Women's Refugee Commission
Research. Rethink. Resolve.

Strong Girls, Powerful Women

Program Planning and Design for Adolescent Girls
in Humanitarian Settings

June 2014

Research. Rethink. Resolve.

The Women's Refugee Commission works to improve the lives and protect the rights of women, children and youth displaced by conflict and crisis. We research their needs, identify solutions and advocate for programs and policies to strengthen their resilience and drive change in humanitarian practice.

Photographs © Kathryn Paik, Jennifer Schulte and the Danish Refugee Council.

Cover photo: The WRC spoke with in- and out-of-school girls, young mothers, and girls who live alone or with foster families. Girls drew maps of their communities and explained what they do during the day, whom they interact with and where they feel safe and unsafe.

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Contents

Acronyms & Abbreviations

CBO	Community-based organization
CEFM	Child, early, and forced marriage
CFS	Child-friendly spaces
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
FGD	Focus group discussion
FGM/C	Female genital mutilation/cutting
GBV	Gender-based violence
IMC	International Medical Corps
IRC	International Rescue Committee
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
STI	Sexually transmitted infection
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WASH	Water, sanitation, and hygiene
WRC	Women's Refugee Commission

Executive Summary

In most countries, adolescent girls face disadvantages compared to their male peers in family roles, divisions of labor, and access to resources because they are female and young. Even before conflicts erupt or natural disasters occur, adolescent girls' transition from childhood to adulthood is shaped by rigid expectations that have negative implications for their access to health services, schooling, and other life-shaping opportunities. In conflict and displacement settings, the institutions, systems, and community cohesion that normally support girls' development, protect them from violence, and uphold their human rights are weakened or destroyed. Family and community structures break down, while traditional and social norms disintegrate, affecting adolescent girls in unique and devastating ways.

Yet, adolescent girls in humanitarian settings should not just be seen as a vulnerable group; girls possess enormous capacity for becoming a source of transformation in their families and communities. Growing evidence supports that investing in girls' economic and social empowerment can reduce their risks of experiencing violence and is an effective pathway to sustainable development. Likewise, conflict and crisis situations often lead to shifting gender roles that open up possibilities for positive social changes, resulting in an opportunity for gender norms to change for the better.

The Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) has worked for a number of years on promoting effective economic opportunities for women to mitigate their risk of experiencing gender-based violence (GBV). A key finding to emerge from this work was the necessity to undertake a specific initiative on adolescent girls aged 10-16 years old—for whom direct employment may not be age-appropriate, yet building employment-readiness skills is critical. In 2010, a three-year global advocacy project entitled Protecting and Empowering Displaced Adolescent Girls Initiative was launched to find ways to equip adolescent girls in humanitarian settings with skills and resources to transition safely to adulthood and prepare them for developing safe, dignified livelihoods.

In collaboration with implementing partners, the WRC

tested promising approaches in adolescent girls' programming by applying the learning from development contexts in pilot programs in three displacement settings. The initiative explored alternative means of empowerment to protect adolescent girls by establishing safe spaces as portals where displaced girls can build confidence and agency while gaining critical skills for their future livelihoods.

This report synthesizes the findings from:

- Desk research and key informant interviews

- In-country assessments from refugee camps in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda

- Learning to date from pilot programs in three refugee camps in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda

This document is intended to help humanitarian practitioners more effectively identify and address the unique needs of adolescent girls in displacement and crisis settings. It also provides donors and policy makers, who have the ability to drive change in humanitarian programming, with guidance on how to make sustainable impact for adolescent girls.

Key Recommendations

- **Allocate a sufficient start-up period to allow time for staff training and consultations with girls, and to adjust tools for learning activities.** Time must be invested *before* interventions start to ensure staff can work effectively with girls and tools are developed for girls' activities.

- **Maintain a focus on girls as the primary beneficiaries.** Programs for youth or women are mostly attended by adult males or older women, respectively. Level the playing field for girls by centering interventions on girls, and involving them every step of the way.

- **Create safe spaces to bring girls together.** Public spaces are usually dominated by men and boys. Girls need a space to call their own. Safe spaces can be a platform for building girls' social networks,

knowledge, and skills.

- **Build mentorship and leadership models into programs.** Girls and communities mutually benefit from mentorship and leadership. When a girl sees herself as a leader or mentor, it can create a positive force for change in her life. Strong networks of girl leaders improve the status of females in the community.

- **Integrate programs with economic strengthening activities.** Financial literacy and vocational skills training, and practicing savings, should accompany the learning activities for girls. Integrating activities to increase a girl's economic prospects can lead to improvement in her and her family's future well-being.

- **Ensure programs are developmentally and contextually appropriate.** Life skills for younger girls should focus on different issues than for pregnant, married, and parenting girls; for financial literacy skills, help younger girls to practice savings, and older girls to access loans.

- **Involve men and boys in programs as partners and allies for changing gender norms.** Engaging men and boys without explicit focus on transforming unequal power relations may not be as effective and can even lead to more gender inequality.

For a full list of recommendations, see page 28.

Report Structure

This report will first provide an introduction to why the needs and capacities of adolescent girls in humanitarian settings should be taken into account; then it presents the methodology for the research undertaken by the WRC's Displaced Adolescent Girls Initiative. The report will continue with findings from our initiative: approaches and promising practices in adolescent girls' programming undertaken across various contexts as well as our initial learning from our pilot programs in three refugee settings. Lastly, drawing from our research to date, the report will present a range of strategies and options for humanitarian actors to consider when planning and designing programs for adolescent girls, and more generally when working with adolescent girls in crisis settings.

Introduction

Why adolescent girls matter

Adolescence (age 10 – 19) is a critical period of transition from childhood to adulthood, a time when events, choices, and opportunities can shape the course of the rest of a person's life. There are more than 1.5 billion adolescents in the world; half of them are girls and young women. Gender inequality, already present during childhood, often becomes more pronounced during the formative phase of adolescence. Girls are more likely than boys to be denied the opportunity to attend secondary school,[1] which has been shown to be a critical factor for reducing early childbearing.[2] Fifty percent of sexual assaults are on girls aged 15 and younger,[3] which can lead to mental health impairments, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS, or pregnancy for which their bodies are not ready. Complications of pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death among girls aged 15 to 19;[4] pregnancy during adolescence carries a higher risk of mortality than does pregnancy in a woman in her 20s.[5] Girls are also far more likely than boys to be socially isolated, lacking friends, and less likely to be exposed to potential mentors and role models that are important for a girl's sense of self and her future well-being.[6]

Why adolescent girls in humanitarian settings matter

Displaced girls at heightened risk

Over 1.5 billion people in the world today live in countries affected by violent conflicts.[7] As of 2013, approximately 51.2 million people had been forced to leave their homes due to conflict and violence.[8] The scale of humanitarian crises in 2013/2014, largely due to the conflicts in Syrian Arab Republic, Mali, Central African Republic, and South Sudan, have together created the

greatest forced displacement situation since World War II. Natural disasters, particularly those related to climate change, are fast becoming a leading cause of forced displacement; 32.4 million people were forced to leave their homes due to natural disasters in 2012.[9] In 2013 Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines alone caused the displacement of over 4 million people.[10] These figures and circumstances cannot be ignored; they reflect the reality of millions of adolescent girls today who face serious risks to their health, safety, education, and well-being.

In most countries, adolescent girls face disadvantages compared to their male peers in family roles, divisions of labor, and access to resources because they are female and young. Even before conflicts erupt or natural disasters occur, adolescent girls' transition from childhood to adulthood is shaped by rigid expectations that have negative implications for their access to health services, schooling, and other life-shaping opportunities. In conflict and displacement settings, the institutions, systems, and community cohesion that

Adolescent girls with babies sometimes face stigma and discriminiation, but they find support through safe space programs.

normally support girls' development, protect them from violence, and uphold their human rights are weakened or destroyed.[11] Family and community structures break down, while traditional and social norms disintegrate, affecting adolescent girls in unique and devastating ways.[12]

"Girls are easily exploited because they're poor and parents don't have means to take care of them and any man can get what they want if they offer them little things like soap or food."

- Male community member in a group discussion at Kyaka II Refugee Settlement in Uganda

Gender-based violence (GBV), particularly sexual violence, is a human rights violation that has profound physical, psychological, and social consequences for adolescent girls. Women, girls, men, and boys all suffer during humanitarian crises. However, because gender inequality, the root cause of GBV, is exacerbated during such times, girls and women are disproportionately affected.[13] All over the world, due to their disadvantaged position in society, girls and women bear the burden of poverty, have less access to education, and are less mobile as a result of the traditional family and care-giving roles, all of which negatively impact their experiences during crises.[14] Girls and women may have common experiences because of their gender, but oftentimes girls suffer additional targeted harm due to their age. Girls are recruited as combatants in armed conflict, making up as much as 30-40 percent of child combatants, while also being subjected to sexual violence and forced marriage to male fighters.[15] Yet, girls are usually excluded from disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs and they face social stigma and shame upon returning to civilian life.[16]

While sexual violence may be the most immediate and destructive type of GBV occurring in acute-onset emergencies, as situations become more stable and recovery begin, other forms of GBV, including child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM), female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), honor killings, and other harmful traditional practices are reported with increasing frequen-

What Is Gender-based Violence?

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females. Acts of GBV violate a number of universal human rights protected by international instruments and conventions. Many—but not all—forms of GBV are illegal and criminal acts in national laws and policies. Around the world, GBV has a greater impact on women and girls than on men and boys. The nature and extent of specific types of GBV vary across cultures, countries, and regions. Examples include sexual violence, including sexual exploitation/abuse and forced prostitution; domestic violence; trafficking; forced or early marriage; and harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation and honor killings.

- Inter-Agency Standing Committee Definition

cy.[17] While girls who are unaccompanied or separated are particularly at risk of being targeted by perpetrators, all displaced girls are at heightened vulnerability in temporary shelter situations.[18] Child trafficking, children engaging in transactional sex, and HIV transmission risks all see an increase in conflict and disaster-affected settings.[19, 20, 21]

In a 1999 government survey of over 2,000 sex workers in Sierra Leone, 37 percent were children, of whom 80 percent were unaccompanied and displaced from the civil war.[22] A study conducted in Rwanda found that before the 1994 genocide the average age for marriage for a girl was between 20 and 25 years. In the refugee camps during and after the genocide, the reported mean age of marriage was 15 years.[23] Most recently, with the emergency surrounding the conflict in Syria, NGOs have started to see a rise in CEFM; parents marry off their underage daughters to older men both as an economic strategy to alleviate financial hardship and to protect them from being assaulted by other men during flight and in displacement settings.[24, 25] CEFM also contributes to increased vulnerabilities of exploitation and abuse, exposure to STIs, unwanted pregnancy, and subsequent unsafe abortion, maternal death, and potential impairment or longer-term disability.

Girls who are separated from their families, married, or have a disability, or any combination of these circumstances, face an even greater risk of all forms of abuse and hardship. As families cope with separation, loss of livelihoods, access to basic needs, and other stresses and shocks, girls often take on increased responsibilities in caring for dependents, carrying out household chores, and engaging in livelihood activities at the cost of their education and physical safety. These circumstances restrict girls' mobility, visibility, and access to lifesaving services. Isolated from their peers, support groups, and the wider community, adolescent girls are often invisible to humanitarian relief efforts.[26]

"The man who raped me ran off to the Congo. No one knows where he is anymore, no one cared about making things right. I had one friend who cared about me. But after I got pregnant, she didn't want to be friends anymore."

- 16-year-old girl with a baby, Tanzania

Humanitarian imperative

Despite girls' vulnerabilities, most humanitarian efforts do not target adolescent girls either in mainstream programs or in separate interventions. Adolescent girls are either lumped together with women or with children, each of which has needs and life experiences that vastly differ from those of adolescent girls. Likewise, youth programs that intend to target both male and female youth often mostly benefit male youth because the design of the programs does not consider adolescent girls' circumstances, including their care-giving responsibilities and the heightened risks of GBV girls may encounter when traveling to programs. Adolescent girls are neither women nor children, yet they carry the burdens of both during times of crisis, and face the double discrimination of their age and their gender.[27] Because adolescent girls are among the most vulnerable and least likely to be visible, humanitarian actors have a re-

sponsibility to understand the nature of the challenges they face and address their unique protection risks. Although the risks are great, displacement can also provide an opportunity to reach girls with positive interventions that they would have had no access to in their home communities.

> Given the severity of the physical and emotional consequences of GBV, the protection mandate of the humanitarian community, all humanitarian programs should ask: Will the proposed intervention contribute to reducing the likelihood that girls will experience GBV?

Methodology

The WRC's Protecting and Empowering Displaced Adolescent Girls Initiative aims to contribute to the knowledge base on strategies and options for designing and implementing programs for adolescent girls in humanitarian settings. The findings and analysis are drawn from three key areas of work:

1. Desk research/Key informant interviews

In 2011-2012, the WRC carried out a global scan of innovative adolescent girls programs from both development and humanitarian contexts. Although programmatic evidence primarily comes from non-humanitarian contexts, a number of reviewed programs have been implemented in post-crisis or fragile states. The WRC documented and analyzed key approaches and lessons for application in humanitarian settings, including learning about the impact, reach, and sustainability of adolescent girls programs. Documents reviewed included program evaluations, academic articles and gray literature available online and through program staff contacts to establish trends and key approaches identified in adolescent girls programming. The WRC reviewed over 40 programs that protect and empower adolescent girls through various combinations of asset-based interventions—strategies that incorporate delivery of

information and services as well as building skills and support networks directly targeting adolescent girls. The populations reached in the reviewed programs are primarily adolescent girls aged 10-19. Programs reviewed utilized several key approaches that are increasingly being recognized as promising strategies to support adolescent girls:

- Safe spaces for girls to meet separately from boys

- Access to mentors and role models

- Girls are at the center of programming

- Multi-sectoral approach and coordination

- Health and life skills combined with financial education/livelihoods training

- Community engagement and buy-in, including parents/guardians and critical males in the girls' lives

A list and brief description of selected programs from the desk research is available in Annex 1.

The desk research was supplemented by semi-structured interviews with humanitarian and development practitioners, academics, and researchers in various fields relating to adolescent girls, gender, public health, women's rights and empowerment, and children's issues. Key questions were posed on opportunities and challenges in engaging adolescent girls, effective strategies and constraints in addressing GBV against adolescent girls, and lessons learned from practitioners from their work across diverse settings.

A list of organizations consulted in this initiative is found in Annex 2.

2. Field Assessments from refugee camps in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda

In 2012, three in-country assessments were conducted in Sheder and Aw Barre Refugee Camps in Ethiopia; Nyarugusu Refugee Camp in Tanzania; and Kyaka II Refugee Settlement in Uganda. The objectives of these assessments were to understand the needs and capacities of adolescent girls and to consult the girls

Adolescent girls explained that they often don't feel protected or safe anywhere, particularly when they leave camp in search of firewood.

and the community members on their own solutions to address the concerns girls had in their respective locations. Assessments included focus group discussions disaggregated by age, gender, and vulnerability;[28] in-depth individual interviews; semi-structured interviews with service providers, staff from community-based organizations, international organizations and government agencies, and staff from the UNHCR. A total of 215 adolescent girls, 44 adolescent boys, 97 refugee women and men and dozens of staff of UN agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and government agencies were consulted during the in-country assessments.

This report includes generalized findings from across the three refugee contexts; for specific findings and recommendations see the Women's Refugee Commission's individual reports:

- *In Search of Safety and Solutions: Somali Refugee Adolescent Girls at Sheder and Aw Barre Camps, Ethiopia[29] (http://wrc.ms/RX3fEu)*

- *The Path to Hope: Congolese Refugee Adolescent Girls in Nyarugusu Refugee Camp, Tanzania[30] (http://wrc.ms/TvjDMy)*

- *Scattered Dreams, Broken Promises: An Assessment of the Links between Girls' Empowerment and Gender-based Violence in the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, Uganda[31] (http://wrc.ms/XUU7Er)*

3. Three-site pilot interventions

The findings from the desk research/key informant interviews and in-country assessments presented several key intervention approaches for testing in pilot programs, the details of which are elaborated in the following sections of this report. Requests for proposals, highlighting these approaches as examples of possible interventions, were developed and distributed to international and local NGOs already working in refugee camps in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda.[32]

The pilot interventions aimed to increase the knowledge base about what types of programs enable adolescent girls in humanitarian settings to become agents of their own protection and to detail some key considerations for implementing such programs. Specifics of the interventions were designed in collaboration with implementing partners,[33] who also consulted girls and community members for their direct inputs into activities prior to project start-ups. While activities varied across projects, all three took similar programmatic approach in utilizing a safe space for adolescent girls as a platform to deliver information and skills training, as well as creating opportunities to develop social support networks. All three pilot interventions also engaged the parents/guardians of the girls and the wider community for support and buy-in.

Findings from the Displaced Adolescent Girls Initiative

Approaches in adolescent girls' programming

Girl-centered interventions

While mainstream programs should maximize participation of girls, there should also be targeted programs for girls. This does not only mean designing interventions that promote changes in the physical and social environments in which girls live, including the attitudes of men and boys, but programs must start with, and be centered on, girls to reap the greatest benefits. Research indicates that investing in girls is not only economically sound but is key to sustainable development that has the power to uplift entire economies.[34] Societies cannot afford not to invest in girls—the consequence is slower growth and reduced incomes.[35] Despite these potential outcomes, girls are still at a disadvantage in comparison to boys in every aspect of society: access to education and health; economic opportunities; and participation in leadership. Resources tend to reach the most advantaged groups; disadvantaged girls who could benefit the most from investments tend to receive the fewest. In Burkina Faso, for example, girls made up only 19 percent of those who access youth centers and 36 percent of "youth" in question are men older than 20.[36] Girl-centered programs level the playing field for girls by centering interventions on girls, measuring outcomes on their well-being, and involving them every step of the way. There is growing evidence that girl-centered programs can have significant positive effects on delaying marriage and childbirth, increasing literacy, and attaining higher levels in education.[37]

> "Girl-centered program design" puts girls at the center of each and every program decision—from identifying which girls to target, when and why, to measuring results at the level of the girl.
> –The Girl Effect

Asset-based approach to reduce risks

Evidence from the field of adolescent health and development suggests several protective factors or "assets" are associated with improved health-seeking behavior and reducing risks, including prevention of violence and delaying of sexual activity.[38, 39] Asset-based approaches are thus a widely used framework for positive adolescent programs across developed countries.[40] In developing countries, recent studies focused on adolescent girls have also begun defining factors that tend to support girls in healthy transition to adulthood and protect them from violence.[41] These factors include being in school, having strong friendship networks and social affiliation, access to a place to meet peers, access to relations of trust, information about health, and financial literacy.[42]

> "Assets" are the building blocks of economic and social empowerment.

Asset-based approaches simultaneously reduce adolescent girls' vulnerabilities and increase their access to opportunities. They place girls at the center (Figure 1) to build foundational assets—human, social, financial, and physical—and equip them with the wherewithal to transform their lives and positively impact their families and communities.

Figure 1 Asset-Based Model (adapted from Population Council)

Human Assets	Social Assets	Financial Assets	Physical Assets
• Communication skills • Good health • Ability to work • Education • Literacy • Health, legal and economic information • Self-esteem • Bargaining power	• Friends • Social networks • Mentors • Relationships of trust • Group membership • Access to wider institutions of society	• Cash • Savings • Access to loans • Vouchers • Entitlements	• Identity card • Land • Shelter • Transport • Personal Assets (clothing, jewelry, household items) • Tools, equipment and other productive assets

Table 1 Categories of Assets (Adapted from the Girl Effect)

In programing, an asset-based approach means developing key skills and resources that relate to those foundational assets (Table 1): human and social assets—behavioral compentencies that include communication skills, financial literacy, and confidence building; and financial and physical assets—resources that help create security, develop savings behavior, provide income generation options, and increase productivity.[43]

Safe space model as a vehicle for other interventions

Adolescent girls are often socially isolated. By being with girls their own age, girls can share knowledge and experience, and build the support networks that have been shown to improve their health and social outcomes, and be protective against GBV and other threats to their development. A meeting place for girls, whether dedicated or ad hoc, can be a safe space when it is culturally accepted by girls and the critical adults in their lives, easy and safe to access, free from intrusions by males or other unwanted authority figures, and offer some degree of privacy and confidentiality.[44]

Safe space interventions are far more effec-

tive when they serve as a venue for delivering knowledge about sexual and reproductive health, training in skills (Figure 2) such as financial literacy, and support for staying in school—all of which have also been shown to be protective.

Girls need space and time that is their own where they can meet regularly, develop skills and confidence, mobilize around their shared concerns, and also have fun together. This safe space in Nyarugusu Refugee Camp in Tanzania provids such a place.

Figure 2 Safe Space Model

Promising practices and lessons learned

For over a decade, the field of research and programs for adolescent girls has grown to a wide range of studies and interventions in health; formal and non-formal education; leadership and skills training; and economic empowerment that seek to address the broader economic and social dynamics of adolescent girls' well-being. To date, few of these programs have targeted *displaced* adolescent girls; however, there is a growing interest in understanding the needs of adolescent girls in various types of humanitarian settings, including camp and non-camp settings, during slow onset and immediate crisis periods,[45] and in cyclical disasters where adolescent girls are often extremely vulnerable and yet assume enormous leadership and care burden roles within their families.

Adolescent girls in humanitarian settings are not just an urgent protection concern. They possess great potential for transforming their families and communities, as well as their own lives. As growing evidence supports investing in girls as an effective pathway to development, the WRC sought to test several promising practices and lessons learned from the adolescent girls' work to date in humanitarian settings:

1. **Mentorship/leadership development programs can be mutually beneficial for girls and communities.** Girls benefit from exposure to mentors who are older girls from their communities who can be suc-

cessful role models to emulate; mentors are vital to the development of girls' self-confidence and healthy behaviors.[46] As they are not parents or teachers, mentors can give helpful advice while allowing the girls themselves to take ownership over their choices and actions. Building girls' leadership abilities can create a positive force for change in the lives of girls when they see themselves as a leader and mentor. Stronger networks of girl leaders also improve female social status in the community and challenge existing social norms that keep girls from accessing their rights.[47] Safe spaces can be used as a platform to deliver mentorship programs.

> *"Being a mentor helped me to build social standing among the community"*
>
> - Participant in group discussion with mentors at Nyarugusu Refugee Camp in Tanzania

Refer to Annex 3 Case Study: Population Council's Abriendo Oportunidades (Opening Opportunities): Program for rural, indigenous girls aged 8–18 from poor communities in Guatemala.

2. **Holistic approaches have better outcomes in addressing the multiple factors that shape adolescent girls' lives.** Much of the current programming for adolescent girls is based on the theory of change that building girls' assets during early adolescence will translate to decreased experience of GBV, delaying first pregnancy and age of marriage, and greater labor market participation.[48, 49] Specific issues relevant for adolescent girls include: health, including sexual and reproductive health, maternal health and HIV; all forms of violence; education; skills training, work transitions, and livelihoods; and social norms that perpetuate inequality. While a single-sector approach may enable larger-scale programming, exclusive focus on one issue may ignore the fundamen-

tal links between multiple risks factors. In addition, an intervention in a single sector without understanding interrelationships with other sectors can have a negative effect. For example, while some economic empowerment programs have been shown to increase economic opportunities for women and girls, these programs may also increase their risk of different forms of GBV, including physical harm, sexual abuse, and coercion.[50, 51] While there is no agreement which combination is most effective, the most successful interventions offer a comprehensive approach, addressing the intersection of factors that shape girls' lives.

Refer to Annex 3 Case Study: International Rescue Committee's Girl Empower: Building the Evidence Base for the Effective Economic and Social Empowerment of Adolescent Girls in Ethiopia and Liberia.

3. Integrate economic strengthening activities into programs. Traditionally, girl-centered programs have focused on education or reproductive health; more recently, programs began to combine economic dimensions into social and health programs for adolescent girls. Family poverty usually has a greater impact on girls than boys, and when households experience economic hardships, it is the girls and young women who are compelled to take riskier work to contribute to family income.[52] Among the most economically marginalized groups, adolescent girls lack access to cash, savings, and other financial capital and face limited opportunities

Hands-on skills training empowers out-of-school refugee girls in Uganda.

to gain the education, knowledge, and skills that can lead to economic advancement.[53] Girls have a strong interest in improving their prospects for the future, so livelihoods or economic strengthening[54] activities can make programs more attractive to them. In addition, if parents and communities view girls as capable of earning a sufficient income, their treatment of girls improves. Studies have shown that increasing a girl's control over economic assets can improve her own and her family's future well-being, improved psychological well-being, improved social power, decreased risk-taking behaviors, and improved economic outlook for her children.[55]

> Financial education builds skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors to enable adolescent girls to manage money well.

> Economic Strengthening Approaches[51]:
> - Skills training
> - Income-generation schemes
> - Cash transfers
> - Agricultural development
> - Small business support
> - Financial education
> - Loan/savings-led microfinance
> - Job development
> - Cash/food-for-work

Refer to Annex 3 Case Study: BRAC's Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents (ELA) program in Bangladesh, Uganda, Tanzania, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Haiti, and Sierra Leone.

> *"I'm now able to think about what I'm learning here and how this will help me in the future to earn income so that I can help my family."*
>
> - Adolescent girl in a group discussion at Nyarugusu Refugee Camp, Tanzania

Refugee girls with disabilities face particularly steep barriers in accessing children and youth programs, education, healthcare, and other critical services in the camp.

4. Target the most marginalized girls to ensure programs are equitable and make most impact. Despite the evidence that investing in adolescent girls' health, education, and skills has multiple benefits for girls, their families, communities, and societies as a whole,[56] girls are often left behind in many programs intended to target adolescents and youth. Studies assessing coverage and reach of youth-serving programs have shown that those considered "better-off"—often older, more educated, male, and urban—are the ones accessing programs, clearly underscoring the need to better target the girls who are most in need.[57] Successful programs use data to understand which girls are the most vulnerable and where they are located.[59] Data can be drawn from multiple indicator cluster surveys, demographic and health surveys, and National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention surveys to determine which girls are most at risk for early marriage, school leaving, sexual violence, and HIV/AIDS, and where they tend to be concentrated. There are various methods to recruit girls, including door-to-door; service provider

referrals; community structures such as church groups, women's groups, youth groups; use of market days to publicize program and recruitment opportunities; and girls themselves, who may know other vulnerable girls who may otherwise be difficult to find. The girls most in need are generally those least likely to access services and programs, including married girls, girls who are heads of households, and girls with disabilities. Reaching these girls requires additional effort and thoughtful outreach strategies.

Refer to Annex 3 Case Study: Kisumu Medical and Education Trust's Sisterhood for Change (SFC) program in Kenya.

5. Community and gatekeeper buy-in creates an enabling environment for girls. Because girls are frequently overlooked and seen as unimportant due to both their gender and age, there may be a lack of understanding of the need for girl-centered programming. Communities need a process of education and buy-in, which is necessary as part of project start-up in order for women, men, and boys to "see" girls and their particular needs, importance, and potential as agents of change. Programs that empower, educate, and protect girls should not be seen as valuing one group over others, but as strengthening the most vulnerable link of a community, for collective benefit and well-being. The number of programs that engage men and boys in efforts to address social norms and gender equality has been on the rise in response to the understanding of their essential role in influencing women's and girls' health and well-being.[59] Programs must start with girls at the center, addressing their needs and vulnerabilities, but interventions that focus on girls alone without engaging their gatekeepers only produce partial solutions and may even create problems by alienating men and boys. Identifying *which* males are most influential in a girl's life is a crucial part of this process.

Refer to Annex 3 Case Study: Pathfinder International's Safe Age of Marriage Program in Yemen.

6. Programs with a gender lens can be transformative for adolescent girls. Integrating a focus on challenging gender norms may be a key factor in preventing violence, improving reproductive health outcomes,

and changing behaviors and attitudes.[60, 61] Traditional adolescent programs that center on sexual and reproductive health often perpetuate girls' roles as primarily reproductive, maintaining the social and cultural norms that thrust girls prematurely into adulthood. Similarly, programs that aim to enhance girls' economic empowerment tend to conform females to gender-stereotypical options, keeping them in occupations that are low paying and low status, with little opportunity for upward mobility.[62] Yet, girls have aspirations that are often beyond the realm of defined social norms, and programs designed to challenge those boundaries can help transform societies and promote gender equality. Such change also requires the inclusion of men and boys in the process. The gender transformation process requires co-responsibility, shared by women and men, and girls and boys.[63]

Refer to Annex 3 Case Study: Population Council's "Ishraq" (Enlightenment) for adolescent girls and "New Visions" for boys in Egypt.

Testing approaches in humanitarian settings

Description of pilot interventions

Based on the promising practices and learning to date from existing adolescent girls programming, the WRC worked with field partners in designing 12-month interventions[64] to find new ways of protecting and empowering displaced adolescent girls in three refugee camp settings in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda. All three settings are considered protracted refugee situations characterized by long periods of exile for the majority of the populations and without prospect for near-term solutions. Adolescent girls and their communities were consulted on all activities to ensure they are culturally and contextually appropriate and respond to the multiple needs of girls to the extent possible.

Safe spaces are used in all three interventions as a platform for delivering interventions and aim to reach refugee adolescent girls who are considered most vulnerable, including young mothers, pregnant girls, girls who are married, out-of-school girls, girls with disabilities, girls living with foster parents or who are child

heads of households. All three pilots are designed with activities to build girls' confidence, increase their social networks, and train them in financial literacy to support safe transition into adulthood. Partners in all three locations work closely with UNHCR field staff and receive their full support for all activities related to protecting and empowering this target population.

Ethiopia

The WRC partners with the International Medical Corps (IMC) at Kobe Refugee Camp to bring together 99 Somali refugee adolescent girls aged 10-16 years in a safe space to learn life skills and computer skills, and participate in sport and recreational activities. The project aims to keep girls in school, build girls' practical skills to reduce high incidence of GBV, and prepare them for safe and sustainable livelihoods. Activities are complemented by provision of school supplies and other basic materials to remove barriers to education while educating parents, teachers, and community members on the needs and capacities of girls.

"I want to study hard to become a doctor one day. I am focused on learning and not getting married."

- Fadumo, 14, at Kobe Refugee Camp, Ethiopia

Sports and recreational activities are critical for confidence building in IMC Ethiopia's girls project.

Tanzania

The WRC works with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) at Nyarugusu Refugee Camp to build the capacities of 380 Congolese refugee adolescent girls[65] aged 10-16 years and strengthen community mechanisms to protect them using a safe space model. Project activities are designed to build girls' safety nets, sense of safety, and leadership skills, including life skills and financial education via cascading mentorship approach to pass down knowledge from trained female youth mentors to target adolescent girls. Activities for older girls are supplemented with training in livelihood skills, including textile design and production and soap making to increase their future economic prospects. Key decision-makers (community leaders, parents, caregivers, teachers, and religious leaders) are involved in the project at every stage.

"Girls had no hope for the future beyond doing house chores, getting married, taking care of children... but now they are starting to think about their life ahead and plan. They're learning to work together, understand that they could make a team and do better than what they can do alone…"

- Male refugee community leader in a group discussion in Tanzania

In IRC Tanzania's girls project, older girls are learning to dye textiles, which can be sold for a small profit.

Uganda

The WRC partners with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) at Kyaka II Refugee Settlement to improve the lives of 95 Congolese and Rwandan refugee adolescent girls[66] aged 14-16 years who have been out of formal education for more than a year and are unlikely to re-enter school. The girls receive basic literacy and numeracy training followed by intensive learning in several marketable skills (sewing/tailoring, hair dressing, and knitting) to help prepare them for future income-generating opportunities. The girls meet in groups to learn together and are supported by trained older female mentors who are girls' advocates to the wider community.

"We're slowly helping these girls transform their attitudes about themselves. We want to help them put their learned skills into something bigger in their lives."

- Female mentor in a group discussion in Uganda

Refugee girls in Uganda learn to braid hair in groups. They hope to start their own salon. This is the first time such out-of-school girls have had the opportunity to access vocational training designed specifically for adolescent girls.

Monitoring and evaluation

The pilot interventions collected baseline data to compare results to "midline" and "end-line" assessments;

the data sets are girls' self-reported responses to survey questions. The interventions did not include a control comparison group.[67]

Baseline surveys were conducted in May-June 2013 with over 500 adolescent girls registered to participate in the project across three pilot locations. Survey questions were developed and tested locally with partners to measure girls' starting points in their levels of health, legal, and economic knowledge; decision-making capacities relating to education, marriage, and sex; access to friends and relationships of trust; economic activities they are currently engaged in; access to money or savings for emergencies; and perceptions about safety, mobility, and future aspirations. Midline evaluations were conducted in March-April 2014 on a subset (247) of randomly selected girls who were surveyed at the baseline in order to assess the effectiveness of the project models; to draw lessons that can help strengthen the projects and the implementing partners' work on adolescent girls; and to provide practical recommendations for improvement.

In 2015, an end-line assessment will be conducted to determine to what extent the interventions achieved the goals and objectives to increase girls' skills and knowledge, expand their social connectedness, and prepare them for greater future economic opportunities. The end-line will also assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation and further identify promising practices. The results are expected to contribute to the ongoing development and learning about which approaches work best to protect and empower adolescent girls, and to creating the conditions for scale-up and sustainability for such programs in humanitarian settings.

The findings from the midline evaluations are preliminary and by no means indicative of the projects' success or sustainability. Partners from all three pilots indicate that it is too early to measure outcomes.

Limitations

Baseline surveys were conducted in 2013 through implementing partners in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda. In 2014, midline evaluations were conducted in Tanzania and Uganda; Ethiopia's midline results are still being compiled at the time of this report. Therefore, the results from the overall interventions are incomplete. However, these results, combined with quarterly monitoring activities conducted by partners as well as qualitative data collected through WRC's own monitoring visits to all three locations, synthesize noteworthy findings to contribute to the strategies presented in this report.

Although the survey questions were locally tested for appropriateness, the post-baseline debriefings revealed that some of the questions relating to girls' economic activities were not designed to account for how married girls may be dependent on their husbands and thus had difficulties in teasing out their practices regarding earnings, spending, and savings from those of their husbands. In addition, some of the same survey questions may be concepts that were too difficult for younger adolescent girls to grasp, resulting in some non-responses.

A subset (247) of the girls who were both surveyed at the baseline and active in the interventions were chosen to participate in the midline in order to reduce the cost burden and effort of the assessment. The subset was selected randomly in order to ensure that the participants were representative of the baseline population and not those that experienced the most positive changes.

Preliminary findings from pilot interventions

Program Title: Protecting and Empowering Displaced Adolescent Girls in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda

Goal: To enable displaced adolescent girls to protect themselves from sexual violence and empower them to build brighter futures.

Immediate results (output): Refugee adolescent girls have increased access to social support and mentorship, life skills, financial education, and reproductive health information; community capacities are enhanced to serve and protect refugee adolescent girls effectively.

Intermediate results (outcome): Refugee adolescent girls are equipped with resources and skills they need to become healthy and self-reliant young women; community mechanisms to support and meet the needs of adolescent girls are strengthened.

The WRC pilot programs have made good progress in carrying out planned activities and achieving immediate results (outputs). At this early stage, as expected, there is limited evidence of progress towards intermediate results (outcomes). Below is a summary of progress to date based on the changes the WRC observed in partner interventions from baseline to midline assessments (note that midline assessment is not yet completed in Ethiopia at the time of this report; the findings below are primarily from Tanzania and Uganda):

Human assets: The baseline data found adolescent girls have low self-esteem and self-confidence, mixed knowledge about their rights, and little autonomy in decisions that affect their lives. Less than a third of the surveyed girls in Tanzania and Uganda had hopes for their future. In a question that asked whether or not girls felt optimistic that they could have a better life than their parents and guardians, over two thirds of them said they were not optimistic. In Ethiopia, about two thirds of surveyed girls at the baseline said they feel optimistic about their futures; however, this may be because the Somali girls in Ethiopia have been displaced for significantly less time (around three years) than the Congolese girls in Tanzania and Uganda (most of whom were born in camp as their parents and guardians have been displaced since around 1996).

About half of the surveyed Congolese girls in Uganda (53 percent) reported some safety plans and strategies to move around their communities without being harassed. This was much less among the surveyed girls in Tanzania (23 percent) and Ethiopia (5 percent) despite GBV being reported as a concern for girls in moving around camps across the three sites.
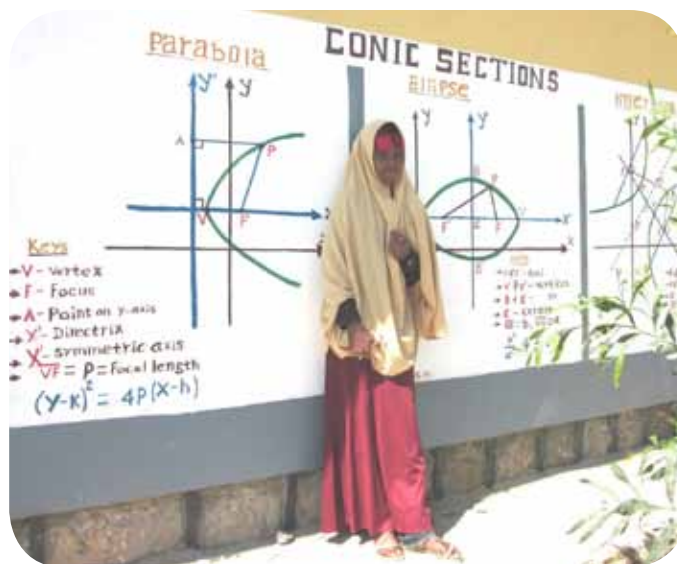
This 15-year-old Somali refugee girl in Ethiopia enjoys studying math and aspires to become a physicist. Somali girls aged 15-16 are commonly expected to marry, drop out of school, and bear children.

The following are some highlights from the results in girls' level of self-confidence by midline: In Tanzania, about two thirds of the girls said they now "have hope for the future" compared to only 12 percent at baseline (Graph 1), and over 80 percent of girls said they now feel they can make a positive impact in the community compared to only 24 percent at baseline (Graph 2). Similar results are noted in Uganda: All surveyed girls said they now "have hope for the future" compared to only 17 percent at baseline, and 97 percent of girls said they feel they can make a positive impact in the community compared to only 24 percent at baseline.

Graph 2: Proportion of girls who feel they can make a positive impact in the community
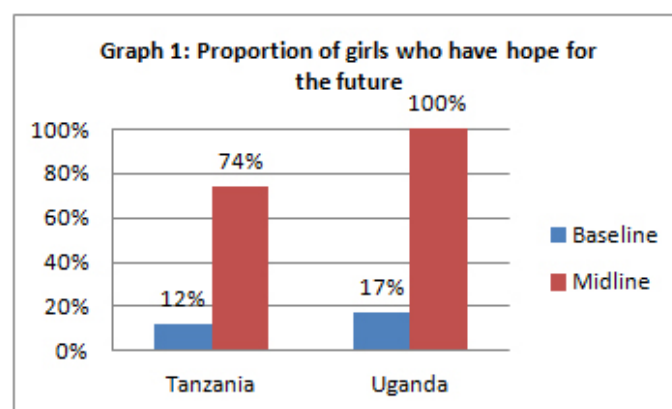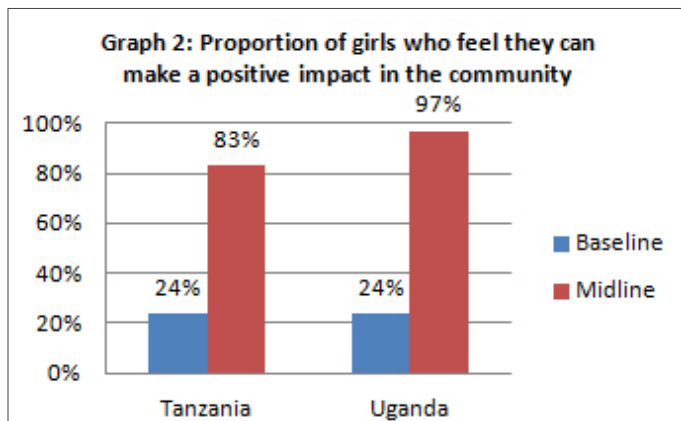
On girls' level of self esteem, in response to a question asking whether girls agreed or disagreed with the statement, "I feel as capable as other people of doing many things," the proportion of girls who agreed at baseline was 24 percent and 25 percent in Tanzania and Uganda, respectively. By midline, the proportion increased to 85 percent in Tanzania and 86 percent in Uganda. Similarly, the proportion of girls who agreed that they feel they have good qualities as a person at baseline was 22 percent in Tanzania and 30 percent in Uganda; by midline, the proportion increased to 85 percent in Tanzania and 88 percent in Uganda.

On having safety plans and strategies to move safely around the community, 78 percent of girls in Tanzania said they now have safety plans, compared to 23 percent at baseline (Graph 3). In Uganda, 69 percent of girls said they now have safety plans, compared to 53 percent at baseline. These results demonstrate that girls have gained critical skills on navigating safety routes around their communities and increased access to safety nets to protect themselves.

Graph 3: Proportion of girls who have safety plans to move around camp
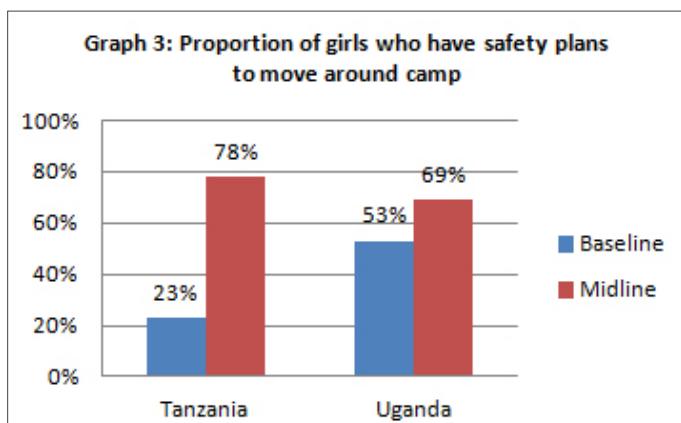
Social assets: Baseline results indicate that most adolescent girls across the three sites were socially isolated, with as many as 79 percent of the surveyed girls in Uganda reporting they had three or fewer close friends. In Ethiopia and Tanzania, the proportions were 73 percent and 64 percent respectively. Over 60 percent of surveyed girls across the three sites had no access to mentors or older role models they could look up to or emulate. Among those who reported having someone they could turn to for support in times of hardship, few were outside their immediate family.

By midline, little change was observed in the number of friends that girls in Tanzania or Uganda reported, which may indicate that cultivating friendships among socially isolated girls take time.

However, an increase was observed in the proportion of girls who report having someone to turn to for support by midline in both Tanzania and Uganda (73 percent at baseline to 80 percent at midline in Tanzania; 52 percent at baseline to 88 percent at midline in Uganda).

Furthermore, of the girls that reported having someone to turn to in times of hardship, the proportion of girls who mentioned non-family members increased from 0.04 percent at baseline to 28 percent at midline in Tanzania, and 12 percent at baseline to 30 percent at midline in Uganda (Graph 4).This indicates a possibility that the activities may be enabling girls to build trusted relations outside of their families, expanding their social boundaries, and setting the stage for community engagement.

Graph 4: Proportion of girls who mention non-family members among trusted relations
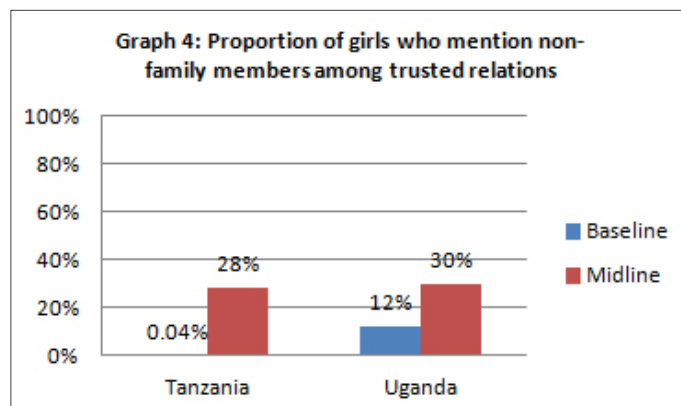
Financial assets: The baseline found that many displaced adolescent girls had economic lives; they found

ways, although not always safe ways, to earn money to supplement their family income or to pay for some of their basic needs. However, what they earned was rarely sufficient for their basic needs. Over half of the surveyed girls did not have practical money skills to save or track their spending and earning.

By midline, there was little change in Tanzania around girls' financial and economic assets. This is likely due to the late introduction of financial literacy skills within the curriculum design. These outcomes will be better measured at the final evaluation.

Girls in Uganda, however, where older adolescent girls were targeted with economic strengthening activities, indeed reported some improvement in tracking their spending (from 32 percent at baseline to 53 percent at midline) and earning (37 percent to 52 percent at midline) (Graph 5). In addition, over 60 percent of girls have learned to save by midline, while only 28 percent saved at baseline.
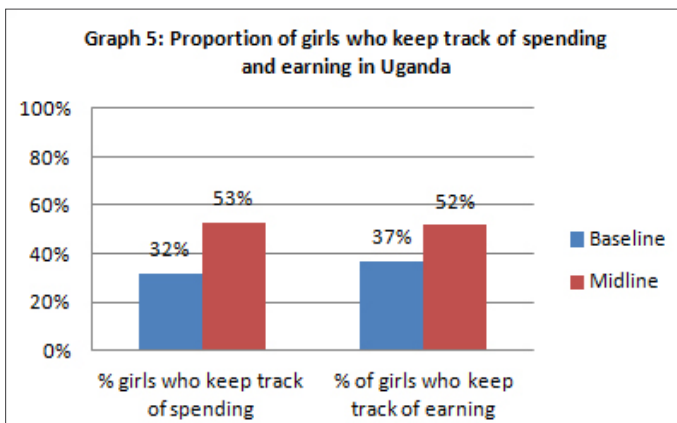
Physical assets: About a third of the surveyed girls in all three countries did not consider their living situations safe, many of them living in temporary situations with friends and relatives. Many of the girls said they felt unsafe or very unsafe moving around the camps/settlement during the day; over half of all the girls felt unsafe to very unsafe moving around at night time. These findings have implications for their daily activities, including access to services, chores outside the home (fetching water, collecting firewood, cooking, etc.), and for play outside.

Baseline questions on physical assets were aimed at un-

This 16-year-old refugee girl in Uganda had never attended school. She fled the DRC with her grandmother after both parents were killed in the conflict. She wants to start her own business and encourage other refugee girls to go to school.

derstanding girls' living situations and their perceptions of safety where they live and conduct their daily activities at the project onset, which informed the project activities on the need to incorporate forming safety plans and strategies to avoid harassment while girls move about in their communities. The changes in girls having these plans and strategies from baseline to midline are highlighted in the human assets section above. Given that the period between the baseline and midline was only about 10 months and as activities focused more on building girls' social, human, and financial assets, questions around girls' physical assets were not included as part of the midline evaluation and therefore results are unavailable for comparison with the baseline. These questions will be included at the final evaluation.

Throughout the implementation period, the WRC worked closely in partnership with IMC, IRC, and DRC to compile strengths and weaknesses of the projects,

and, where appropriate, worked with girls and communities to adjust approaches and develop new mechanisms for program content delivery and systems for feedback on the progress.

Strategies and Options for Planning and Designing Adolescent Girls' Programs in Humanitarian Settings

Key points

- Allocate sufficient start-up period to allow time for staff training, consultations with girls, and selecting and adjusting existing tools for learning activities.

- Consult girls directly to design program content that responds to their specific needs.

- Ensure programs are developmentally and contextually appropriate.

- Create safe spaces to bring girls together as a vehicle for other interventions.

- Build mentorship and leadership models into programs.

- Address the multiple vulnerabilities of adolescent girls to maximize outcomes.

- Integrate programs with economic strengthening activities.

- Engage with parents/guardians from the onset and work with them continuously to ensure they allow girls to participate.

- Ensure ample time for both community buy-in and for girls to develop friendships.

- Pay particular attention to hard-to-reach girls.

- Take a sector-neutral approach, which can appeal to girls and demonstrate to the wider community that girls deserve a space of their own.

- Tackle aid dependency by advocating for a longer-term view of community development.

- Involve men and boys in programs as partners and allies for changing gender norms.

- Establish a mechanism for community dialogue and shared responsibilities for adolescent girls.

Detailed strategies and options for programming

Allocate at least three months[68] for start-up activities to allow time for staff training, recruitment of girls, conducting needs assessments with participating girls, selecting and adjusting existing tools for learning activities, training mentors, and mobilizing communities. Humanitarian staff may be considering implementing girl-centered programming for the first time. Training and orientation is critical for all program staff to gain a comprehensive understanding of the situation of adolescent girls in their specific settings. They must also be trained on facilitation skills to work effectively with girls.

Sufficient time must be invested *before* girls begin meeting together to develop tools for the girls' learning activities to ensure that the content is contextually and developmentally appropriate for the target group(s) of girls—see below for further details on developmentally appropriate programming. Mentors are a critical component of successful adolescent girls' programs; many young women in humanitarian settings may never have been exposed to mentoring programs and require intensive training on the basics of mentoring and leadership, communication, and facilitation skills to work with girls and with parents/guardians of the girls.

In emergency contexts, start-up periods may be significantly reduced; however, the need for investing time on staff training, conducting girl-inclusive assessments, and adjusting program tools before girls meet is just as important, as it lays the groundwork for effective programming in the recovery stage.

For program content development and delivery, several practical toolkits and curricula specifically designed for

adolescent girls' life skills and financial education, as well as training modules for mentoring, are listed in Annex 4. Reference for tools for design and implementation of emergency programming for adolescent girls[69] is listed in Annex 5.

Consult girls directly to understand their specific needs and to design the content of the activities that appropriately respond to those needs. Adolescent girls are not a homogenous group: in-school girls, out-of-school girls, girls with disabilities, child mothers, married girls, unaccompanied/separated or orphan girls, girls who are heads of households, and commercial sex workers may each have distinct needs and challenges. Conducting pre-program needs assessments can help program staff to understand the contexts in which the girls live and prioritize issues to cover in program activities. For instance, FGM/C is not a prevalent issue among the Congolese refugee context as it is in the Somali refugee context. Similarly, the concept of having "boyfriends" is unfamiliar in conservative Somali context, where there are few interactions between boys and girls beyond the age of 10, whereas it is a normal topic to discuss with girls in the Congolese context. The assessment can also determine girls' starting points, such as their literacy levels and experience in formal education, that inform what should go into the program content, and how it should be delivered to the target girls. Based on the findings, existing program resources and tools can be adjusted to meet the project needs.

Examples of quantitative and qualitative assessment tools can be found in resource toolkits listed in Annex 5.

Design developmentally appropriate programming to ensure program content is relevant for girls at different life cycle stages. Adolescent girls in different humanitarian settings face many common challenges, but these are specific to their age, developmental capacities, abilities and disabilities, and background, including the cultural and institutional contexts in which they live. While adapting the program content and tools to respond to those specificities results in more effective programming, it can also be cost prohibitive to build in tailored needs assessments and ensure staff have capacities to cater for the diverse needs of all the subgroups of adolescent girls. However, at minimum, pro-

gram content and tools should segment the girls based on age, such as younger and older girls (e.g., 10-14 years and 15-19 years), or by life cycle stages, such as segmenting pre-pubescent girls from girls who are pregnant, married, and/or parenting, irrespective of their age.

Establish decentralized safe spaces for girls. In humanitarian settings, where adolescent girls tend to be missing from programs, there is even a greater need to create a space to call their own, even if only temporarily. Establishing a safe space in a centralized location may be the most cost-effective approach, but such spaces may not be accessible for many girls who live long distances from the central location. Particularly in camp settings where most services are centralized,[70] establishing a safe space where girls could also access other camp-based services may be sensible, but for many girls, distances are a major challenge. Public transportation may not exist, may not be perceived as safe, or may be prohibitive for girls due to public transit being viewed as unacceptable for women and/or girls. Interventions need not create or construct new safe spaces for girls. Safe spaces can be as easy as setting up designated days and times in existing infrastructure: child-friendly spaces (CFS), youth centers, women's centers, community centers, health posts, or other public spaces, such as schools, churches, and mosques. By establishing "girl-only" hours or days within existing infrastructure, interventions can improve girls' access and respond to

Somali girls in Ethiopia meet in a safe space several times a week so they can have more social support, learn about GBV, and encourage each other to continue and finish their education.

their specific programmatic needs. Girls' attendance in existing programs can also be improved by utilizing girl-friendly approaches, including increasing female staffing and ensuring that time and location of programs are safe for girls to attend. One way to determine where safe spaces should be located is to have the girls map out their own communities using a variety of available safety mapping tools found in Annex 5.

Make use of mentors to deliver the program content to adolescent girls. Agencies may be able to reduce the cost of program staff by empowering mentors to establish safe spaces, train other mentors, facilitate learning activities for girls, train girls in financial literacy, mobilize communities, and monitor and evaluate the interventions. Mentors should be female youth, ideally a few years older than the target girls, whom the girls could look up to and emulate. When properly trained and set up to reach the girls, mentors can deliver the life skills and financial education to groups of girls, as well as bridge connections with the wider community, while closely monitoring the activities, and reporting back to program staff. Building up mentorship structures has multiple benefits: girls can visualize what fe-

male leadership development looks like and it can lay the foundations for a core group of empowered female youth to serve as point of contacts to engage with other community leadership bodies. A sample structure of a program can look like below:
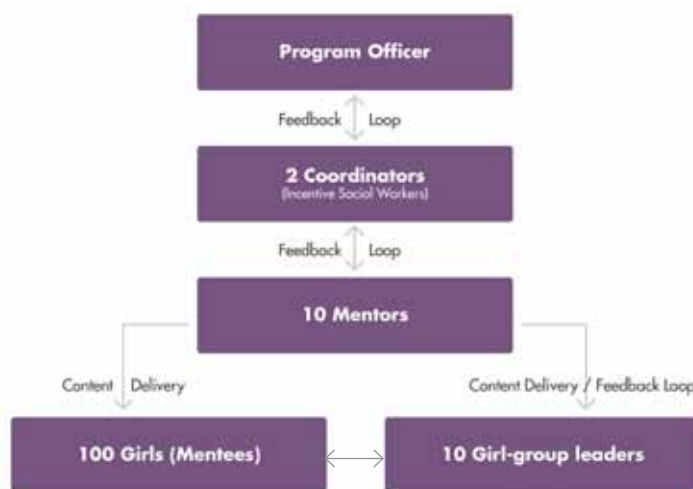

Figure 3: Example Structure for Girls Mentorship Program

> *"I stopped going to school after the death of my mother. I was ordered by my father to stay at home so that I could assist him to raise my young sister who was one year old at the time. The situation I went through made me leave school for more than a year. One day, a mentor from our zone visited me and advised me to attend the sessions at the adolescent girls center. I joined the rest of the girls at the center who were discussing about the importance of education and I was inspired by the mentor who gave testimony of how she managed to complete her studies despite many challenges she faced and now she is volunteering as a peer educator. One week later, I asked the mentor to escort me to school where I explained to the head master and got the permission to repeat the class. I am now studying at Amitie Secondary School as a form one student and happy visiting the girls' center."*
>
> - Nadia, 15, Nyarugusu Refugee Camp, Tanzania

> *"I meet with my mentor up to twice a week. She taught me many different skills, like how not to pick a fight with my mother, how to maintain good hygiene, how to keep time, importance of not running off with men so I don't contract HIV, and importance of being part of a group. I used to fight with girls in my knitting training, but after meeting with my mentor, we now work together and came to even like each other!"*
>
> - Adolescent girl from Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, Uganda

> *"I never thought about going back to school…my mentor helped me to consider going back and making a change in my life. I now think about my future…especially at night when I'm lying to fall asleep."*
>
> Adolescent girl from Nyarugusu Refugee Camp, Tanzania

Program Activities that Build Assets

Human Assets
- Life skills training
- Health education
- Literacy
- Financial education
- Vocational skills training
- Business development/ enterpreneurship training
- Rights education

Social Assets
- Group formation
- Development of social support networks
- Mentoring
- Sports

Financial Assets
- Informal savings clubs
- Access to loans/credit
- Remittance services
- Other financial services
- Market linkage creation

Physical Assets
- Safe space for girls to meet
- Safe place to work
- Access to tools or equipment for business
- Shelter reinforcement
- Gender separated latrines

Figure 4: Program Activities That Build Assets

It is important to budget at least one dedicated staff to oversee mentors' activities and the girl group leaders as well as to manage the overall implementation. Mentors should be provided with a stipend; young females in these settings are extremely time poor, particularly if they have care-giving responsibilities, and therefore should be compensated for their time and work with girls.

Design core activities to build girls' human, social, financial, and physical assets. For programming options under each category of assets, see Figure 4.

For activities to be age- and developmentally appropriate, younger girls could, for instance, practice saving money through informal savings clubs while older girls who have already received training in financial literacy and undergone some savings practice could gain access to loans or credit services. For activities to be culturally appropriate and context specific, for example, life skills training may or may not include information about FGM/C depending on local practice; and vocational skills training is provided with considerations for the local market needs and economic conditions, as well as restrictions imposed by local authorities, includ-

ing the right to work for refugees.

Engage with parents/guardians of the girls from the start and work with them continuously to ensure they allow girls to participate. Adolescent girls rarely have the powers to make decisions for themselves; their participation in programs is often dependent on the consent of their parents/guardians or gatekeepers. Many adolescent girls' programs experience some resistance from parents and guardians for several reasons: they are suspicious of girl-centered programs; they believe girls have little value outside the home; they fear girls' safety in accessing programs. To help mitigate fears and reshape attitudes about girls' participation, create opportunities for parents/guardians to visit or volunteer at learning activities, without requiring participation, to determine for themselves the value of such programs. Mentors, as long as they are properly trained, can also help secure permissions from the parents/guardians and gatekeepers for participation, and negotiate on behalf of the girls.

Ensure that ample time is given to girls to cultivate friendships and build life experiences together by

IRC Tanzania involved key decision-makers (community leaders, teachers, religious leaders, and parents and guardians of target adolescent girls) at every stage of the project. Topics in the girls' curriculum that may be perceived negatively were first introduced and explained to these adults to address any misconceptions before rolling it out with the girls. These adults were also invited to volunteer in the learning activities girls are engaged in at the safe space. In time, they decided themselves to teach the girls cultural songs, dances, and other local traditions. This built trust among families and communities on the relevance and need for such activities for girls and enhanced their support and ownership in the overall project.

facilitating regular safe space meetings and consistent content delivery. In protracted humanitarian settings where minimum services may exist, programs specifically targeting girls are rarely implemented. Girls in these settings have multiple responsibilities, be it at home, at school, or in income-generating activities, and time poverty is one of the barriers to their engagement in program activities. Unless girls can consistently and regularly meet and are learning activities perceived to be relevant to their circumstances, they will drop out of programs. Girls are unaccustomed to programs that specifically target them; building trusted relationships with mentors, developing peer support, and gaining so-

Somali girls in Ethiopia in life-skills training.

cial acceptance take time, especially if the goal is to maintain the social networks beyond program duration.

Pay particular attention to girls that are especially hard to reach and intensify efforts to include them in activities. Adolescent girls who are married, pregnant, have children, are heads of households, living with chronic illness or disabilities, and girls with multiple vulnerabilities (e.g., married and with disabilities) are particularly hard to reach, and yet would benefit most from asset-based interventions. Ensuring that programs are relevant and inclusive of these girls is not as difficult as it may seem; below is some general guidance on how to make programs more inclusive of the hard-to-reach girls:

- **Ensure that needs assessments at start-up include hard-to-reach girls** so that they can identify key issues that are important to them and barriers to their participation.

- **Ensure that activities have flexible schedules to accommodate girls who have care-giving responsibilities:** girls can decide themselves which days/times best work with their schedules; allow girls to bring their dependents to activities; or build in mechanisms for provision of childcare.

- **Make activities accessible for girls with disabilities.** Distances and lack of safe, affordable transportation are barrier to their access; initial monetary assistance may be required to get girls with disabilities to access safe spaces and then later, as social networks are built, girls living in close proximities may assist in bringing these girls to activities.

- **Promote inclusive activities, rather than creating separate activities for girls with disabilities and raise awareness on integration and inclusion.** In many cases, girls with disabilities can demonstrate active participation when given a chance as well as any girls.

- **Address social stigma, discrimination, and negative attitudes that may exist with being pregnant or chronically ill, or having disabilities** up front by discussing them openly in the safe space and allow the girls to set their own rules on how to

behave when they come together.

- **Build support from family members and critical adults in the girls' lives** through intensified mobilization efforts and awareness raising.

Take a sector-neutral approach that appeals to girls and demonstrates to the wider community that girls are important and deserve a space of their own. Humanitarian programs still largely tend to be sector specific. Safe space program models are not confined to any one sector and because activities respond to the specific needs of girls, they may be more appealing to them. Safe space programs can also lay the foundation for enabling girl groups to engage with the larger community within different sectors, including health; water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); food security/livelihoods; and education.[71]

> *"They never let us know what was happening in the camp before, but now they're including us in community meetings. It makes us feel like we matter."*
>
> - Sophie, 16-year-old girl from Nyarugusu Refugee Camp, Tanzania
>
> *"Here, the girls have privacy, their own space. They're happy to learn here."*
>
> - Mother of an adolescent girl in a group discussion at Kobe Refugee Camp, Ethiopia

Tackle aid dependency by advocating for a long-term view of community development. Humanitarian programs are often focused on life-saving interventions and built on responding to immediate needs. Communities that are used to and are dependent on aid often expect programs to provide instant, tangible results. They may at first reject or be suspicious of a program aiming to build girls' assets amidst other urgent needs. Furthermore, humanitarian staff may be highly experienced in implementing short-term activities, such as food aid and other relief efforts, and medium-term activities, such as preparedness, safety nets, and livelihood support to advance recovery. They may be less experienced implementing longer-term ac-

tivities. Asset-based approaches for adolescent girls must be thought of as medium- and long-term strategies that address the underlying causes of poverty and gender inequality. Effective advocacy can take place when staff are able to articulate to community stakeholders that among all the competing needs, attention on adolescent girls is necessary to transform the environment into more equitable spaces for girls and boys. One of the most powerful advocacy messages to use with families and communities alike is to make an economic case for changing norms—such as when women and girls earn income, they reinvest 90 percent of it into their families (as compared to 30-40 percent for men).[72] Perceptions change when girls demonstrate economic benefits to their families and community.

Challenge the existing gender norms by strategically involving men and boys in programs. Involving men and boys in programs must extend beyond awareness raising on adolescent girls' needs or getting male gatekeepers' buy-in to support girls' participation. Programs are more effective at empowering girls and targeting violence against girls if they engage men and boys with explicit intention on transforming unequal power relations between men and women, including promoting alternative norms of masculinity.[73] Activities engaging men and boys must explore society's harmful expectations and stereotypes about what it means to be a man while building a new generation of male lead-

Public education campaigns in camps seek to engage men and boys to stop rape and to inform everyone to believe and support girls and boys when they disclose sexual abuse.

ers who can model strength without violence and serve as positive change makers in the community. Integrating training for men and boys in conflict management, effective leadership, communication and interpersonal skills, and fatherhood and parenting skills can influence the positive role of men as allies in building a more gender-equitable and just society.

IMC Ethiopia regularly invites community leaders to participate in the activities at the safe space—in this case, computer literacy training. An elderly male leader told IMC that he had thought that computers were only for boys and men but seeing girls using them made him happy. He expressed a strong belief that this project will help to change the restrictive cultural perceptions about girls, transforming them into productive women in the future.

- Report from International Medical Corps, Kobe Refugee Camp, Ethiopia

Develop mechanisms for community dialogue and shared responsibilities for adolescent girls. Community involvement must be a process of learning that empowers people to make decisions, modify behaviors and change social conditions. Decide on a specific strategy or mechanism to engage in community dialogues and lift up local champions, whether it be teachers, refugee committee leaders, religious leaders, women's group leaders, CBO leaders, or others that have community standing and a level of authority to mobilize the rest of the society. These change makers can be harnessed to call on the community to share responsibilities for protecting one of their most vulnerable groups and safeguarding future generations. Planning communal events surrounding major local or international holidays can be effective in mobilizing communities and building ownership for programs: March 8 (International Women's Day); August 19 (World Humanitarian Day); October 11 (International Day of the Girl Child); November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women); December 10 (International Human Rights Day); and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence, between November 25 and December 10.

IRC Tanzania plans quarterly "community wellness events" where success stories from participating girls are celebrated and used to mobilize the entire community around changing social norms and attitudes towards girls. These approaches are beginning to challenge the social norms that keep girls at the bottom and facilitate a supportive environment for girls to grow up safely to positively contribute to the wider development of their community.

Next Steps

The Women's Refugee Commission plans to continue working with operational partners in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda for an additional year to contribute to the global learning agenda for future adolescent girls programming in displacement contexts. Complementing this work, the Women's Refugee Commission began a recent study on how to better protect adolescent girls in the early days and weeks of emergencies when they are at heightened risk for sexual violence and exploitation. Research is also underway to understand the unique sexual and reproductive health needs of very young adolescents (10-14 years). In addition, the Women's Refugee Commission is researching the impact of conflict on early marriage and how practitioners can design programs to mitigate girls' risk of early marriage as well as better reach and serve those girls who are married in their programs and services. The learning from these studies will be synthesized to develop additional resources and tools for humanitarian practitioners, donors, and policy makers to address the vulnerabilities and build capacities of adolescent girls in humanitarian contexts.

Notes

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Annex 1: Adolescent Girls Programs

African Medical Research Foundation (AMREF)

Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia

The Nomadic Youth Reproductive Health Project

The project provides reproductive health information to Maasai youth, aged 10-24. Ministry of Health staff are trained to provide youth-friendly services and to enable local communities to advocate for nomadic youth's reproductive health rights. The project used social networks and safe spaces to improve girls' sexual and reproductive health and introduce an alternative rite of passage as a viable option for FGM/C.

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)

Bangladesh, Uganda, Tanzania, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Haiti and Sierra Leone

Employment and Livelihood for Adolescents (ELA) Program

The ELA provides girls and young women aged 14-25 with mentorship, life skills training and microfinance. In groups, girls build social networks and receive life skills and other confidence building activities. Training is accompanied by financial education, access to capital, and livelihoods skills to build girls and young women's sense of self-worth and an entrepreneurial mindset.

Bangladesh, Tanzania, Uganda

Social and Financial Empowerment of Adolescents (SOFEA) Program

Using a holistic approach, the program provided girls aged 11-21 with: a club that provides a safe place to socialize; training in life skills that enable them to make informed decisions; livelihood training to increase their economic opportunities; and financial literacy training and savings/credit facilities.

BLAST, Marie Stopes Bangladesh, Nari Maitree (We Can campaign), Population Council and icddr,b

Bangladesh

Growing Up Safe and Healthy (SAFE) Project

The project builds the social and health assets of vulnerable adolescent girls to improve their capabilities and reduce GBV. Group sessions are held among adolescent girls, boys, young women, young men, and local community leaders in urban slums where they learn about and discuss child marriage, violence prevention, available legal and health services, and propose legal and policy reforms.

Cardno Emerging Markets

Kenya

The Value Girls Programme

Targeting 2,000 young women aged 14 - 24 the project offers access to safer and more lucrative livelihood options; increasing their incomes through participation in high growth value chains; developing and communicating an effective model for economically empowering girls and young women. The intervention provides workplace training on vegetable farming and poultry rearing to beneficiaries.

CARE

Bangladesh, Egypt, Kenya and Tanzania

Innovation through Sport: Promoting Leaders, Empowering Youth (ITSP-LEY) Project

Using sports as a vehicle to minimize the effects of poverty and social injustice on marginalized youth, especially girls, the project develops leadership skills and opportunities to practice leadership, and delivers institutional capacity building to local NGOs. It aims to improve educational success, enhance economic opportunities, and include marginalized groups of youth, all with a focus on girls.

Burundi

Ishaka Program

CARE's village savings and loan program was adapted to empower 20,000 girls and young women, aged 14-22. The program provides skills and capacities to girls and young women to access financial services and make informed choices to ensure economic and social security; reinforces social networks through solidarity groups; and aims to change cultural and policy norms to advance girls and young women's access to informal and formal financial services.

Honduras, Egypt, Malawi, Yemen, India, and Tanzania

Power to Lead Alliance (PTLA)

The program promotes girl leaders aged 10-14 through cultivating opportunities for girls to practice their leadership skills. The program creates, strengthens, and scales-up diverse leadership opportunities for girls through activities that includes sports, health, arts/drama, debate, music, youth council/boards, life skills groups, academic clubs, scouts, awareness campaigns, environment work and classroom support.

CARE, International Center for Research on Women

Ethiopia

TESFA Program

TESFA reached 5,000 child brides aged 10-19 with information and services on sexual and reproduc¬tive health, how to save and invest money, and life lessons including how to care for a newborn to how to communicate in a relationship. Built on CARE's Village Savings and Loan Association model, the program organized girls into

groups and to deliver program content through peer educators.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

Ethiopia

Empowering Adolescent Girls (EAG) Project

5,500 rural adolescent girls aged 10-19 are provided with greater access to education and economic opportunities including: education on agricultural production, access to low-cost irrigation, training in financial literacy and access to financial services, education in health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, sanitation and human rights.

Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA)

India, Egypt, Nepal, Nigeria, and South Africa

Better Life Options and Opportunities Model (BLOOM) Program

The program reaches adolescent girls and boys with a combination of life skills, literacy and vocational training, support to enter and stay in school, leadership and health awareness training. CEDPA trains community leaders at local, regional and national levels to change harmful attitudes and inequitable gender roles affecting girls' education and livelihoods development.

Chemonics International and Making Cents International

Nigeria

Maximizing Agricultural Revenue and Key Enterprises in Targeted Sites (MARKETS) Project

The project improves the livelihoods of young women and caregivers of orphans and vulnerable in children aged 16-30 years through training in managing household assets and record keeping, and basic business skills. Training focus on the management of household assets and decision-making surrounding food selection and prepa-

ration to maximize nutritional outcomes.

Columbia University, Save the Children UK, University of Liberia, Makerere University, et al.

Liberia, Sierra Leone and Northern Uganda

Community-Based Reintegration of War-Affected Young Mothers: Participatory Action Research (PAR)

The project targets 658 pregnant girls and young mothers, and their children, to enable them to plan, implement and evaluate their own steps to achieve reintegration. Implemented in 20 field sites, groups of 30 young mothers were established to worked collaboratively to identify the problems they were facing and implement initiatives to mitigate those problems.

Equality Now and the Tisunge Ana Athu Akazi Coalition (TAAAC)

Zambia

Our Girls, Our Future Project

The project addresses school-related gender violence for adolescent girls age 14-18 through a safe spaces model, consisting of weekly group meetings where girls learn about and discuss sexual and gender-based violence, HIV and sexual and reproductive health topics, financial education, and life skills through mentors.

FHI 360

Kenya

House-girls Health and Life Skills Project (HELP)

The project offered health and life skills training on STIs, including HIV and unintended pregnancy prevention to domestic workers known as "house girls". Girls are taken through a curriculum covering self-esteem and communication skills; sexual and reproductive health; sexual violence, alcohol and drug abuse; personal savings and fi-

nancial management; basic household safety and security; and first aid.

Fundación Paraguaya

Paraguay

All-Girls Self-Sustainable School Project

A self-sustaining, agro-forestry school for girls, the project uses on-campus enterprises provide a platform for girls to develop skills required for future economic success, while generating income to cover the school's operating costs. Rural girls aged 14-17 are targeted with a curriculum that balances traditional secondary school topics with agricultural skills and entrepreneurship. Girls are also provided with savings facilities at school.

Government of Liberia, Government of Denmark, Nike Foundation, and the World Bank

Liberia

Economic empowerment of adolescent girls and young women (EPAG) Program

An integrated literacy and life skills training program, EPAG targets 2500 war-affected girls and young women aged 16-27. Its goal is to promote young women to enter into wage and self-employment through provision of business development skills, job skills, and life skills training. The program also links girls with mentors and peers to increase their social networks.

Haiti Adolescent Girls Initiative

Haiti

"Espas Pa Mwen" ("My Space") Program

The program empowers adolescent girls aged 10-19 through girl-only spaces locally named "Espas Pa Mwen" to build their social, health, and economic assets. The groups serve as social platform through which to connect girls to age-appropriate skills training and ser-

vices, including reproductive health, financial literacy, and psychosocial support.

Heshima Kenya

Kenya

Girls' Empowerment Program (GEP)

The program enables refugee girls and women aged 13-23 to access education and livelihood opportunities and cultivate girls' leadership skills. The program serves participants with various learning levels, cultures, and languages, and traumas in a unique classroom environment that provides education, social support, life skills, vocational training, and income generation activities.

International Center for Research on Women

India

Development Initiative Supporting Healthy Adolescents (DISHA) Program

The program aims to increase access to modern family planning and sexual and reproductive health services for youth aged 14-24 and delay marriage and childbearing and strengthen their ability to make informed decisions. It also provides youth with alternatives to early marriage through livelihoods skills and builds leadership and capacity for promoting youth sexual and reproductive health.

International Rescue Committee

Ethiopia, Liberia

Girl Empower Program

1,800 girls aged 10-14 in Ethiopia and Liberia are equipped with skills and experiences necessary to make healthy life choices and to stay safe from violence. The program has a holistic approach addressing all aspects of girls' lives, including their social capital, access to education; financial literacy and building girls' economic skills; and providing access to quality health and psychosocial care.

Kenya

Adolescent Girls' Platforms, Dadaab and Hagadera Refugee Camps

The program targets refugee adolescent girls aged 10-14 with the goal to develop girls' skills and networks that promote their safety and security. The program uses a safe space approach to deliver life skills development, including financial literacy and mentorship to participating girls. Community gatekeepers are engaged closely to improve the environment to keep girls safe.

International Rescue Committee, Youth Initiatives Kenya and Family Health Options

Kenya

Girls Empowered by Microfranchising (GEM) Project

The project helps establish micro-franchise businesses among girls aged 17-21. The model includes: (1) life skills training to ensure that girls are equipped with practical information to stay safe, make healthy choices and communicate their needs, (2) basic business skills training, (3) franchisor specific technical training, (4) start-up equipment to start off their personal businesses.

Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs, MACRO International (now ICF International)

Botswana, Malawi, and Mozambique

Go Girls! Initiative

The program develops social, gender and behavior change communication approaches to reduce adolescent girls' susceptibility to HIV infection. Targeting girls aged 10-17, the program addresses contextual factors that present barriers to accessing education, increases girls' resilience through building life-skills and strengthens parents' ability to support girls.

Kisumu Medical and Educational Trust and America Jewish World Service

Kenya

Sisterhood for Change (SFC) Program

The program targets vulnerable girls and young women aged 10-24 and aims to increase their access to livelihood opportunities and sexual reproductive health information/services. Participants are trained for 6 months in vocational, reproductive health or life skills with mentorship, then placed in a 3-month internship at a local business.

Landesa, West Bengal's Department of Women and Child Development

India

Security for Girls Through Land Program

The program improves girls' social and economic status by increasing girls' and communities' understanding of girls' land-related rights and helping girls to use land to create assets. The program enables girls through nutritional support, life skills education, and vocational education using girl groups, peer leader methodologies, community engagement, a land rights and land-based livelihoods curriculum, and partnerships with government stakeholders.

Navsarjan Trust

India

Dalit Shakti Kendra "Dalit Empowerment Centre" or DSK

The centre provides practical skills to Dalit adolescent girls and young women. DSK offers a range of vocational skills including tailoring, furniture making, electric wiring, mobile phone repairing, and complemented by life skills workshops designed to encourage self-confidence, rights awareness, and citizenship.

Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation

Zimbabwe

SHAZ! Zimbabwe Program

The program combines a life-skills curriculum, business training, and microcredit loans to address the health, economic, and social factors contributing to high rates of HIV among 16-19 year old out-of-school, orphan girls. Activities aim to increase girls' knowledge and control over economic resources and thereby reduce HIV infection through improving their abilities to negotiate safe sex.

Pathfinder International

Yemen

Safe Age of Marriage Program

The program aims to end child marriage and improve girls' poor health and social outcomes by changing social norms about the value of the girl child and the importance of girls' education. The program improves community knowledge of the social and health consequences of child marriage and strengthens community support for keeping girls in school through securing endorsement of religious leaders of increased age of marriage.

Plan International, Making Cents International

Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Niger

Making Financial Services and Business Skills Development Available to African Children and Youth Project

3,000 out-of-school, working children and youth aged 15-24 are facilitated to access financial services and business and life skills development services. Trainings were conducted in groups, three-quarters of which are composed entirely of girls and the remaining groups are mixed.

Population Council

Kenya, Uganda

Safe and Smart Savings Products for Vulnerable Adolescent Girls Program

12,000 girls aged 10-19 are assisted to expand access to safe spaces, strengthen social networks, and learn financial education and basic health education. Working with financial institutions, financial service products are developed specifically suited to girls' needs. Girls join a savings group that meets weekly in the community under the guidance of a mentor who facilitates training and group discussion.

Zambia

Adolescent Girls' Empowerment Program (AGEP)

10,000 girls aged 10-19 are provided with financial education and life skills led by young women from the community, health vouchers, and girl-friendly savings accounts. The program tracked girls' school attainment, HIV prevalence, age at marriage, age of first birth, experience of sexual violence and effects on self-esteem, agency, and savings activity.

Guatemala

Abriendo Oportunidades (Opening Opportunities) Program

Indigenous girls from poor communities are divided into two age cohorts: 8–12 and 13–18 and young women from each community lead younger girls' club participants via cascading leadership model. Girls' clubs are used as a base to provide life and leadership skills, vocational skills to promote the right to safety and security to break the cycles of violence in their homes and communities.

Ethiopia

Berhane Hewan Program

The program addresses multiple sectors to keep girls in school longer and uses informal educational methods to teach them about family planning and reproductive health. It focuses on the importance of girls' social networks, both peers and mentors, and facilitates their continued growth through group discussions and gatherings.

Biruh Tesfa Program

Out-of-school adolescent girls in urban slums are targeted for mentoring on education on HIV and related issues, and non-formal education with links to health services. Trained adult female mentors go house-to-house to find eligible girls to participate, which enabled finding hard-to-reach girls, including child domestic workers, girls with disabilities, child sex workers, and migrants.

Egypt

Ishraq (Enlightenment) Program

The program fosters literacy, life skills, reproductive health, civic engagement, and livelihoods opportunities for out-of-school girls aged 13-15 in rural Egypt. Introducing a sports element for girls to break with traditional gender roles, girls engage in fun and physically challenging activities to enhance their self-confidence.

"New Vision" Program

A male component of the Ishraq program targeting participants' male family members, aged 13-18. The program teaches boys life skills and seeks to increase their gender sensitivity. Course participants reported improved coping skills, greater self-confidence, greater knowledge of reproductive health issues and more equitable views regarding gender norms.

Kenya

Tap and Reposition Youth (TRY) Program

The program aims to reduce adolescent girls' vulnerabilities to adverse social and reproductive health outcomes by improving their livelihoods options. The program targets out-of-school girls and

young women aged 16-22 and uses a group based microfinance model to provide credit, savings, business support and mentoring to program participants.

Public Health Institute

Guatemala, Honduras, Liberia, Ethiopia, and Malawi

Adolescent Girls' Advocacy & Leadership Initiative (AGALI) – "Igniting Change for Girls"

AGALI aims to improve adolescent girls' health, education, and livelihoods, and empowers leaders and organizations to advocate for girl-friendly laws, policies, and funding. Through capacity building workshops, seed grant funding, and technical assistance, AGALI creates a global movement of leaders and organizations advocating for girls. AGALI's partners have provided direct training and services to over 40,000 adolescent girls and their allies, in addition to engaging 600 grassroots organizations in girl-centered advocacy efforts.

Reach India

India

Learning Games for Adolescent Girls and their Mothers Program

The program enables rural, illiterate adolescent girls aged 10-19 to create and follow a savings plan and practice simple behaviors to prevent diarrhea and HIV/AIDS and improve their nutrition. Activities are delivered among self-help groups of 10-20 members.

Save the Children

Bangladesh

The Kishoree Kontha Project

The project links savings schemes with health and education to allow rural adolescent girls aged 10 - 19 to build their human, social and economic assets. Tailored youth-inclusive market research tools are used to develop and deliver appropriate financial and nonfinancial products and services.

Straight Talk Foundation

Uganda

Gulu Youth Center Program (GYC)

As a portal for education and skills-building, the GYC provides adolescents aged 10-24 with integrated sexual and reproductive health information and services through a comprehensive prevention approach that combines "Talk + Services + Livelihoods" and organizes health dialogues, visits to schools for health talks, home visits, support groups for young mothers and adolescents living with HIV, and radio programs.

TechnoServe and African Center for Women, Information and Communication Technology

Kenya

Young Women in Enterprise (YWE) Program

YWE trains adolescent girls and young women aged 15-22 in life skills and financial literacy using tools to plan, implement, and manage a small business and links to financing, with an emphasis on the importance of savings. Mentorship is guided by leading women entrepreneurs and business plan competitions identify promising ideas and enable talented entrepreneurs to advance their businesses.

World Bank

Afghanistan, Jordan, Lao PDR, Liberia, Haiti, Nepal, Rwanda, and South Sudan

Adolescent Girls Initiative (AGI)

The AGI targets some 20,000 adolescent girls and young women across eight low-income countries, including some of the toughest environment for girls. Aiming to promote the transition of adolescent girls and young women from school to productive employment, interventions range from business develop-ment to technical vocational training targeting skills in high demand. All projects include life skills training; topics include reproductive health, rights awareness, problem-solving techniques, communication and negotiation skills, and managing personal finances. AGI expands girls' networks and link to employment opportunities, exploring ways to incentivize job placements for girls.

Annex 2: Key Informant Interviews – List of Organizations

Agencies Consulted

AmeriCares

Bloomberg School of Public Health
  Johns Hopkins University

George Washington University

Girl Hub

Haiti Adolescent Girls Network

Harmaya University, College of Law

Heshima Kenya

Instituto Promundo

International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)

International Rescue Committee

MacArthur Foundation

Nike Foundation

Population Council

Raising Voices

Save the Children

Sonke Gender Justice

Sussex University

Together for Girls

UNICEF

USAID

In Ethiopia:

Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA)

Canadian Embassy

Norwegian Embassy

Oak Foundation

Population Council

U.K. Department for International Development (DFID)

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Ethiopia

In Tanzania:

Canadian International Development Agency

CARE International

Ministry of Home Affairs

National Organization for Legal Assistance (NOLA)

Tanzania Child Rights Forum (TCRF)

Tanzania Red Cross National Society

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Tanzania

Women's' Legal Aid Centre (WLAC)

World Vision

In Uganda:

African Humanitarian Action

American Refugee Committee

Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Finnish Refugee Council

Office of the Prime Minister

United States Mission, Uganda

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Uganda

Windle Trust

Annex 3: Case Studies

1. Population Council's Abriendo Oportunidades (Opening Opportunities): Program for rural, indigenous girls aged 8–18 from poor communities in Guatemala

The Population Council launched Abriendo Oportunidades in 2004 to empower indigenous girls aged 8-18 from Guatemala's poorest rural communities. The program increases Mayan girls' social support networks, connects them with role models and mentors, builds a base of critical life and leadership skills, and provides hands-on professional training and experience.

The program divided girls into two age cohorts: 8–12 and 13–18 and used a cascading leadership model where two young women aged 15–18 from each community led each annual cycle of younger girls' club participants. Girls' clubs were used as a base to provide critical life and leadership skills and vocational skills as well as promote the right to safety and security to break the cycles of violence in their homes and communities. Since 2004, more than 6,000 girls, 100 youth leaders, and 45 interns have been trained and supported by the program and expands to about ten new communities per year. Local government, NGOs, and private commercial sectors are increasingly engaged, providing an anchor for the program. Most program participants remain connected to each other and the program and graduates are hired for supervisory positions to contribute to the program's sustainability. Many participants continued their education and found jobs, staying in their communities where they become leaders for social change.

A 2007 program evaluation showed that:

- 100% of Abriendo girl leaders had completed the sixth grade, compared with 82% nationally.

- 97% of Abriendo girl leaders remained childless during the program cycle, compared with the national average of 78% for girls their age.

- 94% of Abriendo girl leaders reported experiencing greater autonomy and feeling more comfortable expressing their opinions.

- 88% of girl leaders opened a bank account.

- 44% had obtained paid employment by the end of the program.

The program is now being expanded to other Latin American countries. In addition, a randomized controlled trial will measure the impact of Abriendo Oportunidades on school attendance and retention.

2. International Rescue Committee's Girl Empower: Building the Evidence Base for the Effective Economic and Social Empowerment of Adolescent Girls in Ethiopia and Liberia

The International Rescue Committee implements the Girl Empower program targeting 1,800 girls between the ages of 10-14 in Ethiopia and Liberia. Girl Empower is designed to equip girls with the skills and experiences necessary to make healthy, strategic life choices and to stay safe from abuse and sexual exploitation. The program has a holistic approach addressing all aspects of girls' lives, including their social capital, access to education, financial literacy, role models, and the attitudes of family members. Girl Empower is unique in its approach because it addresses multiple aspects of girls' lives to ensure the whole girl is supported, and focuses on building the assets of adolescent girls. Activities within Girl Empower include building girls' economic skills and social capital; developing safe and supportive households; and providing access to quality health and psychosocial care.

Girl Empower responds not only to girls' heightened exposure to harm in humanitarian and post-conflict settings, but also to the vital roles they can play in building healthier families and stronger communities. The Girl Empower project aims to achieve the following results:

- Girls will develop and attain their financial goals and aspirations.

- Girls will increase their self-confidence and realize their social capital, enabling them to be self-reliant and also

know where to turn and how to ask for support.

- Family members will prioritize the education and well-being of girls in their family.

- Girls in target communities who have suffered abuse and sexual exploitation will have access to quality services that meet their specific needs as adolescents.

The project will also include a rigorous impact evaluation that will inform scale-up and dissemination efforts. At the end of three years, the IRC plans to share findings with relevant stakeholders to replicate best practices, shape policy, and drive further innovation.

3. BRAC's Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents (ELA) program in Bangladesh, Uganda, Tanzania, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Haiti and Sierra Leone

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) implements the ELA program which combines livelihood and life-skills training with credit facilities to help improve the quality of life of rural adolescent girls and young women between the ages of 14 and 25. Targeting girls from disadvantaged backgrounds in Bangladesh, Uganda, Tanzania, Afghanistan, South Sudan and, most recently, Haiti and Sierra Leone, it has been rigorously tested and shown to have positive impacts. BRAC launched its first adolescent development program (ADP) in Bangladesh in1993, which included Kishori Kendros ("Girls' Clubs"), safe spaces where adolescents aged 10 to 19 could read, socialize, play games, sing, dance and exchange views and experiences – all activities that were often frowned upon in their homes. Launched in an African context, the ELA is similar to ADP, but it has a stronger emphasis on financial literacy, livelihoods and microfinance.

It starts with the Girls' Clubs close to the home, where teens can discuss problems with their peers in small groups and build their social networks, away from the pressures of family and male-centered society. Health education, confidence building and other life skills are added to the mix. Finally, as one of the world's earlier and largest providers of microfinance, BRAC has added an innovative financial component. To navigate their way to a more prosperous future, teens from poor families require financial education, capital, livelihood skills, a sense of self-worth and an entrepreneurial mindset, all of which can be taught or encouraged.

For younger girls, the emphasis is on social skills development and creating a savings mentality, but by their mid-teens – the exact age differs from country to country, and context to context – there is a demand among adolescent girls for livelihood training, financial literacy and sometimes micro-loans.

As of December 2011 ELA has had 9,713 clubs worldwide with 268,434 members, and had disbursed a cumulative total of USD 2.27 million in specially tailored loans for girls.

4. Kisumu Medical and Education Trust's Sisterhood for Change (SFC) program in Kenya

Implemented by the Kisumu Medical and Education Trust (KMET), SFC program provides vocational education program for disadvantaged girls and young women aged 10-24 from Kisumu slums and lakeside region from Suba district, Kenya. SFC targets high school dropouts, orphans, young mothers, girls living with HIV/AIDS and commercial sex workers who have little hope for their future livelihoods. The program focuses on job training with sexual and reproductive rights information. Many of the girls enrolled in SFC had to drop out of school because they were forced into early marriage, became pregnant outside of marriage, or simply could not afford the school fees, books, and required uniform. SFC offers an alternative to these young women who are eager to take control of their lives.

Participants choose training in tailoring, hairdressing, or cooking/catering. The training centers are equipped with daycare facilities to care for the young children of the participants. Graduates continue their education with three-month internships at local businesses, and are encouraged to stay involved in the program as mentors and outreach workers to recruit new participants. Throughout the training, KMET gives the girls the psychosocial support, mentoring, and health and rights education they need to succeed. The combination of vocational skills and sexual and reproductive health education help empower these girls to feel confident and make healthy and informed decisions that will allow them to thrive with their newfound skills.

5. Pathfinder International's Safe Age of Marriage Program in Yemen

Pathfinder International, in partnership with Yemini Women's Union (YWU), implemented the program in Yemen which aimed to end child marriage and improve the poor health and social outcomes of young girls by changing entrenched social/gender norms about the value of the girl child and the importance of girls' education. The program was piloted in Al-Sawd and Al Soodah districts in Yemen's Amran governorate with the following objectives: i) to improve community knowledge of the social and health consequences of child marriage; ii) to strengthen community support for keeping girls in school as an alternative to child marriage; and iii) to secure endorsement of religious leaders and stakeholders of increased age of marriage. This one-year program adapted promising practices, and developed a model to raise awareness of the effects of child marriage in rural communities. Through the program, 20 men and 20 women, which included religious leaders and nurse midwives, were selected and trained as volunteer community educators to conduct outreach educational activities with families in their communities to re-examine socio-cultural and religious norms, and practices related to child marriage.

The initial results of the program found an 18% increase in awareness about the benefits of delaying marriage, with a 34% increase in those agreeing that delaying marriage would create more opportunities and education and a 19% increase in those agreeing that delaying marriage would increase work opportunities. Further, marriage for girls between ages 10 to 17 decreased in both districts in the baseline/endline comparison. The pilot project is now being scaled-up in the Amran districts of Thula and Raydah. As the program comes to an end, YWU is gradually assuming the management oversight of program activities and has been actively lobbying with government for a change in Yemeni law that would prohibit the marriage of girls under age 17.

6. Population Council's "Ishraq" (Enlightenment) for adolescent girls and "New Visions" for boys in Egypt

The Population Council implemented the Ishraq program with a goal to foster literacy, life skills, reproductive health, civic engagement, and livelihoods opportunities for marginalized, out-of-school girls aged 13-15 in rural Upper Egypt. The program introduced a sports element for girls, the first of its kind in Egypt to break with traditional gender roles. Although conservative members of the community at first challenged the idea of girls participating in sports, they later embraced the program that provides girls with a chance to engage in fun and physically challenging activities and serves as a pathway to enhance their self-confidence.

Engaging with several gatekeepers of girls was an essential element of program strategy, including parents, brothers, and community leaders. Along with these gatekeepers, Ishraq also works with schools and youth centers to provide a sheltered environment for girls. Recognizing that adolescent boys, particularly the brothers of adolescent girls, are crucial actors in helping to shape girls' lives, Ishraq grew to include a male component, "New Vision" which targeted Ishraq participants' male family members, aged 13-18. New Vision's program themes include gender equity, civil and human rights, and male responsibility to self, family and community. The ultimate goal of this approach was to exert a long-term positive influence on the social norms concerning girls' life opportunities. The evaluation findings indicate that the program has positively influenced girls' knowledge and attitudes, has raised their aspirations and skills, and has begun to change social norms about girls' roles and capacities.

Annex 4: Adolescent Girls' Life Skills/ Financial Education Toolkits Matrix

Title/Organization	Context/Language	Main contents	Target audience/ Ages	Website/Notes
Adolescent Girls Prevention Education Toolkit: Promoting the protection and empowerment of girls by building knowledge and life skills International Rescue Committee (with Population Council for toolkit development)	Kenya – Dadaab Refugee Camp–Humanitarian setting/English	Comprehensive learning sessions on gender-based violence, reproductive health, and financial education; mentor's guide; practical handouts; background notes/ references	Adolescent girls Ages: 10-14 yrs old	Developed for low-resource context with limited time available for training. For more information, contact Carmen Lowry, at Carmen.Lowry@rescue.org
AGEP Health & Life Skills Curriculum Adolescent Girls Empowerment Program – AGEP/Population Council	Zambia – Development setting/English	Reproductive health, gender and gender based violence, life skills, leadership, and human rights	Adolescent girls Ages: 10-19 yrs old	http://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/2013PGY_HealthLifeSkills_AGEP.pdf
AGEP Financial Education Curriculum Adolescent Girls Empowerment Program – AGEP/Population Council	Zambia – Development setting/English	Financial goal setting, saving and earning money, talking about money	Adolescent girls Ages: 10-19 yrs old	http://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/2013PGY_FinancialEducation_AGEP.pdf
Go Girls! Community-based Life Skills for Girls: A Training Manual The Go Girls! Initiative/Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs/USAID-PEPFAR	Malawi, Mozambique and Botswana – Development setting/ English, Portuguese, Chichewa, Setswana	Full spectrum of life skills; training manual for teachers and adults; school based training manual for girls and boys; community mobilization manual	Adolescent girls Ages: 13-17 yrs old	http://www.k4health.org/toolkits/go-girls
GREAT Scalable Toolkit Gender Roles, Equality, and Transformations (GREAT) Project/ Georgetown University Institute of Reproductive Health (IRH), Save the Children, Pathfinder International	Northern Uganda – Development setting/ English, Acholi/Lango languages	Full spectrum of life skills via Flip-books, Activity cards for very young adolescents, older adolescents, and married adolescents (15-19 yrs old). Radio discussion guides and community games for engaging adults.	Adolescent girls, adol. boys, married adolescents Ages: 10-19 yrs old; adults	http://www.pathfinder.org/publications-tools/great-scalable-toolkit.html
Life Planning Skills: A Curriculum for Young People in Africa PATH/African Youth Alliance	Tanzania/Uganda/ Ghana – Development setting/ English, Kiswahili (Tanzanian version only)	Reproductive health, gender roles, communications, goal setting & planning for the future Facilitators Manual/Participants Workbook	Adolescents & youth Ages: 10-24 yrs old	http://www.path.org/publications/detail.php?i=1593 (Tanzania) http://www.path.org/publications/detail.php?i=1592 (Uganda) http://www.path.org/publications/detail.php?i=1591 (Ghana)
How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program: Elements of Effective Practice™ ToolKit Mentor/National Mentoring Partnership	English	Comprehensive guide on design and planning, management, operations, and evaluation of a mentoring program. Contains checklists, templates and other tools needed to start or maintain a quality mentoring program.	Adolescents and youth	http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_413.pdf

Annex 5: Resources

Girl-centered Program Design Toolkit, Population Council 2010:

This toolkit is written for programming for adolescent girls ages 10–24. The toolkit has three main sections: the first focuses on structure, the second on content, and the third on monitoring and evaluation. Each chapter contains an introduction to the topic, examples from existing programs for girls, and practical, user-friendly tools.

http://wrc.ms/AG-toolkit-PopCncl

From Research, to Program Design, to Implementation, Programming for Rural Girls in Ethiopia: A Toolkit for Practitioners, Population Council 2011:

This toolkit includes: 1) factors to understand before designing programs for rural girls; 2) steps to design a venue, strategy for service delivery, and content suggestions; and 3) methods for monitoring. Specific tools include:
- Quantitative/qualitative needs assessment tools for pre-design stage
- Qualitative tool to collect feedback on program from girls
- Registration form and activity form for girls' program

http://wrc.ms/PopCncl-rsrch-design

Life Skills – Skills for Life: A handbook, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support 2013:

This handbook provides guidance on how to conduct needs assessments, plan, implement, and monitor and evaluate life skills programs. It contains checklists and case studies/best practices to help program staff tailor activities to specific target groups, i.e. children, youth, women and men, and older people. It is also designed with particular attention to implementing life skills programs during and after crisis.

http://wrc.ms/IFRC-AG-skills

Safety Mapping Tool, Women's Refugee Commission, 2011:

This tool contains step-by-step instructions on how to use the tool to capture local knowledge and social perceptions about risk and safety on a map and provides a list of questions to pose in a focus group discussion setting to understand: what resources, services, and infrastructure are available to girls; in which spaces girls feel safe and unsafe; and what risks increase harm or violence.

http://wrc.ms/S3jGQd (page 16)

Population Council's Safety Scan Tools:

This set of tools can be used to capture safety by time of day, safety in different places in the community, safety accessing services and opportunities, safety nets, safety by season, safety by situation, and safety by day.

http://wrc.ms/AG-toolkit-PopCncl (pages 45-49)

Emergency Girls Analysis and Integration Matrix (eGAIM), Omar Robles, Women's Refugee Commission (publication pending September 2014):

This tool is designed to inform the planning and implementation of emergency programming by supporting technical staff to: capture adolescent girls' vulnerabilities and needs; identify answers to key girl analysis questions; and determine how these considerations are relevant to emergency response.

Girl Effect – Girl Consultation Toolkit:

Includes a selection of tools to help you hear from girls, to understand their lives, to uncover the issues and challenges they face and to gather their opinions on how they want the world to change. This toolkit provides guidance on how to set up a workshop, run activities and analyze findings. Each of the tools outlined can be used either together or on their own.

http://wrc.ms/girleffect-toolkit
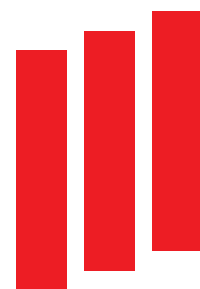
Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™

MENTOR's keystone publication on mentoring standards offering benchmarks for day-to-day operations, they are applicable in stand-alone mentoring programs, as well as programs where mentoring is one component. Each standard also offers program enhancements, based on the experience of outstanding mentoring practitioners. This resource includes a section on practical advice in building a new mentoring program or strengthening an existing one.

http://wrc.ms/AGmentor

Market Assessment Toolkit for Vocation Training Providers and Youth, Women's Refugee Commission, 2008:

This toolkit contains: *Market Assessment Toolkit for VT Providers*: provides an understanding of dynamic market conditions and the sources of potential employment growth within the community and surrounding areas; *Analysis Guide*: facilitates the translation of information gathered during the market analysis into more effective programming; *Market Interaction Toolkit for Youth*: helps youth become active participants in determining which vocation best matches their skills and needs through a self-assessment.

http://wrc.ms/1iEJtbW

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