



Girl-Centered Programming: What are We Really Doing?

Summary of Recommendations, Promising Programs, Resources and Tools Shared

FHI 360, on behalf of USAID's Interagency Youth Working Group; the Youth Health and Rights Coalition; and the Coalition for Adolescent Girls hosted an e-forum titled ["Girl-Centered Programming: What are We Really Doing?"](#) February 27-28, 2013. The discussion was moderated by Amelia Peltz, USAID; Wendy Baldwin, Population Reference Bureau; Kelly Hallman, Population Council; Joyce Adolwa, CARE; Tamara Kamanga, Advancing Girls' Education in Africa; Allie McGonagle Glinski, ICRW; and Suzanne Petroni, ICRW. The e-forum focused on the critical importance of a girl-centered approach to health and development.

The forum webpage was viewed by 901 unique visitors from 57 countries. The highest numbers of visitors to the forum were from the United States, Mozambique and South Africa. Before the forum, resources from girl-serving organizations and programs were collected. The list of resources, [available here](#), was shared during the forum.

This forum provided a platform for learning exchange among professionals, providers, and advocates around the world. Following is a summary of recommendations gleaned from participant responses:

- 1. To ensure the meaningful participation of adolescent girls in program design and implementation:**
 - Develop leadership skills of adolescent girls and include girls in the design of leadership activities
 - Help adolescents and youth gather evidence to analyze their own environment and the issues that affect them
 - Work with groups of adolescent girls rather than individual girls

- 2. To ensure that programs reach the most vulnerable adolescent girls:**
 - Use existing information (evidence from available data, studies and key informants) to determine who the most vulnerable girls are, where they are and what issues they face
 - Assess the program and policy landscape to see which (if any) organizations are serving these girls, with what services, and which girls actually access the services
 - Compare DHS data of in-school versus out-of school youth to identify the most vulnerable communities
 - Include indicators in data collection tools—such as access to resources, service use, and degree of isolation— that help identify the most vulnerable girls

- 3. To reduce barriers to education:**
 - Use research to identify the root causes of barriers to girls' education
 - Provide girls with leadership development and mentoring so that they can act as role models to other girls in their communities
 - Offer adult literacy programs for parents
 - Provide scholarships to girls
 - Address traditions and gender norms that prescribe gender roles for girls
 - Promote innovative programs that keep girls in school



4. To address sanitation barriers to school attendance:

- Engage school officials, local municipalities and public health authorities in implementing water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) as a component of their basic education strategies
- Collaborate with the Ministry of Education and water sanitation programs to ensure that all schools have clean and safe water and facilities
- Improve knowledge of WASH by providing training to teachers and incorporate it into the school curriculum
- Work with traditional leaders, religious leaders and other key leaders to provide access to a safe, reliable and sufficient water supply
- Create more water sources (for example, boreholes) in areas where piped water is not available
- Encourage community participation in WASH education programs

5. Indicators to measure success in girl-centered programs should include:

- The degree of positive change in their participation in public spaces
- Opportunities available for girls to network with peers
- Girls' participation in decision-making processes (particularly those related to her rights), at the household, school, and community level
- Girls' access to services available in the community
- Degree of change in the school and learning environment (i.e., gender-equitable learning opportunities and safer, girl-friendly school environments)
- Girls' ability to articulate issues and barriers they face
- Girls' meaningful and consistent participation in civic action
- Equitable allocation of resources and workload at home, especially in comparison to boys
- Improved education outcomes, retention and progression through the education cycle
- Awareness of gender-based violence and mechanisms for redress/prevention

6. Consider ways to incorporate new technology like mobile phones and social media to reach adolescent girls.

7. Program strategies to engage men and boys should:

- Involve men and boys early, to help support sustainable change in the root causes of girls' marginalization in society
- Help participants to see how gender norms can affect both males and females positively and negatively
- Involve key decision-makers in adolescent girls' lives like parents, brothers, and partners



8. When planning to scale up successful girl-centered programming:

- Recognize which types of program models would be effective on a large scale and which ones are actually more effective on a small scale
- Ensure government buy-in and interest
- Determine how the intervention can be tailored to the context of the particular target country
- Understand which program elements are most cost-effective and could most feasibly and effectively be taken to scale

Along with sharing programmatic recommendations and strategies, many participants shared examples of promising programs and organizations engaged in this work. Programs and organizations highlighted during the forum included:

- [BRAC's SOFEA program](#)
- [Catholic Relief Services' Dialogue and Action Project](#)
- [Girl Power! Project](#)
- [Grass Roots Soccer's SKILLZ STREET](#)
- [ICRW's Gender Equity Movement in Schools \(GEMS\)](#)
- [ICRW's Towards Improved Economic and Sexual/Reproductive Health Outcomes for Adolescent Girls \(TESFA\) program](#)
- [PATH's Entre Amigas project](#)
- [PATH's gender barriers project](#)
- [PCI India's Vocational Training Centre](#)
- [Peace Corps supported Camp Glow \(Girls Leading our World\)](#)
- [Population Council's Addis Birhan program](#)
- [PSI and EDC's Healthy Actions Program \(Advancing Youth\)](#)
- [Save the Children's Ishraq program](#)
- [WASH Advocates](#)

Participants also demonstrated interest in learning more about available tools to support program design, implementation, scale-up, and monitoring and evaluation. As a result of this rich discussion, the following tools and resources were shared:

- [C-Change Compendium of Gender Scales](#), FHI 360
- [Girls' Leadership Development in Action: CARE's Experience from the Field](#), CARE and Girl Scouts, 2012
- [Costing Guidelines for HIV Prevention Strategies](#), UNAIDS, 2000
- [Going to Scale: The Challenge of Replicating Social Programs](#), Jeffrey L. Bradach, 2003
- [Methods for Costing Family Planning Services](#), UNFPA and FHI 360, 1994
- [Scaling for Social Impact: Strategies for Spreading Social Innovations](#), Gregory Dees, Beth Battle Anderson, and Jane Wei-skillern, 2004
- [Scaling Up—From Vision to Large-scale Change](#), MSI, 2006

Thank you to all who helped to make this event a success