ASPIRE Consortia experience: How can we strengthen health-environment partnerships to maximise impact for coastal communities?
EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION

The principles of effective collaboration between partners from different sectors, and how HCD has supported the process

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Once the closure of the project was announced, MSI Madagascar, the PHE Network and ThinkPlace carried out a situational analysis and coordination work through working sessions. The goal of these sessions was to highlight the common activities to be developed in the field and to analyze where and how the HCD (Human Centered Design) approach could enrich and improve processes.

Programme phases:
• Co-design
• Implementation
• Closeout
HCD. Human Centered Design approach

Human Centered Design (HCD) is a creative **approach to problem solving**. It draws on the **human experience** of those affected by the subject (users) to find **strategic and effective solutions** to complex problems in our societies.
Activities

Effective collaboration. Results

Recommendations Report
ASPIRE Madagascar
Recommendations for integrating sexual reproductive health and resilience in fragile and climate change affected environments in Madagascar.

"Understanding the integrated approach in the right framework is critical, and it took time and dedicated thought to ensure that the programs and activities that were implemented as part of the project reflected that, at the end of the day, this is a good model."

The ASPIRE: Advancing Reproductive Health by Promoting Innovation and Resilience program is funded by the COFO and implemented by the consortium partners: MSI Reproductive Choices (formerly Marie Stopes International), Blue Ventures, CARE International, Itad and ThinkPlace.
Ways of working together. Lessons

OVERVIEW
The ASPIRE programme is an excellent case study to look at the challenges and successes associated with consortium ways of working, relationship building, and innovative programming among diverse partners.

Building on the previous learnings and literature on partnership-brokering – ThinkPlace sought to explore the lived experience of all partners engaged in the ASPIRE programme to understand how the partner-level lessons learned during each phase might be used to shape how future consortia navigate their work and generate new thinking on consortia ways of working.

To uncover these findings, we used lines of inquiry guided by participants’ lived experiences captured through the following themes:

1. Strategic Partnerships
   relationship-building & consortium ways of working

2. Critical Moments
   achievements, pain points, pain points & adaptations

3. Programme Closure
   reflections on closeout activities & defining the legacy of ASPIRE
Pitfalls of innovative ways of working in consortia (and how we can avoid them).

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<tr>
<th>Pitfall</th>
<th>How to Avoid This</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fall back into traditional ways of working by operating in siloes.</td>
<td>Leverage diversity of partners.</td>
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<td>Duality of partnering between global and local.</td>
<td>Create cohesion, everyone needs to feel like they are an equal part of the whole.</td>
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<td>Strategic misalignment among innovation efforts.</td>
<td>Build in adaptive processes, and be prepared to pivot.</td>
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<td>Assuming innovation is the right approach.</td>
<td>Assess the appropriate type of innovation required and manage expectations for results.</td>
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<td>Adopting innovation language, without adopting the right mindset.</td>
<td>Adopt a collaborative mindset.</td>
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Opportunities for innovative ways of working

1. **IMAGINE**
   Identify partners, build trust, and leverage their lived experience and areas of expertise to start reframing the problem to unlock the potential for impactful change.

2. **ACT**
   Establish a collective agreement towards innovation, build energy and momentum, and establish processes that continue to move the program forward.

3. **REFLECT/SUSTAIN**
   Maintain momentum and ambition by celebrating successes, demonstrating progress, and conducting reflective sessions focused on the partnership itself as well as project outcomes.

4. **ADAPT**
   Address challenges brought on by disruptions through pivoting and problem solving together instead of apart.

5. **SCALE**
   Create lasting partnerships willing to carry forward innovative thinking into the implementation phase or to seek alternative opportunities for collaboration in the future.