SKILLS FOR A CHANGING WORLD

Non-formal Girls' Life Skills Programming

Implications for Policy and Practice

TARGET AND REACH

NON-FORMAL LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMS ARE MISSING A CRITICAL OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE THE MOST MARGINALIZED GIRLS

- Half of programs use no background criteria to target program participants.
- Majority of girl participants do no meet even on condition of vulnerability (as defined by the study).
- Educational opportunities for marginalized and vulnerable girls are oftentimes accessible only through non-formal initiatives.

DEFINITIONAL CONSENSUS

PROGRAMS TRY TO TEACH A BREADTH OF SKILLS, BUT THERE IS A DEFINITION ISSUE TO ADDRESS IN PROGRAM DESIGN

- Narrow focus may be keeping programs from focusing on breadth
- Inconsistency on what programs are calling "life skills"
- Too much focus on livelihoods or knowledge of life situations rather than on developing a broad range of competencies

MEASUREMENT

THERE ARE GAPS IN WHAT LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMS MEASURE

- If we cannot define life skills, how can we measure life skills?
- Need to move away from self-report and toward process-oriented assessments
- Longitudinal measures in evaluations are critical for linking life skills to girls' life outcomes

POLICY AND SCALING

LIFE SKILLS PRACTITIONERS MAY BE MISSING A KEY OPPORTUNITY TO INFORM EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY AND SCALE PROGRAMS

- Policy-practice gap suggests more can be done for policy-practice alignment
- Learnings from the non-formal sector may not make it to national policy

NON-FORMAL AND FORMAL SECTOR SHARING

FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER TO IMPROVE GIRLS' OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- Formal sector can learn from design and delivery in non-formal sector
- Training, evaluation, participation, and integration are key

RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve targeting of participants to reach marginalized and vulnerable girls.

Design programs that are more intentional about the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that girls need for positive life outcomes and social change.

Develop process-oriented measures of life skills.

Generate more evidence through non-formal sector coalitions to inform policy and action.

Create regular opportunities for learning between non-formal and formal education stakeholders for wider systems change.