African Forum on Youth Skills & Enterprise in Digital Age.

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Education For change: Empowering Young Women and girls through Digital Skills.

Title and Roles of the presenter.

Education For Change (EFC) is an innovative concept implemented, to improve girls' leadership and empowerment through quality education.

As program manager the presenter's Roles and responsibilities are:

- Manage the project activities and make sure that the collaboration among partners and other stakeholders is effective.

- Insure overall Program Management, Program quality partnership and advocacy.

- Ensure that DRR, resilience and SRH elements of the project are firmly entrenched in project   activities.

- Represent CARE in youths' education sector at Mopti region level, particularly for girls.

Project areas and objectives

The **Education For Change**   is implemented in 19 rural villages and 8 urban neighborhoods of Mopti in Northern region of Mali,

Its goal is:

By 2020, the socio-cultural environment in the target zones of Mopti region will have improved with regard to the respect of youth rights, particularly those of girls, so that they may access appropriate educational and socio-economic opportunities that could sustainably improve their lives.

 The three main objectives are:

1: To ensure a positive change in socio-cultural norms in favor of youth rights (education, reproductive health, participation).

  2: To increase adolescent empowerment particularly girls using affordable new technologies.

   3: To increase Authorities' awareness of girls' rights and the need to expand their opportunities.

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What is innovation in EFC?

CARE / EFC project uses a comprehensive cross-sectoral approach that combines Education, sexual and reproductive health, Economic empowerment and resilience, to ensure that adolescents particularly girls are empowered to become change agents in their communities

This is done using a mobile phone platform to facilitate interaction between adolescents organized in specific youth groups called Girls' Friendship circles for leadership, Emergency brigades for DRR and resilience activities, and VSLA for economic empowerment.

The m-platform is used to dispatch messages to friendship circles who interact with their peers, to answer, or ask clarification questions with supports of focal point teachers.

Emergency brigade members are also implemented innovative smart agriculture, reforestation, hygiene and sanitation activities, complied with the national climate change effects reduction and resilience policy and Program.

Questions, answers, comments and all relevant information shared on the platform by adolescents are saved on a server, to make a sustainable and available data set.

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An ethic committee made of influent local traditional leaders, women leaders, Administrators and youth association members are committed to oversee the compliance of the platform with social norms and ongoing policies and regulations. (sensitive topics like SRH, gender issues, family planning).

The mobile phone platform is integrated in the national education system, to enable interaction between in-school and out-of-school adolescent boys and girls.

EFC is the first initiative in Mali that prioritized the teaching of SRH, and integrated DRR/resilience and the VSLA approach in schools in Mali.

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A steering and ethic committee meeting

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Development issue/challenge addressed by the project.

The EFC project is committed to address:

Access: Increase participation in school, improve access to learning, materials and information, establish a bridge beween schools and communities through peer –to- peer communication network.

Quality: improve the content of traditional poor quality curriculum and teaching methods that was not along with students' needs and expectations (SRH, DRR, VSLA, gender sensitive Teaching approach, child- centered pedagogy, active methods, focal point teachers' networks …).

Gender equity: improve scores on adolescents' equal access to education (76.4% for girls/86.7% for boys) and their retention in the system **(**54.6% for girls/60.2% for boys), reduce Gender Based Violence (GBV) with a focus on child marriage, promote SRH rights and services.

Facilitate synergies and social interaction through interventions based on diversity**:** Girls/ boys, students/out-of-schools, women/men at school and community levels,   political and administrative authorities, etc

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MEL component of the project

The project uses a longitudinal measurement framework that involves tracking a sample of the out-of-school girls participating in the project. This enables CARE Mali to evaluate the effect of this project on out-of-school girls.

At agency level, the project tracks the changes in learning outcomes, retention of out-of-school girls in upper primary school, and completion rate in primary school.

At structural level, the project assesses the magnitude of cultural changes, the change in attitudes among custodians of culture in the school environment.

The project also monitors the effect of changed treatment of boys towards girls on issues that contribute to girls' absenteeism or drop out.

The impact on out-of-school girls is tracked by comparing to where the model is not employed or to previous state data.

How the project's impact was measured?

A participatory monitoring system is implemented to measure the progress of project activities:

Monthly monitoring is conducted by the local NGO field agents with technical supports of a Supervisor, and the NGO Manager;

Quarterly internal monitoring by CARE staff, with technical supports of the MEL specialist, the project manager and the CO Team Leader.

 Semester joint supervision implemented with overall representatives of project key actors: School authorities, community leaders, partner local NGO staff, women groups, direct beneficiary adolescents, teachers.

 Annual, midline and final evaluations with a focus on qualitative and

quantitative data collection and analysis.

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Lessons learned

Some impacts /effects of project innovations on adolescents' lives happened to be debatable:

While the use of mobile phones drove a great motivation for overall beneficiary adolescents and created school attrition, appreciated by teachers,

❑ a few community members and school Administrators argued that it negative and would cause depravity, cheating, fun in class, ….

❑ Because of poverty and education costs that burden parents, a few community members think that the school VSLA approach is as challenging.

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Adolescents receiving mobile phones from the project

MERCI

Tiyabu

Thank You

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