenEngage Tanzania: Building a Community of Practice for Engaging Men in Health and Gender Equity

### KEY POINTS

In 2008, the CHAMPION Project launched MenEngage Tanzania, a network of 21 government agencies and nongovernmental organizations working together to promote the engagement of men and boys in achieving gender equality, preventing HIV, promoting human rights, and reducing violence.

MenEngage Tanzania promotes collaboration and resource sharing among organizations, supports joint advocacy initiatives, builds the capacity of network partners, strengthens partnerships between local organizations, and increases public awareness of the importance of male engagement in ensuring healthy families and communities.



### BACKGROUND

There is increasing recognition of men's role in preventing the spread of HIV and ensuring the health of their partners and families (WHO, 2012; Rottach, Schuler, & Hardee, 2009). However, men and boys are still not adequately involved in HIV and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) efforts. MenEngage is a global alliance of organizations that seek to engage men and boys in reducing gender inequality and improving the health and well-being of all (MenEngage, 2014). The network's global steering committee includes nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); its advisory council is led by United Nations (UN) agencies. Regional and country networks, of which MenEngage Tanzania (MET) is one (MenEngage Africa, 2014), move the MenEngage agenda forward at decentralized levels. Formed in 2008, and later relaunched in 2011 by the CHAMPION Project, the MET network brings together 21 local and international NGOs, country-based UN offices, and the Tanzanian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW) to advocate for male involvement in HIV prevention and SRH promotion.

**“MenEngage shows that if men have the opportunity to access information on how they can better support child and maternal health, they will become positive and supportive fathers. It is vital that more time and resources are dedicated to men to increase their awareness.”**

—Rose Mtui, CHAMPION Program Officer (during Tanzania Gender Networking Programme Seminar)

### POLICY AND ADVOCACY INTERVENTION



### Box 1. MET Network Members

#### Government Agencies

Tanzania Commission for AIDS (TACAIDS)\*

National AIDS Control Program (NACP)\*

Reproductive and Child Health Services (RCHS)\*

#### Local Organizations

Human Development Trust (HDT)\*

Medical Women Association of Tanzania (MEWATA)\*

Tanzania Interfaith Partnership\*

National Council for People Living with HIV and AIDS (NACOPHA)

Women in Social Entrepreneurship (WISE)

Tanzania Family Planning Association (UMATI)

Women Creative Solutions Association (WCSA)

Haki za Warawake (HAWA)

Mentomen Tanzania

#### International Organizations

Jhpiego\*

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)\*

Swedish Organization for Sexuality Education\*†

CARE International\*

Pathfinder International\*

Plan International

EngenderHealth/CHAMPION Project\*

EngenderHealth/RESPOND Tanzania Project (RTP)

African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF)

The Balm in Gilead (Tanzania)

Marie Stopes Tanzania\*

IntraHealth International

FHI 360

\*Steering Committee members

† New Secretariat

Table 1. Trainings, education sessions, and capacity-building workshops provided through the MET Network

Session	Type	Organization
Engaging Men in Health Services	7-day training	CHAMPION Project
Gaps in GBV Laws and Policies	Education session	Human Development Trust
Engaging Men in Female Genital Cutting	Education session	Legal and Human Rights Center*
Advocacy Toolkit	Capacity-building workshop	CHAMPION Project
Analyzing Policies and Programs through a Gendered Lens	Capacity-building workshop	CHAMPION Project
Engaging Men in GBV Prevention	International training (Zimbabwe)	MenEngage Africa
Media Training	1/2-day training	UNFPA and CHAMPION Project
Safe Motherhood Bill	Education session	CARE International and Tanzania Women Lawyers Association*
Site Visit to Male-Friendly Health Clinic	Education session	CHAMPION Project

\*Non-MET network organization that led an education session with MET partners.

## APPROACH

### Partner Mapping and Capacity Assessment

CHAMPION established a strong membership base through the extensive mapping and assessment of potential partners. A survey was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of organizations' objectives, priorities, activities, and target audiences, as well as determine their capacity to conduct advocacy and actively contribute to the network. Of the 61 organizations completing the survey, 21 were selected for membership, representing government agencies and local and international NGOs (Box 1).

### Setting a Common Agenda

Through the formation of an eight-member steering committee, CHAMPION played a leading role in establishing the following shared advocacy and policy priorities, goals, and objectives:

To create a supportive environment that increases awareness and knowledge of male involvement in HIV prevention and SRH promotion:

- To assist member organization in increasing their organizational capacity to mainstream and implement male involvement programming and services
- To engage in national-level awareness-raising activities that highlight the importance of male involvement in HIV and AIDS and SRH

To create an enabling policy environment that supports male involvement in HIV and AIDS and SRH:

- To promote national policies and strategies that encourage men's roles in supporting overall family health
- To promote organizational (e.g., health facilities and workplaces) policies that support men's roles as key contributors to family health

The steering committee jointly developed the MET network's Terms of Reference, coordinated meetings and special events, reviewed policies, and facilitated the development of policy documents. Biannual workplanning reflected the collective interests of partners to capitalize on existing resources and build the capacity of partners to advocate for male engagement in health. The annually rotating Steering Committee provides each member organization with a sense of ownership over network activities, thereby enhancing the network's effectiveness.

## PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

### Shared Learning and Advocacy

As the Secretariat for MET, CHAMPION successfully coordinated quarterly general meetings, monthly Steering Committee meetings, advocacy planning, and all other network activities. Through trainings, education sessions, and capacity-building workshops, CHAMPION and partners strengthened the ability of network members to advocate for



**Dr. Donan Mmbando, Acting Chief Medical Officer of the MOHSW, discusses strategies for engaging men in HIV testing at a MET Network partner dialogue.**

policies and actions that increase male engagement in services for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT), HIV testing and counseling (HTC), antenatal care (ANC), and family planning (FP) (Table 1). The trainings, education sessions, and capacity-building workshops listed in Table 1 were coordinated by CHAMPION through the MET Network. The organizations listed in the right-hand column were asked to prepare presentations. For instance, CHAMPION conducted a seven-day training with MET members on engaging men in health services, and the Human Development Trust presented to network partners on gaps in GBV laws and policies.

CHAMPION's advocacy trainings were designed using EngenderHealth's gender-transformative Men As Partners® (MAP®) manual<sup>1</sup> and emphasized analyzing policies and programs through a gender lens, and implementing advocacy plans. As a result of these activities, numerous partners reported integrating male engagement into their long-term plans and programs.

### Site Visits

Health facility site visits were conducted to enable MET partners to learn about initiatives to engage men and strengthen collaboration among partners. In 2012, network partners visited a Marie Stopes Mwenge health clinic where staff received training from the CHAMPION Project on how

**"The MET network is one of the most significant innovations in the national effort to ensure universal access to reproductive health. As Secretariat, CHAMPION brought expertise, dynamism, and a clear vision to the table. UNFPA values its collaboration with the project, which surely has improved the lives of women and men in Tanzania."**

—Julitta Onabanjo, UNFPA Country Representative

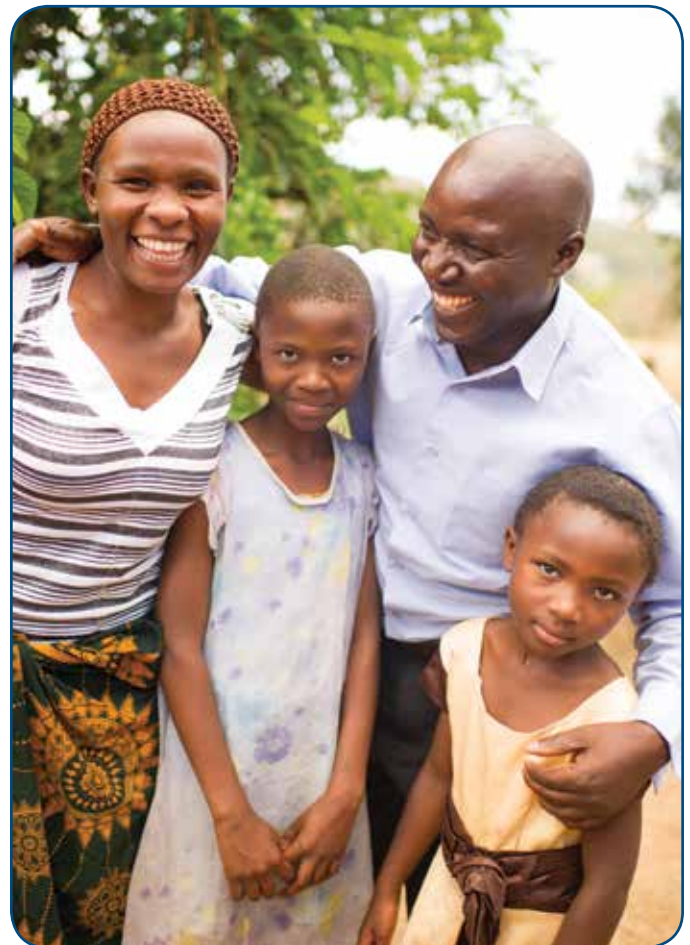
**"MenEngage Tanzania is an awesome forum, which I am sure will draw many members in the future. Its focus on challenging harmful gender norms engages men as agents of change and not simply passive actors. MSI embraces CHAMPION's approach to mainstreaming gender within family planning and sexual and reproductive health services."**

—Josiah, Marie Stopes International (MSI)

to make their facility more male-friendly. During the visit, partners learned about the clinic's approaches to increasing service uptake among men and strategies for overcoming challenges. Similar site visits were incorporated into subsequent work plans.

### Media Engagement

In 2012, CHAMPION conducted joint activities with MET members to support the MOHSW's plan to reduce the transmission of HIV from mother to child to less than 4% by 2015. Network partners supported this effort by focusing their advocacy and media outreach activities on male engagement in PMTCT. MET conducted television and radio interviews, published newspaper articles, and worked with high-profile figures to publicly discuss engaging men in PMTCT and role in ensuring the health and well-being of his family. MET



A Men as Partners® group education workshop participant and community champion with his family.

also held a discussion at the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme's weekly Gender and Development Seminar Series. In collaboration with UNFPA, CHAMPION also conducted HIV trainings for journalists

## MOVING FORWARD

Over its tenure as Secretariat of MET, CHAMPION made important strides toward ensuring the sustainability of the network. With a clear agenda, purpose, and identity, MET now has the structure and capacity to continue its important work. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities among partners has contributed to the strength and effectiveness of the network. Going forward, the network will require strong leadership to lead coordination efforts, secure funding for meetings and collaborative initiatives, and ensure attendance. Prior to project close-out, CHAMPION worked in close collaboration with a local NGO, Health Promotion-Tanzania (formerly the Human Development Trust) to strengthen their capacity to assume the Secretariat.

## SUMMARY

Today, the MET network is a strong, diverse network of government, UN, and local NGO advocates with a clear vision for promoting gender equality and awareness of men's critical role in curbing HIV transmission, improving reproductive and maternal health, and ensuring healthy families. Under CHAMPION's leadership, a community of practice on male engagement has emerged. MET has become a recognized voice in Tanzania for engaging men and boys in achieving gender equality and will continue to expand its reach, impact, and sustainability in years to come.

## REFERENCES

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**A husband accompanying his wife to a postnatal care visit at a CHAMPION-supported health facility offering male-friendly services.**

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<sup>1</sup> The MAP® group education curriculum (ACQUIRE Project & Promundo, 2008) encourages critical reflection on the impact of gender inequality on health and builds the skills necessary to make safer, more responsible decisions about sexual behavior

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