

# Impact of SBC Media on Youth Agency in Kenya

## Situation

Young Kenyans face many challenges that prevent them from reaching their potential, including high incidences of HIV/AIDS and early pregnancies. Emerging evidence suggests that strategies to increase agency among young people might be most effective in bringing about sustained changes in attitudes, norms, and behaviors.

## What We're Doing

USAID's Agency for All Project is conducting a study to understand if and how a youth-focused, multimedia social and behavior change (SBC) intervention can help increase agency among Kenyans ages 18–24 in informal settlements. Using Shujaaz Inc as an existing multi-media platform for young Kenyans, we are designing messaging with community engagement activities to resonate with the real-life experiences of young Kenyans. Our research is designed to identify pathways between increased agency, positive shifts in social norms, and improved sexual and reproductive health. This includes:

- **Formative research** among young people and key informants including focus groups, individual interviews, and collaborative design-thinking sessions to understand youth concepts of agency and vision of a “good life”.
- **Longitudinal panel survey** of Kenyans aged 18–24 living in informal settlements.
- **In-depth interviews** with participants who complete the longitudinal panel survey and key Informant interviews with “trusted adults” and “youth-friendly” medical professionals.
- **WhatsApp experiments** to test media formats and platforms among existing Shujaaz media fans.

## What We're Learning

- Young people report agency as a confluence of individual and collective factors including self-worth, critical consciousness, peer influence, and family support.
- The media campaign will focus on modeling positive change for young people, including increased self-worth and relational empathy.
- We hypothesize that the media intervention and community engagement activities will shift social norms and increase individual capacity for exercising agency through narratives that model positive change towards a good life and that activate social support networks.

## Impact

The results of this evaluation will help us gain a deeper understanding of youth agency and how we can design media campaigns that effectively increase youth agency along multiple dimensions, including sexual and reproductive health, healthy relational engagement, and pathways to the achievement of a good life.

## Snapshot

**Location:** Kenya

**Duration:** 2024–2025

**Consortium Partners:** Center on Gender Equity and Health, UC San Diego; Shujaaz Inc.; Makerere University

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