**M4-H4-Barriers and Solutions Pairing Exercise**

**Instructions:**

1. Print out enough copies for each group.
2. Cut out the barriers and place them in one envelope. Then cut out the solutions and place them in another envelope
3. Add some blank cards as well for groups to write any additional barriers and solutions they might come up with
4. Explain that a number of barriers might have the same solution and some barriers might have more than one solution.

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| BARRIER | SOLUTION |
| Power balance between young people and older generations | Community embeddedness - Young people are best placed to identify the problems they face and design appropriate solutions based on their knowledge of navigating local contexts and structures. This will enable more groups of young women and girls to be reached, especially the hard to reach (such as out-of-school youth) who sit outside of traditional structures of engagement. |
| Poor education and training affects possession of life skills such as critical thinking and decision making | Overcoming power dynamics with positive forms of decision-making relations: collaboration, empowerment (supporting development of confidence, self-worth, leadership skills), education of their rights to participate |
| Inequality and exclusion of social groups makes it hard to reach specific groups, such as rural young women and girls? | Capacity building soft skills. Training and supporting young people to build up these soft skills, results in more effective and meaningful engagement. They will operate more effectively as team members and participate more meaningfully in discussions and other program activities. |
| Short term engagement – high turnover in programmes | Follow-up - Where there is a lack of ownership of the project, it affects commitment levels disengagement. Where they have inputted to make sure you have a follow up strategy afterwards. This will help them to see the impact of their contribution, feel valued and will result in longer-term engagement with your program |
| Gender-based violence. | Peer to peer educators. |
| The cultural norm of only viewing young people as beneficiaries, as opposed to partners and leaders. | Creating safe spaces - promote tolerant, open and safe working environments, especially for vulnerable young people |
| Lack of evidence around what works in youth programing. Lack of age-disaggregated data through which to create targeted development programs and measure their impact. | More radical opportunities that focus on address power imbalances, such as co-ownership should be explored to go beyond traditional engagement structures. |
| Gender norms often means there is pressure for women and girls to spend time completing domestic chores and look after children/young siblings, preventing them from having the time to engage with extra activities. | Peer to peer communicators - Young people are the best communicators. Young people themselves can best express their ever changing nuances that affect themselves in their everyday lives. |
| Traditional understanding of gender roles/gender bias - females seen as unworthy of investment. School fees and additional costs such as transport, clothing and books reinforce the gender gap. When poor families cannot afford to educate all their children, it is often their daughters who have to stay home until they get married. | Developing young people as partners and leaders - gaining buy-in from local young people, and supporting them to be partners and leaders will aid your reach, but will also establish a strong network of volunteers therefore combating attrition rates and enhancing the sustainability of your programming. |
| Stereotypes regarding the potential value-added of young people. Young people are seen as lacking in expertise, experience dealing with authorities or people in a position of power, technical knowledge, limited mobility, low confidence, weak public communications skills. | Using data. For example Afrobarometer data provides useful insights into the realities of young people’s engagement and combats the perception of them as aggressive and volatile. |
| Classification of adulthood - nature of youth being a transitionary state means that rights attached to adulthood aren’t easily handed over (aside from voting which is based on age) | Consider funding opportunities for the young people you are engaging. Providing travel expenses and stipends makes participating a more realistic long term option. |
| Education dropout rates - percentage of girls that go onto secondary education. Out of schools young people are hard to reach, but also sometimes lack some necessary soft skills essential to engagement (e.g. critical thinking, decision making). | Working with youth-led organisations and youth groups for credibility. When you are a new ‘face’ (organisation) to these young people, it helps to interact through established youth organisations and youth groups for trust and credibility. This is particularly when approaching sensitive issues such as HIV and AIDS. |
| Inequality and exclusion of social groups – how do we reach groups such as rural young women and girls. Even when utilising participatory approaches to youth engagement, it is easy to be exclusive and focus engagement on youth ‘superstars’ who are part of the programme or system already. | Consider working with youth-led organisations and youth groups. When you are not embedded in the area as an organisation or they may be more established in the community and able to overcome some of the social and structural barriers |
| Teenage pregnancy and early marriage | Present engagement as an opportunity to build soft skills such as leadership. Understand the objectives of the young person for this opportunity help them achieve that. They will see the benefit of investing their time. |
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| Society views young people as a threat - volatile, aggressive or ‘anti-state.’ Young people often perceived as risky and aggressive, demanding and unaware of the implementation challenges development practitioners face. |  |
| **Young people’s sexual and reproductive health rights, particularly women and girls’, are sensitive issues for individuals and communities**. Contraception seen as the female’s responsibility, if they have any say at all. Until there can be an open and honest dialogue, these prevalent and important issues are hard to address or attempt to resolve |  |
| High turnover of young people involved in programs. Managing youth retention |  |