EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Girl Rising Empowering Next Generations to Advance Girls’ Education (ENGAGE) project, funded by the USAID, aimed to increase awareness of the importance of equitable access to education and to mobilize social action around girls’ education initiatives in India, DRC and Nigeria.

The overarching goal of this public-private partnership was to address the social norms and barriers influencing girls’ access to education. ENGAGE was designed to demonstrate that high-quality media and storytelling, deployed strategically with the appropriate tools and resources, can increase awareness of the importance of girls’ education, spark individual and collective engagement, build stronger social movements, catalyze policy advancements, and as a result, create meaningful and lasting social change.

The project’s three key objectives included:

• **Objective 1**: Increase public attention, awareness, engagement and action around the importance of equitable, quality education for all and the need to eliminate gender disparity in education.

• **Objective 2**: Mobilize and engage men, women, and school-aged youth through grassroots community initiatives to take action to address barriers and social norms impeding access to quality education for girls.

• **Objective 3**: Motivate leaders, key stakeholders and other decision-makers to take concrete, positive action to eliminate barriers to girls’ education.

In order to achieve the project’s objectives, ENGAGE collaborated with national media agencies, corporations, governments and several international and local NGO partners.

Monitoring & Evaluation Goals

ENGAGE retained an independent evaluation firm, Fluent Research, to conduct its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in India, DRC, and Nigeria. The overarching purpose of M&E was to ensure that all facets of the ENGAGE program were implemented as planned and to measure the efficacy of the program in achieving its intended outcomes. To that end, the M&E team:

• Collected data on inputs, activities, and outputs to track progress in implementation of all three project objectives; and

• Conducted performance and impact evaluations of the community-based interventions to assess effectiveness of the project in achieving Objective 2 (mobilization of community members)

Evaluation Approach

ENGAGE was a multi-country, multi-faceted program with different approaches to utilizing the power of media in addressing gender inequality in education. M&E had to keep track of a wide
range of activities in each country, from media broadcasts to social media engagement to outreach activities targeting the general population, parents, children and teachers in select regions, and key decision-makers and stakeholders.

ENGAGE conducted a wide variety of programmatic initiatives, all centered around use of the Girl Rising videos and associated materials and curricula. In broad terms, these initiatives fell into three types:

1) Broadcasting models, aiming to maximize reach among general public and hard-to-reach populations, including TV, theatrical, radio and digital/social media engagement
2) Screenings and discussions with NGO representatives, select corporate executives and employees, and local influencers and decision-makers
3) Community-based, multi-activity models, aimed at enhancing locally led discussions around the positive benefits of educating girls and ultimately local enrollment of girls in school.

In the first category, the initiatives included:
- National televised broadcasts in India along with print and digital campaigns to accompany as well as related Public Service Announcement campaigns disseminated on television, digitally, on radio and in theaters
- Regional television broadcast in Northern Nigeria, in partnership with Arewa 24
- Regional television broadcast and radio outreach in the DRC, in partnership with Foundation Hirondelle/Radio Okapi

In the second category, the Girl Rising film and locally produced content were screened at numerous events for government, corporate, NGO, and local community audiences. These screening events were typically followed by discussions focused on the barriers to girls’ education in their respective communities and the perceived impact of the film on community members’ motivation to act in support of girls’ education.

In the third category, a variety of programs were fielded:
- In India, a community-based intervention in forty villages of Rajasthan and Bihar, in partnership with Save the Children.
- In Northern Nigeria, a grassroots-driven initiative in select communities, in partnership with the Discovery Learning Alliance; a partnership with the Kano State Agency for Mass Education (KSAME) and Bayero University to integrate Girl Rising materials into Women Empowerment Centers across Kano; a partnership with the Society for Women Development and Empowerment of Nigeria (SWODEN) to integrate Girl Rising materials into Youth Peace Clubs; and a partnership with Aisha Halliru Youth Development and Empowerment Intitiative (AYDI) to train youth mentors on how to utilize Girl Rising materials.
- In the DRC, a wide-ranging program of community-based film screenings in rural areas, in partnership with IMA World Health, as well as a partnership with HPP-Congo to integrate Girl Rising materials into the teacher training curriculum and community engagement programs.
These community-focused initiatives were implemented through NGOs on the ground, local community leaders, educators, and volunteers or through government agencies. In these cases, ENGAGE produced the content and curricular design, provided the materials and tools, and trained local individuals in their application.

Given the great variation in the scope and type of the ENGAGE initiatives across the three target countries, the methods of evaluation varied greatly. Limited resources also required the prioritization of data-collection around particular initiatives at the expense of others.

**Data Collection Strategy**

The data collection strategy for such a multifaced program included a wide range of methodologies:

1) Desk review of gender equity in education: to provide the context in which ENGAGE operated
2) Ongoing process monitoring: to measure progress and track program implementation activities
3) Media data aggregation and analysis: to track the number, type and reach of airings; to measure the digital footprint of social media activities, and an estimated size of the audiences reached, where possible
4) Ad-hoc post-screening surveys: to measure the immediate reaction of viewers attending private screening events to the messages of ENGAGE
5) Qualitative interviews and focus groups with program participants
6) Impact Evaluation: to measure impact of the ENGAGE intervention in select communities in India
7) Performance Evaluation in DRC and Nigeria, to examine how the Girl Rising materials are being used by the community members and to measure community members’ perceptions of the value of the Girl Rising materials.

**The Overall M&E Results**

The M&E results demonstrate that the ENGAGE program has successfully met virtually all output and outcome goals. In fact, the program has far exceeded its targets in all of its broadcasting, community outreach, training, and content development goals.

**The Impact Evaluation Results**

The impact evaluation of the community-based intervention in India provides the clearest evidence of the impact that the ENGAGE narrative model, paired with a community-based intervention, has had on its intended outcomes.
The impact evaluation of the ENGAGE Save the Children intervention in select villages of Rajasthan and Bihar was designed as a quasi-experimental study and conducted with a total sample of 1,000 respondents (children and parents) from 500 households. The study consisted of three phases: the baseline survey, the midline qualitative phase, and the endline survey. The intervention consisted of a wide array of community-based activities and events, with the Girl Rising film and tools at the center of each activity.

The impact evaluation was designed to measure the efficacy of the ENGAGE program in increasing parents’ and children’s awareness of the benefits of education for girls and boys, in raising their aspirations for their or their children’s education, to build girls’ confidence and self-efficacy in overcoming challenges to education, and in motivating parents and children to take actions in support of girls’ education.

The results of the evaluation demonstrated that the ENGAGE intervention in India, implemented in partnership with Save the Children from August 2015 to March 2017, had a significant positive impact on both attitudinal and behavioral outcomes, including:

- **Positive Impact on Parents’ Aspirations for Girls’ Education:** The ENGAGE program had a significant positive impact on parents’ desired years of education for their daughters (the proportion of parents who wanted their daughter to obtain post-secondary (beyond 12 years) education rose from 31% at pre-test to 50% at post-test).

- **Positive Impact on Girls’ Aspirations for the Highest Level of Education:** Girls in the intervention villages expressed higher aspirations for the highest level of education they would like to achieve, with desired years of school increasing from 12.0 to 14.0 years at post-test.

- **Positive Impact on Children’s Attitudes toward Gender Equality:** Children in the intervention condition significantly improved their attitudes towards gender equality, related to equal treatment of girls and boys in school, as well as to the opportunities that men and women should have in social, political, and economic spheres.

- **Positive Impact on Children’s Confidence:** The ENGAGE intervention had significantly improved children’s confidence in addressing education-related challenges and decisions.

- **Positive Impact on Children’s Empowerment:** Children in the intervention condition were more likely than children in the control condition to feel more empowered to change things for the better in their school and in their community after the intervention.

- **Positive Impact on Children’s Participation in Decision-making:** After exposure to the program, children reported higher rates of participation in family decision-making regarding their education and their future, with the most dramatic increase in the levels of participation in decisions concerning their marriage.
- **Positive Impact on Parents’ and Children’s Behaviors:** Exposure to the ENGAGE program had led to an increase in proactive behaviors among parents and children in the intervention group. Both parents and children in the intervention condition were significantly more likely than their counterparts in the control group to have engaged in conversations with each other, other family members, friends, neighbors or other community members about the value of education, and more likely to have sought information about the value of children’s education and girls’ empowerment.

The impact evaluation provides compelling evidence that the ENGAGE program in India had contributed to a shift in attitudes, awareness, aspirations, and behaviors with respect to girls’ education. The program inspired a variety of concrete actions among community members, such as discussing the issue of girls’ education within families and with neighbors and members of community, the encouragement of daughters to pursue higher levels of education, seeking out more information about girls’ empowerment and girls’ planning for the future.

**The Performance Evaluation and Ad-Hoc Research Results**

The performance evaluations of the community-based interventions in DRC and Nigeria, as well as the ad-hoc surveys and post-screening discussions with community members in India, DRC and Nigeria, provide further evidence of the ENGAGE effectiveness in changing attitudes towards equitable access to education and mobilizing community action.

The performance evaluation of the ENGAGE diverse activities was derived most commonly from primary feedback from participants in program events such as screenings, discussions, and workshops. This feedback was gathered via survey questionnaires, focus group discussions and individual in-depth interviews.

The ad-hoc surveys and post-screening interviews have evaluated the following program components and outputs:

- Training of local facilitators and volunteers
- Tools (video chapters, discussion guides, training manuals, and radio program)
- Messages and content

**Training**

ENGAGE and its partners have conducted a series of training exercises for local volunteers in preparation for using the ENGAGE materials and videos in community sensitization activities. Primary feedback from these training events has been uniformly and exceedingly positive with respect to the quality of the workshops and their capacity to inform and prepare the participants. Feedback does indicate, however, room for improvement in terms of preparing trainees how to handle difficult situations that might arise in the course of leading a community sensitization event.
**Tools**

The research assessed the ENGAGE videos and other tools with respect to several key parameters: appeal, comprehension of message, relevance, and motivational capacity.

Feedback from a wide variety of sources and audiences has consistently indicated that the core tool for ENGAGE – the *Girl Rising* videos – are highly appealing, highly effective in delivering the message of the value of girl’s education, and, more importantly, highly motivating. In addition, they are effective as triggers of dialogue. These findings apply across a range of cultures and languages.

Research had strongly and consistently suggested that they are effective:
- as informational tools
- as motivational tools
- at re-energizing those already committed to the task
- as a stimulus for community gatherings and discussions

In addition, the ENGAGE tools had also proved adaptable to a range of programmatic interventions, as developed by a variety of different partner organizations so as to leverage their existing capacities.

**Messaging and Content**

M&E indicates that the core messages of the ENGAGE videos and curricula are highly relevant, resonate with community member experience, and encounter little resistance.

What’s more, the ENGAGE materials and outreach arrived at an opportune moment, when attitudes about girls’ education and early marriage were shifting – at least from the perspective of many participants.

The broad receptivity to, and widely expressed desire for more of such content -- from both educators and community members, from both fathers and mothers -- strongly suggest the potential for expanding the use and availability of the materials and the potential for creating additional stories.

When assessed alongside other data, the combined evidence strongly suggests that these narratives – especially when combined with the opportunity for group discussion, and the ongoing advocacy of local leaders, educators, and trained volunteers -- motivate people to at least want to act and to feel that barriers can be overcome through action.

This evidence includes:
- The consistency of the reported emotional power and resonance of the videos -- across all communities and respondent types (community leaders, educators, mothers, fathers, girls, boys, and journalists); across diverse cultures and languages, and diverse geographic locations;
- Unsolicited claims of intent to take action as a result of the screenings;
• The fact that so many respondents assume that the videos will have motivational impact on others – because of its impact on themselves;
• The fact that the respondents repeatedly referenced the examples of the girls depicted in the videos as the source of their motivation to help promote girls’ education.
• Repeated references to shifting social norms and the need for such materials and programs to take advantage of this fact and to ensure momentum is not lost.
• Widespread expressions of a desire for more such videos, and for continued exposure and discussion, and for the geographic expansion of the campaign.
• The impact of community sensitization campaigns in 46 communities in and around Kano, Nigeria:
  o The ENGAGE Program Coordinator, who visited the communities to monitor implementation of their action plans, reported concrete steps taken by community members to enroll girls, hold screenings of the Girl Rising film, and intercede with reluctant families. Community leaders reported making commitments to provide tuition for girls, provide school supplies, and construct new school facilities.
  o Community leaders reported that more than 7,300 girls newly enrolled or returned to school after dropping out, resulting from the sensitization campaigns and Da Bazar Mu screenings
  o In fact, so many girls enrolled that several communities reported that they are now challenged by a lack of sufficient classrooms to accommodate all the girls being enrolled.
• The impact of community sensitization campaigns in Rajasthan and Bihar, India:
  o The local communities reported 653 children enrolled in school as a result of their school drive mobilization activities over the course of nine months.

Conclusions

The collective feedback from these diverse audiences and activities strongly suggests that the ENGAGE narrative- and discussion-based model, tailored to local sensitivities and speaking with great relevance to actual local circumstances, is effective in garnering attention, stimulating dialogue, opening minds, inspiring champions of girls’ education, and triggering concrete action by individuals on behalf of girls.