



# ENGAGING MEN AS GENDER EQUALITY CHAMPIONS

Strengthening Small Business Value Chains  
Learning Series



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# Abstract

In our world, people of all genders are impacted by the roles, expectations, and behaviors placed upon them by society. Gender, as opposed to sex, is learned, and describes the ways that people are influenced by our family, community, country, and the world. Through our work with Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), MEDA understands that women and marginalized populations do not exist in isolation, their lives are interwoven with others. If changes take place in a woman's life, such as increased agency and realization of rights or increased access to opportunities, it will impact others in her family. For this change to be meaningful and sustainable, men must be included in the process, so that they understand the reasons for and benefits of these changes and are not threatened by them. In the same way, men must change to recognize harmful perspectives and behaviors associated with masculinity and patriarchy, that are ultimately disempowering for everyone. They must also act in a way which accounts for historical injustices which wrongfully benefitted men at the expense of women. For example, women are pressured to stay at home and focus on being caregivers at the expense of their personal and economic development, while men may be expected to engage in risky behavior, violence, and suppression of emotions at the expense of their personal safety and emotional development.

A gender analysis conducted by SSBVC in early 2019 identified women's lack of agency at the household level and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as key barriers to greater economic empowerment for project clients. To address these issues, the gender team decided to pilot the Gender Equality Champion (GEC) model with five men in one of the project regions, Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. MEDA has implemented the GEC model in various initiatives including the Greater Rural Opportunities for Women (GROW) project in Ghana and the Improving Market Opportunities for Women (IMOW) project in Myanmar and has integrated learnings from these projects into this SSBVC pilot. To ensure the sustainability of the model and to strengthen the capacity of project partners to engage men in gender equality in the future, the SSBVC gender team collaborated with a local Business Development Service Provider (BDSP), Anza Entrepreneurs (herein referred to as Anza), to implement the model. Under the guidance of the MEDA gender team, Anza assisted in selecting men to be trained as GECs in Kilimanjaro, conducted the training according to the [manual](#) prepared by MEDA, and monitored and evaluated the model. This learning paper reflects on the experience of piloting the GEC model in Tanzania and provides recommendations for the implementation of the model in the future.

Key findings from the model included the following:

1. The GEC model contributed to a shift in attitudes and perspectives among men towards gender, specifically around roles and responsibilities. However, there were limits. For example, while men are willing to support their wives in domestic chores and caregiving, and have women contribute to the household income, they believe

that household work should be the primary responsibility of women and earning income should be the primary responsibility of men. While discussing their answers, most respondents said that they want to be the income earner out of love for their families and not as a sign of masculinity.

2. While GECs are able to recognize the importance of women's empowerment, they still need ongoing training, advisory and logistical support to reach their goals of becoming more gender-equitable and continuing the work of raising awareness in the community. Patriarchal traditions and cultural norms have a long history and will take considerable time to change.
3. In terms of changes that GECs wanted to see in the communities with respect to gender equality, all GECs wish to see their wives and daughters doing better in all aspects of life. Their vision for now and in the future is to see the women in their lives treated with respect and dignity. Three of the five also mentioned that they want to see women taking up leadership positions and be treated equally in accessing social and economic opportunities.
4. Even after training, many GECs strongly agreed that if someone insults them, they will defend their reputation with force. This violent behavior is indicative of harmful ideas about masculinity and requires continued attention to discover and embody positive masculinity such as courage, strength, and leadership, which are valuable aspects of the human experience and traits of both women and men.



*Participants of peer dialogue in Moshi Vijijini, Kilimanajaro*

5. Attitudes regarding SGBV are complex and sometime contradictory. For example, respondents who disagreed that there are times when women deserve to be beaten, strongly agree that women should tolerate violence in order to keep their families together. This indicates a paradox that requires further attention.
6. There is not adequate legal support on issues of SGBV at the village level and most community members do not know their rights or how to respond to violence. Most disputes are addressed at the family level and most of them are left unreported.

## SSBVC Project Overview

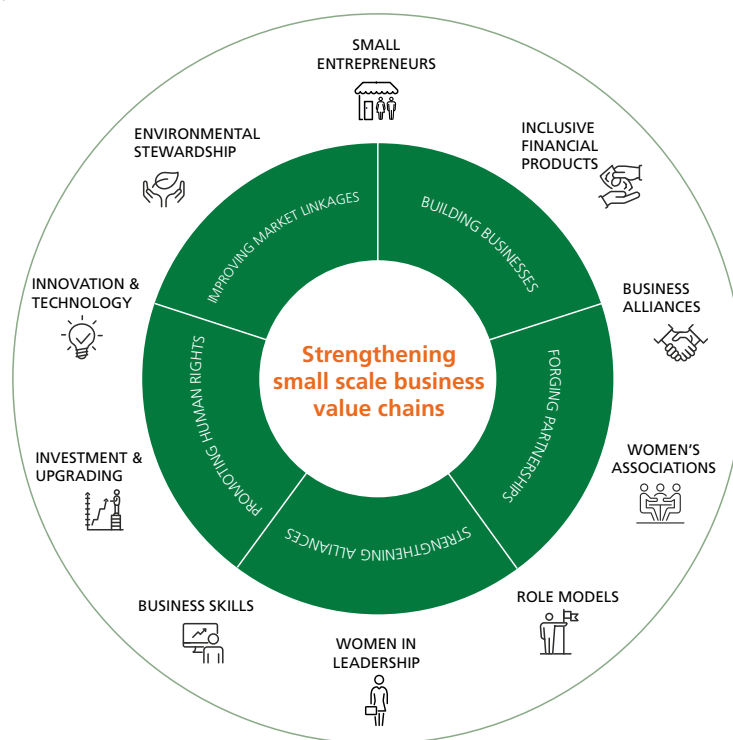
Around the world, MEDA combines innovative private sector solutions with a commitment to the advancement of systemically marginalized communities, including women and youth. MEDA's expertise includes market systems development, environment and climate change, inclusive and green finance, impact investing, and gender equality and social inclusion. In Tanzania, MEDA's Strengthening Small Business Value Chains (SSBVC) project aims to contribute to Tanzania's economic growth and increase job creation by sustainably improving the business performance of Lead Firms (LFs) and the Small and Growing Businesses (SGBs) and women and men Small Entrepreneurs (SEs) in their value chains. The project develops industry and private sector partnerships, linking LFs to SGBs and SEs as well as the end market by taking promising businesses to the next level with smart subsidies (including eVoucher), matching grants and access to financial services. Through the project, MEDA works with local partners to provide business development services and support market development in the extractives, agri-food, logistics, construction, and manufacturing sectors. The project focuses on three regions, namely Arusha, Morogoro, and Mtwara.

SSBVC integrates gender equality (GE) into project activities with an emphasis on women's economic empowerment. The project works with various actors involved in the selected value chains to build their awareness and capacity in GE. The project works with SEs, SGBs and LFs to improve GE outcomes for men and women within the value chains in which they participate. For LFs, this includes annual training on GE for all staff, the creation of GE policies to guide their operations, and GE Action Plans to help them implement practical activities to improve GE within their company (and in some cases, among their linked SEs) over the course of MEDA's contract with them. In addition, MEDA's GE Officer supports LFs to create a post-contract GE plan to carry on the work once the project has ended. The project also works with Business Development Service Providers (BDSPs) to share GE awareness training with men and women SEs and to build women business owners' capacity, in particular. In addition, targets have been set for women's participation, including 10% women-owned/led LFs and 40% women SEs reached.

## The SSBVC Learning Series

The SSBVC Project aligns with MEDA's organizational theory of change. The goal of the project is aligned with MEDA's mission to facilitate inclusive market systems where MEDA, with its partners, helps to provide farmers and small businesses with access to finance, business skills, and productive resources. In particular, the SSBVC project supports lead firms to provide decent work for small entrepreneurs in their supply chains and adopt environmentally sustainable technologies and improved business practices while promoting human rights in the value chain.

The SSBVC Learning Series is an initiative to share lessons learned with project stakeholders and the wider global development sector. Topics include private sector engagement in Tanzania, client experiences with business performance and drivers of success, effective strategies for sustainable enterprise development and advancing and measuring women's economic empowerment.



## Context

The principle of gender equality is embedded within the Tanzanian Constitution and subsequent amendments; and the government of Tanzania's commitment to gender equality is evidenced in ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). However, [OECD](https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/TZ.pdf)<sup>1</sup> found that a high level of gender discrimination in social institutions persists as a result of patriarchal norms and the precedence

<sup>1</sup> OECD Development Centre's Social Institutions & Gender Index 2019, Tanzania Country Profile, accessed 28 April 2021, <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/TZ.pdf>



*Peer dialogue participants hold GEC training manual in Lushoto, Tanga*

of customary law. For example, many women and girls in Tanzania still face inequalities in access to resources and opportunities as well as autonomy and influence in decision making. These issues are both a product of and exacerbated by inadequate healthcare, particularly reproductive healthcare and SGBV. Customary law also gives preference to men in terms of inheritance and property ownership. Importantly, gender inequality also negatively impacts men in boys through harmful masculinity ideals that foster violence and risk-taking behavior.

There is also no law in Tanzania specifically addressing SGBV, and it remains widespread and severely under-reported. The Tanzanian Ministry of Health, community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children<sup>2</sup> estimates that “one-third of Tanzanian women have experienced physical violence, while a tenth of women have experienced sexual intercourse against their will”. The effects of violence against women are numerous and far reaching. According to the World Bank Group,<sup>3</sup> “the earnings of women [in Tanzania] in formal wage work who are exposed to severe partner violence are 60% lower than women who are not exposed. Conversely, economic empowerment seems to protect women from violence: women living in wealthier households have a 45% lower risk of violence than those living in poorer households”.

The agriculture sector, in particular, lags behind other sectors in terms of gender equality and development. In agricultural households, men are typically responsible for paid labour and

<sup>2</sup> The Tanzanian Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, 2016, accessed 28 April 2021. <https://data.em2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/TZ-Country-Gender-Profile-004.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> World Bank Group, *Women, Business, and the Law 2016: Getting to Equal*, 2016, accessed 28 April 2021. <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/455971467992805787/women-business-and-the-law-2016-getting-to-equal>

cash crop production while women are traditionally expected to produce food crops, provide labour for cash crops, manage household and reproductive work and care for the sick and elderly in the community. Among other things, this gendered division of labour, and “triple work burden” negatively impacts women and girls’ abilities to invest in their crop production to generate additional income. It also contributes to “time poverty” where women and girls do not have the time for rest and leisure, which is essential for health and wellbeing.

In this context, inequitable gender norms, cultural practices, and attitudes must change to truly impact the lives of women and girls in Tanzania, and both women and men must be engaged to make this shift.

## Engaging Men as Gender Equality Champions

### **Men as Partners in Building Gender Equality**

In our world, people of all genders are impacted by the roles, expectations, and behaviors placed upon them by society. Gender, as opposed to sex, is learned, and describes the ways that all people are influenced by our family, communities, and broader society in how to interact with others. Through our work with Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), MEDA understands that women and marginalized populations do not exist in isolation; they are interwoven with others. If changes take place in a woman’s life, such as increased agency and realization of rights or increased access to opportunities, it will impact others in her family. For this change to be meaningful and sustainable, men must be included in the process, so that they understand the reasons and benefits of these changes and are not threatened by them. In the same way, men must change to recognize harmful perspectives and behaviors associated with masculinity, in favour of modeling more positive aspects of masculinity. They must also act in a way which accounts for historical injustices which wrongfully benefitted men at the expense of women. Women too, must recognize and respond to the ways that they reinforce harmful masculinities. For example, men may be expected to engage in risky behavior, violence, and suppression of emotions at the expense of their personal safety and emotional development while women are pressured to stay at home and focus on being caregivers at the expense of their personal and economic development.

While MEDA understands that both women and men should be engaged as champions of gender equality, to achieve this goal, the Engaging Men as Gender Equality Champions (GEC) model focuses specifically on the role that men can play as agents for change, partners, allies, advocates, and gatekeepers of power. The MEDA GEC model is adapted from the training program “Working with Boys and Men to Advance Gender Equality and Sexual and Reproductive Health Training” by Care Malawi, published in 2017 as well as the “Promoting Gender-Transformative Change with Men and Boys: A Manual to Spark Critical Reflection on

harmful Gender Norms with Men and Boys in Aquatic Agricultural Systems” training program published by Promundo and CGIAR in 2016.

Through the GEC model, MEDA and its partners conduct a training of trainers (TOT) with select GECs. The role of GECs is to advocate for women’s participation in project activities, to host dialogues that will build awareness around gender equality, and to transform social norms and harmful stereotypes of masculinity in favor of promoting positive masculinities. Through monthly dialogues, GECs encourage other men and key influencers (for example, traditional authorities) in the community to positively use their power to educate other men about women’s rights and contributions, and support and advocate for women’s access to resources and authority. GECs increase knowledge of and respect for women’s rights among women and men, the sharing of power, and acceptance of women’s participation in household, business, and community decision-making.

Specific objectives of the activities in this model include engaging men in:

1. Identifying and reflecting on harmful masculinities and the relationship between gender inequality and the perpetuation of poverty
2. Modeling positive masculinities, such as leadership, courage, and strength, as valuable aspects of the human experience which are important traits of both women and men
3. Fostering mutual respect, reliability, and cooperation between women and men in the economic sphere, which in turn has positive spillover effects in other areas
4. Supporting the project in promoting gender equality and transforming gender relations by
  - a. Identifying and challenging social norms which negatively impact a person’s ability to reach their full economic, social, psychological, and emotional potential and wellbeing
  - b. Understanding and challenging unequal power relations and structures
  - c. Promoting change in attitudes and behaviors that facilitate gender equality and social inclusion
  - d. Acting as role models of equitable behaviors and positive masculinity at the household and community levels
  - e. Advocating for women’s economic empowerment without speaking for them or dominating the conversation around gender equality
5. Addressing the factors contributing to SGBV and promoting appropriate prevention and response.

## GEC Process

GECs are identified and selected using criteria related to willingness to volunteer their time and interest in promoting gender equality, level of community influence and involvement, participation in the MEDA project, leadership and communication skills, and no history of violence. GECs must also have a personality where they are comfortable speaking in public but do not dominate conversations and speak *for* women, rather than *with* them. Selected GECs then participate in a 2 to 3 day training workshop. Over the following months, GECs facilitate men-to-men gender dialogues and community forums with key influencers on identified gender issues with a set number of people (roughly one third of the number of men in the village or community as well as other identified “sources of influence”). These dialogues and community forums draw from the original training materials. Once the GECs conclude the set number of dialogues for the first round, there is a forum for GECs to reflect, share their experiences, and learn from each other. The forum also includes refresher training for any topics identified as persistent challenges. After the forum, GECs are presented with a certificate identifying them as Certified GECs of the MEDA project. Next, an assessment is conducted to evaluate the model and gather information for future trainings and activities associated with the model. Ideally, newly certified GECs and project partners plan a new round of dialogues and community forums. In addition, the partner can leverage strong GECs to mentor a future cohort of new GECs.

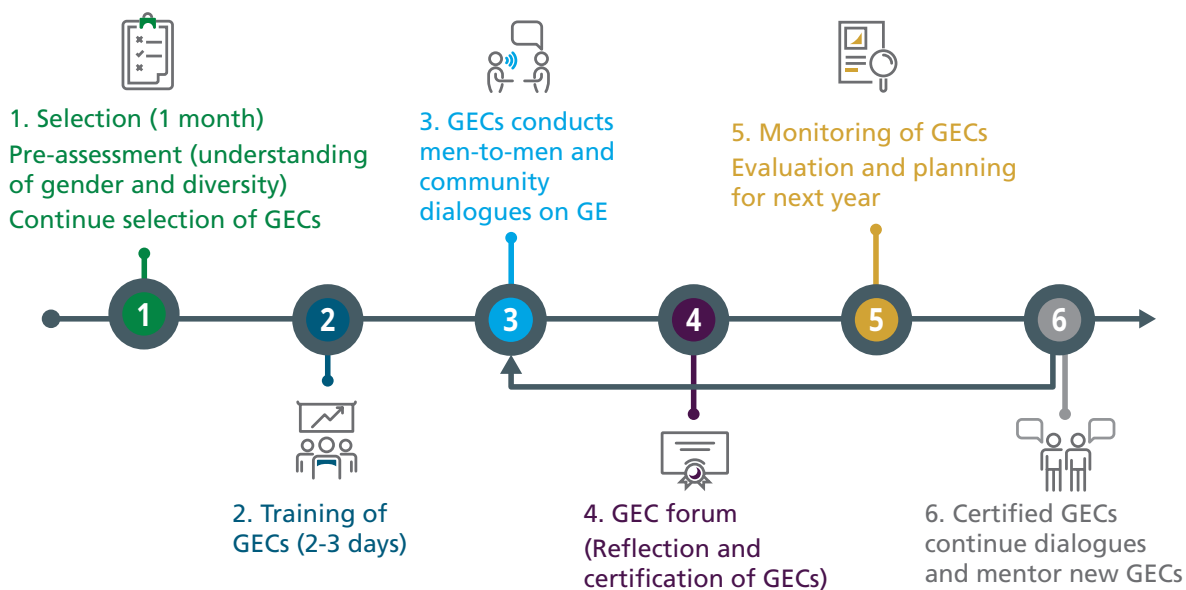


Figure 1: GEC Timeline and Activities

## SSBVC GEC Implementation

The gender analysis conducted by the SSBVC project in early 2019 identified women's lack of agency at the household level and SGBV as key barriers to greater economic empowerment for project clients. To address these issues, the gender team decided to pilot the GEC model in Kilimanjaro, one of the project regions. The program implementation in SSBVC incorporates lessons learned from MEDA's previous work with Gender Equality Champions in the Greater Rural Opportunities for Women (GROW) project in Ghana, and the Improving Market Opportunities for Women (IMOW) in Myanmar.

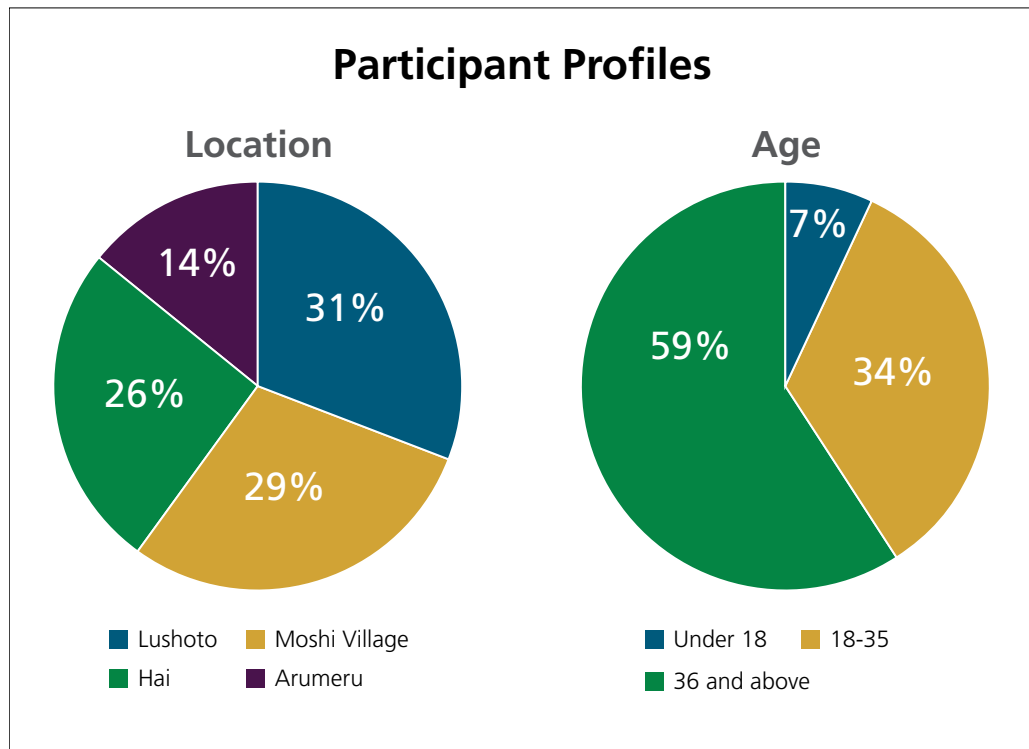
To ensure the sustainability of the model and to strengthen capacity of project partners to engage men in gender equality in the future, the SSBVC gender team updated MEDA's GEC Manual and provided this to one of the project's BDSP, Anza Entrepreneurs, to implement the model. Under the guidance of the MEDA Gender Officer, Anza assisted in selecting men to be trained as GECs in Kilimanjaro, conducted the training according to the manual prepared by MEDA, and performed the monitoring and evaluation of the program.

First, Anza identified five men in Kilimanjaro region (Lushoto, Hai, Moshi Vijijini, Arumeru, and Longido districts) to train as GECs to support their communities in driving positive socio-economic changes. In November 2020, Anza conducted a three-day training for the GECs which included themes of gender awareness, human rights, shared responsibilities, decision-making and financial management, gendered division of labour and time use, SGBV, and effective facilitation of dialogues and community forums. The trainings were met with enthusiasm. GECs noted that one aspect of the training that they particularly appreciated was the opportunity to come together as men. GEC, Elisante Jackson, noted,

*"I have never participated in gender training with men as agents of community change. This model used by MEDA and Anza is the best model."*

During the trainings, Anza found that the age, position, and experiences of most of the GECs reflected deeply-rooted cultural practices, beliefs, and attitudes on gender issues. However, Anza felt that the desire for change was present and that with continued training and advisory services, these champions could make positive changes in their communities. Anza also paid special attention to creating a safe space for men to share their experience on gender issues from their various communities and were given adequate time to discuss and reflect on their own experiences. For example, participants noted that in their communities some men also face violence, but they are afraid to talk about it because it is perceived as a weakness for men to report such cases.

Over the subsequent four months Anza supported the GECs to address challenges they faced in cascading the trainings and conducting peer dialogues. The five GECs conducted training to an average of nine other men each, using peer dialogues, reaching a total of 43 men who participated in the GEC program. Most (59%) of those trained were over the age of 36. Participant profiles are shown in the charts below.



In the men-to-men peer dialogues, participants shared their experiences on how gender inequality affects both men and women and inhibits social and economic development in their societies, but in different ways in each community. For example, in Mbuguni ward in Arumeru district, gender roles are most apparent in the types of crops cultivated, with some crops controlled by women and some by men. In this instance, women have control over food security crops such as bananas and milk while men have control over cash crops. In most households in this community, men and women do not collaborate on decision making, especially on how income obtained from the crops will be allocated. In Lushoto, on the other hand, the separation of responsibilities has more to do with income generation, where men are the main breadwinners and women are responsible for taking care of the family. Here, women and men collaborate in decision making around the allocation of resources brought home by the men.

Other topics of discussion included where and how to report gender-based violence, human rights abuses and how to address cultural norms without causing conflict in society. One issue discussed in detail was gender-based violence against men. The most common examples were in places where women had control over resources, and they did not share income

with men. There were also instances where men faced psychological and emotional abuse for not providing for their families. Participants in the peer dialogues noted, in particular, they appreciated a space where they could talk about gender and how gender inequality negatively effects both women and men.



*Anza facilitator (front left, sitting) and GEC with dialogue participations after discussion session in Vunjo, Moshi, Kilimanjaro*

In March 2021, Anza conducted a refresher training for the GECs and provided them certificates to acknowledge the work they had done over the previous four months. On the first day of the refresher training, GECs shared experiences from the peer dialogues and Anza provided coaching on gaps and learnings that were identified in the monitoring visits. Participants also shared their experiences on how they used the information and knowledge gained during the first training to champion gender equality in their villages, how they organized and conducted the peer dialogues and the feedback they obtained from their community members. In Shirimatunda for example, the GEC worked with the local government office to motivate men to participate in the dialogues. The office also provided a venue for the dialogues to take place. In Mwika and Lushoto, GECs invited fellow members of the farmer's group and provided them with booklets for them to read before their dialogues. This motivated men to come to the dialogues prepared to discuss what they had learned from the booklets. The booklets were developed from the key messages detailed in MEDA's GEC manual.

On the second day of the refresher training, a discussion on various gender topics was conducted with a guest speaker Calista Njau, a gender specialist from Tumaini University in Moshi. Njau shared with the participants various strategies that can be used in championing gender equality in Tanzanian communities. Participants particularly valued her experience as an expert in the local setting with lived experience in their communities. For example, she suggested that, given their age, position, and reputation in their communities, the GECs can use available platforms such as farmers' groups, local government offices, vicobas (savings and loans groups), churches, and mosques to spread this information and to motivate others, especially youth, to join together to address gender inequality. She also suggested initiating gender clubs in schools where children and youth can start this discussion early. Inviting elders and other key influencers in the community to speak at these clubs could provide important intergenerational dialogue opportunities and accountability among community members.



*GECs receiving certificates from Calista Njau, Senior Lecturer and Gender Expert from Tumaini University*

The refresher training provided a platform for GECs to share the experience they gained through the program, especially while implementing men-to-men dialogues. Participants were particularly inspired by GEC ideas in Mbuguni and suggested forming a father's union as a platform for men to learn and discuss gender-related issues, express the challenges they face as men in society and find better ways to address gender inequality in their community as well as establish a group for saving and credit to solve their financial challenges. Many participants expressed a desire to replicate this idea in their own communities.

GECs also discussed the fact that for many years they have seen and heard of various programs that aim to educate women about gender equality and how to fight for their rights, but have excluded men. They felt that these programs actually made the movement for gender equality even more challenging and most of the time lead to conflicts in the community. They noted that when men understand how gender equality is crucial in the development of society, they will be willing to work together to achieve it. GEC Cornelio Mushi noted,

*“Before this training, I was not ready to have discussions with other male community members on women’s involvement in decision making, but now I am a champion for this and ready to convince other men to involve women in decision making.”*

## Measuring Impact

To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of program, and the impact it had on gender attitudes, a version of the Gender Equitable Men Scale (GEMS),<sup>4</sup> created by Population Council and Promundo, was administered with GECs and participants in the dialogues they facilitated (see Table 1 below). The Scale consists of a series of statements that are read to GECs and dialogue participants, and they respond, telling the enumerator whether they agree or disagree with the statement.

Each of the items has three response categories: “agree”, “somewhat agree” and “do not agree”. The least gender-equitable response was given a score of one; two points were given to a moderately equitable response; and a score of three was given to the most equitable response. Therefore, the higher the score, the more gender-equitable the attitude.

Items	Response Categories and Weights Assigned		
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Do not Agree
<b>Domain: Roles and Responsibilities</b>			
Women’s most important role is to take care of her home and cook	1	2	3
Men are the primary breadwinner	1	2	3
A man should have the final word about decisions in his home	1	2	3

<sup>4</sup> Population Council/Horizons and Promundo Development, 2013 “Measuring Gender Attitude: Using Gender-Equitable Men Scale (GEMS) in Various Socio-Cultural Settings, accessed 28 April 2021, <https://promundoglobal.org/resources/measuring-gender-attitude-using-gender-equitable-men-scale-gems-in-various-socio-cultural-settings>

A wife is to obey her husband in everything	1	2	3
Changing diapers, giving kids a bath, and feeding children are the mother's responsibility	1	2	3
Couples should decide together if they want to start a new business or expand their own businesses	1	2	1
The man should make decisions about purchasing essential items in the home	1	2	3
The man should be the final decision maker in the family	1	2	3
<b>Domain: Sexual and Gender-based Violence</b>			
There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten	1	2	3
A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together	1	2	3
<b>Domain: Reproductive Health</b>			
If a man gets a woman pregnant, the child is the responsibility of both	3	2	1
Couples should decide together if they want to have children	3	2	1
<b>Domain: Masculinities</b>			
To be a man, you need to be tough	1	2	3
If someone insults me, I will defend my reputation, with force if I have to	1	2	3
It is important for men to have friends to talk about his problems	3	2	1

*Table 1: Gender-Equitable Men Scale adapted from Population Council/Horizons and Promundo*

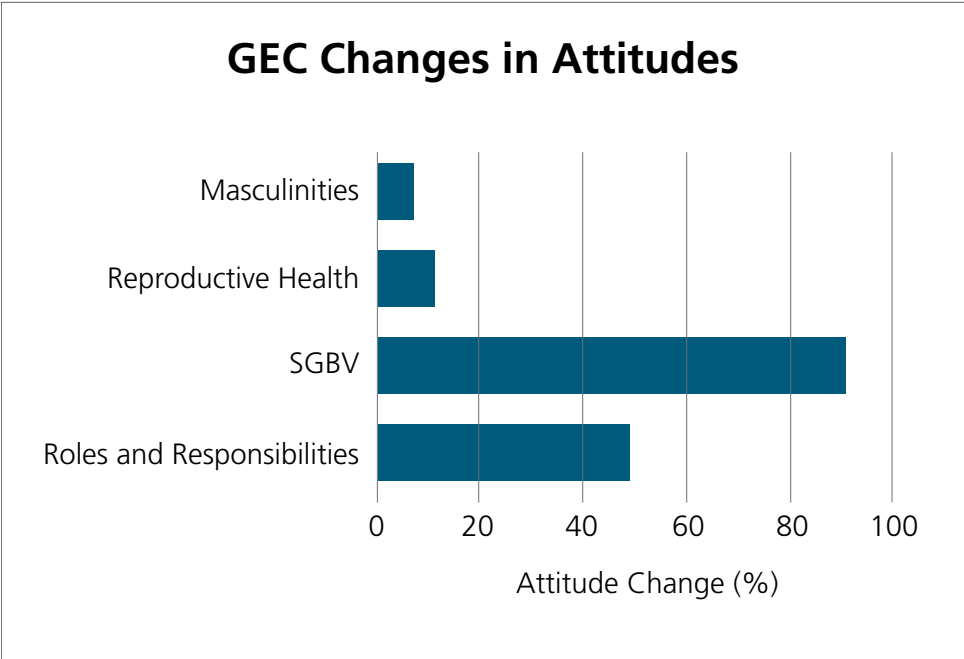
## Data Gathering Methodology

The table above presents the adapted GEMS questions with weights for each response category. The 5 GECs were surveyed before and after the initial training. These results are presented in the following section, which explores the shift in perspectives from before and after the training. During the monitoring visits, GEMS was also administered with the men involved in the dialogues. However, this survey was only done once, after the training, so no shifts in perspective can be determined. These findings are expanded upon below in the

section “Dialogue Participant Survey Results” and are arranged by domain measured in the scale. This data was gathered from 42 of the 43 total dialogue participants.

**GEC Survey Results**

The results of the survey administered with the 5 GECs before and after the initial training indicated a shift in attitudes and perspective towards greater gender equality, specifically regarding roles and responsibilities in the family, decision making, and SGBV. The starkest difference was with attitudes around SGBV. Before the training, all but one man strongly agreed that “there are times when a woman deserves to be beaten” and “a woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together”. After the training, no men strongly agreed that there are times when a woman deserves to be beaten and only one man strongly agreed that “a woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together”.



The 49% increase in gender-equitable perspectives on roles and responsibilities were mostly around men changing their minds about being the breadwinners and final decision makers as well as women needing to “obey” their husbands. Attitudes on reproductive health did not see a high degree of change. However, original scores were already quite high in this area. In fact, no men disagreed that children are both parents’ responsibility and couples should decide together to have children. And after the training all men “strongly agreed” with both of these statements.

The smallest improvement was in perspectives around masculinities. In particular, men still generally agree that “to be a man, you need to be tough” and “if someone insults me, I will defend my reputation, with force if I have to.” However, GECs agreed to the statements to a

lesser degree after the training. More detail on scores and weighting can be seen in the table below.

Domain	Pre Score Average	Post Score Average	Percent Increase
Roles and Responsibilities	9.4	14.0	49%
SGBV	2.2	4.2	91%
Reproductive Health	5.4	6.0	11%
Masculinities	5.4	5.8	7%

## Dialogue Participant Survey Results

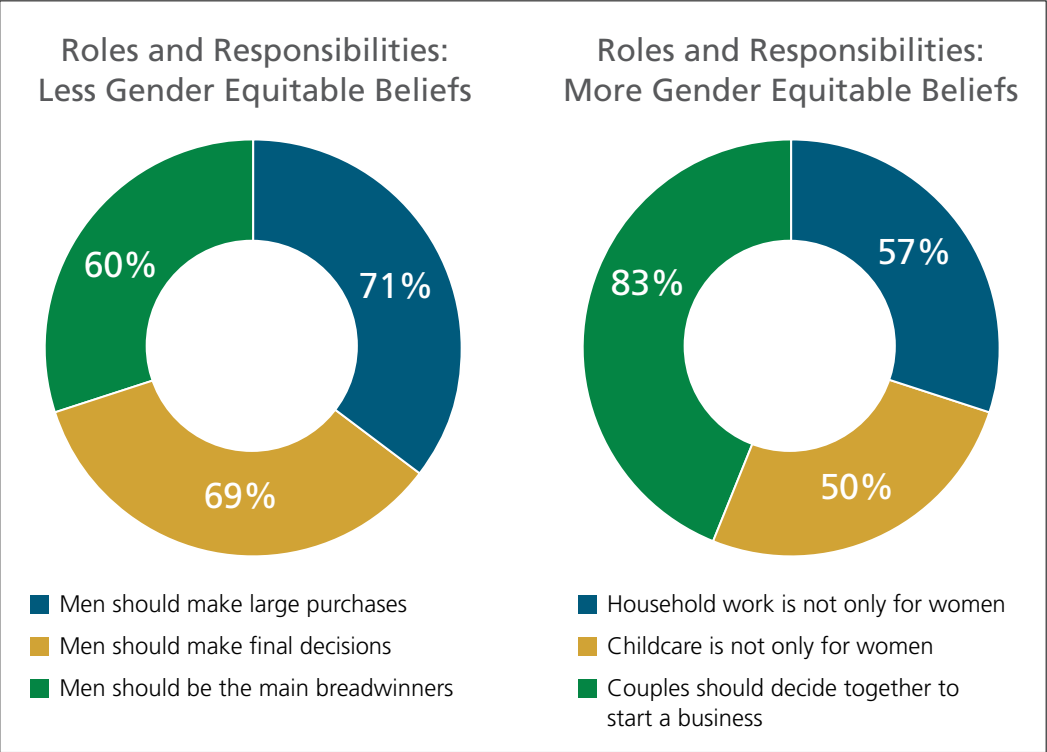
As noted above, during the monitoring visits, the Gender Equitable Men Scale was administered again, this time with the men involved in the dialogues. Below are the findings that were measured in the scale, arranged by domains. This represents data from 42 of 43 total dialogue participants.

### Roles and Responsibilities

According to survey data, the gender role statements to which the largest majority of respondents noted that they “strongly agree” include: men need to make large purchases (71%), men make final decisions in family discussions (69%), and men are the main breadwinners (60%). Roles toward which men demonstrated more gender-equitable attitudes included the statement that “the most important role for women is to look after the house



and cook”. Here, only 43% strongly agree with this statement, 17% somewhat agreed and 40% did not agree. In terms of changing diapers, washing, bathing, and feeding young children, 50% of men strongly agreed that this was the primary responsibility of the mother; 29% did not agree and 21% somewhat agreed. One statement where there was very strong agreement on equal responsibility is that couples should decide together whether they want to start or expand a business. Eighty-three percent of respondents agreed with this statement.



These findings suggest that there is still a need to promote discussions around roles and responsibilities where labor is equitably distributed, and decision-making should be a joint process among adults in the household. Equitable sharing of roles and responsibilities can have positive impacts for everyone in the family. Interestingly, there seems to be more leniency toward women being involved outside of the household than for men to share the “final say” in allocation of money and making decisions. Men also seem to be willing to contribute to caregiving in the family, but do not see it as something for which they are primarily or even equally responsible. While discussing their answers, most respondents said that they do it out of love for their families and not as a sign of masculinity.

**Sexual and Gender-based Violence**

In response to the statement “there are times when a woman deserves to be beaten” only 7% strongly agreed, 61% of respondents disagreed, and 32% somewhat agreed. This shows that some men still believe there are times when they believe it is appropriate to physically abuse their wives. When reflecting on this statement, men noted that they use force only

when they are denied access to their “marital right” to sex, food, and accommodation, or when they are insulted by their wives. However, when discussing a related statement, 50% of respondents strongly agreed, 12% somewhat agreed and 38% of respondents disagreed that a woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together. There is a clear contradiction: most men think women should not be beaten, but if it is to keep her family together, then it is acceptable. Respondents noted that women generally tolerate violence due to extreme poverty and financial dependence, and lack of legal assistance and understanding of rights. They understand that these issues are very complex and expressed that they would like more time and support to plan on how to address these issues in their communities.

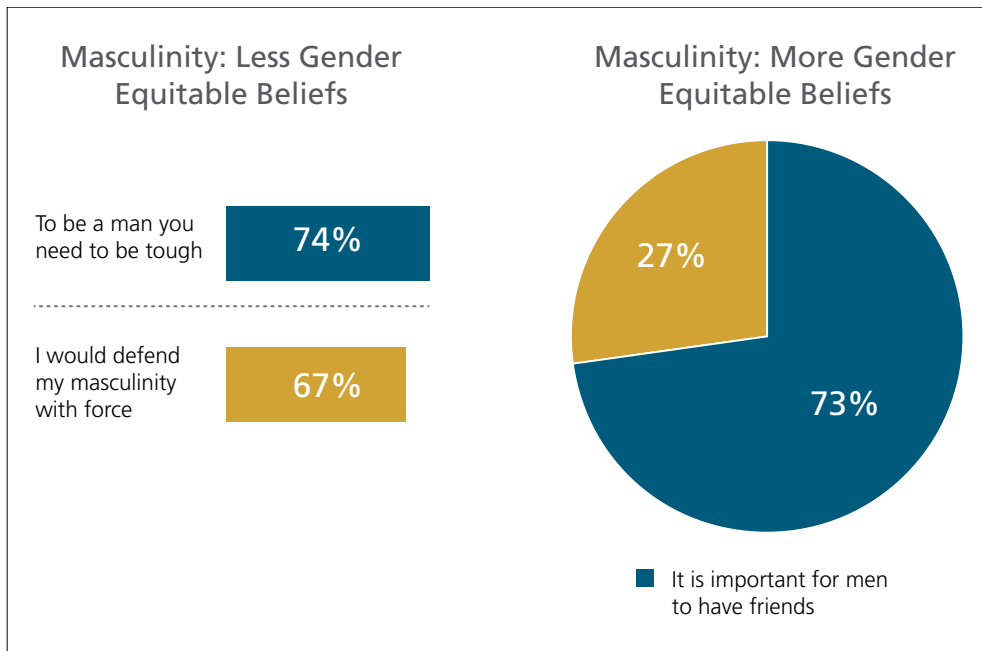
During the training participants noted that there is inadequate legal support on issues of SGBV at the village level, despite the mandate by the Government of Tanzania to establish a “gender desk” at each police precinct. The Desk mandate was put in place to address high rates of SGBV in Tanzania, though there are many communities that have not yet been reached with this service. In addition, most community members do not know their rights or how to respond to violence. Instead, most disputes are addressed at the family level and are left unreported. In all the villages that Anza visited for the GEC monitoring, there was no established gender desk and most participants of men-to-men dialogues did not know that this resource existed in Tanzania.

## **Reproductive Health**

The Scale also included two questions about reproductive health. Here, the results of the survey showed predominately equitable attitudes. In response to the statement “if a man gets a woman pregnant, the child is the responsibility of both”, 90% strongly agreed. Similarly, in response to the statement “couples should decide together when they want to have children,” 81% strong agreed.

## **Masculinities**

Responses to statements on identity suggest that men feel a need to defend their masculinity in harmful ways and they hold on to harmful ideals of masculinity. For example, 74% of men strongly agreed to the statement “to be a man, you need to be tough.” Furthermore, 67% of respondents strongly agreed that if someone insults them, they will defend their reputation with force. One promising finding was that 79% of respondents strongly agreed to the statement “it is important for a man to have friends with whom he can talk about his problems.”



After the refresher training and certification, Anza conducted a final general reflection discussion with the 5 GECs to understand the impact of the entire GEC program including the initial training, the peer dialogues, customized support from Anza, and the refresher training. Reflection questions include the following:

1. Are roles for women and men changing in your community? Why and how?
2. What does an “empowered woman” act like and do in your community?
3. What does a “gender-equitable man” act like and do? Are there examples of empowered women and gender-equitable men in your community?
4. What specific changes do you want to see for women in your village in the next year?

GECs reflected that they now have a better understanding of the need for men’s and women’s roles to change; specifically, they pointed to the need for men to take on more domestic chores to better support their families. The GECs also recognized the importance of women’s empowerment for socio-economic development, noting that an empowered woman is one who takes a leadership role in the family and community. GECs still struggled with some of the ideas of what it means to be “gender-equitable men” but see collaboration between women and men as playing an important role in poverty alleviation and development. Specifically, they requested ongoing support and education to reach their goals of becoming more gender-equitable men, such as further technical and financial support to form groups and conduct additional community dialogues on gender equality. They also noted that opportunities to meet with Tanzanian gender experts who understood the specific issues they face would be helpful.

Overall, GECs are hopeful. They noted that patriarchal traditions and cultural norms have a long history and will take considerable time to change, but the process has begun. For example, one of the five GECs reported that more women in their communities are now leading households in economic decision-making. When asked what changes they would like to see in their communities with respect to women in their villages, all GECs agreed that they wish to see their wives and daughters doing better in all aspects of life including education and economic opportunity. Now, and in the coming years, they would like to see them treated with respect and dignity. Three of the five also mentioned that they want to see women taking up leadership positions and being treated equally in accessing social and economic opportunities.

## Moving Forward

In partnership with Anza, MEDA has learned many valuable lessons through the GEC pilot in Kilimanjaro, Tanzania, and intends to incorporate these learnings in future projects in Tanzania as well as expanding work to engage men as champions of gender equality around the world. An analysis of the data from this pilot gathered through interviews, questionnaires, and direct observation revealed the following key learnings and recommendations:

1. It is critical for GECs to have ongoing support from an organization and a known contact at the organization to reach out to with questions or concerns. Anza appointed a point person who was available to answer questions and problem solve with individual GECs when they needed extra support. This was important for the GECs to be able to plan the logistics for their peer dialogues, but also in managing conflicts and other challenges. Logistical support should include a small budget for food, water, and travel, as appropriate.
2. Men and boys also experience violence. This is an issue that often arises in trainings around violence, and sufficient time should be allocated to discuss this issue, as well as sharing resources on reporting and where to find support.
3. Printed materials such as key messages from the facilitation manual (e.g. the booklets that some GEC distributed) are helpful for GECs to remember what they have learned and to use in peer dialogues as discussion starters and reference points. These should be released on a regular basis to keep gender equality issues top of mind throughout the implementation of the program.
4. Extra care must be taken in identifying GECs who meet key criteria for the program. This includes an interest in promoting GE, time available to conduct peer dialogues, influence in the community, and personality (for example, comfort with public speaking but also ability to speak with women and not for them, acknowledging that empowerment comes from within). In some instances, older men with influence can

be paired with younger men who have more free time to work together to complete the dialogues.

5. Strengthening the capacity of men to facilitate dialogues effectively is a key component of the GEC program. Facilitation is an important skill to bring people together with a common cause and appropriately manage conflicts.
6. GECs should be encouraged and supported to plan and implement their own initiatives that are tailored to the needs of their communities. The GEC who established the father's union as a peer platform is an excellent example of community-led development.
7. Refresher trainings should be conducted in specified wards or villages and include local government authorities so that communities can own the program and make it sustainable.
8. Young men should be encouraged to work with GECs and/or become GECs themselves, particularly as they are more likely to have access to and awareness of information and communications technology which can be leveraged to disseminate gender equality messages.
9. Legal services are scarce and expensive in remote areas, and most women do not know their legal rights. Many people (mostly women) are denied justice due to limited understanding of legal processes. In rural areas there is very little access to legal knowledge, while the problems rural communities are confronted with are immense. Future GEC programs should include a legal support and education component in partnership with local authorities to address these issues.


## Conclusions

MEDA and other organizations, such as Promundo and CARE, have seen great success with efforts to engage men in gender equality programming using models like GEC. The program is adaptable, and the key messages are relevant for promoting positive masculinity around the world. SSBVC was the third MEDA project to conduct a pilot of the GEC model and, seeing the positive outcomes, the model has been included in the design of a number of new projects. MEDA published a full GEC manual for the SSBVC pilot which will be used in future implementation of the model. [The manual can be found on the MEDA website here.](#)



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