

Breakthrough ACTION DRC

Design & Test Report

Using human-centered design to enable Sexual Reproductive Health and gender equality dialogue between parents, caregivers and Very Young Adolescents within the parental component of the Growing Up Great program in Kinshasa.

Submitted to: USAID

Submitted by: Breakthrough ACTION DRC

April 2022



Table of contents

1 INTRODUCTION

Objectives
Methodology
Context
Timeline

2 THE APPROACH

The system around VYAs
Opportunities
Co-design
Prototype & Test

3 THE PROTOTYPES

From ideas to concepts
Prototypes
Results from the Test

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations
Lessons Learned

The team

Special thanks to the team that conducted the Design & Test in the field:



Save The Children

Blandine Aveledi (DRC)

Grace Molisho (DRC)

Pierrot Mbela (DRC)

Florentine Diantisa (DRC)

Alain Mawangu (DRC)

Jennifer Gayles (US)

Community Focal Points

Clarisse Ngengo

Gérard KIMWANGA

Pasteur Alain Malomba

GEAS

Kara Hunersen

Ben Kazenza

Landry Egbende

Eric Mafuta

Aimee Lulebo

Filles Chercheuses ("Research Girls" programme)

Triphene Pongo

Naomie Tshiyamba

Mélissa Sumaili

Ministry of Health

Jean Marie Kalala

Ministry of Education

Jean Kabuka

Comité des Jeunes (Youth Committee)

Gradi Mbadu

Éloge Luzolo

Beria Tshimanga

Acronyms

CBO	(or OBC)Community Based Organization
COJ	Youth Committee
CDT	Core Design Team
D&T	Design & Test
GBV	Gender based violence
GEAS	Global Early Adolescent Studies
GUG	Growing Up GREAT! (Bien Grandir)
HCD	Human-centered Design
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
SCI	Save The Children International
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
VYAs	Very Young Adolescents

Iconography



Desk Review

Information from given documentation.



What we heard on-site

Quotes from the field team and end users.



What we saw on-site

Observations from the field team.



What we understood

Analysis and learnings from the team.



Ruptures in the process

To adapt the key activities and learn.

Introduction

- A Objectives
- B Methodology
- C Context
- D Timeline



A Objectives

The following document details the *Human-centered Design* activities conducted in Kinshasa from the 28th of March to the 8th of April. The overall objective was to adapt key components of the Growing Up GREAT! (GUG) programme.

Over the course of these two weeks, *the team set out to work hand in hand with relevant stakeholders in DRC to co-create, prototype and test multi-level social behaviour change interventions that would foster a supportive and gender-equitable, sexual reproductive health environment for Very Young Adolescents in the sites targeted by GUG.*

The alignment of key voices in a core design team (CDT) enabled the project to consider the experience, expertise, creativity, and intent of different stakeholders throughout the activities, and to reflect on new ways to address the major design challenges:

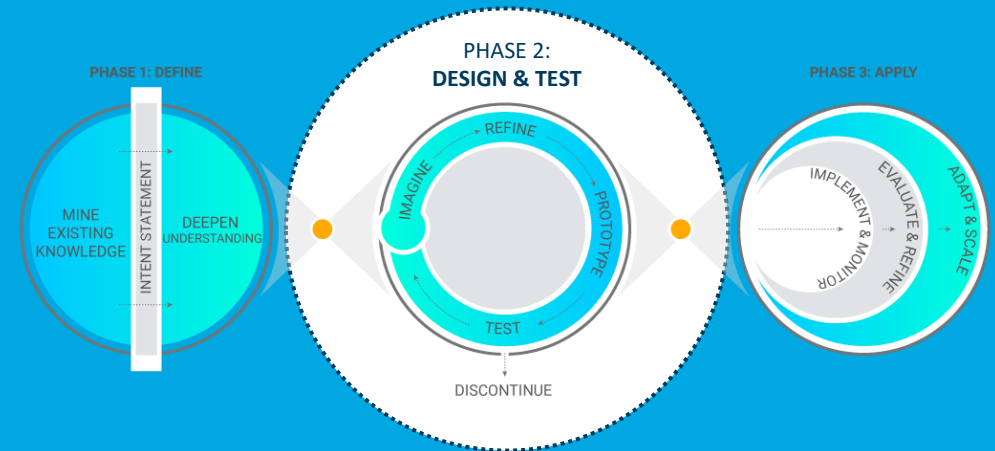
How might we...

...ensure the most important influencers are engaged in proposed interventions in a way that adolescents feel comfortable with?

... ensure social and structural systems of inequality are addressed?

... align with existing platforms and systems to ensure greater potential for scalability?

B Methodology



In the Design and Test phase, the team used key opportunities identified throughout a previous desktop review to conduct idea generation workshops (co-design), low-fidelity prototyping and a rapid test in site.

The process of building and testing ideas, known as prototyping, helped the team gaining early user feedback to refine successful ideas and/or solutions, or eliminate unsuccessful solutions by filtering through three key criteria: desirability to users, technical feasibility, and potential for scalability.

The intention is that ideas that showed the most merit during testing will be considered for implementation for GUG program.

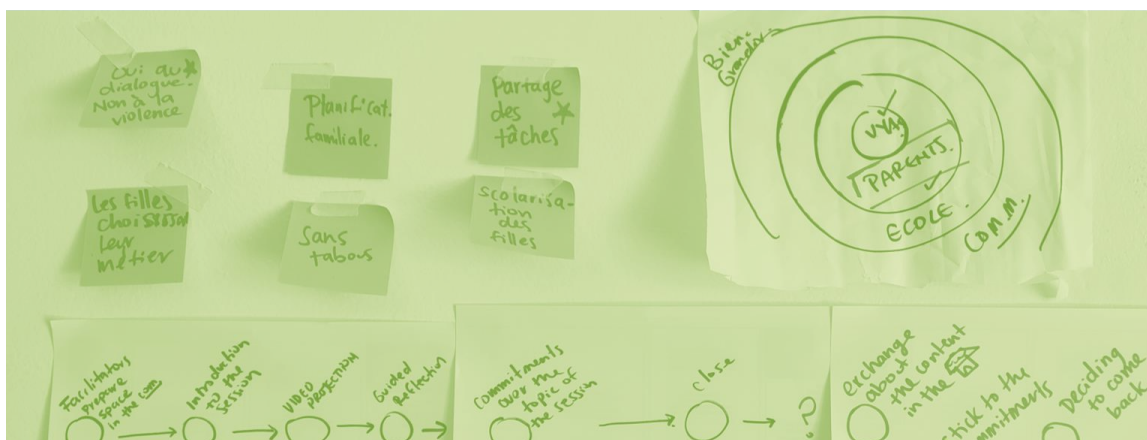
c Context

“ In urban Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), adolescents face significant barriers to sexual and reproductive health (SRH), including low educational levels, widespread gender-based violence (GBV), and inadequate services. As a result, only 18%-24% of sexually active girls ages 15-19 years use a modern method of contraception, and 12.5% have already been pregnant or given birth.

Early adolescence, ages 10-14 years, represents a critical window for intervention before most youth become sexually active and gendered attitudes and behaviors coalesce. Gendered expectations regarding appropriate behaviour, especially in the realm of sexuality and reproduction, influence the ability of adolescents to make informed decisions, forge healthy sexual relationships, and access services across the life course. ”



- Growing Up GREAT! Brief



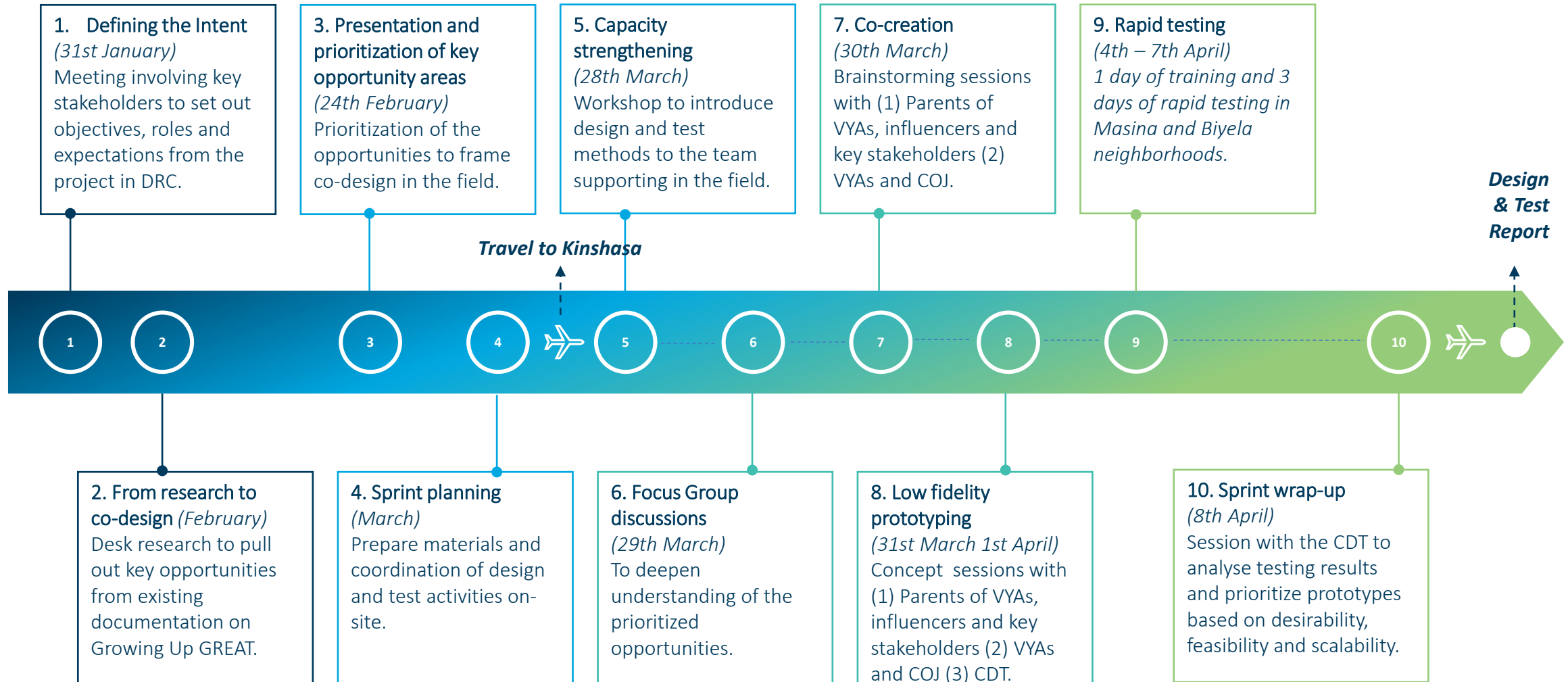
Growing up GREAT! is a toolkit of materials around SRH, GBV and gender equality. This toolkit is used to carry out a multi-level intervention that encourages reflection and dialogue through community group engagement to build more equitable gender norms that support adolescent development and well-being.

The intervention took place in Kinshasa in Kimbanseke and Masina communes, from October 2015 until September 2020. It is brought to the communities through 4 different touchpoints in which all different tools address social norms such as: **(1)** Puberty and sexuality are not discussed with adolescents. **(2)** Education is prioritized for boys and not for girls. **(3)** Lower social status of women and girls prevents equal distribution of opportunities, resources, and household roles, and leads to GBV.

During the longitudinal Global Early Adolescent Studies (GEAS) conducted to evaluate the intervention, parents and VYAs indicated that more open communication on sensitive topics was one of the most important outcomes of their participation in the programme. Thus parents value reflective discussions in small groups and want information and life skills sessions to increase their knowledge and ability to share accurate information with their children. On the other hand, commitment to participate in the interventions still faced challenges such as low involvement of fathers and even low understanding of the vision of GUG.

The parental component was selected to frame the Human-centered design activities in Kinshasa and was defined as the nest in which interventions would be fostered to promote, build and support parents and VYAs dialogue and exchange around SRH, GBV and gender equality.

D Timeline



The Approach

- A Opportunities
- B The system around VYAs
- C Co-design
- D Prototype & test

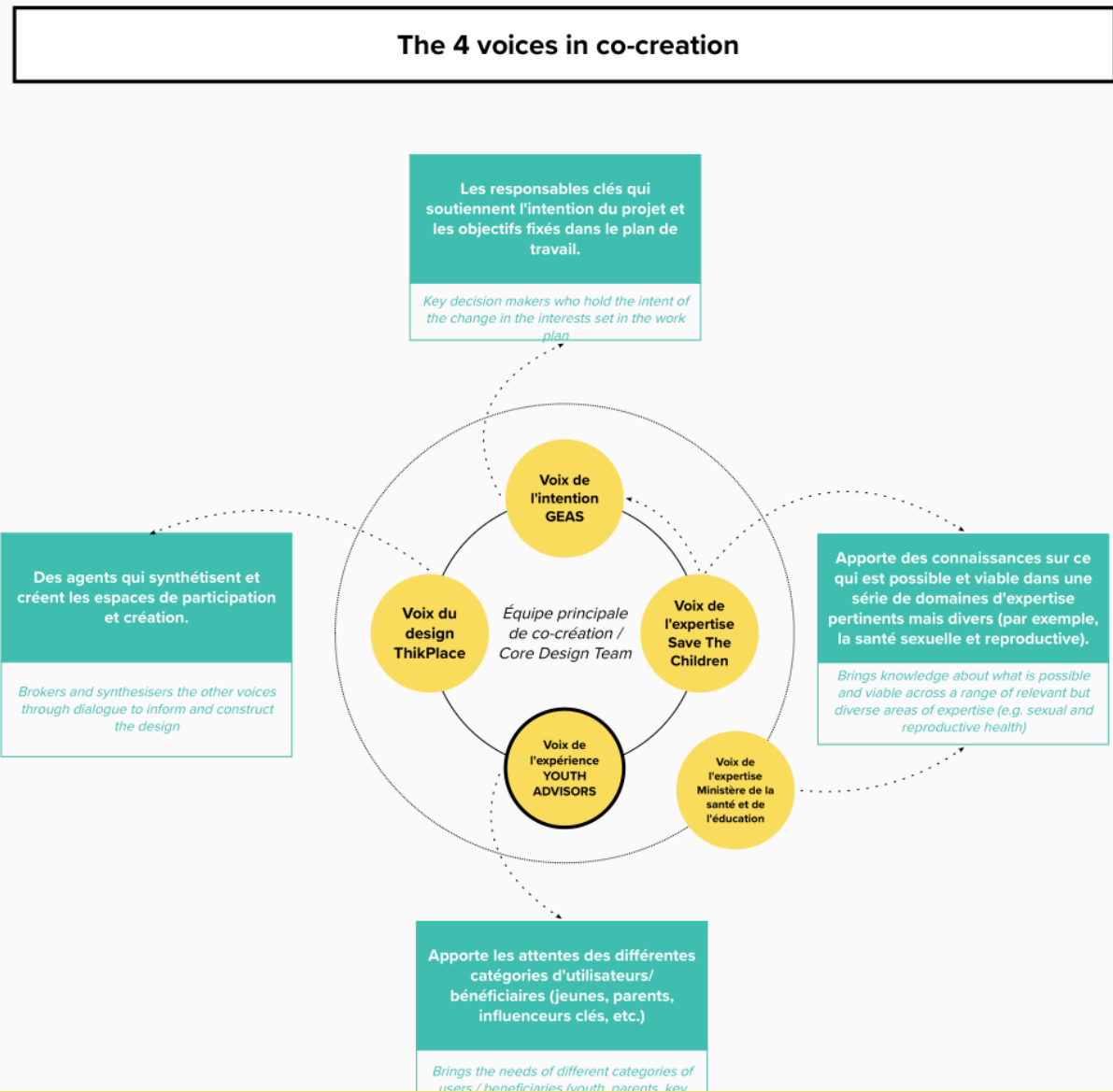


Image extracted from:  [Intent Workshop Mural-board](#)

A Opportunities

Before arriving on-site, the team reviewed the GEAS research and created problem statements based on recurring challenges and gaps. These statements were then workshopped to further define key opportunity areas and identify next steps.

The CDT then prioritized opportunity areas, considering the various voices and perspectives of the partnership. The opportunities include:



- (1) Some of the key voices of the CDT did not participate in the prioritization.
- (2) Opportunity #2 only had one vote, but it being the vote of the Youth Committee and having agreed to meaningfully listen to VYAs voice, the opportunity #2 passed the filter.

O P P O R T U N I T Y # 1

Finding the appropriate narrative to align the understanding of the common value that the programme brings to parents, boys and girls.

Advice on SRH at home is determined by gender. However, when there are issues with children's education, blame is mainly attributed to women.

The narrative about mothers' and fathers' role in their children's SRH is divided, which prevents fathers from being actively engaged and involved.

Parents have additional expectations of the programme, related to the basic educational needs of their children.

Prioritised by: GEAS US (*Voice of intent*) ThinkPlace (*Voice of design*)

O P P O R T U N I T Y # 2

Creating spaces for intergenerational conversations and dialogue about SRH outside of stigma and fear.

In the home, conversations about SRH begin only when they can no longer be avoided.

Very young adolescents do not share their questions with their parents for fear of reprisals.

Parents fear and avoid conversations about SRH because they think it may encourage children to have sex.

Prioritised by: COJ- Youth Committee (*Voice of experience*)

O P P O R T U N I T Y # 3

Designing different resources that parents need to feel supported and comfortable when receiving or giving SRH education.

Language and educational gaps are barriers to parents' use of SRH vocabulary and concepts.

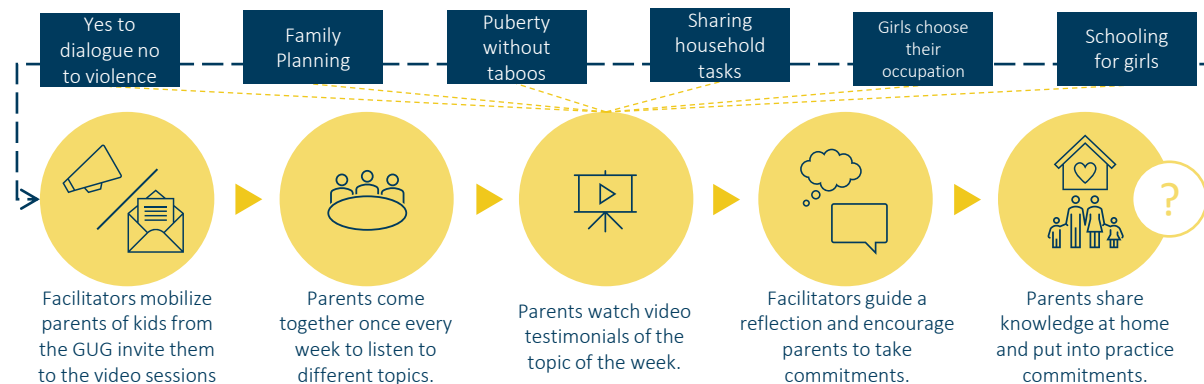
Parents of older generations do not have an experiential reference of SRH education at home to feel supported/ comfortable when talking to their children.

Parents turn to other key actors in their family (elder siblings, aunts, uncles) or community (teachers, leaders) to support their children's SRH education.

Prioritised by: Save The Children US + DRC (*Voice of expertise and intent*)

A Opportunities

During the desk review of evaluations and materials from the GUG interventions, the team identified some challenges related to the **timeline of the parental component of the programme**. The analysis framed the touchpoints between the programme and the parents/ caregivers that could possibly foster the ideas obtained in the future co-design exercise.



B E F O R E

It was a challenge for facilitators to mobilize and engage parents and caregivers prior to the session, especially men.

Improve communication around the project from the moment of recruitment. The objectives of the project should be clearly explained to parents and children when recruiting children to the project and repeated throughout the project to avoid misunderstandings.

For some Community-based groups, this practice was not promoted because of the financial implications of such invitations.

Explore the possibility of identifying child club members living with their parents to invite fathers as a priority or plan some specific meetings to facilitate attendance by men.

Prioritised by: ★ GEAS US

D U R I N G

Parents' inconsistent participation during the sessions was a both a challenge and opportunity for improvement.

It should be noted that most of the Facilitators had multiple sessions to catch up with those who had not followed the topics. Some even conducted sessions an hour before the scheduled video session.

Parents who did not have teenage daughters did not attend the sessions that addressed girls' schooling and freedom to choose their profession.

Significant participation of grandparents in the sessions. Because they are not busy.

Sometimes parents send an older brother or sister to replace them in the sessions or to accompany them.

Prioritised by: ★ GEAS US ★ SCI US ★ ThinkPlace

A F T E R

Understanding dynamics after the parental component (video-sessions) to amplify the impact of the project.

Facilitators follow up to encourage parents to return

Sharing information at home facilitated the assimilation of learned concepts, practices and behaviours, reduced the susceptibility of their partners and was a good element for initiating dialogue within the family (maintenance of dialogue between parents and children)

Some participants did not see the importance of inviting the spouse (because they were already sharing information at home)

Parents need to feel supported by the community to change their behaviour.

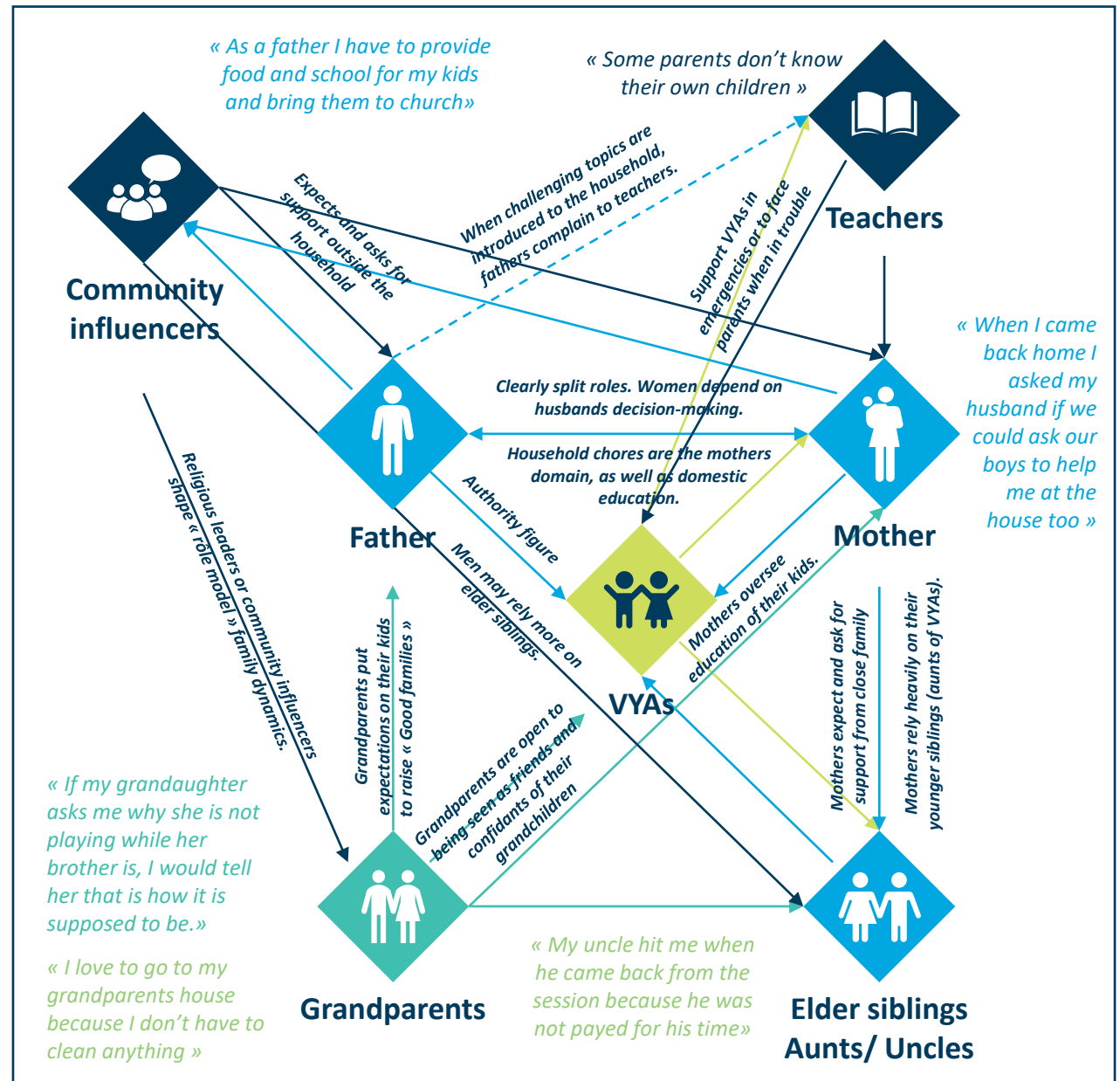
Prioritised by: ★ ★ SCI US+DRC ★ ThinkPlace ★ COJ

B The system around VYAs

Communities where the design and test activities were conducted are hugely impacted and aware of the challenges they face when raising kids in their context. Underage vandalism and teenage pregnancy are two of the problems parents are most concerned about.

Through the review of the documentation of the GEAS studies and the development of six different focus groups, the team was able to understand the relationships between the different actors in the system where the GUG programme is based. The diagram on the right is a visual representation of emergent topics while discussing with VYAs, grandparents, parents, facilitators of the GUG interventions, community leaders and teachers.

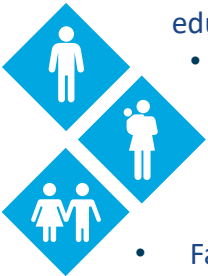
VYA's parents prefer to be perceived as authority figures to ensure that their kids will follow their direction. Mothers' younger sisters are important members of the household, and often caretakers for children - younger sisters accompany women and go to live with them when they get married. Community leaders and elders actively disseminate messages to set role model education and expectations when raising kids. Needs such as economical support for kids, guaranteeing schooling and religious engagement are directly associated to good parenting, and therefore are present in every feedback or interaction with foreigner programmes that target their children.



What we learned about Sexual Reproductive Health and gender equality education around GUG parental component



- VYAs touched by the program have appropriated knowledge around SRH and gender equality and feel comfortable when sharing with teachers with whom they speak about those topics on frequent touchpoints.
- Kids whose parents don't take part in the program still fear exchange on SRH topics with their parents.
- Kids crave spending time with their parents, who they say are always busy.
- In some community events and spaces, women, men and kids are divided, which gives a contradictory example when wanting to encourage family exchanges and spaces of dialogue.



- Parents do not want to be perceived as permissive and relate good education with being a respected authority figure to their kids.
 - While fathers feel more comfortable talking about SRH messages, mothers tend to keep it confidential to the family level.
 - Women turn to elder siblings to support them in VYAs education. Young uncles and aunts tend to be caregivers.
- Fathers feel comfortable with social recognition, mothers tend to feel ashamed or uncomfortable with it.
- Parents tend to talk to kids in a vertical way. They expect to be heard but not asked. They do not know how to handle the curiosity of VYAs.



- Grandparents and their grandchildren are “Kokos” (*Copains*, friends in English) and VYAs enjoy their company because they know they are not expected to do any tasks or constrain themselves when interacting with them.

- Parents can perceive grandparents as permissive.
- Grandparents are happy to see grandchildren become teenagers because it means they will soon have families on their own.
- While grandparents have a more horizontal relationship with grandchildren, they not necessarily disseminate updated information about SRH and are not aware or open to concepts such as gender equality or GBV.



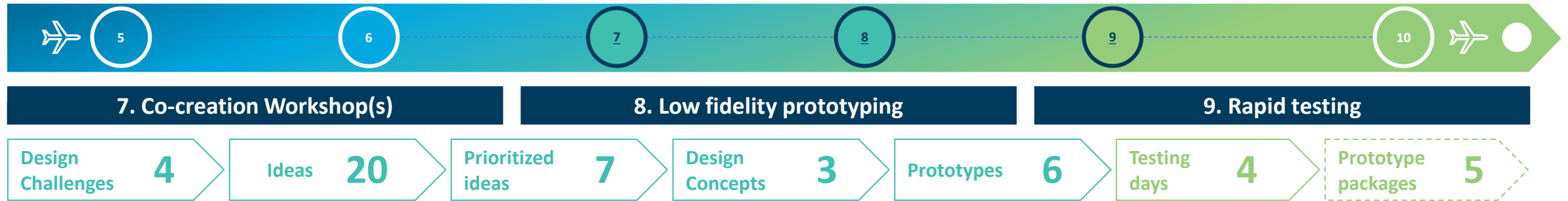
- Teachers are allies when disseminating the right SRH and gender equality messages. They deal with kids' body changes and even challenging situations like teenage pregnancy as part of their job.
- Teachers have to deal with concerned parents who disagree with some of the SRH messages that they deliver.
- Teachers are respected and have a level of influence in the community.
- When boys and girls are asked to work together in specific activities they collaborate well. Recreation and time outside school is strongly divided between gender.



- Some Christian churches are engaged with the program and willing to cooperate with interventions that bring knowledge around SRH under their scope of influence.
- The Catholic Church is closed to letting this kind of information into their communities.
- Churches have weekend activities for the communities (parents schools and kids schools) and are recognised as spaces to socialize, learn and spend spare time.
- RECOs have strong knowledge in these subjects and support communities learning and appropriation of SRH and gender equality topics.
- CBOs who facilitated GUG components are very passionate about the programme and believe in it.

C Co-design

D Prototype & Test



Co-design starts with identifying challenges. However, framing challenges as negative statements can stifle imagination. To address this, designers convert problems into design challenges by creating “How Might We” (HMW) questions. Once participants prioritize design challenges, ideation begins..

We conducted two different workshops for co-creation:

- 25 Parents, caregivers and key community actors
- 15 VYAs in the range of 10-11 years old

Challenges and ruptures while conducting the workshops were:



Short working sessions due to mobility issues in the city and VYAs attending school in the mornings. This affected the continuity of ideation exercises. As a result the team had to adjust the regular activities to enable quick thinking.



Mix of local languages, different schooling levels and mixed sample of professions were roadblocks in the facilitation of the activities that obliged the team to simplify HMW and shorten individual reflection activities.

Ideas that meet needs, include different ways of solving an issue, and that aligned to the context they would be adopted are prioritized to develop into concepts. A concept is an idea that details the way it is foreseen in a tangible reality. It answers the questions: What, how, when and who? Once concepts detail the way ideas should be materialized, prototypes are built. A prototype can take any shape: a song, a poster, a role play a drawing, a game...

Prototypes are the means to show, interact and receive feedback from users through a concrete object or activity. They are built quickly with inexpensive materials and iterated upon according to the collected feedback. In this activity, ThinkPlace developed 3 concepts with the CDT, and the designers developed 3 additional concepts.



Prioritization in the workshops worked as a contest in which participants tended to prioritize speeches that will make them win votes rather than introducing their ideas. As a result best speakers got the votes.



While conducting a concept development session with the CDT, 2 more ideas were born and added to the 4 that were initially prioritized.

Once the prototypes materials were ready, the CDT engaged 3 community focal points to mobilize and conduct testing sessions over 4 days. Testing in a qualitative process implies enabling participants to interact with prototypes and observe their struggles or listen to their questions.

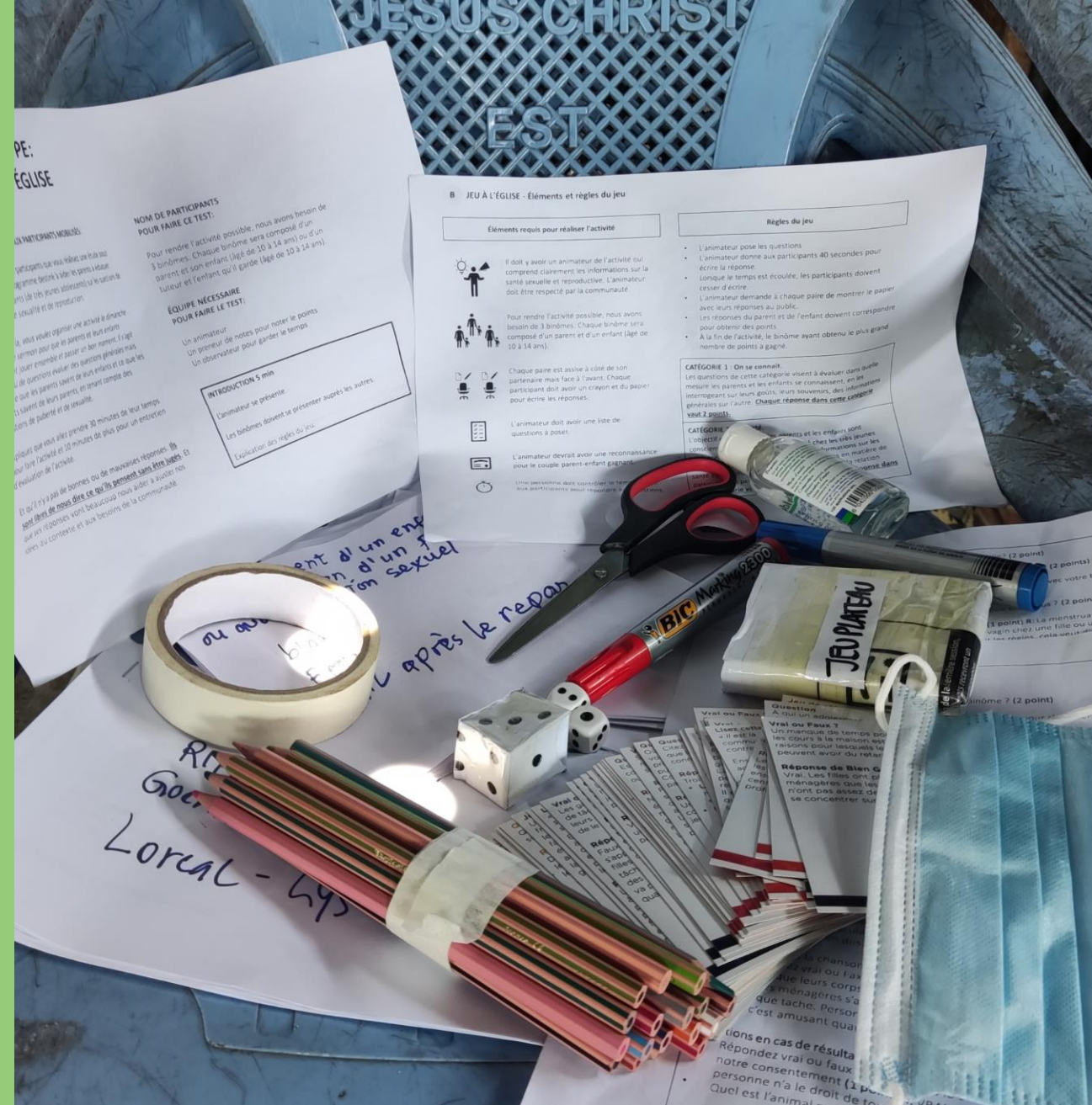
Prototypes are set out to actively fail and show any possible mistake before iterating and refining. Testing prevents expensive implementations and encourages users (communities) to be a part of the many twists ideas go through before being implemented.

Once the 4 testing days were finished, the CDT and stakeholders conducted a Wrap-up session to filter Prototypes through desirability, feasibility and scalability lenses.

As a result, from 6 prototypes, 5 will be further developed into packages to be tested once more with relevant stakeholders.

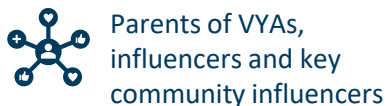
The Prototypes

- A Co-creation in depth
- B From ideas to concepts
- C Prototypes
- D Results from the Test



A Co-creation in depth

Co-creation process was conducted through 2 co-design workshops that took place in 2 half-days sessions for 2 different users.



Attended morning sessions



VYAs and COJ

Attended afternoon sessions due to school.



For the first co-design session participants were asked to individually prioritize HMW, and then proceeded with a brief brainstorming in groups.

However, challenges in language, schooling and time blocked the in depth understanding of those design challenges. As a solution the design team decided to simplify questions into the following ones:

Original HMW → **Simplified HMW**

TOOLS

How might we create **accessible tools** to support parents in sexual and reproductive health and gender equality education in the household?

What kind of tools or activities would you create to help parents (of VYAs) understand and learn about SRH outside the GUG! sessions?

How can we create tools for our parents to talk to us about puberty and sexuality?

Original HMW → **Simplified HMW**

CURIOSITY

How might we prepare parents to approach and support their children in the face of the **curiosity** that characterises puberty?

How would you get parents to stop punishing and blaming their children for being curious about sexual matters?

How can we create tools for our parents to talk to us about puberty and sexuality?

Original HMW → **Simplified HMW**

DIALOGUE

How might we **talk** about sexuality, puberty, gender equality and health in a less intimidating way?

How would you encourage dialogue between parents and Very Young Adolescents?

How can we talk about uncomfortable issues with our parents?

Original HMW → **Simplified HMW**

INFLUENCERS

How might we use other key actors and **influencers** to support parents in educating their children about SRH?

What would you do to create support between parents & caregivers (of VYAs) and community influencers?

How can we invite others in the community to be part of our education about puberty and sexuality?

A Co-creation in depth

Generating Ideas

Generating Ideas was part of the co-creation sessions facilitated by the team. In groups the participants developed **20 ideas to address the challenges** proposed by the HMW questions. These initial ideas were the starting point of the prototype development. Participants and the CDT prioritized the ideas according to their opinion as to each ideas were better answering to the HMW questions and, **from the prioritized ideas, they were able to develop concepts** that were built into the prototypes which were tested.



A From Ideas to concepts

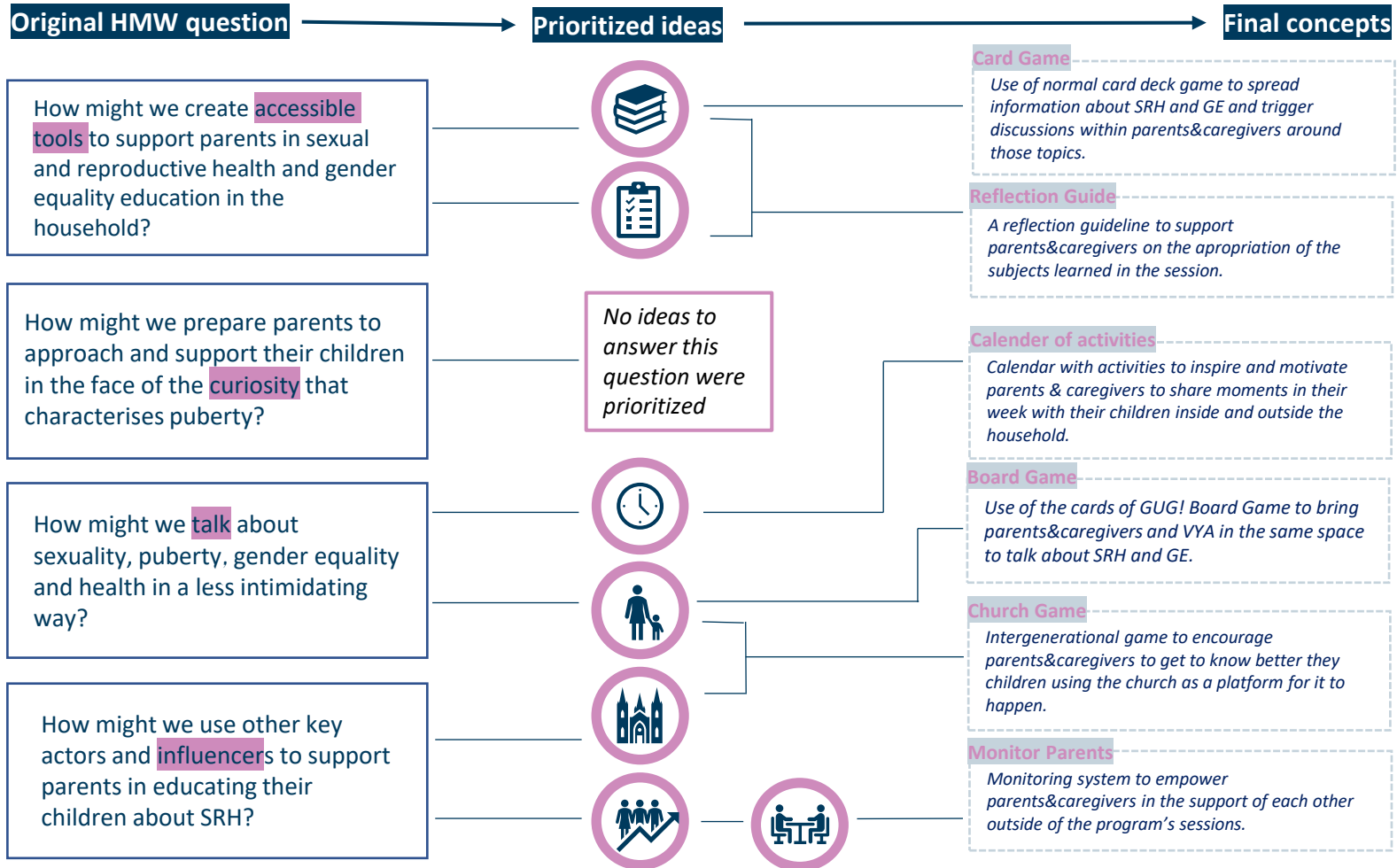
Prioritizing Ideas and Developing Concepts

How did we prioritize the ideas?

Through a vote with the participants and the Core Design Team, the ideas that were the most assertive answers to the « How Might We » questions were prioritized, and from them, the concepts were developed.

Why did we prioritize ideas?

After the ideation process many ideas that emerged were complementary and could be integrated with each other. Moreover, the number of ideas was too large to be all developed. The team had to prioritize ideas to further develop them into concrete concepts.



How did we develop the final concepts?

TPSN developed a guideline called the Concept Development for participants to conceptualize and have a further development of their most promising ideas. These concept cards were organized to encourage high levels of detail for the following phase which would be building prototypes.

Why did we develop final concepts?

Because conceptualizing ideas was a new methodology for participants, the Concept Development guideline was meant to guide teams to include relevant details while also creating a set of checkpoints around how to test the success of it. The aim was to promote team reflection while also ensuring more concrete concepts rather than vague or underdeveloped ideas.

C Prototypes

Once the prototypes were finalised the CDT met with community influencers to start the testing phase.

We split into three teams to run the tests during the 3 days they would take place.

Each team was designed to have one community leader, who would make the initial contact with the test participants since they were familiar with the communities where the tests would take place, a *fille chercheuse* to assist the community leader and take notes and two CDT representatives who would observe, take photos and take notes.

Each team was responsible for testing and evaluating different prototypes along the 3 days.



During the testing days some adjustments were made to the plan due to the need for further testing of one prototype. Additionally, some team members were absent due to personal matters.



Testing plan

Prototypes

- A** Monitor Parents
- B** Church Game
- C** Card Game
- D** Manaka Calendar
- E** Reflection Guide
- F** Board game

Teams

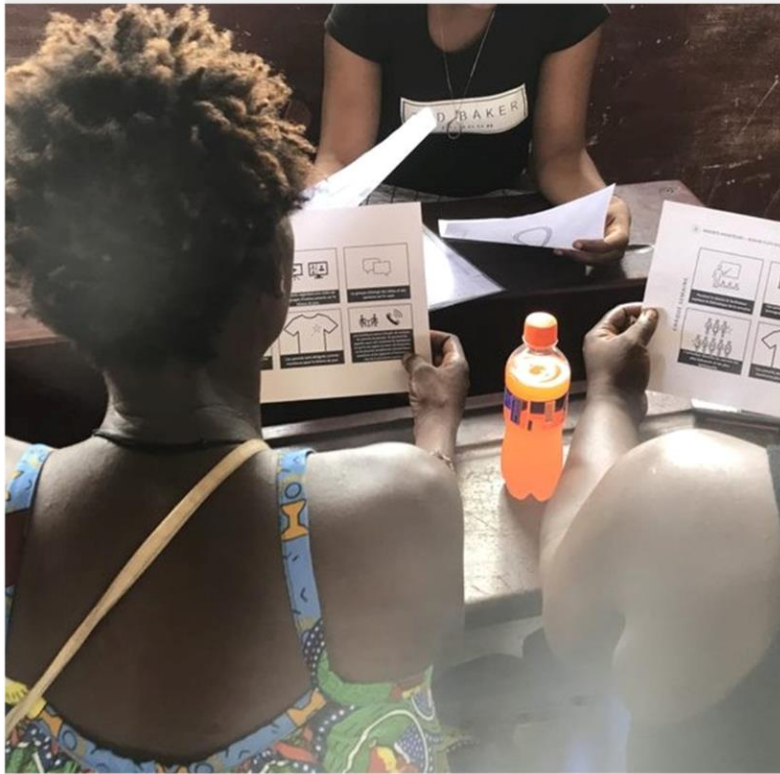
- 1** Jenifer Gayles – Save the Children USA
Naomie Tshiyamba – Fille Chercheuse
Gérard KIMWANGA – Community RECO
Landry Egbende – GEAS Kinshasa
- 2** Paola Molano – ThinkPlace
Triphene Pongo – Fille Chercheuse
Clarisse Ngengo – Community Teacher
Ben Kazenza – GEAS Kinshasa
- 3** Rafaela Cruz – ThinkPlace
Mélissa Sumaili – Fille Chercheuse
Alain Malomba – Community Pastor
Blandine Aveledi – Save The Children DRC
- 4** Team created during testing due to rupture in the process

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Team	1 2 3	2 3 4	1 2 3
Prototypes to be tested	C A D E	F B A	C A D E
Testing place	Mounkoka Biyela neighborhood (All prototypes)	Mounkoka Pastor Alain's Church (Prototype F and B) Biyela neighborhood (Prototype A)	Mounkoka Biyela neighborhood (Prototypes D and E) Masina (Prototypes A and C)



Prototype A: Monitor Parents

A monitoring system organized by the session’s facilitators who selects parents who were more engaged during the sessions and recognize them as a monitor. Monitors should be checking on other parents outside of the sessions to provide them support.



OPPORTUNITY

Designing different resources that parents need to feel supported and comfortable when receiving or giving SRH education.



TARGET

Parents & Caregivers



ASSUMPTIONS

- Parents & caregivers who are familiar with the session’s subjects will feel confident to be seen as monitors of a certain subject.
- Parents & caregivers feel proud of being recognized as monitors of a certain session’s subject.
- Parents & caregivers will have the availability to engage as a monitor.



WHAT WAS TESTED

Recognition as a way of motivating and engaging parents&caregivers to support each other.



HOW WAS IT TESTED

30 minutes conversation with parents & caregivers to show a storyboard explaining how the system would work: start by explaining the sessions and then how the parents who are chosen monitors would be seen as models and give support to the others.

Afterwards, exit interviews were conducted to get parent feedback.



MATERIALS

StoryBoard with the sessions flow and the monitoring activities.
Recognition badge and certificate.



Prototype A: Monitor Parents



When mentioning the word “sexuality” or “sexual” during the conversation people that were around were visually uncomfortable. Some men were annoyed that their wives were having conversations around those topics. An older mother said she would not engage in sessions which would be around SRH related topics.



I would feel very safe because in case of an accident people will recognize me. Police would let me pass and know that I am part of a project.

Mother participating on the testing



I would like the idea of being a monitor because one day maybe the other parents will recognize my support.

Mother participating on the testing

LEARNINGS

- The badge is expected to be a “free-pass” to benefit from services in the community
- The badge is seen as a sign of authority, which comes together with the idea of being respected by others.
- Being a family example and a religious person are seen by parents & caregivers as important criteria to be a monitor.
- Parents & caregivers see the program as a way of keeping children out of the streets.
- Participants don't feel so confident to be the ones giving support when it comes to SRH topics, since there is a lot of technical information.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Use of recognition systems as a way of engaging participants through the sense of pride and respect of being recognized and validated.



Building trust with participants before addressing topics around sex and sexuality. There is still a lot of stigma around those words and using them on a public sphere or in printed materials without giving participants the time to adjust might discourage them from engaging in activities.


Creating visual identifications can mislead parents or community members into thinking there is an economical recognition to what they are doing.

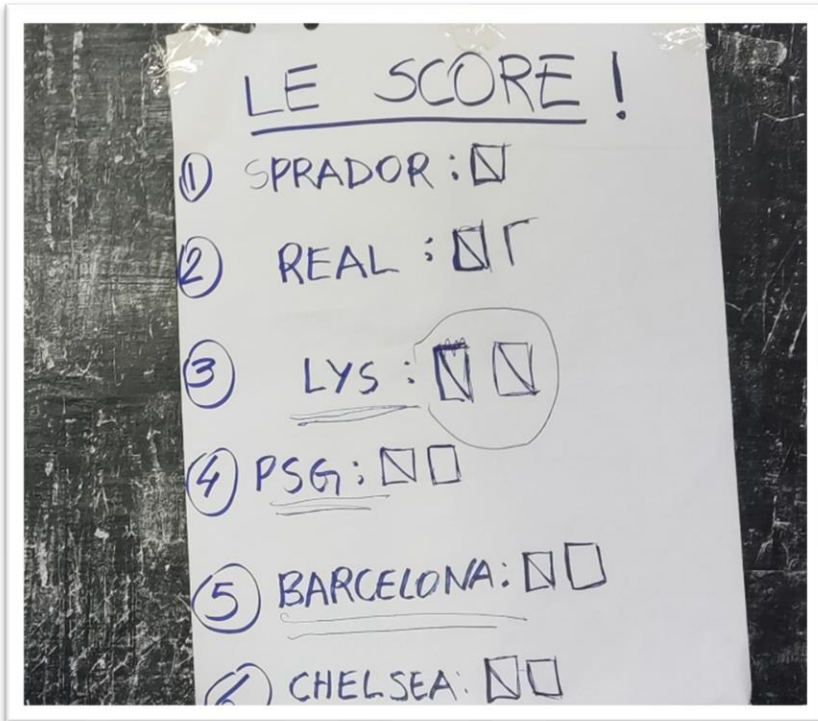
People love to be recognized but are not as motivated to spare free time to follow-up with their peers.

Prototype B: Church Game

Q&A Game to be played in pairs one parent/caregiver - one VYA in which they will have to answer individually about 2 type of question:

- 1) Personal information about each other's lives (2 points)
- 2) SRH and puberty related questions (1 point)

 Instead of one parent and one child on the testing day, there were both parents and children from same family coming to play, which changed the dynamic of the game and allowed the team to also observe couple dynamics.



OPPORTUNITY

Opening conversations and creating dialogue outside of stigma and fear around SRH issues.

TARGET

Parents & Caregivers
VYA

ASSUMPTIONS

- The church is a platform to bring parents&caregivers and VYA together.
- All participants will be willing to play a game together.
- Parents&caregivers and VYA will feel comfortable to talk about SRH and puberty in front of each other and of people they don't necessarily know.

WHAT WAS TESTED

- The influence of the church to promote parents and VYAs interactions.
- The level of knowledge parents & caregivers have about their own children's personal life.
- Game as a fun engaging way of having parents & caregivers and VYAs interacting.
- Recognition (certificate) as a motivation to engage participants.

HOW WAS IT TESTED

Engaging parents & caregivers and VYA in a round of the game at the church and exit interviews.

MATERIALS

- List of questions for the 2 different categories.
- Flipchart with family team's names for score Certificate for the winner.
- Facilitator to explain and facilitate the Game dynamic.

Prototype B: Church Game



I think it is a very educative activity. We have had the time to learn about our children and to create a dialogue with them.

Mother participating on the testing



This activity helped me find out things about my child I did not know. I was surprised to learn about her best friend.

Father participating on the testing

LEARNINGS

- Gender roles are still engrained in parents and caregivers' behaviors, even for those who are engaged in the program.
- YAs did not feel engaged and open to talk in front of too many adults.
- Games and competitions are appealing to parents & caregivers and are a fun way of engaging them.
- Talking about puberty is not a taboo for parents & caregivers who have already been part of the program.
- The church has a great reach and influence in the community.
- Parents & caregivers feel valued when they are heard and can share their knowledge.

RECOMMENDATIONS



YAs need more dynamic and trusting environment to participate talk and share their perspectives.

Facilitator's role is key to ensure participants understand the game and that everyone has the correct message on the discussed topics.



Too many participants makes the experience demotivating. Have a maximum of 5 families playing at the same time.

Some pastors are still very conservative in the way they see gender roles and sexuality. Be aware of the kind of church the game will be take place in.

Prototype C: Card Game

Conventional card deck set that contains conversation starters around SRH and gender equality topics.. There were 3 different type of conversation starters: (1) Reflections (2) Brief information (3) True or false questions.



OPPORTUNITY

Designing different resources that parents need to feel supported and comfortable when receiving or giving SRH education.



TARGET

Parents & Caregivers



ASSUMPTIONS

- Participants will be willing to take breaks during the game to discuss about SRH and Gender equality topics.
- Gamification is a way to make people comfortable and give them an excuse to talk about thing they don't usually talk about.



WHAT WAS TESTED

- Using local card games as a channel to introduce SRH and Gender equality topics.
- Willingness of parents & caregivers to discuss SRH and GE related topics during a card game.



HOW WAS IT TESTED

Engaging participants to play with the card deck a game of their choice and having them discussing about the topics when a debate starter card comes into the game. Exit interviews.



MATERIALS

- Conventional card deck with some of the cards among it containing information/reflection/true or false questions on them.
- Facilitator to facilitate the debate's dynamic.

Prototype C: Card Game



Participants were at ease and excited playing among friends and acquaintances, whenever a debate starter card came up, they waited for the game facilitator to guide the conversation. When there was no explanation of how the debate starter cards should be used in the game, the participants did not stop to discuss the theme of the card, but simply continued playing the game.



With this game I would not feel ashamed to talk about this topics and we could even play it at the church.

Father participating on the testing

LEARNINGS

- Playing cards is an activity highly appreciated by parents & caregivers, thus it creates a great moment for open discussions on SRH and GE related topics.
- Reflection and information cards are not as appreciated as true/false cards.
- There is need of information in the cards for the discussion to happen.
- People will expect someone to facilitate the discussion for them.
- Without an explanation about the cards with the SRH and GE information, people won't stop to discuss about the topics.

RECOMMENDATIONS



There is need of a facilitator that is trained in the topics to address misinformation happening during the conversation.

The information in the card decks should be in the local language, aged appropriated and visually attractive.

True or false questions are the most appreciated to get discussions started.

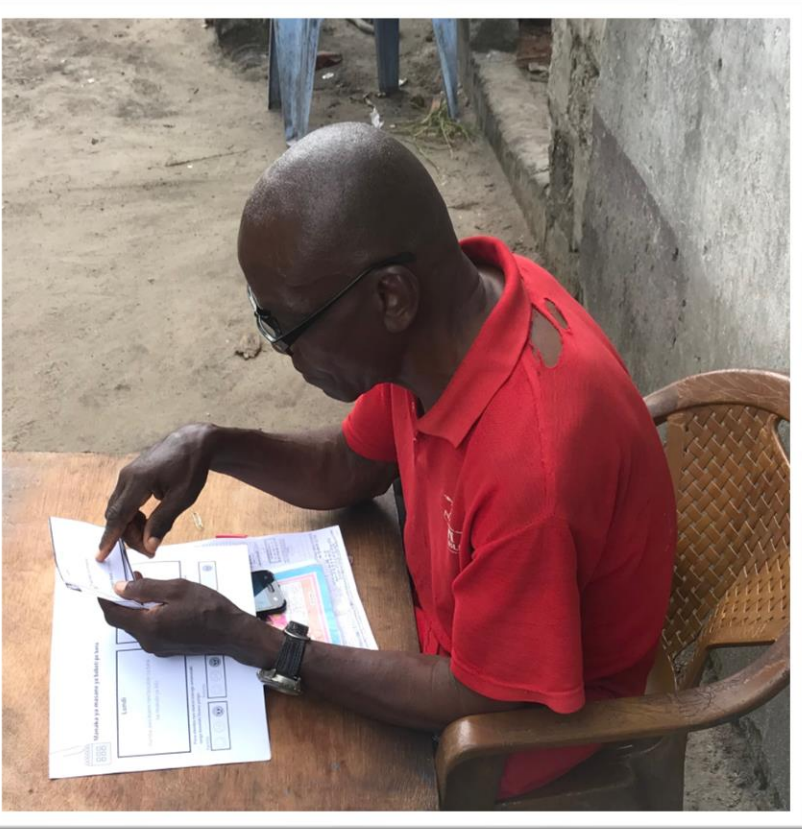
Be aware of how the debate starter cards are designed so that they don't make cards identifiable because it will spoil the card game people are playing.



Cards should not be played without someone who knows well the subjects as it might lead to the spread of misinformation among participants.

Prototype D: Calendrier Manaka

Calendar with the weekdays and activities cards to encourage parents & caregivers to spend time with their children engaging in activities not related to household tasks.



OPPORTUNITY

Opening conversations and creating dialogue outside of stigma and fear around SRH, GBV and gender equality issues.



TARGET

Parents & Caregivers
VYA



ASSUMPTIONS

- Parents & caregivers know how to read.
- Parents & caregivers are willing to do the activities proposed in the cards.
- Parents & caregivers' perception of time is aligned with the proposed calendar activities.



WHAT WAS TESTED

- Willingness of parents & caregivers to share moments in their week with VYA.
- Potential of a calendar of activities as a way of encouraging the creation of shared moments outside of the household.
- Frequency and consistency of touch point in the household as a way of building trust between parents and VYA.



HOW WAS IT TESTED

Household visits to brief a parent or a caregiver and then leave the material with them. Returning to collect feedback after 2 days.



MATERIALS

- 4 pages calendar containing 2 squares with the day of the week per page for all days besides Sunday which has its own page.
- 16 Cards with different activities categorized by moment of the day, time needed to carry them out and subject (SRH/GE or personal).



Prototype D: Calendar Manaka



One father held the calendar on the wall and glued the activities in the calendar pages. He was looking forward to do other activities and had already glued some of them to do in the following days. His kids also liked it, they even used the "emojis" of the calendar.

“ I felt happy and nostalgic after talking to my kids about my own childhood. It is something I never did before.

Father participating on the testing

LEARNINGS

- People don't have the habit of reading.
- Weekends are more appreciated by parents & caregivers to do activities than weekdays.
- The calendar is easy to be used.
- When there is too much explanation about it people don't get the curiosity to go through the material.
- 2 days was not enough time for people to read and use the material.
- Activities that involved SRH were not as much appreciated by parents & caregivers as the ones which were not SRH related.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Materials should be developed in a simple and visual way so that people feel more encouraged to interact with them.

When in need of writing, use local language.

Use daily and familiar activities to the suggested cards activities.

Develop monthly calendars instead of weekly calendars since they will be more useful to the participants.

Motivate parents & caregivers to produce their own activities as the cards are only suggestions.





Parents can feel overwhelmed when having many objects to interact with. Make sure to brief them, or simplify materials needed for the prototype to work.

Prototype E: Reflection Guide

A reflection guide to be used by parents & caregivers after sessions in order to generate reflections not only in relation to the content of the session but also on how to initiate dialogue on the subject with their children.

VIKATIISI

1 Eteni ya misato ya mokambo ya puberté oyo topesaki na bilenge bana oyo basanganaka na programi na biso eyanolaka makambo ya motuya na oyo etali mbonguana oyo eyaka na nzoto na bolenge. Bosololaki yango na bana na bino ya bilenge ?







soki iyo   soki te

2 Batunaki mituna ? Koma to dessine mituna yango awa na se

2 Pona nini bosololaki yango na bango te ? Eloko nini ekoki kosala ete bobanda kosolola yango na bana na bino ya bilenge ?

3 Soki bosololaki na bana, omiyokaki ndenge na kati ya lisolo yango ? Pona elembo oyo elakisi lolenge omimonaki

3 Soki osololaki na bana te, ndenge nini okoki komiyoka na kati ya lisolo ya bongo na bana na yo ? Pona elembo oyo elakisi lolenge okomiyoka

Kanda  Esali ngai malamute  pepele, à l'aise  Elekeli ngai  oyebaki ndenge ya kosala te  na kimia nyonso 



OPPORTUNITY

Designing different resources that parents need to feel supported and comfortable when receiving or giving SRH education.



TARGET

Parents & Caregivers



ASSUMPTIONS

- Parents & caregivers like and know how to read
- Parents & caregivers will feel confident and encouraged to talk about SRH and GE related topics with their children through the support of a material



WHAT WAS TESTED

- Reflection post GUG session to reinforce parents & caregivers appropriation of the topics reviewed in the session.
- Material as a support to start dialogues in the household.



HOW WAS IT TESTED

Household visits to brief a parent or a caregiver and then leave the material with them. Returning to collect feedback after 2 days.



MATERIALS

- One page guide with reflections about the session and SRH dialogues at the household.
- Copy of the puberty book (from GUG! Programme) as an example of materials parents can access when in need of information.



Prototype E: Reflection Guide



Parents & caregivers show interest in having materials to support them when talking to their children about SRH related topics, but when they are given written materials, they don't feel motivated to read them.



Participants who read it found it easy to understand and important because it allows them to have a dialogue with their kids and to be conscious. It encourages parents&caregivers to find time to their children and to engage with them in a more intentional way.

LEARNINGS

- Parents & caregivers don't have the habit to read so, documents with too much text prevent them from reading.
- Some parents don't live with their children and only see them from time to time, so building dialogues is not so easy because there are not frequent touchpoints between them.
- Participants are more willing to interact with information than to reflect on their own.
- There is a contradiction between the demand for written materials and the lack of reading habits and motivation to read.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Use of materials which are more visual.

When using written materials, write them in local language.

Use of more information and data and less reflection activities in the material.

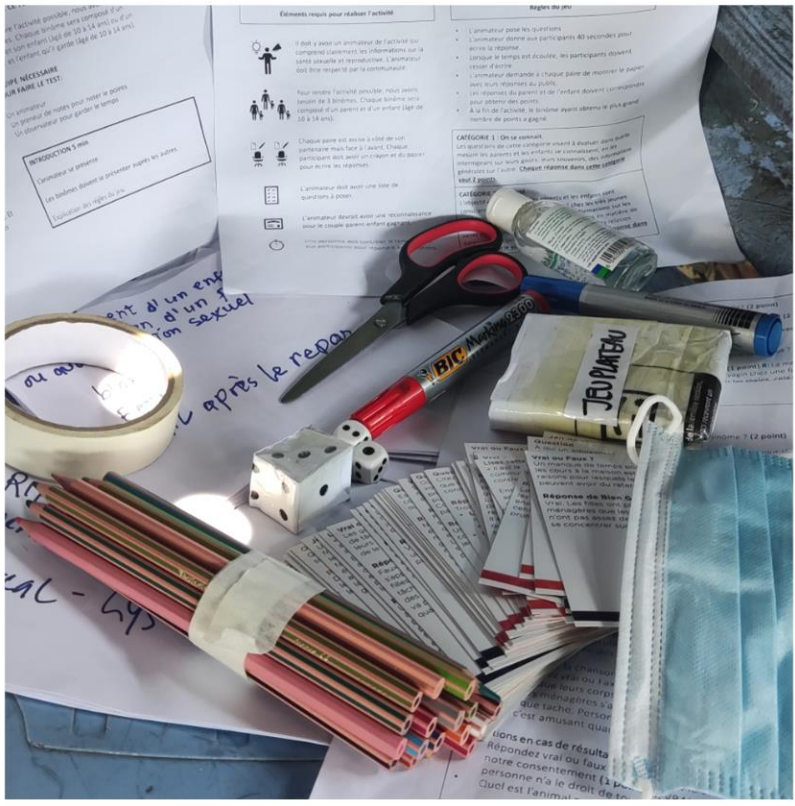


Don't use very formal language, even when it is local.

Don't add too much information on a same page since it overwhelms people and prevents them from reading.

Prototype F: Board Game

Use of the cards from Board Game (developed for the GUG! Program) that is used with VYAs, to develop a game dynamic integrating parents/caregivers and VYAs to address SRH, GBV and gender equality subjects.



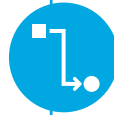
OPPORTUNITY

Opening conversations and creating dialogue outside of stigma and fear around SRH, GBV and gender equality issues.



TARGET

Parents & Caregivers
VYA



ASSUMPTIONS

- All participants will feel at ease to interact and play a game that addresses themes around SRH and GE
- Playing a game together will encourage parents&caregivers and VYA to start dialogues around SRH and GE topics



WHAT WAS TESTED

Intergenerational game as a way of starting conversations around SRH and GE within parents&caregivers and VYA.



HOW WAS IT TESTED

Engaging parents & caregivers and VYA in a round of the game at the church and then interviewing them at the end of the game.



MATERIALS

- Set of cards from VYA's Board Game version.
- Dices.
- Flipcharts with family team's names to count the score.
- Facilitator to explain and facilitate the Game's dynamic.

Prototype F: Board Game



*The comprehension and pace of the game are important aspects to guarantee participants motivation and engagement level.
People feel valued when they are given space to talk and share their knowledge.*



You must think about debating dynamics so that everyone gets to participate in each question.

Father participating on the testing

LEARNINGS

- Families don't play together: the father takes the lead and children don't feel comfortable to express themselves in front of adults.
- Participants feel proud of themselves when they know how to talk about a certain topic.
- Questions about gender equality are debated. Even if it is a true or false activity participants get into the reflection.
- The conditions of the avenue and the number of people playing are extremely important to the game dynamic.
- It is a very long game to be played in the week.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Be aware of the number of participants to guarantee the dynamic of the game.

Weekends days should be prioritized to hold this activity to ensure more people will be willing to participate.

Create dynamics to guarantee that the VYA feel comfortable and safe to participate.

Have the facilitator close-up the debates and open discussions with the correct answer and messages.



Don't use the Board Game that is designed for parents & caregivers because it contains information that are not addressed to VYA.

D Results from the test

DESIRABILITY

FEASIBILITY

SCALABILITY



A- Monitor Parents

Low level of desirability attributed to lack of time and need of participants to prioritize activities which provides them monetary reward. Yet there is a demand for support.

Even being a prototype easily adaptable for not requiring materials, the feasibility is low due to the complexity of engaging the participants that will be motivated to perform the role of monitors without economical recognition.

Difficult to scale as it needs the engagement of people and the creation of a self-sustaining network/system.



B- Church Game

High level of desirability due to the interaction provided by the game within the couple as well as between parents and VYAs. Being a competition also adds to the attractiveness and desirability of the game among adults, although VYAs still felt uncomfortable with the number of adults in the room.

Easily implementable as it makes use of existing spaces and can be adapted to other public and community spaces such as schools, halls, and other churches.

Easily disseminated since it is an appealing activity and takes place in a church which is wide reaching space among the participants. Possibility of scaling up and creating championships between churches.



C- Card Game

High level of desirability given the familiarity of participants with the card game, the flexibility in being able to choose the game they want to play, and for being a moment of leisure that facilitates the approach of delicate subjects.

Easy and fast to implement, since it requires an easily accessible and cheap material. Easily adaptable to other communities and themes. A good network of community focal points trained by the programme.

Easily scalable as it is a game that is part of the daily life of the participants and has a very great power of dissemination.

D Results from the test

DESIRABILITY

FEASIBILITY

SCALABILITY



D- Manaka Calendar

High level of desirability as it is a tool that catches people's attention and is intuitive to use, besides providing participants with activities they would normally not consider doing with their children.

The product must be conceived thinking ahead of the expiration of activities, and how to update the content when needed. Materials could be expensive. Outcomes will arrive in long term.

Printing and disseminating this calendar will totally be dependent on financial resources. Besides, the objective of opening conversations is still one step before the main objectives of the program.



E- Reflection Guide

Medium level of desirability. Although participants are interested in materials they can use at home, there is appreciation for the message of the guide. Users are not used to reading, so large amounts of text can be overwhelming.

While producing the guide is not difficult, putting it into practice will generate more work for the programme team, as they will have to collect data from the guide to understand how best to meet participants' needs.

The prototype would need a system to follow-up and integrate the data collected from the users or to adapt the Facilitator's training to be able to answer to parents' emergent needs.



F- Board game

High level of desirability due to the interaction provided by the game within the couple as well as between parents and VYA. Being a competition also adds to the attractiveness and desirability of the game among adults, although VYA did not show such a high degree of motivation.

Easily implementable as it makes use of existing materials and can be adapted to other different spaces and moments.

This prototype can easily be integrated as a part of the parental component, since the materials already exist.

After the test was concluded, the CDT was brought together into a Sprint-wrap up session (in-person) to converge on the results of the testing process, discontinue unsuccessful prototypes and foresee possible next steps. The prioritization of successful prototypes for further testing was made by going through the results of the test, in terms of desirability for the users, technical feasibility and their potential to scale. As a second step, all of the participants were asked to agree on the level of impact and effort they envisioned the prototypes requiring and the conclusion is shown in the graphic to the right.

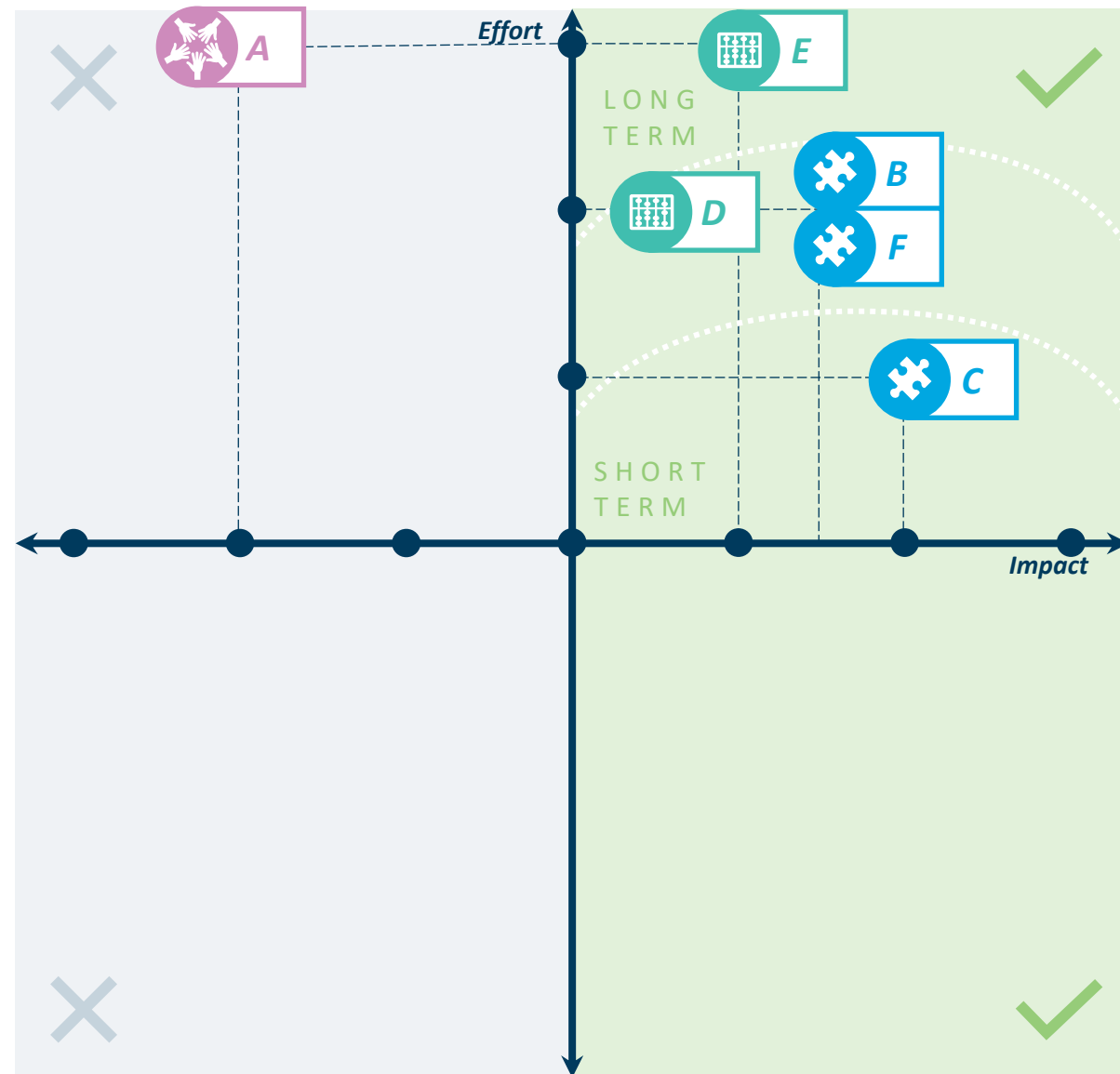
As an overall conclusion, games had potential to create greater impact according to the goals of the project. They demonstrated potential channels to attract the interest of parents and the system of actors around them, and to foster intergenerational, gender equitable dynamics among family members by making use of influential community members.

Next, accessible tools to support parents at learning and building dialogue with VYAs at home also demonstrated capacity to be integrated in existing moments of GUG interventions and amplify the impact of the video-sessions.

However, the Parents monitoring system who was desirable to users, represented high risks in terms of the kind of recognition and incentives parents were expecting from the monitor role.

Also, while assessing the levels of effort the different prototypes would imply to further test or pilot, the CDT clustered them into the 3 different terms in which they could demonstrate good results.

In a short term, the card deck would encourage information exchange among a broader audience, as a medium-term Church games and the board game could expand and create tournament dynamics among neighborhoods. The calendar *manaka* would take longer time to see results. Finally, guided reflection tool which is directly linked to the existent materials could represent a way to channel feedback and constantly update and make use of the obtained data around dialogue in the household.



Recommendations

- A** *Lessons learned*
- B** *...For the process*
- C** *...To work with VYAs*

A Lessons learned

While we initially set out to end the Design and Test phase with a very clear idea of the scalability of the proposed interventions, we did not reach this outcome for a number of reasons (we only had surface-level understanding of the context and the dynamics behind the dialogue at the household level, security and mobility constraints in terms of logistics shortened action time, and from the perspective of the stakeholders present in the activities, there are still a lot of decisions to be made regarding the continuity of the programme)

However, the design & test phase served also as qualitative research time itself, and we were able to collect three types of valuable data to inform the future of this activity moving forward.



What the participants told us and the feedback they produced during the workshops, and testing activities.



What we, the facilitators research assistants and testing team, observed and noted not in what the participants said but in the way they interacted with one another, which allowed us to nuance what they said.



What we understood from secondary and primary data.

1

Every space or tool sparks conversation and with it, the willingness of social recognition. People from the community, especially men, take pride when talking in public and sharing their knowledge and experiences around SRH education for their kids at the household level. Overall, exercises in which participants were asked their opinions or tested on knowledge were the most successful. Parents care about what their community says about them, about their kids and about the way they raise them up. Mothers tend to participate much more when there are no men in the room.



2

The pressure of not having an “enfant rate” (failed child) marks parental decisions and attitudes towards VYAs. The communities have big challenges around “vandalism and promiscuity” which put pressure into parents of VYAs and tends to trigger strict dynamics to counteract the curiosity of their kids. As a result, kids fear retaliation when bringing questions about sexuality and puberty outside from the poor information parents provide them (or not).



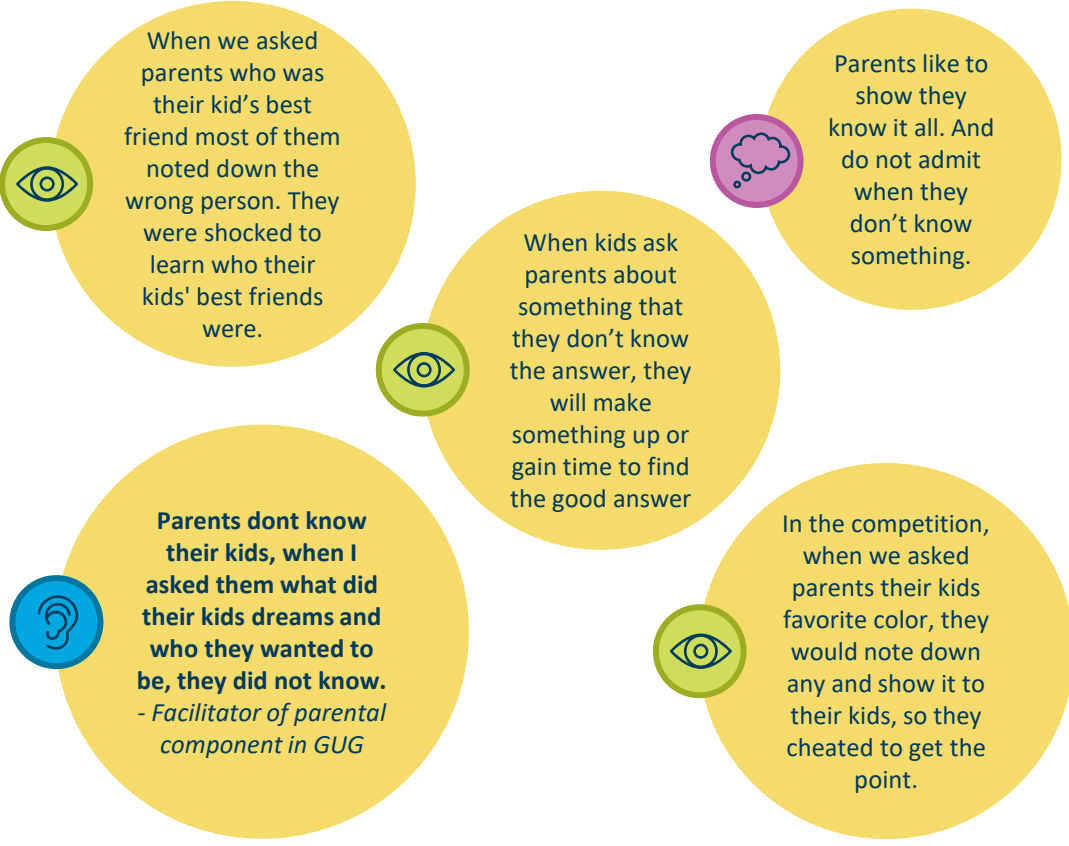
3

Parents and VYAs have different expectations of their exchanges. While parents engage in a dialogue with their kids, they expect their kids to listen to their advice and follow it. VYAs engage with their trusted ones (siblings, neighbors, school peers) by sharing frequent fun moments together and sharing the same interests. VYAs expect to be listened too.



4

Parents don't know about their children, although they believe that they know everything that they need. Parents see knowledge as a strength but fail to admit when they don't know something. During the games and competition activities they were motivated to show their knowledge, however when we addressed basic questions about their kids interests most of them fail to answer and to recognize they did not know. Triggering them in such ways turn out to be a positive way to show them the importance of listening to their kids when engaging at home.



5

Parents know who to ask for support depending on their role's need, but they are not willing to offer support to others due to time and effort. While men feel more comfortable reaching out to take advice from people outside of their home, religious influencers or community leaders, women look for support in close family members when struggling with household chores they must accomplish. Not necessarily to take advice or exchange. Both parents say they don't have time to support anyone.



6

Community is not ready to talk about gender as a concept but they are willing to participate in activities and spaces in which boys and girls or fathers and mothers play together. In activities related to leisure in which interaction between boys and girls or men and women were framed to accomplish something together, participants arrived to exchange, listen to each other and work together to obtain points.



GBV or gender equality questions are strongly debated, and facilitators do their best to deliver the message, but the concept of GE is still too abstract.



The weekend at church schools, mothers, parents and kids are in separate groups. There are some churches where they even sit apart.



Kids say their parents don't have time to be with them and intergenerational interactions are limited.



"The fact of having our kids to play with us is challenging at first but then it is interesting to have the space to talk for the challenges so that we can get the points."
- A father during Board game testing

7

Parents say they want to have tools and resources to read at home about SRH in lingala, but they are not used to reading and words such as "Sexual" are still highly stigmatized. Lingala is a language that is not uniformly spoken (nor written). Mere translation of French resources is not enough to cover up parents needs. Concepts such as Sexual Reproductive Health and gender cannot be translated, are complex to adopt and are highly stigmatized.



Research assistants struggle to find a common ground when talking about concepts of SRH GBV and gender equality in lingala.



Whenever the Word "sexual" and SRH was pronounced, people passing by will look impressed and the interviewee would feel uncomfortable.



"People speak, they don't read lingala, specially long texts"
- Research assistant



After the games test everybody was asking for materials to bring back home because they found the activity interesting and wanted to know more.



Parents want tangible resources to take back home but need people to explain to them and time to appropriate them even if they are highly visual.

B ...For the process

About COVID-19

People in Kinshasa prefer interacting without a mask. Wearing a mask is a huge barrier for facilitation and feels like an imposition to others.

It is advised to work in open spaces, work with smaller groups and if possible, take rapid antigenic test to track any issues in a timely manner.

About FIELD TEAM

Leverage local research assistants and strengthen their Design & Test capabilities. Trust and empower them to conduct, reflect, advise and even make decisions while conducting activities.

About TRANSLATION

Leverage existing materials and content. If not, allocate enough time and budget to review any materials of the prototypes or sessions.

About IDEATION

If participants are not comfortable within their groups, brainstorming will not be successful.

Ideally, mix participants into groups that reflect different perspectives, but remain flexible and move participants into groups with similar profiles if you find they are not participating as much.

About ENGAGING

Do not sacrifice open discussions and plenary exchange moments. People like to express their opinions and feel that their participation is valuable to everyone.

About HCD

Identify hidden talents among your participants and encourage them to take the lead in group exercises.

About SCHOOLING LEVEL

Bringing mixed samples adds value to the process and enables a broader vision about how ideas can be interpreted in a real context. People with lower educational levels might feel insecure or take longer to warm up into brainstorming dynamics; they may feel overwhelmed if asked to jump straight into action. Provide the time they need to adapt and be flexible with the agenda.

About BRAINSTORMING

Do not hesitate to bring examples of other projects or outcomes you are expecting from the sessions. It helps people visualize the future in a methodology that they are learning for the first time.

B ...To work with VYAs

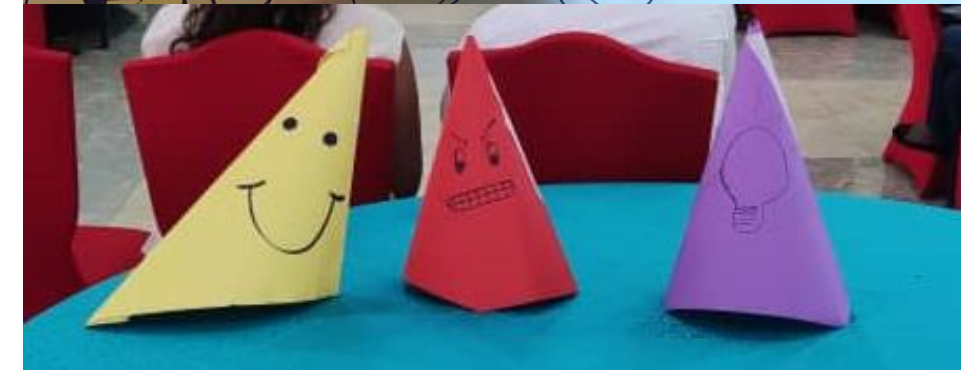
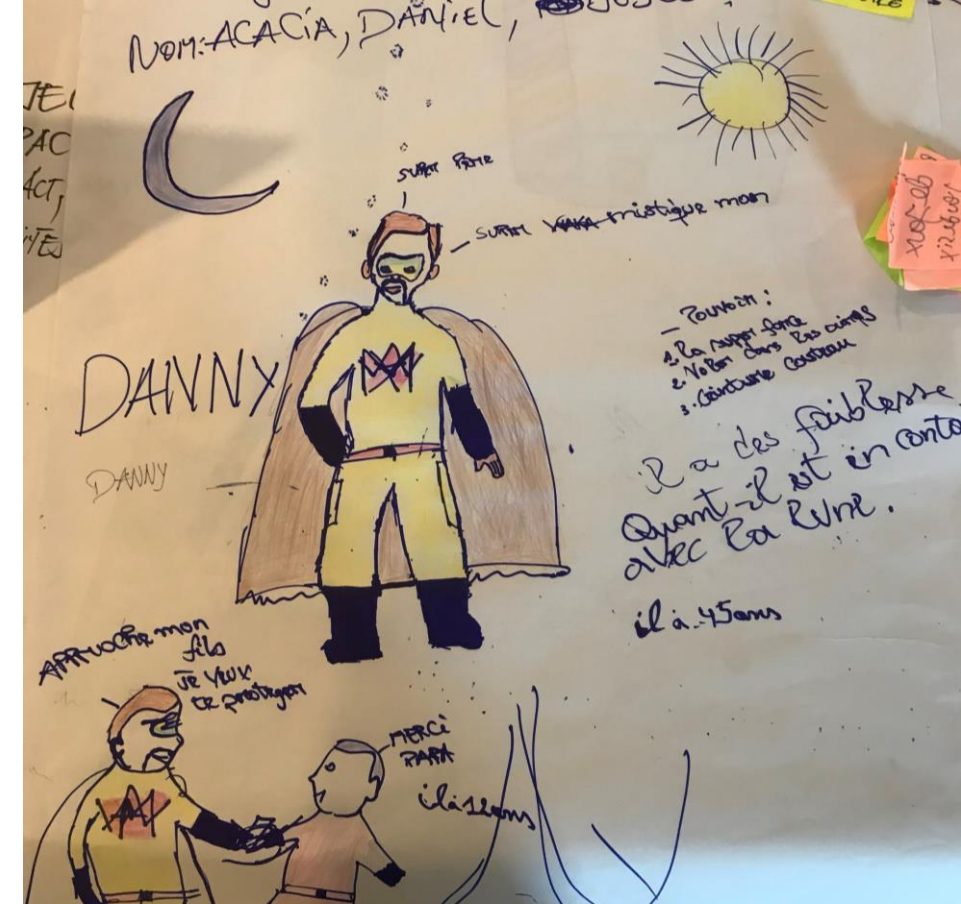
MAKE THEM FEEL COMFORTABLE

- Take time to ask questions about who they are and what they like. Do not jump into questions about puberty and sexuality directly.
- Do not hesitate to ask adults to leave the room. Kids do not express the same when parents are present and tend to give pleasant answers.
- Do not expect them to participate immediately. They have their own pace in letting themselves trust you.
- Bring people they trust to help you facilitate (e.g., teachers, elder teenagers, etc.)
- Make them work in smaller groups (3-4)

**Make sure to have one person specialized in child protection and safeguarding to support the facilitation team in case kids report or show evidence of from situations of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.*

SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE

- Do not force them into writing, especially if they are coming directly from school. Try to use physical exercises, gestures and drawings instead.
- Role playing with them gives a lot of insights into the ways they see their parents and how they perceive adults talking to them. Bring materials to build props for their characters.
- Once they trust you, ask them questions directly and simply: What kind of activities would you like to do with mom? What are the qualities of a super dad? How would you invite your mom to play with you?...
- Use unexpected materials to make them laugh while you conduct the sessions.





Matondi mingi

*Thank you
Merci*

This report is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of Breakthrough ACTION and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.