

NEGOTIATING A BETTER FUTURE

The Impact of Teaching Negotiation Skills on Girls' Health and Educational Outcomes



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IN BRIEF...

- » Pilot project in Zambia to improve girls negotiation and communications skills
- » Girls reported more access to resources, less hunger, and consequently more control over their future lives
- » Programme to be scaled up in late 2014

This project is the pilot phase of a study exploring if, and how, a behavioral intervention with Zambian secondary school girls can improve their educational and health outcomes. In the long term, it is hoped this intervention will contribute to the expansion of a healthy and skilled labor force that can support the country's economic growth and development. The study tests the value of three different components of youth empowerment programs: social capital, information provision, and negotiation and communication skills. The project is with the Zambian Ministry of Education and laid the groundwork for the full study implementation and an eventual country-wide roll-out.

The pilot phase proved successful, with resoundingly positive feedback from the participating girls, coaches, teachers, and school administrators. Overall, our project findings indicate that both the negotiation and the information programs are perceived positively by the girls, and that the negotiation sessions can increase a girl's sense of control over her life and access to resources more than the information alone. Girls in the negotiation treatment reported less hunger, more control over their future life, and more positive conversations with people in their life.

Currently, this evidence comes only from self-reported survey measures. We believe outcome measures that directly measure behavior may be required to demonstrate differentiated impact. Therefore, as part of an extended pilot follow-up process, we have been developing and pre-testing behavioral outcome measures that we have decided to implement in a third round of follow-up surveys with the participating girls and their households. Additionally, we are seeking to triangulate certain data with administrative records at the school. These additional measures will start to be implemented from May 2014.

More information and a Working Paper for this project are available on our website www.theigc.org

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