

# Lessons Learned from Growing Up GREAT: Using a Systems Approach to Implement a Multi-level Adolescent Reproductive Health and Wellbeing Intervention in Kinshasa, DRC

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# Project Rationale

- ✓ Early adolescence as an entryway to promote positive health-seeking behaviors and gender-equitable attitudes
- ✓ Reach adolescents during this critical developmental period before gendered expectations, attitudes and behaviors are set
- ✓ Create a supportive environment at home and in the community

# Norms Addressed



**DISCUSSION OF  
PUBERTY,  
SEXUALITY AND  
OTHER  
REPRODUCTIVE  
HEALTH TOPICS IS  
TABOO**



**GIRLS SHOULD  
COMPLETE  
HOUSEHOLD  
CHORES**



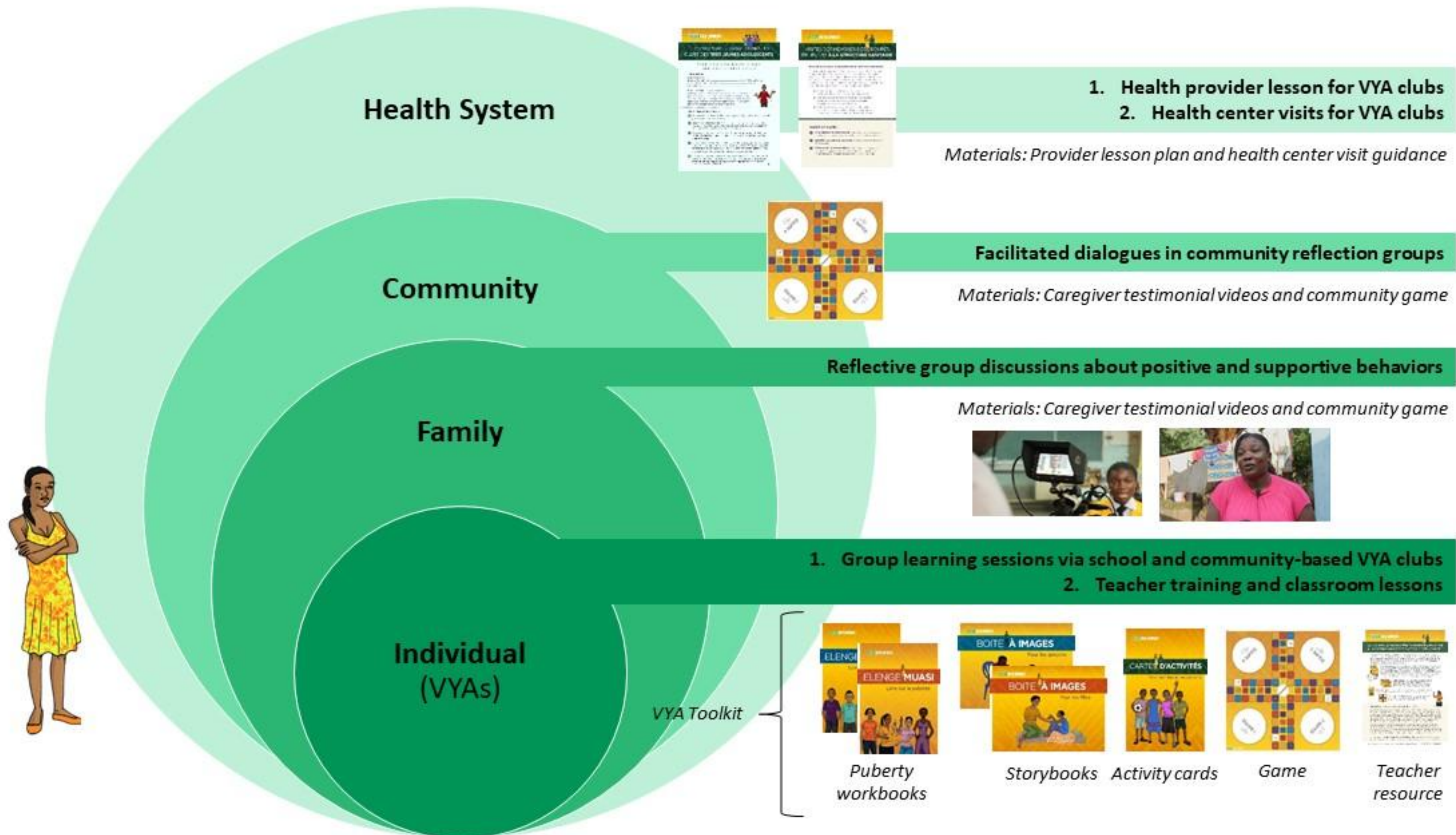
**BOYS SHOULD BE  
PRIORITIZED TO  
RECEIVE  
EDUCATION**



**ADOLESCENTS  
WHO SEEK  
HEALTH  
INFORMATION OR  
SERVICES ARE  
WAYWARD OR  
ENGAGED IN  
“BAD BEHAVIOR”**

**LINKED TO GENDERED TRAITS, ROLES AND  
BEHAVIORS**

# Project Design



# Learning Opportunities



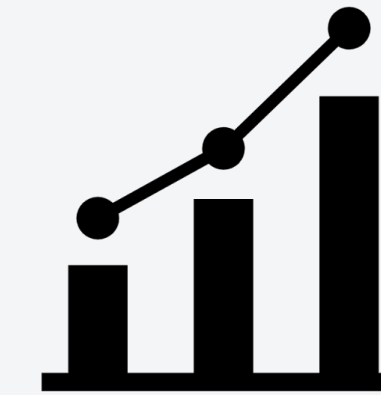
## Implementation Learning

Adaptive management approach which included a Learning Lab prior to pilot implementation and quarterly learning meetings.



## Learning Studies

Rapid qualitative studies that provided critical complementary data on components other than VYA-level activities.



## Impact Evaluation

Longitudinal evaluation of Growing Up GREAT! by the Global Early Adolescent Study

# Lessons Learned

# Lesson #1

## Varied quality of facilitation across VYA groups affected outcomes.

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- ✓ Facilitators differed by school status
- ✓ Qualitative monitoring data on facilitation quality showed peer facilitators required more coaching, while trained NGO facilitators facilitated with more consistency
- ✓ Impact evaluation revealed significant differences in the effectiveness of the intervention for in-school versus out-of-school club participants.

# Lesson #2

**Determining (and measuring) the dosage required to meet intended objectives is hard!**



- ✓ Exposure via multiple activities – how much and what combination of exposure is enough?
- ✓ Monitoring data and impact evaluation reported significantly divergent levels of exposure.
- ✓ Diffusion of messages is an integral part of social norms programs, but this can make it difficult to measure change against a control group.





# Lesson #3

## Social norm change happens slowly and some norms are easier to shift than others.

- Shifting norms is unpredictable – some norms are easier to shift and some norms may need to shift before others can.  Impact evaluation measured large, significant changes in norms around household chores, but no changes to other gender norm measures.
- It is important to monitor negative shifts (social pushback) in order to course correct.  Observational data revealed initial parental resistance was due to feeling uninformed. A simple shift in timing allowed us to resolve this.

# Lesson #4

**Intention to scale may require trade-offs in the intervention model.**

- ✓ Interventions intended for scale must be simple and cost-efficient.
- ✓ Some trade-offs may reduce effectiveness – what is good enough?



# Lesson #5

**Even interventions using a systems approach may require adjustments to go to scale.**

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- ✓ Engaging government stakeholders early on to support a systems approach was critical in in scale-up planning and execution.
- ✓ Pilot was implemented primarily by program-funded local NGO partners working in partnership with government platforms.
- ✓ Once effectiveness of the intervention was established, government stakeholders embraced the approach through institutionalization, but with significant adaptations.

# What's Next?

- 1. Evaluating and learning from the revised scale-up model**
- 2. Using Round 3 GEAS data to understand long-term impact**
- 3. Supporting institutionalization of Growing Up GREAT! to enhance sustainability**



**THANK YOU!**