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Entrepreneurial training for girls empowerment in Lesotho: A process evaluation of a model programme

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Abstract

A Girls Empowerment Programme held in 2010 in Lesotho, Sub-Saharan Africa, focused on HIV/AIDS risk reduction and prevention, life skills and entrepreneurial training (income-generating activities). Entrepreneurial training was a crucial part of equipping the camp attendees with basic skills to help them develop sustainable livelihoods. Such skills and financial independence are essential to enable rural girls to complete their secondary schooling (in a fee-based educational system) and to pursue a career, as well as to further help them be less susceptible to transactional sex and its significant risks. The results of a brief process evaluation with some nested supporting data showed considerable improvement in the girls' knowledge about income-generating activities. In addition, almost half of the camp attendees participated in further entrepreneurial training and

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about half of these girls went on to develop small businesses. Replication of this model of camp training is recommended and being explored in other African countries.

Keywords

Camps for African Youth; Entrepreneurial Training; Gender Equality; HIV/AIDS Prevention; Humanitarian Work Psychology; Life Skills Training

Empowering women and girls to rise out of poverty is essential for the sustainable development of a country. Poverty persists in a number of developing countries due to inequality in, access to, and control over resources and opportunities (Agheneza, 2009; Division for the Advancement of Women, DAW, 2008). To eradicate poverty, it is necessary to empower women and girls through educational opportunities, to develop skills in income-generating activities, and to provide them with associated life skills necessary for successful futures (DAW, 2008). In order to reach financial viability, girls need to have long-term career goals (e.g., to become a teacher, nurse, or accountant) in addition to skills that will allow them to earn income immediately (e.g., by raising chickens, selling cell phone cards, or growing vegetables).

Girls in poverty-stricken areas of Africa face multiple problems. Female youth who are pregnant or married may be prevented from going to school. Those who are orphans are often school drop-outs not of their own will but due to lack of money for school fees, in addition to other issues such as safety and discrimination (DAW, 2008); responsibilities (i.e., looking after sick parents or siblings); or being forced into domestic servitude (Subbarao & Coury, 2004). Dropping out of school is both caused by, and creates, a multitude of problems. For instance, the cost of sending a girl to school may not be valued since she provides necessary free labour at home. Sixty-four per cent of illiterate adults are women, largely due to a lack of access to education, and are often excluded from the decision-making process. Due to all these conditions, women are trapped in a cycle of poverty (DAW, 2008).

Learning income-generating activities and associated life skills are essential to lifting girls out of the poverty cycle and empowering them to resist pressure to exchange sex for money – an activity that exacerbates their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS (Wines, 2004). The crumbling social structure due to HIV/AIDS has left thousands of girls without support or protection. The loss of parents leaves them with few role models or guides in growing up. The cultural tradition of ignoring the rights of girls, and tolerance of sexual violence against women, further complicates the social situation of females (Southard, 1996). Comprehensive, culturally-based initiatives are necessary to combat these conditions. Girls need support to grow up in a safe environment with access to essential education and skills in order for them to become valuable decision-makers and leaders in their society (Agheneza, 2009; Subbarao & Coury, 2004).

Research has shown that the prevalence of transactional sex – exchanging sex for money or essential goods – ranges from 5% to 80% in Africa (Dunkle, Jewkes, Nduna, et al., 2007; Luke, 2005). According to Wines (2004), transactional sex among women is often a means

for survival. Poor socioeconomic conditions have been a major predictor for transactional sex. Factors related to increased transactional sex by young women in Sub-Saharan Africa include length of time a woman has been sexually active, single status, the number of intimate partners, and incidence of substance abuse; whereas higher education levels and marriage are negatively correlated with this behaviour (Dunkle, Jewkes, Brown, Gray, McIntyre, & Harlow, 2004). Transactional sex has also been associated with a 54% increase in likelihood of being HIV positive (Dunkle et al., 2007). Wines (2004) estimated that 25% of men and 50% of women between the ages of 15-24 are HIV positive in Lesotho. Qualitative studies have revealed that women often believe that accepting money or essential goods in exchange for sex means having sex on their partners' terms, without condoms and/or with excessive force (Dunkle et al., 2004; Greig & Koopman, 2003; Philemon & Kessy, 2008). Often, the more money or goods exchanged for sex, the less likely male partners are to wear a condom, resulting in greater incidence of HIV transmission.

A growing research trend has focused on income-generating activities of girls and women as a means of empowerment (Kim, Ferrari, Abramsky, et al., 2009; Parvin, Ahsan, & Chowdhury, 2005; Wooten, 2003); however, gender inequality and discrimination have remained as barriers to accessing and managing resources for financial gain (Agheneza, 2009; DAW, 2008). Thus, training women and girls about income-generating activities as well as life skills is necessary to break the poverty cycle and provide a safer alternative to transactional sex.

Gough, Tipple, and Napier (2003) investigated the use of small home-based enterprises (HBEs) as income-generating opportunities in Ghana and South Africa, and reported that due to the current job market, small HBEs often become the only means to sustain the family. Income-generating activities such as HBEs are popular for several reasons: they require minimal monetary start-up, they have flexibility in adjusting to local demands for goods and services, and require limited skill sets (Gough et al., 2003; Ligthelm, 2005; Tipple, 2005). Further, women often contribute to HBEs by engaging in the more sophisticated and time-consuming production of staple goods (Gough et al., 2003). Some HBEs provide services that range from tailoring and hairdressing to manufacturing or recycling, with these types of entrepreneurship being relatively stable and sustainable forms of income, providing up to 70% of household income, and on average generating a sustainable income level (Gough et al., 2003; Tipple, 2005).

The economic effectiveness of such enterprises indicates that they can be utilised as short-term activities that could provide enough income to facilitate long-term educational goals. In addition, the HBE could be viewed as a long-term goal in itself that can generate enough income to help sustain a family (Gough et al., 2003). Thus, income from such HBEs contributes significantly to household income, and plays a key role in alleviating poverty.

The Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS and Gender Equity (IMAGE) study also found that in addition to learning about income-generating activities, women benefited from programmes that promoted empowerment (Kim et al., 2009). This study compared a control group with a group who only received a micro-financial intervention (i.e., loans to begin a

HBE), and the IMAGE group (i.e., participants who received training on empowerment, domestic violence, HIV, and other confidence-boosting activities along with micro-financial support). Women in both intervention groups were found to significantly improve their economic well-being in comparison to the control group; however, women in the IMAGE group were the only ones who showed significant improvement in all areas of women's empowerment (Kim et al., 2009). However, one limitation of this study was in the duration of the intervention, and the fact that the time and resources to provide women and villages with 12-15 months of support limits the feasibility of making this intervention accessible to broader communities.

In an ethnographic study by Wooten (2003), the association between gender relations and commercial farming as an income-generating activity in rural Africa was examined. Most farmers in Africa cultivate cash crops as well as sustenance farming to pay for taxes, social financial obligations, and consumer products. Over 14 months, Wooten interviewed and observed 22 lead gardeners in Mali (i.e., head gardeners who had access to or control over land, access to water, and often had family members or individuals working for them), of which three were female. The observations revealed that various factors such as age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status have a significant influence on one's capability to participate in commercial agricultural activities, but gender also plays a major role. Since men own the majority of land suitable for gardening in Mali, the income-generating activities that women participate in tend to be limited to making brooms, charcoal, or Shea butter (Wooten, 2003).

According to Boserup (1970), farming has primarily been a female occupation in some regions of Africa. After the European colonisation, African men were pressured into farming cash crops. However, even with the commercialisation of farming in Africa, men work fewer hours while women invest more time in agriculture (Boserup, 1970). Gordon (1996) supported this point, that although Africa was developing economically, women were still not benefitting. Gordon pointed out that the patriarchal African societies that have been influenced by capitalism have historically provided men with more privileges such as higher wages, control over land, and political involvement, whereas women remain marginalised. Other researchers confirm this view, pointing out that in some African nations, women rarely have primary access to land and often depend on their fathers or husbands for land rights (Blackden & Bhanu, 1999).

As early as 1970, Boserup was promoting the need for economic empowerment of African women. However, due to economic and social hardships endured by the peoples of many African countries, this concept received limited attention. Over two decades later, Lephoto (1995), focusing on Lesotho, stressed the need for empowerment, support, and encouragement for African women's engagement in income-generating activities to provide an independent income. Further, financial dependence was identified as a factor that significantly contributes to the subordination of women, making it important to provide necessary support to these women to ensure that their independent enterprises were successful. Based on conclusions of researchers, it appears as though the most readily accessible income-generating activities for young women include gardening, the creation of

HBES, and skill-based services (Gough et al., 2003; Kim et al., 2009; Tipple, 2005; Wooten, 2003).

Methods

The purpose of the Girls Empowerment Programme (GEP) Camp was to introduce entrepreneurial training with life skills as part of a carefully planned approach to poverty eradication, women's empowerment, and HIV/AIDS prevention. This approach addresses the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): Goal 1 (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger), Goal 3 (promoting gender equality and female empowerment) and Goal 6 (combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases). The present report is based on anecdotal reports and responses on a self-report questionnaire given to a group of young girls who participated in a programme on life skills and income-generating activities. As such, it is intended to serve as an attempt to highlight the importance of economic empowerment as crucial to African female youth and to contribute to the understanding, theories, and practical applications of how economic empowerment of women in marginalised communities is a powerful means to advancing gender equality and alleviating poverty in low-income countries. The aim of this paper was to assess the effectiveness in transmitting entrepreneurial or income-generating knowledge more broadly to a purposively selected cohort of rural women in Lesotho, Africa.

Sample

Forty girls were purposively selected by local village leaders and/or chiefs, the criterion being that the girls showed potential to become community leaders. The girls ranged in age from 17-22 years old, all but one of whom were forced to drop out of secondary school education due to lack of financial resources. Seventy per cent of the girls had lost one or both of their parents. Since the camp was located in a campground facility (Outward Bound), which was in a mountainous region within a two hour-drive from the capital city of Maseru, a vehicle picked up the camp participants from their villages and brought them to the camp.

Instruments

Self-report questionnaires were administered to the 40 young women who attended the camp. The protocol included an assessment of life skills, as well as questions about financial issues and income-generating activities. Evaluation instruments were administered in group settings, with coaches (camp training staff) offering assistance where needed. Some questionnaires were in the local language of Sesotho, others were in the English language only, and some were in both languages. In cases where questionnaires were in English only, coaches translated the questions aloud in Sesotho. Some questions were asked pre-intervention and again post-intervention, to determine changes over the duration of the camp experience. Data for the income-generating activities was collected as part of a larger evaluation, for which preliminary results have been reported (Kuriansky & Berry, 2010).

The main questionnaire assessing income-generating activities consisted of 14 items, the majority of which were open-ended, was only used post-intervention. This measure included

questions regarding the girls' short-term and long-term goals, their ideas about how to make money now and in the future, and their confidence in their futures. The complete instrument is provided below (Table 2). In addition, in the general evaluation protocol, one self-report item was asked before and after the camp regarding knowledge of income-generating activities, i.e., "How much do you know about income-generating activities (doing something that makes money for you?)".

Procedures

The GEP in Lesotho, sub-Saharan Africa, was a project in collaboration with the staff of the Office of the First Lady of Lesotho (OFL) and the United Nations-accredited NGO, the International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP), along with other partners, including the Lesotho Ministry for Gender, Youth, Sports & Recreation (MGYSR); the Lesotho Girl Guides Association (LGGA); Global Camps Africa (GCA); and US Doctors for Africa (USDFA) (Kuriansky, 2011; Kuriansky & Berry, 2011). The OFL had been already running psychosocial camps for orphans and vulnerable children but approached the authors to further develop the camp modules and evaluate the outcome. The Camp was held during one week in April 2010, where participants were trained. The modules offered focused on life skills, and included an important module on educating attendees about income-generating activities.

Since economic hardship is on-going in Lesotho, economic empowerment, developing educational goals, and exploring vocational ambitions were considered important elements in planning and implementing a camp that would optimally benefit its participants, who were secondary school dropouts because of financial reasons. Training in income-generating activities is considered especially important due to the rate of transactional sex in sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, a half-day training module on income-generating activities was delivered by the MGYSR, in the local language. This module was based on a programme developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2003), which has been implemented in many countries around the world. The objectives were to enable the girls, as potential entrepreneurs, to develop concrete, feasible, and bankable ideas to start their own small businesses. These business ideas became the starting-point for a business plan, which in turn served as a blueprint for starting up the business. The presentations covered such topics as: generating your business idea; starting the business; and improving the business. Information on financial support was also provided.

Ethics

As a brief programme evaluation of an existing programme, this study was considered low risk. However, before data were collected, IAAP was granted permission to collaborate in the project on October 20, 2009 from the First Lady of the Kingdom of Lesotho and representatives from the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Lesotho to the United Nations. In addition, all of the camp attendees signed informed consent and all of the data has since been de-identified to further protect the participants. The Office of the First Lady's staff has sent the IAAP 6-month and 1-year updates on the number of girls who started their own small businesses, and the types of businesses they developed.

Statistical Techniques

Due to the small sample size and qualitative nature of the income-generating activities questions, descriptive statistics were utilised to examine change. In addition, a one-sample t test was conducted on the income-generating activities question to evaluate whether the participants' post-intervention scores were significantly different from their pre-intervention scores. The qualitative analysis of the income-generating activities assessment is also presented.

Results

The overall findings suggest that the income-generating activities module had a significant impact on the camp participants. As shown in Table 1, results of the question “How much do you know about income-generating activities (doing something that makes money for you)?” showed that before the camp only 40.6% of respondents rated their level of knowledge as “a lot” or “a great deal.” At the end of the camp, this percentage rose to 71.1%. This result shows a significant improvement in the girls' ratings of knowledge about income-generating activities; $t(30) = -3.186, p = .003$ with a 95% CI of $-1.43 - -.31$. The observed power was .99 and with $d = -.704$ there was a medium effect size. In response to the open-ended questions, as shown in Table 2, the participants reported a desire to return to school and continue their education, mentioning long-term goals which generally referred to a profession (e.g., nurse, teacher, accountant or lawyer). Specifically, one girl reported that, “I would like to be educated so that I could reach my goal,” while another stated, “I would like to see myself being a leader somewhere.” In addition, the vast majority of respondents, 76.3%, were optimistic (i.e., rated themselves as “very confident”) that they will achieve their dream jobs.

Although nearly all the participants (about 95%) reported that they do not presently work, they did have ideas about what they can do to earn money to reach their goals. A quarter of the girls reported that they can plant and sell vegetables (potatoes, fruits); another 25% considered starting a business (e.g., handicrafts or hair braiding); and others said they could rear pigs or poultry, including using money gained from selling the eggs to buy more poultry. A few reported that they can sew and sell clothes. These young women reported that income-generating activities such as gardening or rearing farm animals could help finance their education fees and sustain their fiscal needs while they were in school. Several girls reported that, “Natural things like water, soil, can be used to generate money using natural resources,” whereas others reported that, “We can do things in groups/we should group ourselves together to start projects/form partnerships.”

When the camp started, the majority of the girls lacked the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to get involved in income-generating activities aside from gardening. Specifically, 50% of participants stated that they had never worked before they started camp. Although almost 40% of the girls knew that they needed an education to get a job and achieve their long-term goals, these girls did not know how to look for a job or how to identify support to help them fulfil their educational and vocational dreams. After participation in the camp, as shown in responses in the post-evaluation self-report questionnaire, one girl wrote, “There are so many things out there that one can produce and

sell,” and another reported, “I will be trained on business skills.” In addition, all of the girls were able to identify a dream job and resources for finding work.

Almost half of the camp participants attended a subsequent two-week workshop on income-generating activities conducted by the Lesotho MGYSR (the same Ministry whose staff provided an introduction to such activities as part of the camp programme). On the last day of that workshop, the girls were given the opportunity to be voluntarily tested for HIV/AIDS. Confidential testing and counselling were provided by Population Services International (PSI), a prominent health services company in Lesotho; of the 19 attendees, a high proportion ($n=17$) agreed to be tested. This result is encouraging, and suggests that the girls felt sufficiently empowered to get tested and know their HIV/AIDS status, constituting critical information for their future health and well-being. Consistent with this, one participant reported on the income-generating questionnaire, “I know how to make money without selling my body.”

Although the participants learned a lot from their camp experience, the researchers note that the girls continue to face a number of challenges. For instance, with regard to role models, and in terms of the kinds of jobs their families or friends have had, the girls' experiences were limited. A few participants came from families of miners, herders, or HBEs, and due to the high levels of unemployment, these girls had few opportunities to be exposed to professional role models. Almost 25% of the girls reported that their family members were not working and approximately 40% stated that their friends were not working. Thus, they may face additional challenges in creating an income-generating entrepreneurship.

Follow-up Results

Preliminary follow-up of the girls (within six months) by the staff of the Office of the First Lady indicated that about one-quarter of them had established small businesses, ranging from “tuck” shops (selling cookies, chips, and other snack foods) to growing and selling vegetables, to selling air time for cell phones, and to hair braiding. A later follow-up (after one year) by the same staff found that more than half of the camp participants were now actively involved in income-generating activities of some kind. Several of the participants of the camp had started their own business. Some of these were in partnership with another girl. For example, two camp participants became partners in a store selling biscuits and chips. Others had set up new businesses individually. For example, one girl sold sweets to school children, another young woman was selling cell phone airtime and cigarettes in a shop, and one other girl had started as a domestic worker and used her savings to set up a business selling poultry. One participant was continuing in her hair salon as an independent business based out of her home. Some had secured loans, e.g., one girl got a loan and was now selling snacks. Another girl was a shop assistant.

Discussion

Several preliminary observations can be made based on the assessment conducted at the camp of the participants' income-generating activities. Overall, before the camp, the participants lacked information and positive role models for income-generating activities, and had only rudimentary skills to produce enough income to help them to sustain their

current goals, including completing their secondary education, as well as to fulfil their long-term occupational dreams. Although the participants had goals for the future, they will likely need additional support and encouragement to achieve them. The outcome of the self-report questionnaire surveys also suggests that there is a deficit in accessible programmes that could provide information on vocational and educational choices, educational empowerment and encouragement, and practical information on available services and opportunities. For example, few of the girls were able to say how they would go about finding a job, and few of them know to whom they could go for help to find a job. Development and accessibility of such programmes would enhance the girls' probabilities of success.

However, a positive factor benefitting future financial independence of the participants that was identified by the evaluation during the GEP, was the existence of community involvement in providing and supporting income-generating opportunities for its members. Specifically, community leaders who are active in the villages where the girls live would likely become involved with the girls on their return from the camp. As pointed out earlier in this article, some researchers report that community and collaborative approaches (Agheneza, 2009; Gough et al., 2003) may lead to improved outcomes of income-generating efforts and could address some of the potential barriers associated with such entrepreneurship. The camp module and follow-up training encouraged the formation of cooperative efforts.

As the participants were chosen for their potential to be leaders in their community, it was intended that they return to their village and share what they learned with their peers. The importance of this is evident in the comment by the First Lady of Lesotho, Mrs. 'Mathato Mosisili, on the success of the camp activities in an interview with this paper's authors: "Once the girl is empowered, you empower the family and the village and the nation," she said. The First Lady further stated that in longer-range plans for such camps, the participants would be trained to be camp leaders. As a brief process evaluation we did not have a comparison group to determine whether the participants' success was associated with their leadership potential and community support, the knowledge and skills they acquired from the camp, or a combination of both. Therefore, future researchers may want to examine the impact of community involvement on the development of HBEs and should consider including a comparison group.

The qualitative data and follow-up reports from this study on the benefits of income-generating activities were congruent with the existing literature regarding farming and HBEs as potential income-generating activities (Gough et al., 2003; Wooten, 2003). Responses collected from the camp participants suggest that the production of agricultural commodities and development strategies for small businesses or HBEs may be the most effective ways for these girls to generate enough income for either their immediate short-term goals and for their long-term aspirations. Further, the results of this brief process evaluation suggest that even a half-day module on income-generating activities may enhance the knowledge and skills needed to develop an HBE. Therefore, brief programmes such as this may be a more sustainable and feasible approach to helping women become economically empowered. However, as Kim and colleagues (2009) found with the IMAGE study, income-generating activities in conjunction with women's empowerment may yield the best results.

Despite the aforementioned success, this brief process evaluation included a number of limitations that should be considered for future evaluations and research. The sample size was small and through purposive sampling, the girls were all selected by local village leaders and/or chiefs based on the criteria of demonstrating the potential to become community leaders. The resulting sampling bias leads to the suggestion that the camp participants may have already been motivated to change and more open to opportunities. In addition, since these girls were hand-picked by local leaders, they may have been more inclined to request community support in order to implement their business ideas. Due to the sampling bias in this evaluation, future research may consider the potential benefits of offering similar opportunities to a more diverse group of participants who may not have the community support to which these participants had access. Further potential barriers to success should be considered in order to facilitate more sustainable results. An obvious further step in future evaluations and studies would be the expansion of the programme to include males as well as females (whether or not they are in the same camp).

Another important limitation is that since the GEP consisted of many modules, the outcomes of the programme can reflect the sum or interaction effects of these modules. Thus, identifying the income-generating module as solely responsible for economic outcomes is confounded. Any further study would require a design that allows for distinction of economic training from other life skills lessons learned.

Since the GEP was conducted in Lesotho, sub-Saharan Africa, a number of cultural considerations must be considered for future research. For instance, some of the girls had unanticipated difficulties reading and writing English (but were assisted by the camp counsellors). In future, all materials should be translated in advance. In addition, measures and assessment tools should be developed that are culturally relevant specifically to this country and cultural context. At the moment, few instruments exist that have been empirically validated with proven reliability to assess both life skills and financial capacities. These would be very helpful to develop.

It is important to point out that women across the African continent do not always have equal rights as men, or access to resources. Thus, an essential element of such programmes helping participants develop income-generating ideas is training on recognising and problem-solving issues associated with legal and cultural barriers. Future training in income-generating activities could also include careful selection of candidates based on their “entrepreneurial orientation,” an individual-based psychological concept which measures such aspects as a person's orientation toward learning, achievement, and autonomy, as well as innovation, risk-taking, and personal initiative. This kind of entrepreneurial orientation has been found to be a predictor of business success (Krauss, Frese, Friedrich, & Unger, 2005). Research has also established that elaborate and proactive planning can be taught, and that training increases participants' business success (Frese, Krauss, Keith et al., 2007).

The present study reveals that evaluations of this nature are greatly enhanced by planned follow-up procedures and long-term empirical follow-up. In this instance, the long-term follow-up process was not well-defined in advance and assessment measures were not built in to the follow-up occasions and further training offered to participants. Another

complication to the empirical assessments at longer term follow-up periods was that the girls came from widely scattered geographical areas, thus making it more difficult to contact them. In order to understand, assess, and track the potential long-term benefits and/or barriers to success, thorough follow-up plans and procedures need to be established.

Further, it would also be useful to consider the institutionalisation of training in income-generating activities in a setting where it might have a permanent place from which to operate and reach the greatest number of young people: for example, during the last year of secondary school. The breadth of this kind of programme and its ability to positively affect the lives of the youth has tremendous potential for both local communities and indeed the country as a whole. This would also ensure that the programme could continue to build capacity over the long term. Such a programme could then be supplemented by events in camp settings like the one described in this report, which would reach those outside of the formal education system, for example, school dropouts and youth in remote villages.

Conclusions

The GEP camp held in Lesotho, Africa, over one week in April 2010, educated and motivated young female participants to consider how they can create their own income-generating opportunities that can lead to improvement of their current life situation and their ultimate career goals. Anecdotal evidence and responses on a self-report questionnaire revealed that upon completion of the camp experience, the majority of participants reported that they wanted to return to school and were aiming towards long-term career goals, such as nursing or teaching. At a short-term follow-up, it was estimated that 25% started the process of creating their own business. In an assessment by staff of the Office of the First Lady in a meeting with the girls in July 2011, more than half of the girls reported engagement in income-generating activities. The limitations in the present study methodology emphasise the need for rigorous evaluations of programmes. Nevertheless, this brief process evaluation, with some nested supporting data, offers some insight into the issues facing girls in low-income countries, and contributes to the exploration of intervention possibilities for this vulnerable population, underscoring the importance of economic independence. Considering the on-going risks and challenges faced by the young female participants in this camp, their successes serve as a motivating factor that can influence many other girls in their country. They can also serve as a model for entrepreneurial training within a life skills programme that can be replicated in other countries in Africa. Such programmes about economic empowerment hold promise for reducing extreme poverty in nations throughout the continent, and can interrupt the nexus between gender-based vulnerability and a host of harmful outcomes including violence, transactional sex and HIV infection. Policy makers and other stakeholders tasked with empowering girls in the context of cultural and economic constraints in poor communities should consider such approaches.

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Table 1
Responses to the question “How much do you know about income-generating activities?”

	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Not at all	7	21.9	0	0
Only a Little	7	21.9	7	18.4
Some	5	15.6	4	10.5
A Lot	9	28.1	15	39.5
A Great Deal	4	12.5	12	31.6
Don't Know/Missing Data	8		2	
Total *	32	100.0	38	100.0

* Totals do not always equal 40 due to missing data.

Table 2
Responses to the Income-Generating Activities Questionnaire

	Most of the Time	Some of the Time	Almost Never
	n* (%)	n (%)	n (%)
1. How much of the time do you have nothing to do?	13 (34.2)	20 (52.6)	5 (13.2)
2. How bored are you these days?	8 (21.0)	12 (31.6)	18 (47.4)
3. What jobs has your family done? **	31.6% agriculture (e.g., farm, plough, livestock) 23.7% not working 15.8% domestic work 13.2% making and selling goods (e.g., clothing) 18.4% other jobs (e.g., cooks, taxi drivers) 7.9% mining (1 has additional income)		
4. What jobs do your friends do?	39.5% not working 15.8% hairdressing/salons 13.2% other (e.g., babysit, teacher) 7.9% not working, but in school 7.9% work in kitchens 7.9% factory workers 7.9% sewing		
	Yes (1)	No (2)	
	n (%)	n (%)	
5. Do you earn any money now?	2 (5.3)	36 (94.7)	
6. What do you do to earn money now?	5.2% employed (e.g., hairdressers)		
7. What can you do to earn money?	26.3% plant, plough, and sell fruits/vegetables 18.4% start own business (e.g., sell fruits or make handcrafted items) 15.8% hairdressing 13.2% rear chicken or pigs 10.5% attend school or additional training and then start business 7.9% other (e.g., factory, sell items such as samba) 7.9% sewing 7.9% had generic ideas (e.g., work hard, find job)		
8. What ideas do you have about how you can earn money?	39.5% education, training, learn marketing, and network to develop business 21.1% other (e.g., rearing animals, hairdressing) 18.4% plant, plough, and sell fruits/vegetables 15.8% generic ideas to work hard and find job 7.9% sewing clothes 5.3% no current plans		
9. What skills do you have?	18.7% plant, plough, and sell fruit/vegetables 18.4% hairdressing 15.8% generic skills and ideas (e.g., read, write, and meetings) 15.7% other (e.g., cooking, care for animals, acting) 7.9% sewing 7.9% don't know 7.9% start own business		
10. What jobs have you had in the past?	50% never worked 28.9% other (kitchen girl, hairdresser, domestic worker) 10.5% selling items (e.g., biscuits, clothes, samba) 10.5% sell fruit/veg		
11. How can you find a job in Lesotho?	39.5% need education to get job 26.3% networking and talking to people 10.5% look and apply for jobs 10.5% ask government 10.5% other (e.g., plant and sell fruit, volunteer) 7.9% being creative (i.e., acting, making handcrafts)		
12. Who can you go to for help to find a job?	73.7% don't know 18.4% other (e.g., education, networking, advertisements) 7.9% government		

	Most of the Time	Some of the Time	Almost Never
	n* (%)	n (%)	n (%)
13. What is the dream you have for the future of the job you want to do?	34.2% nurse 23.7% teacher 23.7% other (e.g., doctor, actor, soldier, police, lawyer) 10.5% accountant 7.9% business/entrepreneur		
	Very Confident	Somewhat Confident	Not At All Confident
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
14. How confident are you about getting your dream job?	29 (76.3)	5 (13.2)	4 (10.5)

* Totals do not always equal 40 due to missing data.

** Percentages in open-ended responses do not always equal 100 due to multiple responses allowed.