



VALUE PROPOSITION

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Social Norms and Agency Learning Collaboratives (LCs) were founded to create a network of researchers, policy makers, practitioners to bridge knowledge gaps and create a forward-thinking community to build consensus around topics related to social norms¹. This community has specific focus on Social and Behaviour Change (SBC), as social norms are often an essential component of behavior change. Norms-shifting interventions sit at the crux of the relationship with agency. Agency is often defined as “the capacity of a person, or group of people, to create and accomplish goals they set for themselves, with full autonomy to make decisions about their own health and well-being.” Often, limiting norms inhibit an individual or collective’s ability to make their own decisions, due to the normative context through which decision-making occurs. As such, norms and agency are intrinsically linked, and both play a key role in behavior change. The Learning Collaboratives have a collective vision and mission which guides their operations.

VISION AND MISSION

Vision: We envision a world where partnerships, knowledge-sharing, and thought leadership converge to ensure sustained equity, social justice, and health for all people

Mission: Our mission is to strengthen research and practice on social norms, gender, and agency by building a network of practitioners, researchers, evaluators, and advocates who share knowledge, generate evidence, and develop resources to support social and behavior change programming

Initially, the LCs) were formed as one global LC, but the EALC was built from this to promote a regional focus and highlight the importance of having culturally relevant discussions on norms and agency. Similar regional LCs exist in West Africa and South Asia).

.

¹ Social norms are the perceived informal, mostly unwritten, rules that define acceptable, appropriate, and obligatory actions within a given group or community (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990; Cislighi & Heise, 2018)

EASTERN AFRICA AGENCY, SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS COLLABORATIVE

The Eastern African Agency, Social and Gender Norms Learning Collaborative (EALC) was launched in 2020 as a network of implementing organizations, researchers, community representatives and stakeholders including NGOs, national alliances, networks, consortia and media with expertise and an interest in social and gender norms and increasing individual and community agency to improve health. In addition to social norms and agency, the EALC has a focus on gender norms because in the Eastern African Region, social and gender norms are pivotal in positioning and determining peoples' ways of life, shaping opportunities and outcomes.

The LC exists to empower local research institutions and organizations, strengthen networks, and enhance the expertise and capacity of institutions to facilitate and promote high-quality research and SBC programming within their localities. Membership in the EALC is open to individuals and organizations from the Eastern Africa countries including; **Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia.**

The EALC works in partnership with the [Agency for All](#) project² to generate evidence on the influence of agency in shifting social and gender norms using social and behaviour change approaches and frameworks. Research results from the Agency for All project will be utilized by the LC to strengthen the discourse around social norms and agency in Eastern Africa.

Enabling Principles of the EALC

The EALC is guided by principles below that ensure that it remains responsive to the needs of its members;

- Convening power that occurs regularly, is engaging, and maintains participation and interest of the members of the collaborative.
- A shared vision built around a set of core values to provide guidance and improve programming.
- Distributed leadership in which everyone in the collaborative network matters.
- Gender sensitivity and inclusion.
- Learning and reflection space that is effective



The EALC is managed and led by a secretariat of organizations— Impact and Innovations Development Centre (IIDC), CARE International in Uganda, Makerere University, and the USAID Agency for All Project's Regional Coordinator.

Collectively, this group is responsible for moving forward the EALC and its activities, expanding membership, and setting goals for the future of the learning collaborative.

² Agency for All is a USAID-funded 5-year (2022-2027) cooperative agreement with the goal to improve and sustain the health of women, girls, and communities through locally led, equitable partnerships focused on understanding agency within social and behavior change (SBC) programs

OBJECTIVES

In order to realise our vision and mission as well as the goals we have set for ourselves, we have developed the following objectives;



Facilitate Cross-Learning and Networking; To bring together LC members to network and build collaboration geared towards locally driven evidence generation and research utilization



Contribute to Policy Development: Assist LC members in conducting research for the regional with the aim of contributing to local, regional and global policy development.



Create learning platforms: Arrange cross-learning and sharing events at the regional and global levels for LC members, including virtual webinars, conferences, seminars, thematic panel discussions, and in-person learning events.



Build Capacity: To enhance the capacity of LC members and local researchers to generate and utilize evidence and adopt systematic measurement systems for social norms and agency.

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

Our membership is diverse and represents organizations and individuals working across health and development sectors at all levels of professional progression. Our community of practice allows for two-way communication, and the members are essential in our ability to grow and expand knowledge on social norms and agency. A few of the key benefits of joining the LC are highlighted below:

1

Networking and collaboration opportunities: EALC members are able to network with other members from different sectors to expand their professional network through physical and virtual platforms.

2

Engage in convenings and events: Members have the opportunity to participate in regional and global events such as conferences, webinars, seminars, panel discussions, and in-person learning events for sharing knowledge and best practices.

3

Lead technical discussions: Members are able to lead or co-lead thematic groups and technical discussions, contributing to the regional and global dialogue on social norms and agency.

4

Disseminate and amplify work: LC members have an opportunity to share their work such as research papers, project reports, learnings, etc. on social norms and agency at both regional and global levels. The LC also helps members find opportunities to share their work on a global scale, such as conferences.

5

Co-create resources: Members often lead or contribute to the body of social norms work in Eastern Africa co-creating resources such as blogs, technical briefs, case studies, video bytes, and co-host webinars.

6

Community of Expertise: LC members have access to a community of technical experts ready to share support and foster capacity building in the design, implementation, measurement, and scalability of social norms and agency research and programs.

WHAT THE LC WOULD EXPECT FROM YOU

The success and sustainability of EALC solely depends on trust, transparency and ownership among members. The EALC therefore has the following expectations of members;



Willingness to actively participate in or lead knowledge sharing activities, such as thematic groups, task forces, and other EALC-sponsored activities



Ability to openly share resources, evidence, lessons, best practices with LC members while maintaining trust and transparency.



Interest in representing the LC in external meetings such as international conferences, professional gatherings and regional meetings as deemed appropriate



Willingness to talk about the network and consciously work to help expand our reach, including introducing the LC to others for potential enrolment or collaboration.

Joining the LC means you would be connected to a group of forward thinkers, ready to make a concerted effort in shifting the needle on social norms and agency-focused research and programming.

You would be connected to a larger global group, as the EALC is one of four regional LCs which all form a larger global network, and you'd be connected to other regional partners in Eastern Africa.

If this seems like an exciting opportunity for engagement, join us today by registering at this link:

<https://forms.gle/mJjME1nX9mVHQ8Zi6>