



The MenEngage Africa SRHR Learning & Exchange Symposium — PROGRESS 2026

Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to all individuals participating in or supporting the symposium, including participants, speakers, facilitators, organisers, volunteers, contractors, service providers, media representatives, and venue staff. All are expected to contribute to a respectful, inclusive, and safe environment. Participants must treat all individuals with dignity, uphold principles of equality and non-discrimination, and refrain from any form of harassment, intimidation, exploitation, abuse, or harmful conduct. Any safeguarding or SEAH concerns should be reported through the designated reporting channels to ensure prompt, confidential, and appropriate action. By participating, all attendees commit to upholding these standards and supporting a secure space where every voice can be heard and valued.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct outlines the shared values, principles, and expectations for all participants of the MenEngage Africa SRHR Learning and Exchange Symposium PROGRESS. It aims to ensure a safe, inclusive, respectful, and empowering environment for all, especially women, girls, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, youth, and other historically marginalized groups. Sonke Gender Justice and MenEngage Africa maintains a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH). By participating in this convening, all attendees agree to uphold and model the commitments outlined below.

Our Shared Commitments

We commit to creating and maintaining a space that is:

Respectful

1. Treat all participants with dignity, regardless of age, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, race, religion, disability, class, or political belief.
2. Use inclusive, non-discriminatory language.
3. Respect people's boundaries including personal space, pronouns, and lived experiences.

Safe

1. Abide by all safeguarding measures in place to protect against sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment, bullying, and discrimination.
2. Never engage in any form of:
 - a) Sexual harassment or inappropriate behaviour
 - b) Threats, intimidation, or violence
 - c) Unwelcome physical contact



- d) Hate speech or microaggressions
- e) Sharing photos, recordings, or personal stories without explicit consent.

Inclusive & Youth-Centered

1. Listen actively and make space for youth, grassroots, and marginalised voices.
2. Respect power dynamics in intergenerational or cross-sector conversations.
3. Avoid dominating discussions or invalidating others' experiences.

Confidential

1. Uphold the privacy of participants. Do not disclose someone's identity, personal story, or views shared during private or sensitive sessions without their clear, informed consent.
2. Respect requests to not be photographed, tagged, or recorded.

Accountable

1. Accept feedback or correction with openness and humility.
2. If you cause harm intentionally or unintentionally listen, apologize sincerely, and take steps to make amends.
3. Cooperate fully with the Safeguarding Team if an issue is raised.

Accessibility and Inclusion Commitments

Participants should respect accessibility needs and support the inclusion of persons with disabilities, including respecting assistive devices, interpretation services, and accessibility accommodations.

Prohibited Behaviour

The following actions are strictly prohibited and may lead to immediate removal from the convening, loss of accreditation, or further action:

1. Sexual harassment, exploitation, or abuse
2. Discrimination or hate speech based on identity
3. Physical or verbal intimidation or threats
4. Retaliation against any person who raises a safeguarding concern or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited and will be treated as a serious violation of this Code of Conduct.
5. Participants must not photograph, film, record, or share images, videos, or personal stories of others without their **prior informed consent**, particularly in sessions addressing sensitive experiences.



6. Sharing misinformation or defamatory content about participants or organizations
7. Misuse of alcohol or other substances at symposium sessions or affiliated social events in a manner that compromises one's conduct, judgement, or the safety of others

Reporting Misconduct

If you experience, witness, or become aware of a violation of this Code of Conduct or safeguarding concern, please report it immediately through one of the following channels:

1. Speak with Safeguarding officers on-site or virtually:
 - a) Mpiwa Mangwiro-Tsanga +27 82 480 2223
 - b) Josephine C Mukwendi +27 83 210 9387
 - c) Falone Fankam +237 7476 7156
2. Submit an anonymous report via email: sonke@whistleblowing.co.za

Note: All reports will be handled in line with survivor-centred principles, prioritising the safety, dignity, confidentiality, informed consent and non-discrimination of the affected persons. No individual will face retaliation for reporting concerns in good faith.

- Reports may also be submitted after the symposium through the same channels. All reports will be acknowledged within 48 hours and reviewed by the designated Safeguarding Team in accordance with Sonke and MenEngage safeguarding procedures.
- Following acknowledgement, the Safeguarding Team will commence a review or investigation promptly, with the process, scope, and timeframe determined by the nature and complexity of the specific case. The reporting person and, where appropriate, the person against whom a concern has been raised, will be kept informed of relevant progress. Where a Safeguarding Officer, facilitator, or organiser is themselves the subject of a concern, they will be recused from handling that case, which will instead be managed by an independent member of the Safeguarding Team or, where necessary, an external party, to avoid any conflict of interest.
- Confidentiality and Data Protection: Information shared in a report will be treated as confidential and shared only with those who need to know it in order to respond appropriately. Confidentiality may, however, be limited where there is a risk to life or safety, a legal obligation to report (including mandatory reporting requirements under Kenyan law), or an imminent risk of harm. Personal data collected through the reporting process will be stored securely, accessed only by authorised members of the Safeguarding Team, retained only for as long as necessary, and handled in accordance with Sonke and MenEngage's data protection policies.



Survivor Support:

Immediate support will be available for affected persons, including referrals to psychosocial, medical, and legal services. Support will follow established referral pathways in Kenya and remain confidential and survivor-centered. Where a report discloses conduct that may constitute a criminal offence under Kenyan law, including rape or other forms of sexual violence, the affected person will be supported, with their informed consent, to access appropriate medical, psychosocial, and legal services, including referral to law enforcement should they choose to pursue this option.

Consequences for Violations

If a participant breaches the Code of Conduct, appropriate action will be taken, which may include:

1. Verbal or written warning
2. Removal from specific sessions or spaces
3. Revocation of accreditation or credentials
4. Notification of employer or affiliated organization
5. Legal or emergency referrals where appropriate

Note: All decisions will prioritize survivor safety and wellbeing.

A Collective Responsibility

Creating and protecting safe spaces is a shared responsibility. We encourage participants to:

1. Speak up if you witness or experience harm
2. Support one another, especially young and marginalized voices
3. Model the inclusive, feminist values we are advocating for

Together, we can ensure that this convening reflects the transformative, liberatory vision we hold for SRHR, gender justice, and human rights across Africa.

Acknowledgement

By registering for or participating in **the MenEngage Africa SRHR Learning and Exchange Symposium PROGRESS 2026**, you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.