



**USAID** | HEALTH POLICY  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE INITIATIVE



# LIVELIHOODS AND HIV RISK FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS:

## DESIGN OF A PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK

**NOVEMBER 2009**

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The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Agency for International Development or the U.S. Government.



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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AED	Academy for Educational Development
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
BOCAIP	Botswana Christian AIDS Prevention Program
CAFO	Church Alliance for Orphans
COP	country operational plan
COSDEC	Community Skills Development Centre
CTO	cognizant technical officer
GTWG	Gender Technical Working Group
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
OVC	orphans and vulnerable children
PCI	Project Concern International
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
SAPSSI	Salvation Army Psycho-Social Support Initiative
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
YOHO	Youth Health Organization

# INTRODUCTION

## Background

This document summarizes the process that resulted in the design and validation of two resources: *Livelihood Options for Girls: A Guide for Program Managers* and *Identifying Appropriate Livelihood Options for Adolescent Girls: A Program Design Tool*, developed by Health Policy Initiative, Task Order 1. Both resources are intended for use by program managers of the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and are designed to address PEPFAR legislation that supports “Increasing women’s access to income and productive resources.” Activities outlined in the guide and tool include linking care and support programs to income generation activities and livelihood programs for women and adolescent girls; supporting initiatives to ensure that children and adolescents, especially girls, stay in school and are trained in vocational skills; and working with governments to develop policies that increase women’s access to economic resources.

A review of last year’s PEPFAR country operation plans (COPs) revealed that minimal programming related to adolescent girls livelihoods had been undertaken. HIV program managers seeking to implement economic strengthening programs as a means to prevent HIV transmission have little guidance on how to structure and direct such programs for girls in this age group. In designing effective programs, HIV project managers must address the following questions:

- What are the elements of an effective economic strengthening program that help to mitigate economic vulnerability and prevent HIV infection/transmission among adolescent girls (e.g., effective elements of risk reduction), and how can the impact of the intervention risk reduction be measured?
- What are the links between economic strengthening activities and HIV prevention activities?
- What are the best practices in this area?
- What are the objectives, approaches, and characteristics of existing economic strengthening programs for vulnerable girls and/or their families?
- Are any programs attempting to define and/or measure risk reduction?
- How are these programs defining vulnerability among the target audience?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of current economic strengthening programs for vulnerable girls given these best practices, and what recommendations do we have for strengthening these programs?
- Given the effectiveness of current programs (and potential effectiveness if best practices are employed), what recommendations do we have for expanding programming?

## Objectives

To address the knowledge and programming gap, the PEPFAR Gender Technical Working Group (GTWG) asked USAID | Health Policy Initiative, Task Order 1 to produce a tool to help Missions design appropriate economic strengthening and HIV prevention programs for the different needs of particular subgroups of girl adolescents 10–19 years old.

This process comprised the following steps:

- Conducting a literature and program review of what is known about the applicability of microfinance contributing to prevent HIV infection in this target group.
- Based on the conclusions of the review, producing a tool to help Missions design appropriate economic strengthening and HIV prevention programs for the different needs of particular subgroups of girl adolescents 10–19 years old.

- Collecting feedback on the tool from PEPFAR Missions and implementing partners in Namibia and Botswana, as well as GTWG members.
- Revising the tool based on the feedback collected.

As a result of this process, the project team completed three products:

- **Reducing Adolescent Girls' Vulnerability to HIV Infection: Examining Microfinance and Sustainable Livelihood Approaches** (Lukas, 2008). This document provides a summary of the literature (including published and unpublished) on microfinance programs. It includes an assessment of their contribution to reducing adolescent girls' susceptibility to HIV infection. In particular, Part 1 of this literature and program review focuses on youth-centered programs to prevent HIV infection among vulnerable female adolescents—including microfinance and sustainable livelihood programs. Part 2 analyzes the relationship between microfinance and HIV prevention in the general population, with a focus on women and the oldest adolescents in the target group.
- **Livelihood Options for Girls: A Guide for Program Managers** (Caro, 2009). This guide is intended for PEPFAR program managers who require guidance on the selection of livelihood programs for adolescent girls. It profiles livelihood program options that, according to evaluations and other findings in the literature, are most appropriate for 10 common demographic profiles of adolescent girls. The guide highlights elements of success and best practices; cautionary considerations for implementers; and examples of real programs and their evaluated outcomes where available.
- **Identifying Appropriate Livelihood Options for Adolescent Girls: A Program Design Tool** (Caro, 2009). This tool helps program implementing organizations to conduct a gender analysis to identify and understand the specific gender-based constraints and opportunities faced by adolescents with whom they work. Ultimately, this process helps the user understand which types of programmatic interventions may be most successful in addressing their specific needs and interests and provides guidance in the design and implementation of those interventions. It also highlights elements of success and best practices; cautionary considerations for implementers; and examples of real programs and their evaluated outcomes where available.

To meet the needs of PEPFAR program managers, as well as program implementers, the design tool that was originally commissioned was divided into two documents—a programming guide and a program design tool, respectively. The process that led to this decision is described in the following section.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDE AND THE PROGRAM DESIGN TOOL

### Design and Consultations with the PEPFAR GTWG

From October 2007 to March 2008, project staff conducted a comprehensive literature review to assess the linkages between economic strengthening and HIV prevention activities and summarized the findings in July 2008 (the summary report, *Reducing Adolescent Girls' Vulnerability to HIV Infection: Examining Microfinance and Sustainable Livelihood Approaches*, is available at [www.healthpolicyinitiative.com](http://www.healthpolicyinitiative.com)). The review drew heavily from research conducted by the Population Council, titled *Girls Left Behind: The Failed Reach of Current Schooling, Child Health, Youth-serving, and Livelihoods Programs for Girls Living in the Path of HIV* by Judith Bruce and Amy Joyce (unpublished) for the POLICY Project in 2006.

From February to May 2008, the project drafted the program design tool intended to help PEPFAR Mission staff develop economic strengthening and HIV prevention programs. The initial version of the tool included three inter-linked components:

1. **Gender Analysis and Vulnerability Assessment Matrix**, which was designed to guide the user through a series of questions to learn about the participant population and its current situation with regard to socioeconomic factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, race, residence, educational situation (level and in or out of school status), their marital status, employment, asset ownership, social networks, and relative economic dependence.
2. **Program Elements Selection Matrix**, which included a table describing the range of livelihood/economic strengthening programs identified in the literature. The table also summarizes the programs' key elements of success or best practices; raises some cautionary considerations for program implementers; and presents examples of real programs and their evaluated outcomes where available. Using the responses in the first section (described above), the program manager would use this section to link appropriate livelihood program elements to the vulnerability and socioeconomic characteristics of the participant population.
3. **Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators Appendix**, which comprised illustrative indicators for monitoring progress and evaluating the impact of different program elements on reducing the risk of HIV transmission for adolescents. It included indicators to measure the economic impact of livelihood interventions; indicators to measure the impact on reducing HIV risk; and indicators to measure gender equality.

During the design process, project staff consulted with PEPFAR GTWG members, PEPFAR Mission staff, as well as the Cognizant Technical Officers (CTOs) for the Health Policy Initiative for their input. From June to November 2008, project staff received feedback from these various sources in consultative meetings. Consistent feedback from the CTOs and PEPFAR was that the tool needed to be simplified. More specifically, PEPFAR expressed concern that

- PEPFAR Missions would not have sufficient time to go through the data collection process that component 1—the Gender Analysis and Vulnerability Assessment Matrix—entails (thus, there was strong interest in developing a truncated version of the tool that would comprise the guidance provided in component 2—the Program Elements Selection Matrix);
- The tool was long and theoretical in its description. Accordingly, the GTWG requested more user-friendly instructions; and
- The focus of the tool extended beyond adolescent girls from ages 10–19 (thus, the GTWG requested that the language explicitly indicate adolescent girls as the priority population).

Based on the above feedback, project staff revised the tool to combine the Gender Analysis and Vulnerability Assessment Matrix and the Program Elements Selection Matrix. Moreover, to make the tool more “user-friendly,” project staff re-designed the combined matrices as a table, with colors and step-by-step indications on how to fill it out and use it. Project staff also revised the language to provide clearer instructions on how to use the tool.

Feedback collected from the PEPFAR Namibia Mission in September 2008 by the project's CTO highlighted the need for further simplification. In particular, there was a call for

- Clarifying whether the tool is intended for Mission staff or implementing partners of project beneficiaries;
- Developing a graphical flow of the gender analysis and vulnerability assessment that is easier to understand and follow; and
- Overall, making the text less academic and shorter.

After discussions with the Health Policy Initiative's CTOs, project staff decided that a basic guide that profiles appropriate livelihood options per typical subtype of adolescent girl (urban vs. rural, in-school vs. out-of-school, etc.), would be most useful for PEPFAR program managers. Hence, the project produced a guide that eliminated the data collection and analysis steps involved in the original tool design and, instead, helped Mission staff direct their funding into specific types of programs. The tool, however, would be kept as a supplement to the guide for use by implementing partners or consultants hired by PEPFAR Missions to design programs in more detail.

## Vetting with PEPFAR Implementing Partners

The final step in developing the program design tool was to validate it with PEPFAR Mission staff and implementing partners in Botswana and Namibia (PEPFAR priority countries where economic strengthening interventions are prominent in HIV prevention programs). To that end, the project collected feedback on the tool in Botswana and Namibia as follows:

- **Conducting consultative forums with key microfinance stakeholders**—e.g., United States Government (USG)-funded partners, staff of the government's lead social services, and/or youth/girls affairs; staff of USG and other donor-funded implementing organizations in microfinance and HIV; microfinance institutions; staff of major community-based organizations and groups active in micro-finance activities—to get feedback on the design and applicability of the tool. (See Appendix A for the meeting schedules with implementing partners.)
- Where possible, **selecting implementing partner(s), particularly program designers and/or implementers, to apply the tool to their programs.** More specifically, project staff walked through the framework with partners and discussed how useful it is in deciding the types of economic livelihood interventions that are appropriate for the adolescents with whom they work.
- **Distributing a survey** (see Appendix B) that asked for implementing partners' feedback on the guide and the program design tool. In some cases, surveys and/or written comments were returned to project staff via e-mail.

In Botswana, where the Health Policy Initiative local office was available to provide logistical, technical, and communication support for preparation and follow-up, feedback on the tool was considerable and beneficial. Project staff held group and individual meetings with representatives from PEPFAR Botswana and the following nine entities:

- The Salvation Army Psycho-Social Support Initiative (SAPSSI), a program that works with in-school boys and girls ages 10–17 through leadership development and life-skills planning programs.
- Botswana Christian AIDS Prevention Program (BOCAIP), a large program with presence nationwide that works with people from 10 years old up to the elderly. Many of their activities have income-generation components.
- Youth Health Organization (YOHO), an initiative that promotes sexual health among young people. It aims to contribute to the reduction of HIV, sexually transmitted infections, and teenage pregnancy among young people ages 14–29 in the country.
- Nkaikela, an initiative to get sex workers off the street and engage them in some income-generating activities.

- Project Concern International (PCI), RTI International, and the Academy for Educational Development (AED), three international PEPFAR implementing partners just starting economic and/or civil society strengthening programs for adolescent girls.
- The Ministry of Education and the Department of Social Services of the Botswana government.

Of these, BOCAIP and RTI also sent additional feedback through the survey in Appendix B and follow-up discussions with project staff in Botswana.

In Namibia, Health Policy Initiative staff were able to meet with few partners and received minimal feedback. Unfortunately, at the time of the project staff's visit to consult with partners in Namibia, the Mission and partners were in transition. Seven Mission staff were leaving their posts in Namibia. Likewise, the implementing partners were in the process of starting up new activities. However, project staff did consult with three international cooperating agencies, including AED, C-Change Project, and Project HOPE, as well as the following local organizations:

- The Kayec Trust, an organization that attempts to provide young people with relevant, practical, and marketable expertise that will enable them to become independent, motivated, and productive members of their communities.
- Community Skills Development Centre (COSDEC), an organization formed by the Namibian government to improve the capacity of youth and disadvantaged people to gain employment and promote entrepreneurship through skills training that targets the needs of the local community.
- Church Alliance for Orphans (CAFO), a national interfaith networking organization that serves the needs of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) by supporting local churches and other faith-based organizations in Namibia to provide holistic care to OVC. CAFO offers start-up funds for small projects, such as afterschool activities, HIV/AIDS information and activity programs, and soup kitchens.

## Summary of Feedback and Revisions

Overall, all partners and organizations consulted found the programming guide and design tool to be useful. In Botswana, organizations, such as BOCAIP, RTI International, and the Department of Social Services commented that the tool would help them not only in program design but also in monitoring and evaluation of livelihoods programs. All partners in Botswana indicated that they would use the tool to identify and/or design livelihood strategies that they were about to launch. As Ms. Dorothy Tlaga, the U.S. State Department Assistant on HIV/AIDS commented, "The tool assists program managers to understand how to address adolescent livelihood issues at a very practical level."

Partners also expressed appreciation for the richness of the background information provided. In consultations with partners with Botswana—namely PCI, RTI, AED, and Nkaikela—partners requested more background information on situations in which adolescents may find themselves at risk, as well as data on local prevalence of HIV disaggregated by sex. PEPFAR Botswana also noted the need for including definitions of gender terms for both the programming guide and design tool, as well as definitions for types of livelihood programs for the latter as well. While the definitions were incorporated into both documents accordingly, country-specific background and data was not appropriate for a tool intended for PEPFAR program managers and Mission staff worldwide.

To add further clarity to the guide and tool, partners also suggested making changes to the formatting, which the Health Policy Initiative addressed by hiring a professional graphic designer to improve the layout of the documents.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP**

Feedback from the field indicated a strong interest in addressing boys' vulnerability to HIV as well. While several of the best practices in applying livelihood options as identified in the literature could also apply to boys, overall the focus of the programming guide and tool is on adolescent girls, per the request of PEPFAR. Future programming instruments could build on the products of this activity to consider the gender-based vulnerabilities and constraints faced by boys.

Most implementing partners consulted expressed the need for more orientation and/or training on the use of the program design tool. As the tool is best used by someone with qualitative research skills, not all program staff will be adept in using it. Thus, some training may be required. As it may not be cost-effective to send a consultant to the field, an online tutorial should be considered.

In accordance with the feedback received from in-country implementing partners, the programming guide and design tool should be considered and adapted for the specific context of the local population. Additional questions and indicators of vulnerability may need to be added to the programming instruments. Thus, it would be prudent to consult with local experts when applying them.

## APPENDIX A. SCHEDULES FOR VALIDATION OF ADOLESCENT RISK REDUCTION AND LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMMING TOOL

### Botswana March 30–April 4, 2009

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY
March 30	09:30–10:30	Technical meeting with the Health Policy Initiative Country Director, Boipelo Sethiambo; and Program Officer, Moses Polaiko
	10:30–11:30	Meeting with PEPFAR Mission staff, Joan Larosa and Dorothy Tlagae
	12:30–2:00	Lunch
	2:00–14:30	Meeting with SAPSSI staff, Joanna Kirton
March 31	09:30–10:30	Meeting with BOCAIP—Mrs. Kebitsepe (Program Coordinator)
	11:00–12:30	Meeting with Department of Social Services staff, Mompoloki Moatlhodi, Bagele Mahama, and Kennie Ralekgobo
	12:30–2:00	Lunch
	3:30–4:30	Visit to schools
April 1	9:30–12:30	Meeting with YOHO—Tricina and Boitshepo (program persons)— <i>Cancelled and re-programmed with local project staff, Mrs. Kebitsepe and Mrs. Kwape</i>
	12:30–2:00	Lunch
	2:00–3:30	Meeting with Johns Hopkins University—cancelled
April 2	9:30–11:30	Discussion with the Mission staff
April 3	9:30– 4:30	Planning exercise at the Health Policy Initiative office
April 3	9:30– 4:30	Pilot-testing review
April 4	8:00	Depart Botswana

**Namibia**  
**April 6–April 10, 2009**

Date and Time		Meeting Details
MON 04/06	12:00–1:00	In-briefing with USAID/Namibia— Sangita Patel
TUES 04/07	10:00–12:00	AED—Liman Muhammed (081- 1243002)
WED 04/08	8:00–9:30	C-Change—Elizabeth Burleigh (081- 3924075)
	10:00–12:00	Kayec Trust—Liza Escultura (081- 3070211)
	12:00–1:00	COSDEC—Catherine Walker 081- 1241895 or <a href="mailto:catherinew@iway.na">catherinew@iway.na</a>
THURS 04/09	9:00–11:00	CAFO—Rev. Henry Platt (081- 2793377)
	12:00–1:00	Debrief with USAID/Namibia—Sangita Patel
FRI 04/10	10:00–12:00	Project HOPE—Joseph Luchenta (081- 3361907)

## APPENDIX B. REVIEW OF THE GUIDE AND THE PROGRAM DESIGN TOOL

### Review of “Livelihood Options for Girls: A Guide for Program Managers”

**Name of Organization:**

Describe the types of HIV prevention programs for adolescents you are currently supporting or implementing.

Briefly describe the participants in the adolescent programs you support or implement.

Describe any plans you have for adding a livelihood component or activity to current or new programs.

What are some possible ways that you might use the livelihood programming guide in the next three months (e.g., new program design, evaluation, baseline survey, other)?

After reading through the tool, please comment on how easy each section of the guide is to understand and use, and whether it is applicable to your programs. Please rate each of the following sections of the guide. Place a 1–5 in the box (5 = excellent, 4= good, 3 = fair, 2 = poor, 1 = not at all).

Section	Under-standable	Usable	Applicable	Comments
Executive Summary				
Objectives				
Audience and Intended Users				
What We Know About Economic Vulnerability and HIV Risk for Adolescent Girls				
What We Don't Know About Economic Vulnerability and HIV Risk for Adolescent Girls				
Guidelines for Developing Livelihood Programs for Adolescent Girls and Rationale for the Programming Tool				
Program Options I–10				
Appendix I: Bibliography				
Appendix II: Programming Matrix				

Please comment on what you would change in the guide; what you would delete; and what you would add to make it more understandable, useful, and applicable to the needs of your organization.

- 1) Easier to understand
- 2) More applicable to your needs
- 3) Easier to use

Additional Comments:

## Review of “Identifying Appropriate Livelihood Options for Adolescent Girls: A Program Design Tool”

### Name of Organization:

Describe the types of HIV prevention programs you are currently implementing for adolescents.

Briefly describe the participants in your adolescent programs.

Describe any plans you have for adding a livelihood component or activity to your current or new programs.

What are some possible ways that you might use the livelihood design tool in the next three months (e.g., new program design, evaluation, baseline survey, other)?

After reading through the tool, please comment on how easy each section of the tool is to understand and use, and whether it is applicable to your programs. Please rate each of the following sections of the tool. Place a 1–5 in the box (5 = excellent, 4= good, 3 = fair, 2 = poor, 1 = not at all).

Section	Under-standable	Usable	Applicable	Comments
Objectives				
Audience and Intended Users				
What We Know About Economic Vulnerability and HIV Risk for Adolescent Girls				
What We Don't Know About Economic Vulnerability and HIV Risk for Adolescent Girls				
Guidelines for Developing Livelihood Programs for Adolescent Girls and Rationale for the Design Tool				
Basic Structure and Content of the Tool				
Instructions for Use				
Situational Analysis and Vulnerability Matrix				

Please comment on what you would change in the tool; what you would delete; and what you would add to make it more understandable, useful, and applicable to the needs of your organization.

- 1) Easier to understand
- 2) More applicable to your needs
- 3) Easier to use

Additional Comments:



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