



ECHIDNA GIVING LIFE SKILLS & MINDSET CHANGE PROJECT

Co-Creating Tools for Measuring Impact of Life Skills on Adolescents: Insights from Scoping Studies in East Africa and India

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About

Jaslika Consulting

Founded in 2016, Jaslika Consulting is a Nairobi-based firm that combines professionalism and passion to deliver quality services and inspire change. It offers advisory, training and research services focusing on education, child rights, and environmental sectors to provide sustainable solutions that permeate cultural and generational boundaries. Since its formation, Jaslika has been working on issues of values, gender and equality. In 2017, it completed a pioneering study on positive deviance in primary schools in Kenya.

Sheila Wamahiu is a co-founder and director of Jaslika Consulting. Among others, she has to her credit the national study on Value-based Education in Kenya: An Exploration of Meanings and Practices. The Minister of Education, Government of Kenya launched the report in 2015. The study included documentation of Life Skills Education in primary schools in the country.

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Evaldesign

Evaldesign is a research consultancy firm based in New Delhi, India, with a focus on designing and evaluating education programs. Evaldesign provides research and design inputs that allow programs to capture high quality data for quick feedback and effective implementation. Its goal is to help donors, investors, governments and non-profits working in the education sector improve accountability, efficiency and efficacy of education programs through data-driven insights. In recent years, its work has focused on the research and evaluation of Life Skills interventions. In 2017, Evaldesign published the Handbook on Measuring 21st Century Skills that outlines core Life Skills, their constructs and the available tools to measure the skills.

Akanksha Bapna is the founder and CEO of Evaldesign. She has extensive analytical and quantitative experience in experimental design, both in the field of science as well as in the social sciences. She has worked extensively on K-12 Education, bridging the gap between policy, research and practice. Dr. Bapna has a PhD in Biochemistry from Cambridge University and an Ed.M. in International Education Policy from Harvard University.

Disclaimer: The findings and recommendations made in this report represent the views of the study authors and are not necessarily representative of Echidna Giving.

Table of Contents

About	i
1. Introduction	01
2. Study Approach and Process	01
3. Policy Landscape	02
4. Life Skills Interventions	03
4.1 Life Skills Focus	03
4.2 Prioritization of Life Skills	04
4.3 Similarities and Differences in Life Skills Program Interventions	05
4.4 Gender Interventions and Life Skills	07
5. Assessment and Measurement Tools	08
6. Co-creating Common Assessment Tools: Is there a need?	08
7. Key Lessons and Way Forward	09
7.1 Key Insights	09
7.2 Possible Challenges	10
7.3 Recommendations	10
7.3.1 Recommendations from the India Report	10
7.3.2 Recommendations from the East Africa Report	11
Annex	12

1. Introduction

Echidna Giving, a private funder, envisages a world in which the promise of girls' education has been delivered. In this world, girls grasp greater opportunities to learn and earn, and for those who have children, pass on the value of education to them. Educated girls enable better prospects for each successive generation, and help generate more resilient and equitable societies, which benefit everyone. Echidna Giving catalyzes work that has the potential to fast-track improved outcomes for girls. Their chosen accelerators address pivotal moments in a girl's life: early childhood and adolescence. They also support a robust ecosystem in girls' education, among implementers, advocates, researchers and champions, so that effective ideas can take root and thrive.

In October 2018, Echidna Giving commissioned two parallel scoping studies in East Africa and India to provide insights on the viability of supporting the co-creation of tools to assess the impact of Life Skills interventions on adolescents in the targeted study locales. Specifically, they contracted two consultants with strong education sector research backgrounds to engage with the major organizations in East Africa and India implementing Life Skills programs to understand:

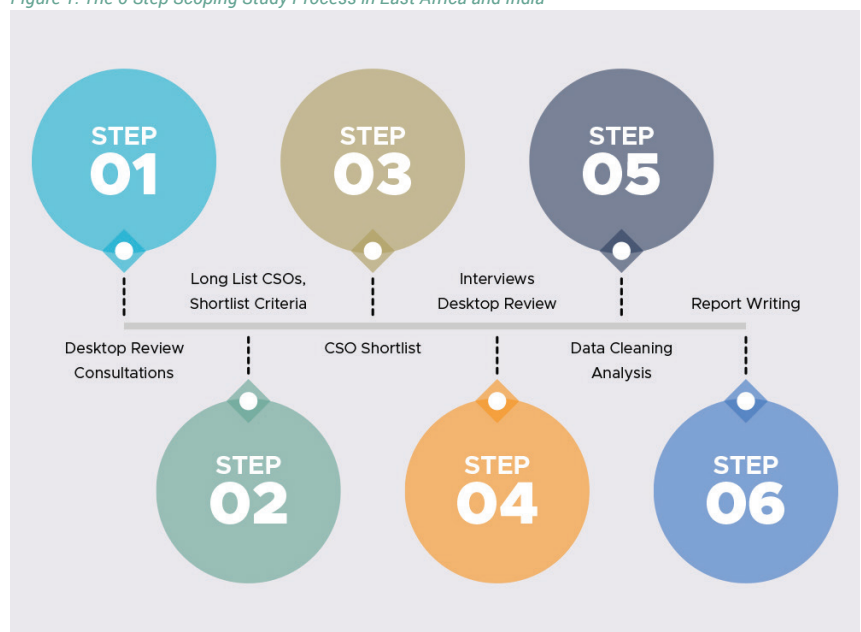
1. What skills are most commonly emphasized by the organizations?
2. Why these particular skills were selected?
3. Whether and how these skills are currently measured?
4. What are the most common measurement/assessment needs?
5. How many NGOs are interested in collective action around developing open source assessment tools and under what conditions?

This report presents the synthesized results of the two studies. It highlights the similarities and notes the differences in the study findings, shares insights and makes recommendations on the way forward. The full reports for East Africa and India are available on request.

2. Study Approach and Process

The two studies, conducted between October 2018 and March 2019, used similar methodologies consisting of six iterative steps as summarized in Figure 1. The interview and desktop reviews were the main sources of data. Interview tools and criteria for purposive sampling were jointly developed. Priority was given to organizations that were (a) implementing Life Skills programs with a focus on girls and/or adolescents; and (b) working in the education space (in and out of school). The appendix contains the full list and summary descriptions of the participating organizations.

Figure 1: The 6-Step Scoping Study Process in East Africa and India



3. Policy Landscape

A review of the policy contexts in India, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda reveals that despite the inclusion of Life Skills Education in the formal curriculum for two decades, the subject is still as at a nascent stage, yet to be fully aligned to the education systems. Table 1 reflects this; the three countries for which comparable data were available, are at the emergent stages on a number of indicators while well-defined interventions are altogether lacking when assessed against others. Tanzania is not included in the table as we were unable to access the relevant data.

Table 1: Overview of Life Skills Space in India, Kenya and Uganda

Enabling Context/System Alignment	INDIA				KENYA				UGANDA			
	Absent	Emerging	Established	Advanced	Absent	Emerging	Established	Advanced	Absent	Emerging	Established	Advanced
Policies (System-level documents that provide guidelines for Life Skills Education)		Emerging				Emerging				Emerging		
Curriculum (Curricular modules designed and developed for teacher/teacher educator/learner use)		Emerging					Established			Emerging		
Learning/Quality Goals (Mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of Life Skills delivery)	Absent					Emerging				Emerging		
Contextual evidence body (Evidence base on impact of Life Skills Education interventions)	Absent					Emerging			Absent			
Funding (Funding allocated for Life Skills purposes as part of education policy)		Emerging			Absent					Emerging		
Pre-service + in-service Teacher Training (Provision of preparatory and ongoing professional development to teachers to ensure that teachers develop skills and expertise on inculcating such skills)		Emerging			Absent					Emerging		
Assessments (Guidelines in place to assess impact of Life Skills Education on learners)	Absent				Absent				Absent			
Color Codes	ABSENT				EMERGING				ESTABLISHED			

In the East African region, implementation of Life Skills Education is weak. One major factor contributing to this is the absence of well-defined assessment guidelines and capacity of teachers to examine the subject. In education systems that are examination-driven, teachers teach to the test and subjects that are not examinable are de-prioritized as teaching subjects, despite official inclusion in the school timetable as standalone subjects, or integration into carrier subjects like the Creative Arts and Performing Education curriculum at the primary school level in Uganda. There is also a window for the teaching and learning of Life Skills within the school setting through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, allowing space to

civil society organizations to intervene in schools mainly through clubs and mentoring activities. However, examinable subjects, especially in upper primary and secondary, edge out clubs even when officially time tabled. Nevertheless, the policy intent is evident in all three countries in the region. It is expected that the ongoing curriculum reforms in Kenya, and the eventual implementation of the secondary school curriculum in Uganda, will succeed in effectively delivering the teaching and learning of Life Skills through formal education.

The Indian government is beginning to prioritize the development of an ecosystem for improving the quality of training for Life Skills but there is lack of clarity around what these skills are. Moreover, the efforts are disconnected due to lack of clear articulation and focus on curriculum integration, teacher development, or reliable measurement of life skills. In addition, India faces the challenge of viewing Life Skills as additional to, instead of integral to, education. Life Skills are often viewed as a part of vocational training and related efforts. While only three states (Madhya Pradesh, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh) have formally commenced work on Life Skills based on availability of government data, the number of government partnerships with organizations implementing Life Skills interventions is high, indicative of a policy-level willingness to take these programs to scale.

4. Life Skills Interventions

The 30 organizations that were part of the study are representative of a wide geographic distribution across India and the East African region. The sampled organizations were just a few among the many working in the Life Skills and Adolescence space but they still reflect the diversity that characterizes the field in terms of their purpose, programmatic focus, outreach and partnerships in the four countries covered by this study.

In East Africa, 16 organizations were shortlisted from a list of 63, spread across Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The organizations reached out to marginalized adolescents, mostly girls, in urban informal settlements and poor rural communities. Over half the sampled organizations were locally registered with a third operating in multiple countries. A total of 35 individuals (60% female) representing these organizations were interviewed from the three countries. In addition, 14 key individuals with expertise in Life Skills and/or the Education sector were consulted informally.

The Indian study reviewed 48 organizations of which 14 were selected. Together, the sampled organizations have presence in all the 29 states apart from Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and the remote north-eastern states. From these organizations, 18 individuals (89% female) were interviewed.

4.1 Life Skills Focus

In East Africa, none apart from the Life Skills Promoters of Kenya incorporate Life Skills as an organizational goal; rather, Life Skills tend to be implied in their vision and mission statements, viewed as strategies to achieve their goals and operationalized at the level of projects and interventions. A significant percentage (44%) defined Life Skills as psychosocial competencies or abilities. However, a quarter of the organizations did not have an official definition of Life Skills. For them the priority was not on defining the concept, but to identify and utilize critical Life Skills as a strategy to achieve their program goals and the desired impact on their beneficiaries.

In both East Africa and India, Life Skills were broadly linked to the achievement of a range of positive academic and non-academic outcomes for the individual. Majority of the sampled organizations across East Africa and India shared common purpose; for them the Life Skills programming was not an end but a means to an end.

In East Africa, the end was most frequently perceived to be the empowerment of girls, adolescents, or youth. It was also about achieving equity and equality, protection against violence, employment and supporting well-being for the excluded and marginalized. The 16 sampled organizations were implementing at least 40 Life Skills related interventions between them in the region. These interventions were embedded in larger programs, and generally considered to be strategies for reaching the organizational goals and priorities.

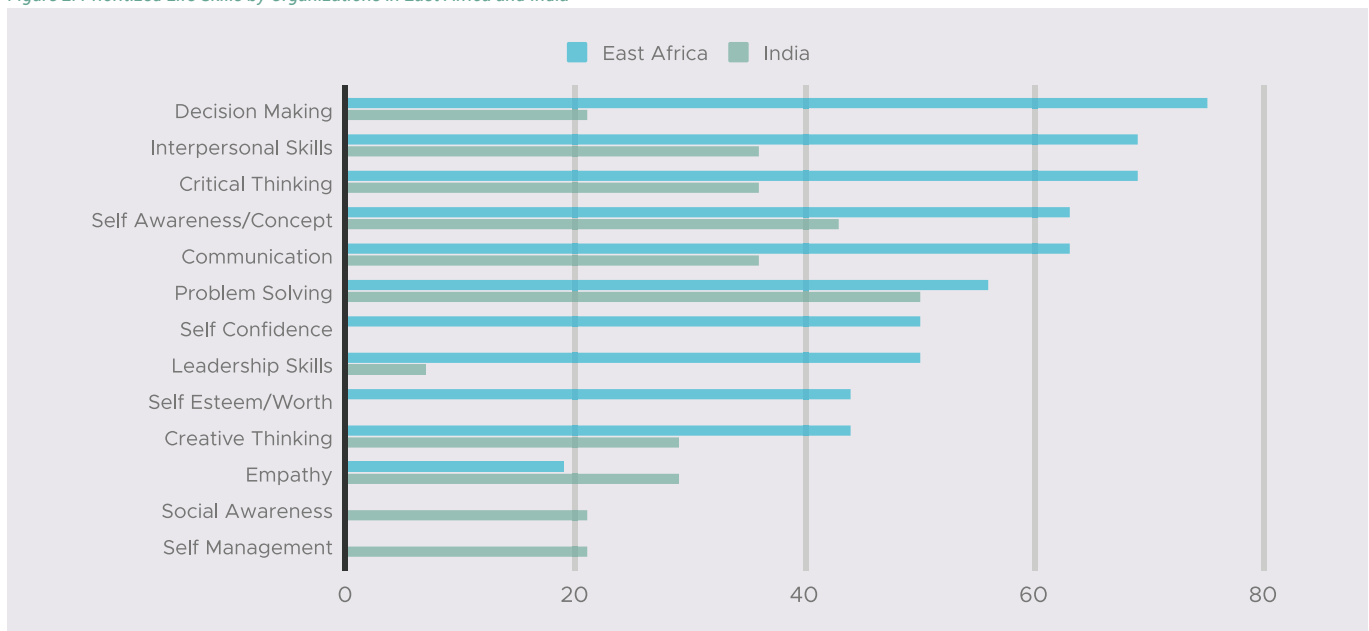
In India, there was focus on gender equity, employability/ entrepreneurial skills, academic outcomes, adversity, adult mindsets, resilience (from the mental health perspective) and leadership (from a systems change perspective), with a strong unified goal of achieving personal agency – the ability to have self efficacy and building one’s identify.

The data also shows a variety of terminologies used interchangeably with Life Skills in both India and East Africa. These include soft, 21st century, transferable, and employability skills among others.

4.2 Prioritization of Life Skills

Figure 2 presents the 10 Life Skills mentioned most frequently by the sampled organizations in the East African region and India. Comparison of the Life Skills prioritized in each locale reveals significant overlap: seven of the ten prioritized Life Skills were common to both.

Figure 2: Prioritized Life Skills by Organizations in East Africa and India



However, the frequency of mention of the Life Skills is not comparable across East Africa and India. The data reveals wide variations. For example, while Decision-Making Skill tops the East African list with prioritization by 12 (75%) of the 16 organizations, it is at the bottom of the Indian list with only 3 (21%) mentions. Similarly, though Problem-Solving is first in the Indian list and sixth in East Africa, it was more frequently mentioned in the latter (9 or 56% of times) than in the former (7 or 50% of times). While Confidence and Leadership Skills made it to the top 10 in East Africa, where they were mentioned by 8 (59%) organizations, they were not included in the Indian priority list since each had been mentioned by only one organization. Similarly, Empathy, which was among the top 10 prioritized Life Skills in India, was mentioned by four (29%) of the Indian organizations. In East Africa, where it was mentioned by three (19%) of the organizations, it did not make it to the top 10.

From Figure 2, it may also be inferred that there was more agreement on prioritization of Life Skills among sampled organizations in East Africa than in India. However, the available data (not reflected in the table) shows a longer list of Life Skills mentioned by the organizations in India (50) as compared to East Africa (35).

Beneficiary needs determine which Life Skills are prioritized by the NGOs in both India and East Africa. In India, employability and health were among the core needs identified. In East Africa, the choice of Life Skills was triggered by recognition of critical gaps in the ability of adolescents to adapt and deal effectively with demands and challenges of life, and to make informed decisions, communicate effectively, have self-management skills and enable them to change their surroundings and lead a healthy productive life. For school-based interventions, the higher order thinking skills were considered to be important for positive academic outcomes. In both locales, though not always explicitly mentioned, the development of the personal agency of adolescents was embedded in the skills prioritized by the majority of sampled organizations.

In East Africa, needs were identified through consultations with various stakeholders, including young people themselves; needs assessments; desk reviews and experiential knowledge of the implementing organizations. Ultimately, they were anchored in the organizational goals and intervention objectives related to girls and/or adolescent empowerment. In both East Africa and India, the World Health Organization (WHO) framework largely influenced the prioritization of Life Skills by the sampled NGOs. For example, the seven skills prioritized in both locations are all part of the framework. However, in East Africa, this influence was either not always acknowledged or indirect: initially with UNICEF support, the ministries of education/curriculum centers in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda adapted the framework and incorporated it into the school curricula. In Uganda, Youth Power's Positive Youth Development framework influenced the Komo Learning Centre's focus on youth Agency. Though Educate! independently came up with their list of priority Life Skills, they have since discovered the 6Cs Deep Learning Competency Framework to be a useful tool to validate their own conceptualization and take their work forward.

In India, Dream a Dream, Pratham, Quest Alliance, Room to Read, Magic Bus and The Teacher Foundation used the WHO framework to identify Life Skills. However, even in India, organizations such as Magic Bus and The Teacher Foundation combined the WHO frameworks with the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) frameworks respectively. The Teacher Foundation used a research-driven approach to identify Life Skills by conducting a large-scale survey in ten languages across teachers and students to outline their priority skills. They also used the United Kingdom Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (UK-SEAL) framework.

4.3 Similarities and Differences in Life Skills Program Interventions

The Life Skills programs reviewed in East Africa had some elements in common. All responded to the felt needs of the participants; their objectives included behavior change and/or development; their content consisted of a combination of knowledge, values, attitudes and skills; and they tended to use interactive and participant-centered methods to deliver on content. Beyond this commonality, there were differences in terms of geographical coverage, targets and outreach. They also differed in some instances in terms of their overall approach and specific methods to teach Life Skills.

There were a variety of Life Skills interventions implemented by the East African NGOs. These may be categorized as: Life Skills Education lessons, mentoring and counseling, clubs, capacity development of adolescents in school, capacity development of adults (teachers, administrators, parents, community members and leaders), curriculum support and engagement, and out-of-school support. The most common was mentoring and counseling interventions across organizations (75%) followed by the capacity development of adults (69%). The least common was Life Skills Education lessons offered by just four (25%)

organizations. An overwhelming majority of these targeted learners and were delivered directly within school settings. There were exceptions. For example, APHRC provided after school hour support to learners in the community setting. Some organizations adopted a holistic approach by supporting the schools to infuse Life Skills into various aspects of their activities and programs. A good example is Educate! whose Life Skills components are embedded in its different programs: skills course, student business clubs, mentorship and training teachers and administrators. Others like the Africa Education Trust and WERK, which intervened in schools, had strong community engagements. A smaller number of interventions were community-focused, targeting out-of-school youth through non-formal training and employment readiness interventions.

In India, the age of beneficiaries varied by program, with some organizations such as Aflatoun working with a narrow range of 10-13 years, while others like Dream a Dream having a much wider age range of 13-21 years. The programs also varied with regards to intervention time ranging from Akanksha's intense school-based model to a 12-week program for Design for Change. Program implementation methods comprised full school programs (Akanksha), in-school programs (Aflatoun and Dream a Dream), out-of-school programs (Dream a Dream, Pratham, Room to Read and SNEHA) and teacher or educator training programs (Kaivalya, Quest Alliance, Study Hall and The Teacher Foundation).

In both East Africa and India, organizations delivered Life Skills interventions using three different modalities: Direct work with or training of adolescents, intermediate models of training of other stakeholders to reach out to adolescents, and the cascade model of training.

Table 2: NGOs by Intervention Modalities and Countries

Direct Work with Adolescents	Intermediate Model	Cascade Model
Africa Education Trust	Africa Education Trust	Camfed
Aflatoun	Aflatoun	CorStone
AfricAid	APHRC	Karibu Tanzania Organization
Akanksha Foundation	Breakthrough	WERK
APHRC	Camfed	
Camfed	Design for Change	
Dream a Dream	Educate!	
Educate!	Kenya Community Dev. Foundation	
Kenya Community Dev. Foundation	Komo Learning Center	
Komo Learning Center	Karibu Tanzania Organization	
Life Skills Promoters of Kenya	Luigi Guissani Institute of Higher Education	
Magic Bus	PEAS	
Milele Zanzibar Foundation	Pratham	
PEAS	Room to Read	
SNEHA	Study Hall	
Trailblazers Mentoring Foundation	The Teacher Foundation	
WERK	WERK	
Color Codes	INDIA	KENYA
		TANZANIA
		UGANDA

As Table 2 indicates, the vast majority of organizations reached out to adolescents either directly or through intermediaries. In the case of India, the intermediaries included local facilitators and teachers. In East Africa, they comprised a variety of stakeholders (teachers, school management, parents and community leaders/ members) depending on the specific interventions. There were differences between India and the East

African region however. In India, the intermediate model was more common with seven NGOs (50%) using it for delivery of Life Skills as compared to four (36%) reaching out to adolescents directly. The opposite was true for East Africa: 12 (80%) out of the 15 organizations for which information was available worked directly with or trained adolescents while 10 (63%) delivered through intermediaries. In both India and East Africa, the cascade model was infrequently used. As may be inferred from Table 2, some organizations in both East Africa and India used multiple modalities to deliver on Life Skills.

4.4 Gender Interventions and Life Skills

Similar skills were prioritized for both genders in East Africa. Nonetheless, the deeply entrenched prejudices and barriers that girls face, and consequently their need for more exposure than boys to develop Self-Confidence, Self-Esteem, Communication and Leadership Skills among others, was broadly recognized. Interventions that focused largely on girls' Empowerment and Agency also, in some instances, incorporated skills to build their economic and academic capacity. These, together with those NGOs targeting the youth, placed an emphasis on skills related to financial literacy.

There was an explicit focus on girls in interventions implemented by half (50%) of the 30 sampled organizations across India, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. This perhaps is not surprising given the deliberate bias for girls in the study. In East Africa, women founded a significant number of the sampled organizations. Girls and women's empowerment remains entrenched in the vision and mission of at least five of the women-founded organizations and is reflected in the targeting of program beneficiaries. Another five NGOs had some, girl-specific interventions. Apart from one organization from Tanzania that retained an exclusive focus on girls, almost three-fifth of the organizations involved boys in some of their activities as a strategy to achieve gender equality. Some of these organizations were WERK in Kenya, PEAS in Uganda and Milele in Zanzibar among others. There were two major implementing models: In the first, boys participated together with girls within the same learning spaces. The Girls' Clubs supported by the Africa Education Trust and Trailblazers Mentoring Foundation are cases in point. Both the clubs were female-led initiatives that allowed space for girls to acquire Leadership Skills. They also helped to break down gender stereotypes and change mindsets. The implementation of Camfed's My Better World curriculum facilitated by the Learners' Guides in school is another example. Both genders benefited from it.

In the second model, some organizations that had specific programs for girls allowed boys to participate in selected interventions, albeit in gender segregated spaces. A good example of this is the APHRC Leadership Initiative, which was one of the components of the larger program The Advancing Learning Outcomes for Transformational Change (ALOT). In this component girls and boys were trained in gender-segregated spaces using gender specific manuals that were developed as part of the intervention. Similarly, the training on health and leadership offered by KaKenya's Dream separated girls from boys with the former receiving a higher dosage of the training than the latter.

A smaller number of organizations like Educate! and Komo Learning Centre in Uganda and Life Skills Promoters and ziziAfrique in Kenya aimed at achieving gender balance. The Luigi Giussani Institute of Higher Learning promoted common spaces where girls and boys interacted and learned together so that each would understand the perspectives of the other. This, in their view, was an effective strategy to achieve gender equality.

Six of the fourteen organizations sampled in India have programs with explicit focus on gender. These include Breakthrough, CorStone, Pratham, Room to Read, SNEHA and Study Hall. Study Hall believes in disrupting structural barriers and traditional notions of gender. Room to Read and Pratham approach their work from a perspective of life outcomes, envisioning multiple future benefits for girls who stay in school longer. SNEHA

and Breakthrough approach it from a rights-based angle, and CorStone from a mental health/resilience point of view.

5. Assessment and Measurement Tools

The most common type of tool used across both East Africa and India is the standardized scale/questionnaire. This includes self-reporting/rating scales as well as reporting/rating by others. In East Africa, 75 percent of the organizations used this type of assessment tool. In Uganda, there was more variety with organizations using multiple tools that included rubrics (Africa Education Trust, Educate!, Luigi Giussani and Trailblazers), observations checklists and logs and records (Africa Education Trust, Camfed, Komo and Trailblazers). However, some organizations moved away from the exclusive use of scales and questionnaires. Educate! in Uganda has developed student portfolio as an assessment tool; Luigi Giussani in Uganda, Camfed in Tanzania and Zizi in Kenya were experimenting with vignettes; and AfricAid conducted interviews using story-telling format as additional measurement tools. Performance assessments were also mentioned by Educate! and PEAS in Uganda, and AfricAid and Milele Zanzibar Foundation in Tanzania. Additionally, a number of organizations in East Africa, namely APHRC, KCDF and WERK in Kenya, Camfed and Milele in Tanzania, used some type of qualitative methods observing that they were more sensitive to context and reduced biases common in self-reporting quantitative tools.

In East Africa, very few organizations had adapted existing tools developed internationally. The Komo Learning Centre used the Youth Power Positive Youth Development Measurement Tool Kit to develop their Monitoring and Evaluation framework and assessment tools. AfricAid commissioned an American psychologist to help them develop the Resilience Competency Tool. The Women Educational Researchers of Kenya had adapted a tool developed by APHRC to assess the Life Skills impact of their Opportunity Schools Program.

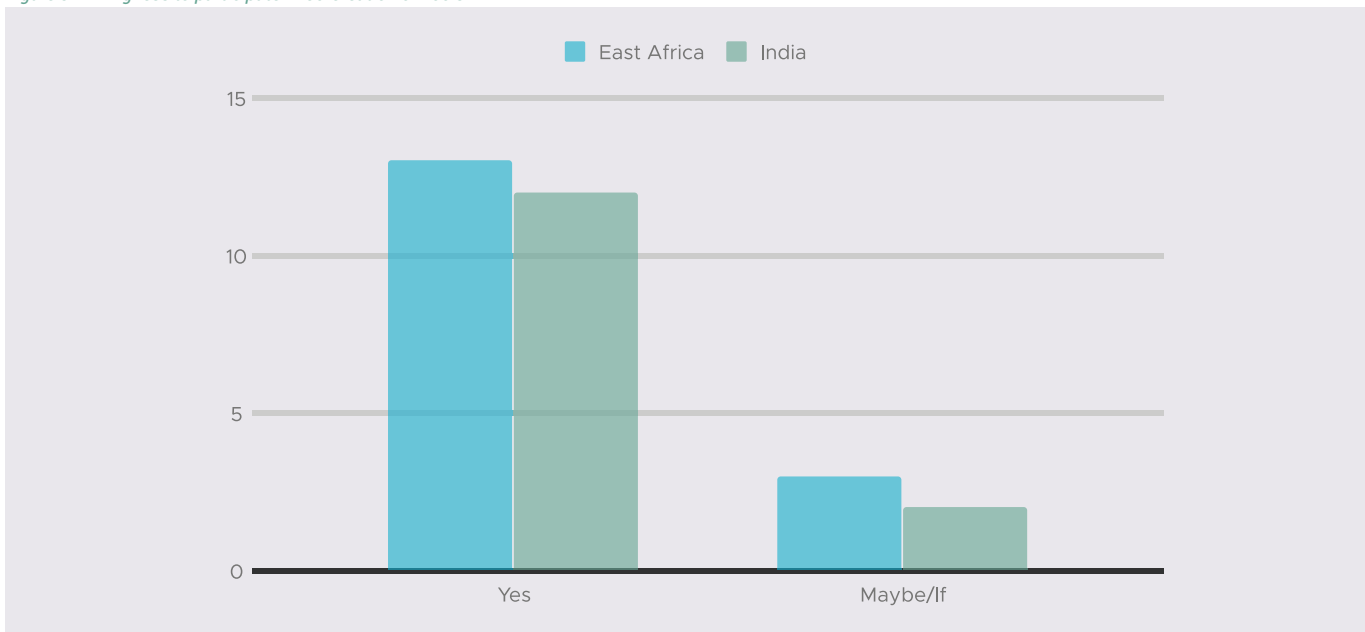
In India, a number of organizations like Aflatoun, Dream a Dream, Magic Bus and SNEHA also used scales/questionnaires to measure Life Skills. CorStone used variety of scales/questionnaires to measure different aspects of resilience (emotional, self-efficacy, social-emotional assets, depression, anxiety, positive psychological well-being and social well-being). In India, Magic Bus created vignettes to move away from scales while Pratham evaluated student projects.

Dream a Dream, Breakthrough, Design for Change, and Room to Read in India and Camfed and Karibu Tanzania Organization (Tanzania), PEAS and Trailblazers (Uganda) in East Africa, had developed or were developing tools in partnership with other organizations.

6. Co-creating Common Assessment Tools: Is there a need?

Despite many organizations having tools to measure and assess Life Skills, there were issues raised in both East Africa and India regarding their effectiveness and user-friendliness. Issues were also raised on their suitability for measuring and assessing impact on adolescents across different sectors, themes and contexts. Some of the organizations clearly struggled to measure the impact of their interventions, and were in need of capacity development. Overall, assessment of Life Skills appears to be still in its infancy in the region. In both geographies, not only did the organizations find the idea viable, the majority (83%) is willing to actively participate in a collective impact initiative around Life Skills assessment tools as may be inferred from Figure 3.

Figure 3: Willingness to participate in Co-Creation of Tools



A small number of organizations expressed willingness to participate subject to certain conditions. They emphasized the need for further clarification and clearance from top management (India) and the relevance of the thematic focus of the proposed assessment tool or tools (East Africa). The overall willingness notwithstanding, organizations pointed out challenges to the co-creation process and outcomes, highlighted in section 7.

7. Key Lessons and Way Forward

Based on the findings of the two studies, insights are shared and key recommendations are made.

7.1 Key Insights and Way Forward

1. **Non-governmental organizations are playing a pivotal role in the delivery of Life Skills programs both in and out-of-school in India, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.** In all four countries, non-governmental organizations have stepped in to fill the void left by the weak capacity of the education systems to deliver Life Skills. Most often, they do so through clubs and other co-curricular and extra-curricular activities in schools and out-of-school. Some organizations have taken an ecosystem approach to meet the needs of the beneficiaries. They are engaging communities, working with multiple stakeholders and providing material support to bridge the gap between the school, household and community. Others have crossed over to the inside providing pedagogical and other support to inspire teachers to teach Life Skills effectively using interactive and engaging methods, weaning them away from deprioritizing the teaching of Life Skills and/or teaching only to the test.
2. **Decades after the introduction of Life Skills Education in East Africa and India, assessing the impact of Life Skills on adolescents remain a challenge.** However, not bogged down by bureaucratic barriers, some non-governmental organizations have been bolder with innovation; a few have experimented with assessments, and have tested and piloted tools but they are yet to be taken to scale. The challenge is in finding the right balance of technique, simplicity, context, flexibility and relevance keeping the end user in mind. There is space, therefore for the co-creation of an appropriate assessment tool or set of tools. Who participates in this will depend greatly on a number of factors, including the path taken to

create it, and what the tools will ultimately measure.

3. **The conceptualization of Life Skills does not fit neatly into any one global framework.** In both East Africa and India the studies found divergence in how Life Skills is conceptualized, what they mean and how they are prioritized across and within sectors. In both geographies, the World Health Organization framework was the most widely used though not by all.
4. **The study reminds us that social norms influence girls' Agency, determining whether they can exercise the right to take decisions on matters that affect them or to express themselves freely.** This is true in both East Africa and India: If the socio-cultural environment is not receptive to increases in girls' Agency, and find it threatening to the established power relationships (often an intersection of gender and age), then it may constrain girls and boys from benefiting equally from the interventions. The focus on the ecosystem and the targeting of adults, by a number of non-governmental organizations in all countries addresses structural barriers in efforts to change mindsets and create enabling environments in which adolescent girls thrive.
5. **To achieve gender equality, there is a need to involve boys in the Life Skills interventions.** Recognizing this, the vast majority of organizations in the East African region, involved boys in girl-focused interventions as a strategy to achieving gender equality. In India, this was true to some extent, with specific organizations extending their work to boys in order to change the mindsets of key stakeholders within an adolescent girl's social structure.

7.2 Possible Challenges

While the collaborative approach provides a pathway towards developing tools that are likely to be more robust, there are both advantages and disadvantages. Possible challenges common across East Africa and India are first, arriving at an agreement on the prioritization and articulation of Life Skills; and second, working across different lengths and types of interventions.

Misunderstanding of the co-creation process itself: what the concept means, and what it entails was identified as one of the biggest hindrances to effective outcomes in East Africa. Further areas of concern that emerged from the East African study revolved around the ability of teachers to teach, plan their lessons and assess Life Skills effectively, and that of implementing organizations to assess and evaluate Life Skills interventions. Additionally, issues of ownership, ethics, relevance and competing priorities were also raised by organizations.

7.3 Recommendations

Both the East African and Indian studies make strong cases for a collective initiative around the co-creation of tools to assess the impact of Life Skills on adolescents. Below we highlight some of the key recommendations from each of the two studies.

7.3.1 Recommendations from the India Report

1. In the Stanford Social Innovation Review, FSG Consulting identifies five conditions of collective success, that is, common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication and backbone support. The India report, framing its recommendations around these five conditions, proposes building agreement on clear statement of goals and mode of operation and on priority Life Skills, defining metrics for the success of the network, plans and timeliness, sharing of resources, identification of areas of strength of the participating organizations, sharing of knowledge and resources, building knowledge repository, convening regular meetings and

interactions and ensuring open access to documentation and progress within the working groups, and building capacity within organizations among other actions.

2. A majority of participating organizations in the India study indicated a focus on Agency. The report thus recommends using Agency as an anchor for the collective while retaining the unique skills specific to individual organizations or sub-groups.
3. Finally, it recommends making concerted efforts for policy-level advocacy in combination with a data-driven approach so as to shift the focus of education from only academics to developing Life Skills for the development of the whole-child.

7.3.2 Recommendations from the East Africa Report

1. The East Africa report recommends a phased process for the co-creation of tools around thematic skills groups to assess the impact of Life Skills on adolescents, especially girls. This will ensure that there is a unity of purpose, relevance and address diversity. Themes proposed include a focus on girls' Agency, the quantification of the economic impact of Life Skills on adolescents, and the measurement of different programs on the same scale.
2. The report urges that team leadership is based on expertise in assessments and experience in implementing Life Skills initiatives within the region, is gender responsive and promotes an organizational culture of trust, respect and learning. Linked to this, a case is made for establishing an effective channel for continuous communication sharing and learning as well as building common understanding of key concepts and processes such as co-creation process, Life Skills and gender.
3. It also suggests that representatives of the ministries of education, curriculum development centers and examinations' boards be invited to join in the co-creation process from the onset to facilitate ownership and government uptake. There is precedent; in Kenya and Uganda the civil society organizations have been working closely with government institutions to develop and implement Life Skills interventions; they sit on NGO project advisory boards and participate in Life Skills and Values networks.

Annex

Appendix: Summary of Participating Organizations in the Scoping Studies in India, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda		
Organization	Description	LS Focus
INDIA		
Aflatoun	Aflateen, a life skills program by Aflatoun focuses on providing young people social and financial education through modules which provide an understanding of money and markets that affect their lives and prepare them for an increasingly complex and demanding job market.	Self-learning, exploration, dealing with emotions, saving and spending, managing resources, social and financial enterprise.
Akanksha Foundation	Akanksha Schools operate under a Private Public Partnership Model. They aim to create a scalable school model within the government system that drives wider systemic reform in education. The schools focus on three aspects - Academic Achievement, Youth Development and Community Engagement.	Communication, critical thinking, creativity, adaptability, Self-management
Breakthrough	Breakthrough's gender equity program for adolescent boys and girls focuses on learning through a peer support network in order to generate dialogue and talk about gender equity in schools. It starts with identity, discrimination, biases and at a later phase, the topics of violence and harassment are introduced.	Self-exploration, self-realization, aspirations, confidence, psychosocial and interpersonal skills. Negotiate space within families, communication, dialogue, assert agency
CorStone	CorStone's Youth First and Girls First programs aim to impact the health and education of adolescent youth by providing integrated, school-based, resilience and adolescent health training programs focused on improving mental and physical health, school performance and engagement, self-advocacy, social skills and relationships among youth.	Solving problems, decision making, and social skills and how to build and have a good support system, collective problem solving. Resilience is the core focus.
Design for Change (DFC)	The Employability and Life Skills Program (ELSP) developed by Design for Change aims to help children build the core skills of Critical Thinking, Creative Problem Solving, Empathy and Leadership, needed to survive and thrive in the 21st century through 12 weekly teacher led sessions with design thinking at their core.	Empathy, critical thinking, problem solving, creativity
Dream A Dream	Dream A Dream is currently implementing both, the Creative Life Skills and the Career Connect Program. The former aims to empower young people from vulnerable backgrounds to overcome adversity and flourish in a fast-changing world, using a creative Life Skills approach. The latter focuses on equipping them with information, skills, and access to opportunities to make a healthy transition to adulthood.	Managing conflict, understanding and following instructions, taking initiative, problem-solving, interaction with each other
Kaivalya Education Foundation	The School Leadership Development Program (SLDP) aims to help school leaders experientially understand and develop skills which build their leadership and coaching competencies. Through the training of school leaders, the program promotes systemic change in teacher professional development approaches and impacts student learning outcomes.	Emotional well-being, self-awareness, collaboration, aware of society, identify impact area, contribute regularly, strive for excellence
Magic Bus India Foundation	Childhood to Livelihood is a Life Skills program for girls aged 12 and above, which aims to improve their school participation and enable school completion and transition to work. The focus of the program is to build Life Skills in the form of resilience, self-efficacy, self-management, self-confidence and faith in the network.	Problem solving, communication, learning to learn and teamwork
Pratham Education Foundation	Pratham's Second Chance program aims to support secondary school drop-outs for girls, with the completion of their grade 10 certification. In parallel, the program offers Life Skills education and vocational courses to expose children to various employability and personal development opportunities.	Self-awareness, self-management, interpersonal skills, problem-solving, leadership, technical skills
Quest Alliance	The digital Life Skills toolkit designed by Quest Alliance aims to develop Life Skills amongst facilitators and build their capacity to effectively impart Life Skills to students. Facilitators are trained to use the toolkit through workshops which also focus on engaging them in a process of reflection and personal transformation.	Self-awareness, communication, building relationships, problem-solving, career specific skills, digital fluency and digital literacy, programming for critical thinking
Room to Read	The Girls' Education Program developed by Room to Read, aims to support girls to stay in school longer, progress towards completion of secondary school, and acquire the skills and agency they need to make informed choices about their lives and realize their potential.	Self-awareness, self-efficacy and social-awareness, critical thinking, empathy and creativity
SNEHA (Society for Nutrition Education and Health Education)	The EHSAS (Empowerment Health and Sexuality of Adolescents) program works with adolescents to address their holistic developmental needs, improve health seeking behavior (physical and mental), and inculcate attitudes that challenge patriarchal norms, reinforce positive gender equitable behavior. The program focusses on educating adolescents, mobilizing communities, providing basic health services and working with public institutions to improve policy.	Construct their own identity, stand up for who they are. Emotional resilience, citizenship, health, nutrition, sexual and reproductive health, mental health
Study Hall	Study Hall runs a teacher development program through two-day workshops focused on helping teachers engage with students in a manner which allows students to construct their own identity. Study Hall has also developed a curriculum centered around the perception of gender for girls and boys being piloted with children in upper primary schools.	Construct their own identity, sense of agency, build girls' aspirations and self-perceptions of themselves as equal, autonomous person
The Teacher Foundation	The Safe and Sensitive Schools Program (SASS) of The Teacher Foundation is aimed at enabling schools to establish an overall culture that is safe and sensitive, through embedding policies, spaces and interactions that are positive, constructive, nurturing and collaborative for all - students and staff members	Self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness (empathy) and decision-making

KENYA		
African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC)	A regional organization with scholars and professionals representing more than a dozen African countries, it is committed to generating evidence, strengthening research capacity and engaging policy to inform action on population health and well being.	Self awareness, self-esteem, effective communication, assertiveness, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, decision making, coping with emotions/stress, empathy, conflict resolution, negotiation.
Kakenya's Dream	A woman-founded, girl focused NGO that helps girls to reach their full potentials through formal education and mindset change programs addressing harmful cultural practices such as FGM and Early Marriages.	Self confidence, negotiation skills, self esteem, effective communication, self defence, decision-making, interpersonal skills, peer pressure resistance, problem solving,
Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF)	The first indigenous philanthropic organization in Kenya, it supports communities to initiate and drive their own development agenda through capacity development, community philanthropy and local resource mobilization and championing development agenda in Education Youth and Children; Policy, Research and Advocacy; Livelihoods; and Communication and Fundraising.	Self awareness, decision making, self confidence, assertiveness, interpersonal skills, self esteem, goal setting, employability, time management
Life Skills Promoters of Kenya (LISP)	Empowers young people and their influencers using empowering approaches and life skills as foundations.	Critical thinking, decision making, coping with emotions and stress, interpersonal relationships, leadership, personal development
Women Educational Researchers of Kenya (WERK)	Women-founded organization, it promotes women's empowerment and gender equality in and through education through linking research to advocacy and action..	Self awareness, effective communication, negotiation, goal setting, healthy relationship, decision making, coping with emotions, self esteem, persistence, self confidence.
ziziAfrique	With a vision of a child who is well empowered with the basics to grow, to think and to thrive, ZiziAfrique's interest spans early childhood to tertiary.	Self awareness, decision-making, coping with emotions/stress, empathy, effective communication, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, leadership, resilience, goal setting/ visioning, negotiation
TANZANIA		
AfricAid	The organization works to address the issue of poor educational outcomes for adolescent girls at two key stages of their development that is lower and upper secondary	Internal motivation, personal leadership, health and wellness, study skills, developing one's potential, building strength, resilience, peer pressure resistance
Campaign for Female Educaiton (CAMFED)	A woman-founded international non-profit with a mission to multiply girl's access to education and accelerate the benefit to individuals, their families and communities in Africa.	Assertiveness, communication, confidence, leadership, negotiation, resilience, self awareness, self esteem,
Karibu Tanzania Organization (KTO)	An umbrella NGO that works through Folk Development Colleges in Tanzania covering different parts of the country targeting teenage mothers.	Self esteem, confidence, relationships issues, understanding themselves
Milele Zanzibar Foundation (MZF)	A charitable Trust founded in 2014 by Zanzibaris in diaspora with their main focus on Health, Education and Livelihood.	Self awareness, creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, decision making, self confidence, career readiness, assertiveness, open-mindedness, communication, problem solving, team work.
UGANDA		
Africa Education Trust (AET)	Also in Somalia, South Sudan and Kenya, it's overall mission is to build education programs for excluded people in conflict-affected areas in Africa with an emphasis on promoting life long education and universal access to education.	Team work, collaborative learning, critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, imagination
EDUCATE!	Operating also in Rwanda and Kenya, it works with schools to see how best to prepare the youth with skills to succeed in a global economy.	Effective communication, critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, citizenship, character
Komo Learning Center (KLC)	A youth-focused NGO, it is dedicated to empowering them through access to education, healthcare and economic opportunities.	Communication, interpersonal skills, self awareness, decision making, self esteem, problem solving, critical thinking, team work, leadership, creativity.
Luigi Giussani Institute of Hlgher Learning (LGIHE)	Accredited as an institution of higher learning by the Uganda National Council of Higher Education, it seeks to address crucial educational deficiencies of quality, school management, accountability and teaching efficiency within the Ugandan context.	Self awareness, decision making, problem solving, effective communication, extraversion
Promoting Equality in Adfrican Schools (PEAS)	With a mission to expand access and sustainably deliver quality secondary education across Africa, it builds and operates not for-profit secondary schools in communities where there is urgent unmet demand for secondary education in Uganda and Zambia	Social interaction, communication, decision making, lateral thinking, problem solving, confidence, financial literacy leadership skills.
Trailblazers Mentoring Foundation (TMF)	Founded by two former child mothers, it contributes towards increased retention of girl in schools through ending teenage pregnancy and child marriages across Uganda.	Knowing and living with themselves, self awareness, assertiveness, cope and deal with stress, making decisons, critical thinking, effective communication, self esteem

