**Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (EPAG)**

**CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINE**

**1. Introduction**

The EPAG project has two major training components, business development skills training and job skills training. ARC and IRC, together with their sub-contractors, are training 65% percent of the EPAG trainees in business development skills. CEP and LEED are training the remaining 35% of the trainees in job skills. For each training track, there is a mixture of three main ingredients: 1) technical skills, or “hard” skills; 2) professional / behavioral skills, or “soft” skills; and 3) life skills tailored to the adolescent girl / young woman population, such as reproductive health education. A quick overview of the two tracks is included here:

**Business development skills curricula components:**

1. Business & entrepreneurial skills = “hard” skills
2. Professional & behavioral skills = “soft” skills
3. Life skills = Reproductive health, parenting, GBV prevention, self-esteem & leadership, etc.

**Job skills curricula components:**

1. Technical / vocational skills = “hard” skills
2. Business skills = “hard” skills
3. Professional & behavioral skills = “soft” skills
4. Life skills = Reproductive health, parenting, GBV prevention, self-esteem & leadership, etc.

**2. Curriculum development timeline**

The EPAG project recognizes that quality training materials are those that are developed, tested, and revised before being finalized. Thus, the project has revised its curriculum development timeline to allow for staged submissions and continual revisions. This will lead to tried and tested training tools as an outcome from the first round of training. The suggested timeline is included below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Due date** | **Content** |
| **February 15th, 2010**  (submitted together with inception report) | - Complete draft of first two month’s training manual & accompanying training materials.  - Detailed curriculum outline of remaining four-month’s training content. |
| **April 12th, 2010** | - Complete drafts of third & forth month’s training manual & accompanying training materials. |
| **June 10th, 2010** | - Complete draft of fifth & sixth month’s training manual & accompanying training materials. |
| **October 11th, 2010** | - Complete, revised training manual & materials |
| **March 10th, 2011**  (submitted together with final report) | - Final training materials, including all training activities developed for Phase 3 of the project. |

**3. Common learning objectives / outcomes**

A key challenge that has arisen with the training curricula development for the EPAG project has been ensuring as much consistency and comparability as possible across the NGO service providers’ curricula drafts. The creative solution to this issue has been to develop common, overarching learning objectives. This allows the NGOs to maintain their creative control in designing their own training programs, while at the same time ensuring common outcomes across project implementation. The following learning outcomes were developed together with the NGO service providers—see the column labeled “desired outcomes for program participants.” These provide a common guide for the development of the training curricula. The columns listing “key skills taught” and “suggested topics covered” are suggestions only and are not meant to be followed rigidly by the NGOs in developing their unique training tools.

**LIFE SKILLS**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Life skills** | **Desired outcomes for program participants** | **Key skills taught** | **Suggested topics covered** |
| **1** | **Sexual & reproductive health** | Participants are familiar with the basic sexual & reproductive health issues affecting young women in Liberia. They have accurate information enabling them to make informed decisions about their bodies. They know where they can access quality medical or psychosocial services when needed. | - Understanding sexual & reproductive health issues.  - The correct way to use a condom.  - STI & HIV/AIDS information & awareness.  - Information about accessing medical and psychosocial care. | * Sexual & reproductive health basics. * Reproductive rights. * Practicing safe sex. * Decision-making / making decisions with your partner. * Family planning options / benefits. * Preventing & responding to STIs, including HIV/AIDS. * Healthy pregnancies. * Local referral mechanisms.   Invite parents, husbands, boyfriends, etc. to various modules or additional training / awareness-raising sessions as needed. |
| **2** | **Family skills** | Trainees (many of whom are already mothers) are taught how to be good parents. They are given guidance in balancing their domestic responsibilities with their work responsibilities. | - The basics of good parenting.  - Managing & balancing time. | * Good parenting skills. * Balancing home & work responsibilities.   Invite parents, husbands, boyfriends, etc. to various modules or additional training / awareness-raising sessions as needed. |
| **3** | **Healthy living** | Participants are familiar with the basics of good nutrition & hygiene, both for themselves and their families. They understand the dangers of drug abuse and know how to access services when needed. | - Nutrition basics.  - Hygiene basics.  - Identifying & responding to common illnesses.  - Information about accessing medical and psychosocial care. | * Basic nutrition & hygiene. * Common illnesses (e.g. diarrhea, malaria, etc.). * Preventing & responding to alcohol and substance abuse. * Local referral mechanisms. |
| **4** | **Preventing & responding to SGBV** | Trainees understand the causes and consequences of sexual & gender-based violence. They can practice basic safety measures to prevent SGBV. They know how to access multi-sectoral services when needed. | - Understanding types & forms on sexual & gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation & abuse.  - Information about accessing medical, psychosocial, legal, and protection / safety assistance. | * SGBV overview – causes & consequences. * Basic safety tips. * Risks of “sugar daddies” / “godfathers” and transactional sex. Dealing with peer pressure. * Local referral mechanisms.   Invite parents, husbands, boyfriends, etc. to various modules or additional training / awareness-raising sessions as needed. |
| **5** | **Self-esteem & leadership** | Participants understand their own personal strengths. They are able to develop and implement progress toward personal goals. They are able to lead and assist others. They can recognize and mitigate conflict in peaceful manner. | - Goal-setting & planning for the future.  - Motivating others and encouraging participation.  - Leadership, rights, and responsibilities.  - Conflict mediation. | * Goals & goal setting / planning ahead. * Personal development workplan. * Gender roles & women’s empowerment. Human rights, child rights, women’s rights. * Civic & community participation. * Dealing with peer pressure & gossip. * Honoring friendship & teamwork. * Respect for diversity & differences. Conflict prevention & mediation skills. |

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SKILLS**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Business & entrepreneurial skills** | **Desired outcomes for program participants** | **Key skills taught** | **Suggested topics covered** |
| **1** | **Entrepreneur-ship principles** | Participants understand the basics of entrepreneurship and the qualities that make a successful business person. They can conduct a basic market assessment, develop a business idea, write a business plan, and do basic marketing. | - Understanding the qualities of entrepreneurship.  - Market assessment.  - Understanding market demand & competition.  - Developing a business plan.  - Marketing / advertising. | * Self-employment / characteristics of a successful entrepreneur. * Understanding the risk associated with operating a business. * Importance of independence & self-reliance, “how to build a business from scratch.” * Business idea generation & idea screening process. * Market assessment, market demand, competition. Knowing your market—having a specialty vs. selling different things all the time (when does product diversification make sense). * Developing a business plan. * Marketing / product design & display, product quality, & product development / advertising. |
| **2** | **Financial literacy & business finance** | Trainees are able to do basic financial calculations. They are able to make informed financial decisions and manage personal as well as business finances. They can write a budget. Trainees have and can use a bank account. Trainees can evaluate their options for earning money, financing their business, and can negotiate with others concerning financial issues. They can plan ahead for business investment and growth. They know how to save money and plan for the future. | - Basic financial calculations.  - Money management.  - Budgeting / costing.  - Savings.  - Understanding business financing options.  - Financial negotiation skills.  - Investing & finance planning. | * Basic mathematical skills. Using your phone calculator. * Business spending vs. personal spending. * Managing money: saving, budgeting, spending. * Writing a budget. * Using a bank account. * Financing options: banks, microcredit, savings & loan clubs / susu clubs. * Understanding interest rates. * Anti-theft—carrying cash in the market, under lapas, traveling with cash. * Artificial pricing vs. defining prices based on facts. * Financial negotiations. Pitfalls in financial arrangements—“seh pay” / sell pay, crediting customers. * Developing a savings plan. The value of saving money—growing beyond “hand to mouth.” * Planning for business investment & growth. |
| **3** | **Business management** | Participants are able to make informed choices about the type of business they want to have. They can keep basic, accurate records of business transactions. They know how to register their business in Liberia and how to pay taxes. | - Understanding types of business ownership.  - Record-keeping / book-keeping.  - Registering businesses in Liberia.  - Paying taxes in Liberia. | * Individual & cooperative businesses. * Informal & formal economy. * Record-keeping. Daily sales & tracking cash flow. * Liberian business climate / doing business in Liberia. * Registering businesses in Liberia. * Paying taxes in Liberia. * Fraud prevention / anti-bribery. Dealing with theft from your employees. |
| **4** | **Health & safety at work** | Trainees understand the value of maintaining a clean & safe working environment. | - Workplace safety & cleanliness. | * Maintaining a clean & safe working environment. * Waste management. What to do when there is nowhere to throw waste. * Wearing the correct footwear, gloves, mask, eyewear, etc. |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Professional & behavioral skills** | **Desired outcomes for program participants** | **Key skills taught** | **Suggested topics covered** |
| **1** | **Work habits & conduct** | Participants understand how to be a good worker. They demonstrate good time management, behavior, and attitudes that are appropriate to the workplace. They take initiative and responsibility for their own work. | - Professionalism basics (dress code, firm handshake, etc.).  - Punctuality & time management.  - Following the rules and not making excuses.  - Knowing how & when to ask questions and request guidance. | * Discipline! Personal initiative & responsibility. * Time management / effective use of time. * Honesty & integrity. Pride in work quality. * Fraud prevention. |
| **2** | **Communication, decision-making, & teamwork** | Trainees are able to communicate and get along well with others in a variety of settings. They can identify and solve problems based on clear reasoning. They know how to use various strategies to manage or resolve conflict. Trainees know how to engage in social networking that increases their business connections. | - Listening and speaking effectively.  - Giving and receiving feedback.  - Cooperation and working as a team.  - Solving problems and making decisions.  - Conflict management and negotiation skills.  - Social networking & business associations. | * Listening skills & strategies. * Listening to & giving instructions. * Speaking with clarity. * Steps in problem-solving. * Working with others to achieve goals. * Social networking for business / business associations & membership. |
| **3** | **Customer service** | Participants demonstrate high-quality customer service skills. They know how to interact with customers and business partners in a professional manner. | - Customer care & responsiveness. | * Customer service skills / business interaction skills. * Getting new customers—going beyond “come check now.” |

**JOB SKILLS**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Technical / vocational skills** | **Desired outcomes for program participants** | **Key skills taught** | **Suggested topics covered** |
| **1** | **Vocational skills** | Trainees know the scope of their respective trades. They have an understanding, insight, and knowledge on critical aspects of the trade. They understand the skills needed to operate in the service industry. Trainees have developed multiple skills in preparation for job placement, providing greater opportunity in finding jobs. Trainees can identify and know how to use the tools, materials, and equipment related to their trade. They are able to integrate theory & practice.  The technical areas currently identified are: hospitality, professional cleaning / waste management, office / computer skills, house painting, security guards, and driving. | - Technical skills for respective trades.  - Moving from theory to practice. | * Technical skills training for each trade. * How to use the tools, materials, and equipment related to each trade. * Technical theory and hands-on practice. |
| **2** | **Health & safety at work** | Participants are familiar with standard health & safety practices in the workplace and can identify unsafe situations. They know how to respond to emergencies. | - Workplace safety & cleanliness.  - Understanding health & safety regulations.  - Identifying & avoiding hazards.  - Responding to emergencies. | * Maintaining a clean & safe working environment. * Hazards in the workplace. * Preventing accidents / responding to emergencies. * Being prepared with equipment & clothing. Wearing the correct footwear, gloves, mask, eyewear, etc. |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Business skills** | **Desired outcomes for program participants** | **Key skills taught** | **Suggested topics covered** |
| **1** | **Entrepreneur-ship principles & business management** | Participants understand the basics of entrepreneurship and the qualities that make a successful business person. They understand that, in Liberia, people usually have more than one source of income—even when someone has a wage-earning job, they often have a small business on the side. Participants can develop a business idea and write a business plan. Participants can keep basic, accurate records of business transactions. | - Understanding the qualities of entrepreneurship.  - Developing a business plan.  - Record-keeping / book-keeping. | * Self-employment / characteristics of a successful entrepreneur. * Developing a business plan. * Record-keeping. Daily sales & tracking cash flow. * Fraud prevention / anti-bribery. |
| **2** | **Financial literacy** | Trainees are able to do basic financial calculations. They are able to make informed financial decisions. They can write a budget. Trainees have and can use a bank account. Trainees can evaluate their options for earning money and can negotiate with others concerning financial issues. They know how to save money and plan for the future. | - Basic financial calculations.  - Money management.  - Budgeting / costing.  - Financial negotiation skills.  - Savings. | * Basic mathematical skills. How to calculate a bill quickly and double-check totals. Using your phone calculator. * Business spending vs. personal spending. * Managing money: saving, budgeting, spending. * How to develop a personal budget. * Using a bank account. * Financial negotiations. * Developing a savings plan. The value of saving money—growing beyond “hand to mouth.” |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Professional & behavioral skills** | **Desired outcomes for program participants** | **Key skills taught** | **Suggested topics covered** |
| **1** | **Workplace conduct** | Participants understand how to be a good worker. They know how to present themselves for employment. They demonstrate good time management, behavior, and attitudes that are appropriate to the workplace. They understand that workplaces have policies and procedures that need to be followed. They take initiative and responsibility for their own work and know how to work under and respect supervision. | - Professionalism basics (dress code, firm handshake, etc.).  - Punctuality & time management.  - Following the rules and not making excuses.  - Knowing how & when to ask questions and request guidance.  - Stress management. | * Discipline! Personal initiative & responsibility. * Professionalism basics (dress code, firm handshake, etc.). Basic hygiene. * Time management / effective use of time. * Following the rules & asking questions. Not making excuses (calling ahead when late or sick, etc.). * Honesty & integrity. Pride in work quality. * Stress management. * Fraud prevention. |
| **2** | **Career development** | Trainees know how to set career goals. They know how to find and apply for a job. Trainees know how to engage in social networking that increases their employment connections. | - Setting career goals.  - Identifying & applying for jobs: filling in applications, writing a CV, thank you letters, etc.  - Interviewing techniques.  - Negotiation skills.  - Social networking. | * Career development & setting career goals. How to pick the right kind of job for you. * Finding employment information. * Filling-in a job application / writing a CV, cover letter, etc. Interviewing techniques & follow-up. * How to negotiate in the workplace. * Social networking. |
| **3** | **Communication, decision-making, & teamwork** | Trainees are able to communicate and get along well with others in a variety of settings. They can identify and solve problems based on clear reasoning. They know how to use various strategies to manage or resolve conflict. Trainees can tolerate and respond positively to constructive criticism. | - Listening and speaking effectively.  - Giving and receiving feedback / constructive criticism.  - Cooperation and working as a team.  - Solving problems and making decisions.  - Conflict management and negotiation skills. | * Listening skills & strategies. * Listening to & giving instructions. * How to respond positively to constructive criticism. * Speaking with clarity. * Steps in problem-solving. * Working with others to achieve goals. |
| **4** | **Customer service** | Participants demonstrate high-quality customer service skills. They know how to interact with customers in a professional manner. They have a proactive attitude to provide service. Participants demonstrate appropriate deportment & mannerisms. | - Customer care & responsiveness.  - Politeness, courtesy, positive attitude, proper greetings, etc.  - Professional mannerisms & body language. | * Proactive attitude to provide service. * Interacting with international people. * Speaking clearly. * Body language & mannerisms. * Recognizing non-verbal communication. * Politeness, courtesy, positive attitude, proper greetings, etc. * Asking questions when they don’t understand. * Customer privacy & not gossiping about customers. * Preventing & responding to bribes and unwanted flirtation. |
| **5** | **Worker & employer rights & responsibilities** | Trainees are familiar with the rights & responsibilities of workers & employers in Liberia. They have explored ways to exercise rights in the workplace. | - Indentifying rights & responsibilities in the workplace. | * Liberian Labor Law basics. * Appropriate ways to take action at work. |

**4. Curriculum development guidance**

The development of training materials is the responsibility of each NGO service provider. Here are some tips as you develop your tools:

1. Remember to consult the job skills & business development skills terms of references and the “Girls Vulnerability Assessment.”
2. Incorporate the Employers’ Advisory Committee feedback. Work with EAC members to collect case studies, job description examples, and additional feedback.
3. Use Liberia-specific case studies as much as possible! Liberian names, places, terms, etc. Keep it very simple.
4. Move from THEORY to PRACTICE as quickly as possible. The more hands-on experience, the better!
5. Pay close attention to the ORDER of the training modules. Some of the heavy life skills issues (i.e. reproductive health & GBV) should come early in the training so as to maximize their potential impact. Some of the professional & behavioral “soft” skills should also come early in the training so that the girls can practice them the whole time.
6. **Use the curriculum resources CD compilation.** Adapt modules and activities from best practice training manual examples (always giving credit & citations!).
7. Reach out to TVET centers, MoHSW, NACP, MoE, MoYS, and other NGOs to obtain copies of their curricula. Use these as guides and resources. With permission, adapt and revise!

**Training duration**

**The text below is copied from the terms of reference for BDS & JS:**

“For the six months of classroom training, training will take place a maximum of four to five days per week and will have approximately three to four contact hours per day. The training provider will be responsible for proposing a training schedule that addresses both safety concerns and minimizes conflicts with young women’s income-earning activities. Training classes should conclude by 5pm since girls have safety concerns about traveling to and from training in the evening.”

**Training tips**

**The tips below are copied from the JS & BDS terms of reference:**

Training providers should incorporate good practices in providing training to adolescent girls and young women.

**Training Content**

* *Relevance:* Content must be tied to the reality of the girls’ lives, recognizing their level of knowledge and experience.
* *Engagement*: Girls must have opportunity to speak out and be given leadership opportunities.
* *Simplicity*: Training content should be kept as simple as possible.
* *Dynamism*: Training should take advantage of the girls’ energy and their need to be physically active.
* *Demand-driven:* If girls do not recognize the need for training, it is hard to motivate them. First contact needs to focus on enabling girls to recognize the tangible benefits of participating.

**Delivery of Training**

* *Safety:* Training venue must be a safe and safely-accessible place which girls feel is their own.
* *Youth-friendly Facilitation:* Participants need to respect and identify with the trainer(s). Trainer(s) need(s) to have enough energy to serve as a magnet for participants, since this will influence whether girls appreciate and retain the lessons from the training.
* *Dialogue*: To createtrust and confidence, training delivery should account for listening to participants; the trainer must be someone who can listen.
* *Learning styles:* Recognizing that people have different learning styles, the trainers should mix lecture, hands-on training, role-plays, scenario planning and exams.