



LAC Gender Impact Evaluation Initiative

Building Agency through Practical Interventions

How Does Vocational and Life Skills Training Impact Employment and Empowerment Outcomes for Adolescent Young women in Haiti?

This study seeks to assess the impact of vocation and life skills training on labor market entry for adolescent young women, in Haiti, while at the same time improving our understanding of the role of agency in determining development outcomes. Researchers and practitioners have shown time and again that human capital investments for young women can have positive multiplier effects for her family, community, and society at large. Young women with more education earn higher incomes, have greater access to reproductive health information and health services, are more likely to delay marriage and child birth, and have higher levels of overall wellbeing, on average. Nonetheless, within the scope of vocational training – one type of human capital investment – little is known about how to stimulate economic empowerment. What has become clear is that the success of job training is extremely context specific and that continued research is needed. The impact evaluation aims to fill the knowledge gap surrounding job training and its agency of women.

Program Design

Seventy percent of Haiti's population is under the age of thirty, giving it the youngest age structure in the Caribbean. This, combined with the country's plagued history of slow growth, extremely high unemployment, and depressing natural disasters, explains the impetus for a program targeted towards investing in the human capital of adolescent young women.

The Haiti Adolescent Girls Initiative (AGI) seeks to socially and economically empower Haitian young women through vocational and life skills training and an internship to increase their future employment and earnings potential by

Intervention Period: 2013-Present

addressing employability within a holistic framework. The program provides technical training relevant for adolescent young women in the current Haitian labor market context, while also providing life skills, counseling, support services, a cash stipend, and an internship within their field to increase the likeliness of a smooth transition from skills training to (at least) temporary employment. Program participants have been split into groups and receive vocational training in fields that do not traditionally include women such as plumbing, heavy machinery operation, carpentry, and construction. The technical training spans about 6 months.

Following the trainings, the AGI program staff will coordinate internships for participants. The life skills and support services offered throughout the AGI program were determined in coordination with local counterparts.

Evaluation Design

This evaluation applied a randomized phase-in strategy to estimate the direct effects of the program on vocational skills attainment and employment outcomes, as well as, effects on agency and empowerment. Young women between the ages of 17 and 21 self-selected into enrollment. Enrolled participants were tested in literacy, numeracy, and analytical ability. Half of the young women that passed the exam (about 1,000) were randomly assigned to either cohort one or cohort two. In accordance with the phase-in strategy, cohort one was offered the program first and upon their completion of the training and internship cohort two received the treatment. Data was collected for all beneficiaries and their households prior to the beginning of implementation and was also collected in the interim between the completion of the first cohort and the beginning of the treatment of cohort two. Cohort two will serve as the control group for analysis of impacts of the program.

Sample Population: Young Women Aged 17-21

Identification Method: Randomized Phase-in

Timeline: Baseline and midline data have been collected. In June 2013, a graduation ceremony was held for the first cohort of young women. Out of the 492 young women in the first cohort, 421 (85.6%) graduated on time (see pie chart). Training for the second cohort of 519 young women started in November 2013 and the young women are currently doing their internships. The follow-up survey data is being cleaned and prepared to do the quantitative impact evaluation of the program. So far, the qualitative study indicates positive results in terms of employment and agency. July 2014

