

# Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Young Women Liberia

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[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rP4-b1FN\\_g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rP4-b1FN_g)

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- Context: Challenges for youth and for young women in Liberia
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## Key message:

- EPAG provides evidence that multiple sources of exclusion can be effectively addressed by programs that combine broad range of services and activities.

# Objective: increase employment and incomes for adolescent girls and young women

1. Job skills training for wage employment, combined with job placement assistance.
2. Business development skills training and micro-enterprise advisory services.
3. Impact evaluation and project monitoring.
4. Institutional strengthening and capacity-building

# Key factors and challenges in the project context

- Large youth population with limited access to resources, wage employment, land, literacy, participation.
- Status of adolescent girls and young women is more difficult, more sources and forms of exclusion, cultural barriers, safety, gender based violence
- Neither government financed public institutions and services nor adequate development of the private sector and of domestic markets offer easy opportunities (government failures combined with market failures)

# Responses in Project Design

- ***Strong analytical foundations*** (vulnerability, institutional, monitoring and impact evaluation)
- Large groups with exclusion require ***strong targeting***, in-depth understanding of the beneficiaries
- Multiple sources of exclusion require complex answers and ***diverse services*** from daycare to mentoring
- Limited government capacities require ***NGO involvement, gradual scale-up from project to programmatic*** level
- Market constraints require strong ***BDS and market incentives***
- Strong focus on institutional capacity, separate funding to the Adolescent Girls Unit in the Ministry

# Results

- ***Diverse outcomes***, some tangible some less including behavioral changes and community impact.
- Monitoring and incentives resulted in ***low dropout, high completion and high placement numbers***
- Impact Evaluation demonstrated ***significant impact***, provided positive feedback to policy makers: earnings for beneficiaries improved by about 50% compared to the control group
- ***Behavioral impact*** is more long-term, evidence is less quantitative but not less critical
- ***Adjustments and scale-up*** to revise targeting, geographical expansion, new modules for boys and for agricultural skills

# Key Messages

- EPAG provides evidence that multiple sources of exclusion can be effectively addressed by programs that combine broad range of services and activities.
- On an operational level, this means clear targeting, sound understanding of the beneficiaries' needs, extensive monitoring .
- Effective programs could be costly, benefits will likely come in the medium to long-term and scale-up should be gradual in proportion with improved capacities and strengthened ownership.