

ACTION LEARNING GROUP CYCLE #1 ON GENDER AND INTERSECTIONALITY

Advancing Cross-Stakeholder Partnership In Adolescent and Youth SRHR through Action Learning

Recommendation and Call for Support From Action Learning Group Members

Identifying the problem

The **YIELD Hub** convened a diverse group of stakeholders to advance and support the development of systematic youth partnerships. The stakeholders participated in action learning cycle sessions designed to share information and experiences. Specifically, the action learning cycle discussions addressed the **gender discrimination and exclusion experienced by young women and gender-diverse youth leaders in the Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (AYSRHR) field**. Five institutions participated in the first action learning cycle; EngenderHealth, Men Engage Alliance, ATHENA Network, CamyFund, and Restless Development. The group used action learning to generate learning goals and implement activity plans to reduce the gender equity gap among young people in the AYSRHR field.

To reduce the current gender equity gap among young people, the group centered their learning goals and action plan on strengthening youth partnership and engagement. This included how organizations and partnerships must have an intersectionality lens and develop a deep understanding of their operating environment, including the young people and gender-diverse youth in the communities and systems in which they work. Through a six-month action learning cycle, the group recognized some gaps within the broader work with young people and partners in the field of AYSRHR.

Identifying the gaps

1

There remains a lot of learning on how to **better integrate diverse voices** (including LGBTQIA+ voices) in the AYSRHR field to ensure that programs reflect young(er) women's needs in all their diversity.

2

Despite a push from organizations such as EngenderHealth for **intersectionality in youth engagement work**, for example, youth representation by gender, age, and marginalization, there is **limited learning and sharing** on what practical tools and approaches are available to implement intersectional inclusion in youth programs and partnerships.

3

Current youth partnership models continue to struggle with how to shift power to young people. There are often **limited internal institutional processes and resources** to facilitate this power shift to give youth full ownership and leadership in decision-making.

Group recommendations

The field-wide challenges mentioned above go beyond the institutions representing the action learning group. They define the difficulties for young people, practitioners, researchers, and funders in the AYSRHR field. Despite efforts to effectively engage young people, the action learning activity signifies the existing bottlenecks and fragmented nature of youth engagement and partnerships.

It reveals the need for a systems-based approach to mainstreaming youth partnership and more spaces for institutions to **learn, share, and facilitate some agenda-setting and collaboration** on these shared problems.

The action learning group calls for broader field-wide collaboration to understand further how these issues impact and reflect in the work of institutions working in the field of AYSRHR. The group puts forward the following recommendations, which reflect their own institutional challenges, and is open to collaboration with AYSRHR stakeholders, especially funders, to implement these recommendations as a consortium or through other funding models.



Create appropriate organizational structures that ensure intentional recruitment and engagement of young people and women and integrate diverse voices (including LGBTQIA+) in the workforce, governance, and participants, such as volunteers, leaders, consultants, and paid staff in AYSRHR efforts across the ecosystem.



Lead advocacy activities aimed at amplifying why intersectional integration is necessary with foundations, bilateral and multilateral donors, intermediaries, government partners, funding mechanisms, and implementing partners working in AYSRHR.



Sharing existing practical tools and approaches to implement intersectional inclusion of young people, women, and diverse voices.



Develop and implement a clear and well-defined roadmap on how to meaningfully integrate youth, in all their diversities, into the leadership and governance structures of institutions that serve them in a way that ensures youth have ownership and capability to influence and take part in decision-making at all stages of the institutions.

The five institutions (EngenderHealth, MenEngage Alliance, ATHENA Network, CAMY Fund, and Restless Development) representing the first YIELD Hub action learning group are open to sharing further details on these recommendations, action plans, and timelines for implementing these activities. They seek support (funding, partnerships, and collaboration) in organizational development, advocacy around intersectional inclusions, and meaningful youth engagement in organizational structures and governance to move forward with their recommendations. The YIELD Hub remains available to facilitate collaboration processes and coordinate activities that move forward youth partnerships in the AYSRHR ecosystem.