Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Brief

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Adolescent Girls Resource Pack

Overview

In order for our programmes and policies to address the needs, rights and aspirations of adolescent girls, and to ensure no one is left behind it is critical that we have better evidence to enable us to tailor our programmes more effectively, ¹ and to target our most impactful interventions using a gender, age and inclusion lens. Robust monitoring, evaluation and learning systems, with measurable indicators, need to be in place to tell us whether our interventions are working and who we are reaching. It is important to be able to track the unintended consequences of these programmes / policies as well as to understand programme participants' perceptions of the interventions. The most effective way of doing this is to ensure we are talking with, listening to, and prioritising the voices of the girls for whom our programmes are designed.

The meaningful engagement of adolescent girls in all aspects of the programme delivery, including monitoring, evaluation and learning will not only improve the outcomes of the programme, but also build the skills and confidence of adolescent girls. The concept of adolescence is often not acknowledged, or well understood, which can lead to adolescent girls being grouped into programmes designed for 'youth' or 'women and girls'. The limited visibility of these groups of girls in many projects, programmes and policies can lead to their particular needs and rights not being addressed. Better data collection, disaggregation and analysis is needed to ensure we understand what is working for these unique groups and that 'no one is left behind', particularly those adolescent girls who are often most invisible and hardest to reach (girls with disabilities, domestic workers, married younger adolescents, young mothers, or those affected by conflict or natural disasters).

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, when face to face data collection has become increasingly challenging, it is important to consider safe and ethical ways to collect data remotely, whilst trying to ensure the voices of the hardest to reach are still heard.² Safeguarding, research ethics, data integrity and Do No Harm become even more important in situations like this³.

Guidance for practitioners

Robust and tailored monitoring, evaluation and learning systems need to be in place to ensure we are building the evidence base and adding to our understanding of what works to address the needs and priorities of both younger (10-14 years) and older (15-19 years) adolescent girls.

Several frameworks exist for understanding and measuring what works for adolescent girls' empowerment. Many frameworks use an <u>asset building approach</u>, some use <u>capability outcomes approach</u>, whilst others have identified a number of domains that they feel are relevant for adolescent girls' empowerment⁴. The following principles are important for understanding and measuring what works for adolescent girls:

1. Participation of diverse adolescent girls⁵.

Adolescent girl participation in the design and implementation of programmes as well as programme monitoring is often overlooked. Participation is key to ensuring programmes are accessible and acceptable to adolescent girls and can also be useful to guide the development of future programmes by ensuring we are learning from girls. Adolescent girls can be involved in the design of monitoring systems, identifying indicators, recruiting other girls to participate, tool development, collecting data, as well as analysing and validating the findings. Engaging adolescent girls in this way is particularly important in emergency and humanitarian contexts to understand the specific risks adolescent girls face in conflict, civil unrest and natural disasters.

2. Disaggregation⁶.

The importance of collecting data which can be disaggregated

by sex, age, disability status and geography, where possible, is well documented yet it is still too often neglected in both humanitarian and development programmes and continues to pose challenges.

Where disaggregated data is available it is often only for female / male and under / over 18 years, this is particularly the case in humanitarian contexts⁷. In some contexts, the concept of adolescence is not well understood or agreed upon, which may lead to confusion and reluctance to break down age tranches further. It is critical nonetheless to disaggregate data in 5-year age bands, i.e. 10 -14 years for younger adolescents, 15 – 19 years for older adolescents and 20-24 for young people⁸. The Washington Group Questions are useful human-rights based data collection tools to help identify people with disabilities. They can be used in conjunction with other survey and identification tools, to aid disaggregation of wider data sets⁹.

3. Context and relevance¹⁰.

Whilst there are a number of globally agreed upon and recognised M&E frameworks and suggested indicators for adolescent empowerment and wellbeing it is critical to carefully consider the relevance and appropriateness of these for the context in which you are working. Depending on the programme focus and theory of change, deciding which indicators to track and measure can be challenging in particular when we are trying to ensure comparability, consistency and quality at the same time as ensuring our approach is contextually appropriate and we have made space for adolescent girls to participate in these decisions. Many programmes seeking to measure girls' empowerment use

indices as a way of measuring the complexity of empowerment. There are various indices for measuring <u>selfesteem</u>, <u>self-efficacy</u>, <u>well-being</u> and <u>happiness</u>, <u>safety and economic empowerment</u> among others. The power dynamics and barriers girls face are different in different contexts and therefore indicators need to be adapted for context. Pretesting and validating monitoring tools with adolescent girls will help ensure data is relevant to your context.

Humanitarian contexts

Globally much of the humanitarian funding, programming and policies do not explicitly target adolescent girls, but rather group them with women or children's interventions. There is a need to improve evidence around adolescent girls and ensure that the data collection tools and practices are adolescent-friendly, and that adolescent girls are participating in the sensemaking and collection of data.

Data reliability and access is a particular challenge in camps and informal settlements when seeking to collect data among refugees and IDPs. Sex- and age-disaggregated data continues to be a huge priority in these settings.

The <u>Girl Roster</u> developed by the Population Council, and WRC is a useful tool to ensure marginalised and hard to reach girls are identified and prioritised within programmes in more meaningful ways.

4. Ethical approach and Do No Harm¹¹.

Collecting data from adolescents aged 10- 19 years presents particular ethical and legal challenges, due to their developmental stage and issues of consent and power dynamics that vary across countries, as well as how 'adolescents' are defined. Programmers and policymakers must strive to work in the best interest of the adolescent girl and ensure that our monitoring and evaluation work does not cause harm to any person involved either as researcher or respondent. Always ask yourself if the information you are requesting is really needed.

5. Adolescent-friendly tools and methodologies¹².

There are many different methodologies that can be used to understand what works in programming for adolescent girls. It is important to ensure a **mix of both qualitative and quantitative** methodologies are used, as well as tools that are **participatory and girl-led** such as maps, transect walks, video / photo diaries, most significant change, games and role plays. The use of cohort studies to track medium- and longer-term outcomes can be particularly relevant when working with adolescents¹³, as they can help us understand in more detail what works and why over the life course.

Methodological considerations include:

- Direct questioning versus indirect / third person questioning or using vignettes or stories, which may be more acceptable to young people as they provide a degree of distance.
- Keep the number of questions you are asking adolescent girls to a minimum, being mindful of their time.
- Consider how best to use technology in data collection (see TEGA case study below). The use of technology can be empowering and exciting for adolescents and may become highly relevant in contexts where face to face interaction is not possible. However many adolescent girls do not have

- access to phones or internet which may lead to their voices being marginalised even further. Careful consideration of how and when to use technology is required.
- Above all try to make data collection fun, inclusive, accessible and short!



Examples of remote data collection methods and tools that can be used when face-face data collection is not possible:

- Remote surveys (Kobo, Google, Telegram)
- Telephone administered surveys
- Interactive voice recordina
- Remote FGDs and KIIs
- Telephone interviews
- Photos or videos from participants
- Reflective journals
- Pictures and drawings

6. Identification and recruitment – pay attention to who you might be missing.

Engaging younger and older adolescent girls in the identification and recruitment of other girls either as programme participants or respondents can be a useful and effective method to ensure a wide range of participants are identified¹⁴.

Likewise, having programme teams go door-to-door in communities, or working closely with mentors and other community volunteers, can help identify the most at risk adolescent girls who are often hidden within communities, such as girls with disabilities, domestic workers, girls in residential care, those living or working on the streets, or young mothers¹⁵. Working with Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs), and using the Washington Group Questions, can be useful way of identifying girls with disabilities who may otherwise miss out on programme interventions.

7. Build the capacity of adolescent girls to collect and use data and research¹⁶.

To ensure the meaningful engagement and participation of adolescent girls in the monitoring, evaluation and learning of a programme, it is important to develop their skills and capacity in this area. Adequate training, supportive supervision, mentoring and opportunities for sharing experiences and challenges must be built into the process. At the same time, it is critical to recognise the skills and expertise that they bring as 'experts in their own lives and experiences'.

8. Remuneration.

Whilst girls may be 'volunteers' in some contexts it is important not to exploit their time and expertise. We must be mindful not to overburden them with expectations and recognise their other commitments. We are asking them to behave professionally and undertake a professional, skilled role and therefore we must ensure they are respected, valued and compensated appropriately for their contribution. This may be in the form of financial compensation or access to training, skills, credit, or savings.

programmes needs to be supported by partners/ donors to know whether interventions have lasting impacts in girls' lives over time. 23 DFID-funded programmes Young Lives and GAGE are useful in building the evidence base about what works to empower adolescent girls. For example, GAGE combines longitudinal observational data with nested impact evaluations of specific programmes. It is important for those undertaking these studies to carefully consider the costs, as these are often underestimated.

Challenges

Data Gaps exist for young adolescents (10 -14 years)¹⁷, adolescents out of school, girls with disabilities and those who are marginalised and fall outside traditional data collection sampling frameworks.¹⁸ There is also limited data for SRHR of unmarried sexually active adolescents;¹⁹ most DHS data relating to SRHR is only asked of ever-married women.²⁰ <u>DFID's Gender and Adolescent: Global Evidence (GAGE)</u> programme is helping to fill these gaps with large datasets on young adolescents in Bangladesh and Ethiopia.

Data reliability and representativeness, particularly for young adolescents (10 -14), which tends to be based on parents' / caregivers' reports. School-based surveys, or in girls' groups, miss out more marginalised, harder to reach young people, including children with disabilities²¹, migrants / refugees, those in conflict settings²², and who may not be attending school for various reasons.

More reliable data exists for health and wellbeing with limited agreed measures for empowerment, decision making, agency or self-efficacy, participation and civic engagement.

CASE STUDY: TEGA – THE GIRL EFFECT

<u>TEGA (Technology Enabled Girl Ambassadors)</u> is Girl Effect's digital research tool. It engages young female researchers to conduct short qualitative interviews with other adolescent girls and young women. Key design features include:

- All the TEGAs are equipped with simple smart phones, programmed with an app, which they use to record the interviews using either film or audio.
- The interview questions are kept short, fun, not too wordy, and relevant for respondents - 30 minutes is optimal.
- Innovative features have been designed to address challenges of **consent and safeguarding**.
- A 'panic button' has been built into the research app that sends a signal out to the research supervisor and other staff members to trigger help.
- Rigorous training and accreditation is provided by the Market Research Society, which has a built in incentive structure to help girls progress.
- TEGAs are fully remunerated in line with local markets and continue to be supervised and mentored by staff members from local partner organisations throughout their employment.

(From interview with The Girl Effect team member.)

Longer term tracking of well-designed girl-centred

Ethical Considerations include:

- Methodology and questions need to be adapted for working with **very young adolescents aged** (10 14 years) ²⁴ especially in areas of high sensitivity such as sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), violence and abuse.
- Be sensitive to the risks of **re-traumatising** young people through our questioning.
- The dignity, health and well-being of individuals and groups must take priority above all else- this is particularly important during times of global health crises.
- Referral pathways must be in place to refer girls for psychosocial or emotional support as part of a quality, survivor centred and youth friendly GBV response service.
- Assent versus consent should be considered. In contexts where an adolescent girl cannot provide consent due to her age, or for other reasons, it remains critical that their willingness to participate, and their understanding of the process, what is expected of them and how the data will be used is made clear to them. Opportunities to withdraw from participating at any point should be made available.
- Issues of data protection, confidentiality, privacy and anonymity should be well understood and explained to participants. Confidentiality should be maintained at all times, except where the adolescent girl faces imminent risk to her well-being, safety, and security. Researchers and programmers must be aware of any mandatory reporting laws that exist in any given context and take those into consideration should any disclosures be made²⁵. In cases where online or digital data collection is being used safeguarding and consent need to be considered carefully. Researchers must be provided with training and support in how to conduct remote data collection safely and ethically.
- Any potential **safeguarding risks** should be identified for all MEL activities with adequate mitigation strategies developed. This includes potential risks, such as backlash from the community, for adolescent girls involved either as respondent or researcher.

Further literature:

- Coalition for Adolescent Girls (2015) <u>Partners and Allies:</u> A Toolkit For Meaningful Adolescent Girl Engagement.
- Glennister, R. et al. (2018) A Practical Guide to Measuring Women's and Girl's Empowerment in Impact Evaluations.
- Innocenti (2016) <u>Measuring Adolescent Well-being:</u> <u>NAACs</u>. UNICEF Innocenti.
- Jones, N., et al. (2019) <u>Qualitative Research Toolkit: GAGE's Approach to Researching with Adolescents</u>. London:
 Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence.
- SDDirect (2017) <u>GLRU Toolkit</u>. Social Development Direct

CASE STUDY OF GIRL-LED MEL: LA PÉPINIÈRE, DRC 26

The DFID-funded programme <u>La Pépinière</u> generated evidence and learning around effective interventions to improve and increase the economic empowerment of adolescent girls and young women. 15 young women aged 16- 24 from diverse backgrounds were trained as qualitative researchers and form the Girl-Led Research Unit (GLRU). **Key features of the capacity building approach included:**

- The Girl Participation Principles, including a code of conduct and vulnerable adult and child protection policy.
- A long-term training programme was delivered over the three years covering a variety of topics.
- Professional mentors from local universities played a critical role in building the sustainable capacity of the girls and provided much valued support, supervision and guidance.
- Researchers worked in pairs to support each other building social networks critical for confidence and skills.
- **Diverse range of adolescents and young women recruited as researchers** different education, socio economic status, different communities and different experiences and opportunities. This enriched the experiences of the girls themselves as well as the research findings.

EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS FOR MEASURING EMPOWERMENT OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN SECTORAL PROGRAMMES –

disaggregated by age, sex, disability, and geography (sources²⁷)

EDUCATION

Aspects to consider include access, gender-responsive and age appropriate education, equity, safety, attainment and learning outcomes, transition to secondary school or vocational training, aspiration and goal setting.

- Number of years of education completed (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary)
- Girls / boys aged 20 24 who are NEET (not in education, employment or training)
- Proportion of girls / boys (i) at the end of primary and (ii) at end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (a) reading and (b) mathematics
- Proportion of girls / boys who dropped out of school in the last year
- Proportion of girls/ boys who are in school at grade for age / percentage of girls / boys over-age for grade
- Proportion of girls of school-going age not enrolled in school
- Proportion of girls who received education subsidy or other "keeping girls in school" initiative
- Proportion of adolescent girls who can access the support and resources to transition to secondary school, tertiary or vocational training
- Proportion of schools with adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities
- Proportion of girls / boys experiencing bullying, corporal punishment, harassment, violence, sexual discrimination and abuse
- Proportion of girls who are able to set realistic long-term goals for themselves (aspiration)

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Adolescence is a critical time to lay the foundations for economic empowerment and can support girls' transitions to decent work. The extent to which adolescent girls and young women are able to control their resources and income and have decision making power around that is a critical aspect.

- The Adolescent Girl and Young Women's Economic empowerment index (AGYWEEI)²⁸ focuses on capabilities, skills and assets as well as decision making power
- Girls aspire to a wide range of appropriate employment opportunities that are not gender segregated or restricted
- Proportion of girls who are financially literate
- Proportion of girls who have access to, and control of, economic and productive assets and opportunities (savings, cash, credit, training, land)
- Increase access to decent work opportunities (paid employment or access to credit for their own businesses)
- Increase in girls' incomes
- Proportion of population in a given age group achieve at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional a) literacy and b) numeracy skills (SDG 4.6.1)
- Increase in girls' free time / reduction in their lack of time (Spring Accelerator)
- Average weekly time spent on unpaid household duties among adolescents aged 10 -19 years, by sex
- Extent to which adolescent girls participate in in decision making at different levels (personal, household)

COMPREHENSIVE SRH

Addressing aspects of sexuality and gender orientation, power dynamics, intimate partner violence and other forms of SGBV, building adolescents self-esteem, self-efficacy and agency through participatory teaching that encourages crucial thinking and greater decision making.

- Adolescent birth rate (age 10-14 and 15-19 years) per 1000 women in that age group
- Proportion of women of reproductive age (15-49) who have their need for family planning met with modern methods
- Proportion of women aged 15-29 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care
- Adolescent girls' access to comprehensive safe abortion services
- Mental health and well-being indices
- Proportion of young people reached by Comprehensive Sexuality Education CSE
- Proportion of adolescent girls and adolescent boys reached by life-skills education in schools

- Proportion of girls/young women who have received non-judgemental, supportive education/advice/services about their sexual health
- Proportion of young women who had 2+ partners in the last 12 months
- The age difference between sexually active girls and their first and current partner
- Proportion of respondents who say they used a condom at last sex with a non-marital, non-cohabiting partner, of those who have had sex with such a partner in the last 12 months
- Proportion of females aged 15 -24 who report unintended pregnancy of current pregnancy or most recent birth
- Proportion of adolescent girls who agree that girls and women always have the right to say no to sex
- Proportion of older adolescent girls and young women who agree that sexual relationship should be equally enjoyed by women and men

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG)²⁹

Important aspects relate to SRHR and access to education and overall empowerment. Adolescent girls are at particular heightened risk of VAWG therefore in many projects and programmes it will be important to pay particular attention to these issues.

- Existence of national laws on VAWG
- Proportion of ever-partnered adolescents aged 15-19 who experienced any physical, sexual and/or emotional violence by a current or former intimate partner in past 12 months
- Proportion of women and girls (aged 15-49) subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner since age 15
- Proportion of girls and young women aged 15–24 who believe that violence against women is acceptable under certain circumstances
- Proportion of adult women and adult men who believe that violence against women and girls is acceptable under certain circumstances
- Proportion of women aged 20 -24 year who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18
- Proportion of adolescents aged 10 -19 who have undergone FGM/C and/or other harmful practices
- Proportion of girls who can cite specific personal safety nets someone to turn to in case of emergency, somewhere to spend the night, someone from whom to borrow money
- Self-esteem measures include sense of agency, aspirations, self-worth
- Context-specific knowledge of services (location, hours of operation, types of services and access requirements)
- Proportion of girls who have specific knowledge of risky people, seasons, events

MEANINGFUL ADOLESCENT GIRL ENGAGEMENT

The meaningfully engagement of adolescent girls is an important outcome in itself.
Considering how to monitor and track girls' participation in decision making and their perception of feeling valued and heard should be seen as critical to build into all adolescent girl programmes.

- Proportion of girls who have opportunities, space, and power to shape the solutions that impact their lives
- Proportion of girls who know their right to and play a critical role in advancing their communities and society
- Proportion of adolescents who indicate that their views were taken seriously in decisions made at home, school and in their community
- Proportion of girls who are actively involved in their communities
- Proportion of girls who report feeling respected, heard, and valued as active change agents by adults and other stakeholders.
- Proportion of girls who can access information, networks and services
- Institutional, program, and project approaches and solutions are intentional and informed and led by girls.
- Mechanisms are in place to provide feedback by adolescents on the quality, accessibility and appropriateness of public services for adolescents

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- ² GEC (2020) Keeping in contact with girls
- ³ UKCDR (2020) <u>Safeguarding in International Development Research: Practical application of UKCDR Safeguarding Guidance during COVID-19'</u> published by the UK Collaborative on Development Research
- ⁴ See and Adolescent-Country-Tracker-postcard-30Apr18-2
- ⁵ Coalition for Adolescent Girls (2015) <u>Partners and Allies: A Toolkit for Meaningful Adolescent Girl Engagement;</u> GBVAOR. (2017) A Strategy to Address the Needs of Adolescent Girls in the Whole of Syria. New York: UNFPA, GBVAOR, Health Cluster Turkey Hub; Rutgers WPF and IPPF (2013) <u>Explore Toolkit for involving young people as researchers in sexual and reproductive health programmes</u>; International Rescue Committee (2014) <u>Are We Listening? Acting on Our Commitments to Women and Girls Affected by the Syrian Conflict,</u> New York: International Rescue Committee.
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- ⁷ GBVAOR. (2017) *A Strategy to Address the Needs of Adolescent Girls in the Whole of Syria*. New York: UNFPA, GBVAOR, Health Cluster Turkey Hub.
- ⁸ Patton, G et al (2016). Our future: A Lancet commission on adolescent health and wellbeing.
- ⁹ The Washington Group collaborated with UNICEF to develop the 'Child Functioning Module' for children between 2-17 years:
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- ¹³ See for example: Young lives; GAGE; and La Pépinière
- 14 The Population Council's Girl Roster tool can be useful for identifying who is missing from the programme.
- ¹⁵ Austrian, K. and Ghati, D. 2010. *Girl Centered Program Design: A Toolkit to Develop, Strengthen and Expand Adolescent Girls Programs*. Population Council.
- ¹⁶ Mercy Corps and ActionAid (2019) <u>GRL Power Case Study: What Can we Learn about the Experience of Girl-led Research in Jordan?</u>; Social Development Direct (2017) <u>GLRU Toolkit</u>, London: Social Development Direct
- ¹⁷ The GAGE programme is developing a large resource of data collecting from among 10 -14 years olds as part of their longitudinal study.
- ¹⁸ Azzopardi, P., Kennedy, E. and Patton, G. (2017). 'Data and Indicators to Measure Adolescent Health, Social Development and Well-being', Innocenti Research Brief.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.; Guglielmi, S and Jones N (2019). *The Invisibility of Adolescents within the SDGs.* GAGE Policy Note.
- ²⁰ Azzopardi, P., Kennedy, E. and Patton, G. (2017). *Ibid.*; Azzopardi, P et al (2019) *Ibid*.
- ²¹ Jones, N., Presler-Marshall, E. and Stavropoulou, M. (2018) *Adolescents with disabilities: enhancing resilience and delivering inclusive development. Policy Note*. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence; Jones, N., Presler-Marshall, E. and Stavropoulou, M. (2018) *Adolescents with disabilities: enhancing resilience and delivering inclusive development*. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence.
- ²² Azzopardi, P et al (2017) *Ibid*.
- ²³ Hallman K. (2016) Population Council Lessons on Increasing and Measuring Girl's Economic Empowerment.
- ²⁴ McCarthy, K, Brady, M and Hallman K (2016) *Investing when it counts: Reviewing the evidence and charting a course of research and action for very young adolescents*. New York: Population Council.
- ²⁵ A safeguarding and child protection policy and procedure should identify reporting channels in the case of disclosure. Individual risks must be taken into account in any issues of mandatory reporting, where it may not be safe or in the best interest of the child to report to the authorities. Above all decisions must be made in the context of do no harm.
- ²⁶ SDDirect (2017) GLRU Toolkit
- ²⁷ SDG indicators (1, 2); DHS programmes; MICS surveys; Patton, G et al (2016). *Ibid*; The Global Fund (2018) *The Global Fund Measurement Framework for Adolescents Girls and Young Women Programs*; Engebretsen, S Austrian K, Catino J, Lloyd C.B, Bruce, J (2012) *Girls First! Perspectives on Girl-Centred Programming*. Population Council; GAGE Consortium (2019) *Gender and Adolescent. Why understanding adolescent capabilities, change strategies and contexts matter*. Second Edition. London: Gender and Adolescence Global Evidence; Spring Accelerator; Engebretsen, S (2012) *Using Data to See and Select the Most Vulnerable Adolescent Girls*. A Girls First publication, New York: Population Council
- ²⁸ Kaminski, J. (2018) *Ibid*.
- ²⁹ Many of these indicators are collected through national prevalence surveys and are not appropriate to ask directly of younger and older adolescent girls in routine MEL but may be used for secondary data analysis to inform programme design and implementation.