

## Adolescent Participation Checklist<sup>1</sup>

Use the checklist below to support adolescents' participation in all aspects of your work with the Adolescent Kit, especially as they collaborate with adults in their community.

- ☑ **Is it voluntary?** Real participation is voluntary, not forced.
- ☑ **Is it accessible to all?** Too often only the most confident adolescents are involved. Too often only the adolescent boys get to speak.
- ☑ **Is it respectful?** Real participation takes place in a climate of respect, where no one is laughed at or ignored.
- ☑ **What's the point of it?** Adolescents should understand why they are participating - otherwise they may see participation as confusing or a waste of time.
- ☑ **Who wants it?** Real participation is based around issues that adolescents themselves care about and want to give their attention to.
- ☑ **Does it make a difference?** Adolescents should feel they are contributing and having a real influence on outcomes.
- ☑ **Is the language right?** Real participation requires adolescents to feel competent in the language and vocabulary that is used.
- ☑ **Are participants equally prepared?** Often adults have all the information, and adolescents don't.
- ☑ **Is it genuine?** Real participation allows adolescents to follow through on ideas – the adults don't decide everything in advance.
- ☑ **Is it safe?** Real participation involves making every effort to ensure that adolescents aren't endangered by what they do or say.
- ☑ **What happens afterwards?** Real participation means adolescents are clear about what happens afterwards, and who is responsible for follow-up actions.

<sup>1</sup> This tool is adapted from content in Commonwealth Secretariat, Participation in the Second Decade of Life: What and Why?, Commonwealth Secretariat, London, 2005.