A Review of Implementation of Principles from the Quality and Standards Framework:

Principles and Tips to Drive the Effective Application of Human-Centered Design on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health

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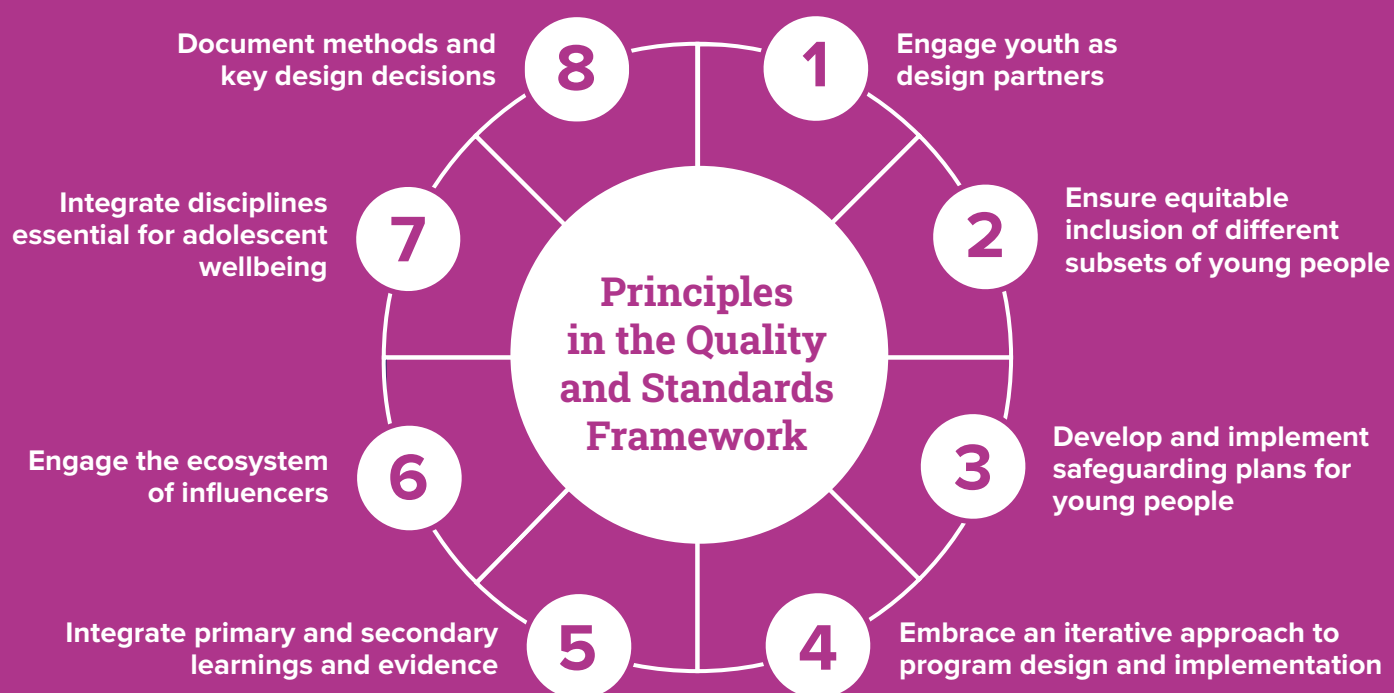Authors: Ciera Thomas, Kubai Edward Ikiugu, Edna Maira, Kate Sheahan

Introduction

Human-centered design (HCD) is a problem-solving technique that puts people at the center of a product or service development process, enabling them to create solutions that are tailored to their context, perspectives, experiences, and desires (Landry, 2020). In the health sector, HCD may be used for various purposes, including the design of health programs, products, and services (Bazanno et al., 2017).

Since 2020, the HCDExchange has been exploring and promoting the use of HCD to improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH). Because HCD is a relatively new practice in global public health, there is a dearth of evidence and guidelines on how to effectively use this technique to achieve desired programmatic outcomes. To address this gap, a working group of members of the HCDExchange Community of Practice created the

Quality and Standards Framework (QSF): Principles and Tips to Drive the Effective Application of Human-Centered Design on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Global Health Programming (HCDExchange, n.d.). This framework consists of eight guiding principles with corresponding tips and resources to safely, equitably, and effectively utilize HCD in ASRH research and programming (HCDExchange, n.d.).

Two years after the launch of the QSF, the HCDExchange sought to improve understanding of how, when, and why select organizations implement principles from the QSF by documenting experiences and lessons learned. This review presents the results of the exploration.

Document methods and key design decisions — 8

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Principles in the Quality and Standards Framework

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Ensure equitable inclusion of different subsets of young people — 2

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Methods

This review focuses on the experience of two organizations, Howard Delafield International India (HDI) and Ipas-Kenya, in integrating and applying principles from the QSF into their projects. HDI and Ipas-Kenya were purposely selected to participate in the review because of their rich experience utilizing HCD in ASRH programming.

A series of semi-structured in-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted with one participant from Ipas-Kenya and two participants from HDI, resulting in over ten hours of data collection. The interviews prompted the interviewees to reflect on the practices within their projects in light of the principles. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using rapid qualitative analysis methods (Schexnayder et al., 2023).

Howard Delafield International (HDI)

HDI is a behavioral insights consultancy driving innovation to positively impact lives. HDI partnered with organizations in the public, private, and social sectors under the Game of Choice, Not Chance™ initiative to create Go Nisha Go™, a gaming app made with girls and for girls in India. The goal was to use gameplay to encourage young people to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.

Ipas-Kenya

Ipas-Kenya works with partners to build sustainable abortion ecosystems. Ipas-Kenya has used HCD in numerous interventions, including in the development of a chatbot designed to provide general education and referral information to women and girls seeking safe abortion and post-abortion contraception services.

Results

Principle 1. Engage Youth as Design Partners

Project teams should engage young people both as team members and co-design research participants throughout the design and implementation process to ensure solutions are driven by the needs and preferences of young people. Involving young people as partners not only provides them with the skills to co-design and make decisions with adult team members but also allows them to work with their peers to navigate ASRH challenges.

HDI and Ipas-Kenya frequently engaged adolescents in project and product design through formative research, co-design, and prototype testing. HDI also involved adolescents in the marketing and evaluation of the Go Nisha, Go™ game. For both organizations, youth engagement improved project responsiveness to the needs and desires of their target audiences. Both HDI and Ipas-Kenya also highlighted the importance of engaging youth over time, noting that sustained engagement with the focus population produced a sense of ownership and accountability to the project. This kind of sustained engagement of young people requires empathy, accommodation, and a significant time investment.

> " Because we were engaging with young girls between 15 and 19 years old and we were talking about relationships, boys, sex and contraception, of course within the context of the narrative of a game, but nevertheless it was in some cases a tricky topic. It meant that it couldn't just be anybody who was facilitating that discussion. So it was a good decision to involve youth even in the process of facilitating it.

HDI's youth-engaged formative research enabled them to gather in-depth information on sensitive topics, filling learning and data gaps related to sexual activity, contraceptive use, and abortion. However, they found that conducting formative research with adolescents about their sexual and reproductive health was challenging, and it was crucial to identify researchers with whom young people felt safe and comfortable. To address this challenge, HDI engaged adolescent girls to conduct interviews with their peers themselves, which required training the girls in topics related to ASRH as well as in research methods. Both these critical steps were time- and resource-intensive.

HDI also noted that, although often overlooked, engaging youth in defining the goal, learning objectives, and outcomes of the research is valuable as it helps to guide the whole project. Formative research conducted with girls also informed functional aspects of the projects. For example, in the gaming industry, mobile games are typically developed in portrait mode. However, through its formative research, HDI learned that their focus population preferred to play in landscape mode. HDI noted that formative research interviews with youth were valuable because they facilitated decision-making processes within the team and the development of learning objectives by "[removing] subjective decision-making to let recommendations come from the girls themselves."

Both HDI and Ipas-Kenya also engaged young people in project and product co-design and testing processes. Throughout these processes, the designers focused on developing empathy for the focus population. Developing empathy is a core HCD principle that includes the development of personas, or profiles of typical and atypical members of the focus population. HDI and Ipas-Kenya utilized these personas to improve their understanding of their focus population's needs, experiences, behaviors, and goals and adapted their products accordingly.

While fruitful, engaging youth as research and design partners can present challenges. For example, the project teams faced potential risks to girls' safety because of the cultural norms and stigmatization related to conducting research on ASRH topics. To mitigate these risks, HDI established extensive safeguarding measures (see Principle Three). Additionally, the availability of HCD-related training resources in languages other than English was limited, and time constraints prevented the research team from undertaking multiple iterations of translation. HDI and Ipas-Kenya also highlighted the importance of generating donor and stakeholder buy-in for these investments and of securing the time and human and financial resources necessary to work through the associated challenges.

Lessons Learned

01 Iteration requires sustained engagement from design partners. To diminish the risk of dropout and to maintain the engagement of young people, it is important to build ownership, a shared vision of success, and a clear idea of the roles each participant will play during the design and implementation process.

02 Often overlooked, engaging young people in defining the formative research goals and objectives is beneficial because these goals and objectives guide the whole project.

03 Training youth researchers in both research methods and technical content is critical to the success of youth-engaged research.

04 Engaging youth in the design process results in reciprocal learning; youth learn about the technical content and research processes, while their adult partners learn about the desires, needs, and experiences of the youth end user.

05 To achieve youth engagement, donors and other key stakeholders must understand the benefits, challenges, and resource requirements of youth-engaged HCD.

06 Prior to engagement, understanding and addressing potential safety risks for youth associated with the project is critical. Implementing safeguarding practices improves the likelihood of participants providing open and honest feedback (see Principle Three for more information on safeguarding).

07 Engaging youth over a sustained period of time is challenging but produces a sense of youth ownership and accountability to the project. Sustained engagement allows opportunities for young people to develop the confidence required to share their opinions, needs, and desires.

Principle 2. Ensure Equitable Inclusion of Diverse Subsets of Young People

Project teams need to be intentional about which vulnerable subsets of young people to include (e.g. those out of school, or living with disabilities) as priority to the particular challenge at hand. These subgroups need to be involved in the design of solutions as well as benefit from the resulting ASRH programming. An intentional focus on inclusivity throughout the HCD process increases accessibility to the intervention among priority subsets of young people.

While HDI and Ipas-Kenya endeavored to include diverse groups of young people in their HCD processes, both organizations found it challenging to do so.

HDI staff noted that although they had an ethical imperative to respond to the needs of all young people and thus engaged youth living with disabilities during formative research, resource constraints limited their ability to implement suggestions and solutions that arose from the process. HDI also noted that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the challenges of ensuring equitable inclusion of diverse groups of young people. The pandemic required shifting their approach from engaging young people in-person to engaging them virtually, which was resource-intensive and excluded those with poor internet access.

> " We do wish that we were able to think about the aspects of inclusion and diversity early on [...] programs that are very much focused and have that perspective right from the beginning, from the planning stages or right from the point that the opportunity is conceived - of either the program or the funding - are able to follow through on it. But in cases like this, it becomes difficult to follow through on it.

Ipas-Kenya found that engaging diverse subsets of young people required extensive planning, preparation, and resources. This is particularly true in projects where youth are not the sole focus population. In particular, Ipas-Kenya's study on post-abortion contraception access and self-care focused on all women of reproductive age, which included a subgroup of sexually active adolescent girls. Within the context of this study, it was challenging to engage adolescents generally and even more so to include adolescent subsets. Ipas-Kenya also cited policy-related challenges. In particular, organizations seeking to engage adolescents under the age of 18 in the design and delivery of sexual health services must seek consent from a parent or guardian. It was thus difficult to include this group of young people in project design without compromising their privacy and creating safety concerns.

Lessons Learned

01 Engaging diverse subsets of young people in HCD processes within ASRH projects is essential to the creation of equitable solutions but requires prioritization, planning, and budgeting.

02 It is critical to ensure the availability of resources for addressing the needs of diverse subpopulations of young people prior to engaging them in HCD research and co-creation of products or services.

Principle 3. Develop and Implement Safeguarding Plans for Young People

Project teams should engage young people in a safe and ethical manner. This includes paying particular attention to differentials in power and agency between young research participants, youth team members, and adult team members due to factors such as age, socioeconomic status, language, and education levels. Those commissioning, conducting, and funding HCD for ASRH have a shared responsibility to protect the safety, dignity, and well-being of young people, as research participants, as team members, and as intended users of the program being designed and/or evaluated.

The focus on ethics and safeguarding requires intentional training, planning, protocol development, and preparation throughout the HCD process.

Both HDI and Ipas-Kenya implemented measures to protect the safety and privacy of youth engaged in their projects. They noted that appropriate safeguarding measures are highly context-specific. Developing and implementing such measures requires skilled specialists with knowledge of local culture, as well as engagement with local leaders who can ensure adequate

contextualization of risk assessment and mitigation strategies. Both organizations also noted the importance of funder and partner values in safeguarding; not all organizations have similar priorities, and these can only be dictated to a certain extent, so identifying organizations that also prioritize safeguarding is important.

HDI's team included safeguarding officers who developed risk mitigation plans, conducted community assessments, engaged local leaders, and identified organizations that could provide assistance in case of an adverse event. However, HDI also highlighted the importance of engaging youth in identifying safety risks.

Ipas-Kenya employed a chatbot that could operate on a common cell phone as the primary mode of conversation between their project and the youth being engaged.

> " These [safeguarding plans] cannot be drafted inside an air conditioned room with people who are not actually going to the field. Involving youth themselves in identifying the risks is also part of the plan.

Because phone sharing is common amongst youth in Kenya, Ipas-Kenya took measures to protect girls' privacy by encouraging them to delete chatbot messages after the conversation concluded and by disabling chatbot auto-engage features. They noted that prioritizing safety benefited not only youth, but also the project; it created trust and accountability between youth and the project, which made it possible to reach other youth through snowballing.

Lessons Learned

01 Involving local community leaders, partner organizations, and end users is important to the development and implementation of appropriate safeguarding plans. This process also generates community support for the project and facilitates a constructive response should a safeguarding issue arise.

02 Having designated staff who are skilled and trained in safeguarding practices facilitates higher-quality safeguarding policies, plans, and practices.

03 Reviewing safeguarding plans frequently is important to ensure that they capture the current project context and respond to emerging safety and security trends.

04 Successful safeguarding plans require the collaboration of multiple teams as youth are often involved with projects in various ways (as focus group participants, researchers, co-designers, etc.), across settings and project phases.

Principle 4. Embrace an Iterative Approach to Program Design and Implementation

Project teams, particularly implementing partners, must adopt a design mindset that leads with curiosity, questions assumptions, defers judgment, and is rooted in co-creation. Throughout all phases of the HCD process, it is essential to uphold an iterative mindset that allows for continuous learning and refinement. Specifically, project teams need to use flexible and evolving approaches to respond to the HCD findings as they emerge.

> " Human needs evolve with time so as they evolve and you iterate, it gives you a sense that you're really meeting the needs of the user, and you're really moving along with the user and with the intervention as well.

Throughout the design process, both HDI and Ipas-Kenya employed user feedback to iterate on different solutions, test underlying assumptions, and improve the relatability and desirability of their intervention. HDI undertook multiple rounds of iteration in all aspects of the game

design. The details found in the personas, language used, physical appearance of the avatar, and color palette of the game came about from several rounds of iteration involving adolescent girls. Ipas-Kenya used iteration to test assumptions made during preliminary project design and to ensure that the final design responded to the lived experiences of adolescents.

Involving youth in iteration generates a sense of ownership over the product. HDI reflected that adaptations based on user feedback "infused reality into [Go Nisha, Go™]" that reflected the needs, desires, and experiences of the focus population. This iterative process improved the acceptability of the product and its probability of uptake while adding details that would not otherwise be possible. Nevertheless, both HDI and Ipas-Kenya observed that iteration through the design process consumed significant time and resources. Ipas-Kenya also noted the challenge of retaining participants outside of the immediate research team through multiple rounds of iteration.

Lessons Learned

01 Prior to starting the iterative design process, organizations should consider the extent of iteration they plan to conduct, taking project objectives into consideration, as well as the availability of time and resources.

02 Organizations may need to prioritize which feedback they incorporate into an intervention. Feedback not actioned in a particular project may prove useful in another, so documenting all feedback is important.

03 Mitigating power dynamics among participants when iterating as part of the design process is critical, particularly when the process includes youth and adults. This will encourage young people to share and contribute to the process. Researchers should encourage participants to approach the iteration processes with an open mind and to recognize that their experiences may not reflect those of others.

Principle 5. Integrate Primary and Secondary Learnings and Evidence

Project teams should use secondary evidence and consult with technical experts throughout the project life cycle to advance the sector's understanding of an existing challenge. Use of evidence helps enhance design efficacy and ensures that the lessons learned from the field of public health are acknowledged.

Researchers may integrate primary data collection and analysis with existing data and evidence to inform project design. The mechanisms involved in this process are highly specific to the needs, resources, and objectives of a project. HDI used literature on existing interventions to develop the initial design of their product and collected primary data in the iterative co-design of the prototypes before the final product was launched. Ipas-Kenya similarly used existing research and data to build an initial prototype but gathered primary data during a community-based pilot of the program. They then adapted the product using primary data from the pilot before scaling it up to other communities. Ipas-Kenya staff noted that using both primary and secondary learnings to guide iteration honed and accelerated the iterative process.

Both HDI and Ipas-Kenya used existing frameworks, knowledge, and evidence to build their projects' foundations and inform technical content. They integrated the primary data they collected to refine the project and ensure relatability. HDI used behavior change theory and game-based learning principles to design their measurement approaches and make the game both fun and informative. They leveraged existing information on menstrual hygiene and contraception to inform the content of the game while integrating primary data from formative research to ensure that the game reflected the girls' lived realities.

> "We used both primary and secondary data to point to where the need is and what we could do as a project to ensure that the intervention is more responsive to user needs.

Similarly, Ipas-Kenya used existing theory and primary data in the basic design of their intervention to identify the focus population's needs and develop potential solutions to address these needs.

Lessons Learned

01 Integrating primary data collection with existing data and evidence saves time and focuses HCD exploration and solution finding. Organizations should make use of existing evidence and identify professionals who can provide subject matter expertise. They can then complement this knowledge with primary data collection to improve the relatability and desirability of the solution/intervention.

02 Conducting a thorough desk review prior to project design can help the implementing organization better understand the specific needs of the focus population that the project aims to address as well as how these needs currently impact them. The review can also identify evidence gaps best addressed with primary data collection.

Principle 6. Engage the Ecosystem of Influencers

Project teams need to take into consideration the broader ecosystem in which young people live and engage the stakeholders within that ecosystem. Involving government and community stakeholders early in the design process increases the perceived value of the project and can pave the way toward sustainability of the intervention. Additionally, project teams need to consult with key influencers in young people's lives (e.g., parents, teachers, romantic partners) to increase the robustness of the solution concepts and the likelihood of solution uptake by the intended beneficiary.

In HCD, it is important to consider and engage key influencers in the lives of youth because these actors can impact how the intervention is received within a community and how the focus population engages with it. Stakeholder mapping helps identify the actors in an ecosystem and determine key influencers. The criteria by which stakeholders are selected for engagement will vary; the project's objectives guide this choice.

Ipas-Kenya utilized two frameworks: the Shifting Gears Framework and the champions model. The Shifting Gears Framework, developed by Ipas, guides a stakeholder mapping exercise that involves pinpointing the influence of various stakeholders within the ecosystem, as well as the potential impacts of the decisions and actions these stakeholders could take. After identifying these local stakeholders and influencers, Ipas-Kenya used the champions model to leverage the support of champions, or proponents of the intervention, while addressing resistance from actors who may oppose or discourage girls from embracing the intervention.

> **So as they review the potential design outcome, [the technical advisory group] also advises on sustainability and scalability of these interventions. So how do we introduce the intervention in other counties where we are not working? What do we need to put in place to be able to do this? They inform us on scale, in terms of how to scale the interventions and how to sustain them beyond the project period... I think any organizations that are attempting to implement human centered design should strive to also put in a technical advisory group to be able to support institutionalization of some of these [QSF] principles.**

After stakeholder mapping, Ipas-Kenya engaged key actors and influencers in a technical advisory group (TAG) which included representatives from the Ministry of Health (MoH), local pharmacies delivering family planning products, and key influencers on women and girls like family members and peer mentors. They noted that assembling this TAG allowed them to develop a pilot program that was responsive to the needs of Kenyan women and girls, while also being complimentary to the existing health infrastructure to promote long-term sustainability and feasibility. Engaging health system actors also facilitated program scale-up after the pilot was tested and revised.

Lessons Learned

01 Engaging stakeholders and community gatekeepers through community-based champions is critical to ensuring buy-in and successful implementation of interventions.

02 It is important to consider the perspectives of stakeholders opposed to the product or project. If engaged productively, these stakeholders can help designers and implementers understand the root of their opposition and the best way to address it.

03 Assembling a technical advisory group (TAG) of diverse stakeholders who have influence over and who are impacted by the intervention improves the likelihood that the intervention will be responsive to existing needs. It also ensures feasibility and sustainability within the constraints of existing resources and healthcare infrastructure.

Principle 7. Integrate Disciplines Essential for Adolescent Wellbeing

Project teams should take an interdisciplinary approach when addressing the needs of the adolescent population. The goal should be to combine different disciplinary perspectives (e.g., behavioral science, public health) that are particularly relevant to adolescents' positive development and wellbeing.

The integration of multiple disciplines into the design team was a natural part of HDI's design process for Go Nisha, Go™. HDI collaborated with nine organizations to provide direct access to products and services for sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing in-game and thereby mitigate barriers to care. Their diverse expertise ranged from road safety to menstrual hygiene and career counseling. Integrating different disciplines into a project or product design is a complex process that requires extensive coordination and synthesis. However, doing so imbues the project with essential layers of adolescent-focused expertise and perspective. To avoid wasting limited resources and to capture the full breadth of other technical areas, HDI recommends integrating existing resources from multidisciplinary organizations with expertise in topics covered by programming efforts.

Nevertheless, assembling diverse experts to integrate multiple disciplines has its challenges. Both HDI and Ipas-Kenya noted the importance of mitigating power dynamics among organizations, government representatives, and community members to ensure all perspectives are equitably voiced. Providing space for feedback at critical junctures was also important to ensure contributions

> **Do not try to reinvent the wheel because each component you try to design from scratch requires a lot of effort. If you tried to do everything, you wouldn't be able to do justice to each matter. So… if [the] intention is to design a rich product that incorporates the nuances and does not serve as a blanket answer to all sorts of questions, then the best way is to partner with experts.**

from all of the actors involved and to create a sense of accountability.

Experts may be assembled into individual teams according to technical expertise, consolidated into a larger group to improve communication and efficiency, or play independent advisory roles. When each team is working on a specific technical component relevant to their expertise, they bring greater topical insight to program development; however, it may then be difficult to coordinate these teams to produce a cohesive product. Conversely, when all experts are consolidated into one team, efficiency improves but opportunities for people to exhibit their expertise become limited.
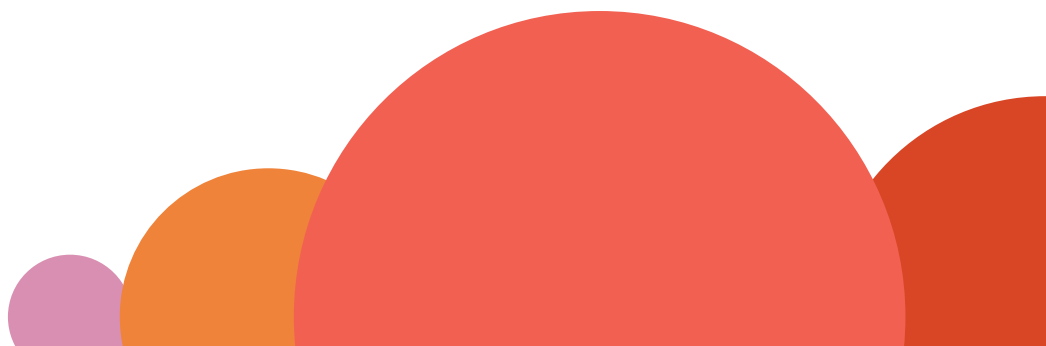
Lessons Learned

01 It is important to partner with organizations with diverse areas of expertise. This will enhance the quality of services provided and breadth of knowledge covered, ultimately giving rise to a more comprehensive intervention.

02 Collecting and synthesizing expertise from different disciplines is time-consuming. However, doing so ensures that adolescents' complex and multi-dimensional needs are considered and addressed from many perspectives.

03 There are numerous ways to integrate disciplines into a project team. While combining multiple disciplines into one team may streamline communication and work functions, this approach may lead to the dilution of individual expertise.

Principle 8. Document Methods and Key Design Decisions

Documentation should be used to provide transparency, clarity, and track progress. Through documentation, project teams can provide justification for the connections made between the data, insights, prototypes, and the intervention being implemented. From the start, project teams should come to an agreement about the types of documentation necessary, who needs to provide documentation, and how documentation will occur.

HDI thoroughly and frequently documented the formative research that informed Go Nisha, Go™. Given that one team was leading game development and another youth engagement, they documented every interaction with youth to ensure that each team had access to the same information. This informed the constant iteration of the game's design and content. However, HDI did not fully document the value and challenges of different youth engagement approaches during co-design, which they noted would have been helpful for future youth engagement initiatives. They also highlighted the importance of documentation both from a managerial perspective and from the perspective of youth engaged in co-design.

> " ...in essence, what we've been talking about so far, right, that in a sense, is a retrospective for us, that has not been documented. And so if we were to do this the next time around, we wouldn't know what to do. Or if USAID were to support another program, who was doing something similar, they would not be able to learn from it and share everything with them either.

Lessons Learned

01 Conducting real-time documentation and analysis of youth engagement strategies, including decisions made, best practices, and lessons learned, is valuable to donors and other organizations planning youth engagement work.

Conclusion

HCD is a critical tool for developing more inclusive, desirable, and relatable ASRH interventions and products. The HCDExchange Quality and Standards Framework has the potential to guide the safe, effective, and inclusive use of HCD in ASRH programming. While the implementation of principles from the QSF is highly context-dependent, this review provides insights into how HDI and Ipas-Kenya implemented the QSF principles and shines a light on the benefits, challenges, and lessons learned in doing so.

Insights from HDI and Ipas-Kenya reveal the value of engaging adolescents in HCD. In both cases, HCD resulted in products that were shaped by participant needs and preferences. Further, both organizations voiced that HCD resulted in a more nuanced and responsive product than would otherwise have been developed. This is particularly evident in a multitude of the details in Go Nisha, Go™, from the characters' hairstyles to the visual orientation of the game itself.

The reflections of those we interviewed also reveal that realizing the full potential of HCD which is guided by the QSF principles requires significant time, human, and financial resources. It is important that donors and implementing organizations interested in leveraging the value of HCD appreciate the associated resource requirements. Both HDI and Ipas-Kenya found it particularly resource-intensive to ensure equitable inclusion of diverse subsets of young people (Principle Two). Effectively engaging more vulnerable subsets of adolescents requires connections to harder-to-reach communities, more time for outreach and trust-building, and different engagement approaches. Additionally, sufficient resources are required for projects to incorporate the suggestions from diverse subsets of adolescents into the solution. It may not be worthwhile or ethical to engage young people in the design process if these resources don't exist. Engaging diverse subsets of adolescents is important for inclusivity and ensuring equitable access to solutions, and therefore both warrants and requires additional planning and resourcing. Both HDI and Ipas-Kenya underscored the resource requirements for safeguarding, emphasizing that effective safeguarding plans, policies, and practices cannot be developed without the engagement of young people, community members, and professionals trained in safeguarding. Safeguarding measures must be informed by the young people and the contexts in which they live, and must be updated regularly.

Reflections from HDI and Ipas-Kenya also highlight that the QSF principles are interdependent. For example, engaging youth as partners throughout the design process (Principle One) is interwoven with approaching program design and implementation iteratively (Principle Four). Similarly, engaging the ecosystem of actors influencing the end user (Principle Six) can involve integrating various disciplines essential to adolescent wellbeing (Principle Seven). Implementers may operationalize the interdependent principles to varying degrees and through diverse approaches according to project objectives, context, and available resources. There is no one 'right' way to implement the principles.
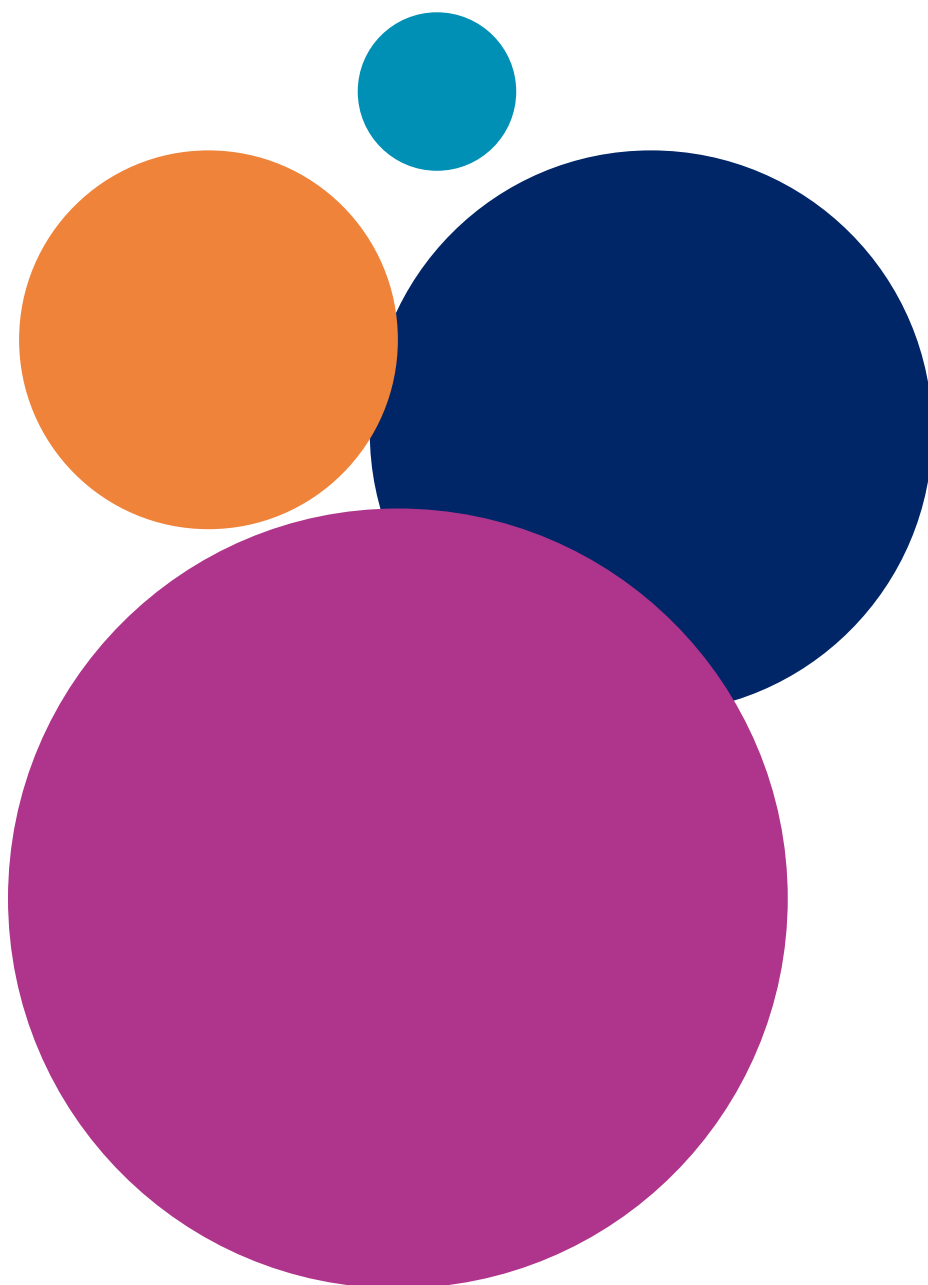
Finally, both HDI and Ipas-Kenya reiterated the importance of involving and engaging program staff, participants, and various stakeholders throughout the HCD process. QSF-guided HCD is iterative, interactive, multidisciplinary, and time-consuming. Sharing information about the intent, process, and envisioned outcome of the HCD process helps to sustain engagement and encourage ownership of and support for the solution.

The results from this review should be considered alongside its limitations. Notably, this brief provides reflections from two organizations that were selected because of their experience in the use of HCD in ASRH programming. Their reflections are neither representative of nor generalizable to other organizations. Additionally, these organizations incorporated the QSF principles to varying degrees in their work but had not set out to implement the principles comprehensively.

Nonetheless, the insights presented in this brief can guide the utilization of standards-driven HCD in the planning, funding, design, and implementation of global programming. While HDI and Ipas-Kenya shared these insights in relation to ASRH programming, they have relevance for broader global health programming. New insights and lessons will emerge as organizations implement the QSF principles in HCD. We encourage organizations to document and share these lessons. Through the implementation of high-quality, standards-based HCD, adolescents can play a central role in the design and implementation of solutions that meet their unique health needs.

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