



# SHOULDN'T I GET A SAY? INTENTIONALLY INVOLVING YOUTH IN PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION & EVALUATION

Brianan Kiernan, Allison Pfozter, Pierrot Mbela, Francesca Quirke, Susan Igras

## THE ISSUE

Adults developing and implementing reproductive health programs is no longer enough. Young people being considered only beneficiaries is no longer enough. Youth and adolescents are experts on their issues and experiences and must be actively engaged in programs to respond to their diverse needs by leveraging their unique talents and perspectives.

But how to do this on a practical level while respecting age and contextual differences of implementing organizations?

### Bien Grandir! Growing Up GREAT!

- Reaching 10-14 year old girls and boys
- Influence adolescent knowledge and awareness of puberty, reproductive health, and gender equality
- Create supportive and more gender-equitable family and institutional structures

### Masculinité Famille et Foi Transforming Masculinities

- Reaching young couples
- Influence couple dialogue and action on family planning, intimate partner violence, gender-positive shifts
- Engage church leaders to create more gender-equitable congregational environments



- Advisory Council of VYA club members
- VYAs as club session facilitators
- VYA-led outcome evaluation

- Advisory Council of younger congregation members
- Youth as congregational gender champions

## LESSONS

- Even if considered in concept notes, projects need to prioritize, operationalize, and budget for youth engagement as implementation begins (even in the design phase)
- Take time to convince skeptical adults; prevailing cultural norms often are biased against youth inclusion!
- Plant organizational seeds and develop feasible strategies that match structures and resources
- For younger adolescents: Consider developmental capacities (in/out of school) and adjust processes accordingly. Always ensure protection.
- Together we can grow project concepts of **positive youth development!**



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**PaSSages**

[WWW.IRH.ORG/PROJECTS/PASSAGES](http://WWW.IRH.ORG/PROJECTS/PASSAGES)