

*Soft Skills Development  
& Workforce Success:  
Current State of the Evidence  
& Upcoming Research*



Making Cents International *presents*

Global Youth Economic  
**OPPORTUNITIES**  
SUMMIT 2015

OCTOBER 6-8 WASHINGTON, D.C.

*October 8<sup>th</sup> 2015*

- Laura Lippman, Independent Senior Researcher
- Mario Picon, Senior Evaluation Specialist, International Initiative for Impact Evaluation, 3ie
- Suezan Lee, Education Specialist, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- Maria Elena Nawar, Development Effectiveness Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB/MIF)
- Susana Puerto, Senior Technical Officer, International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Clare Ignatowski, Director of Human and Community Development, Millennium Challenge Corporation
- Maria Eugenia Munaretto, Coordinator, Youth Employment Funders' Group (YEFG)



International Initiative for Impact Evaluation

# The state of evidence on the impact of transferable skills programming on youth in low- and middle-income countries

**Mario G. Picon**

Senior Evaluation Specialist

[mpicon@3ieimpact.org](mailto:mpicon@3ieimpact.org)

Global Youth Economic Opportunities Summit

October 2015

# 3ie youth and transferable skills reports



<http://www.3ieimpact.org/en/publications/3ie-scoping-paper-series/3ie-scoping-paper-4/>



**Transferable skills are higher-order cognitive skills and non-cognitive skills that individuals can use to be successful across different situations in work and in life**



# The Challenge

- How can we teach or build transferable skills among youth in low- and middle-income countries (L&MICs)?
- What evidence already exists from L&MICs?
- What are the priority questions for future investments in evidence?



# 3IE EVIDENCE GAP MAPS

## Outcomes

Output 1	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Impact 1	Impact 2
----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	----------

Interventions	Interv 1					
	Interv 2		Study 1 Study 2		Study 1	
	Interv 3		Study 1	Study 3 Study 4		Study4
	Interv 4					
	Interv 5					

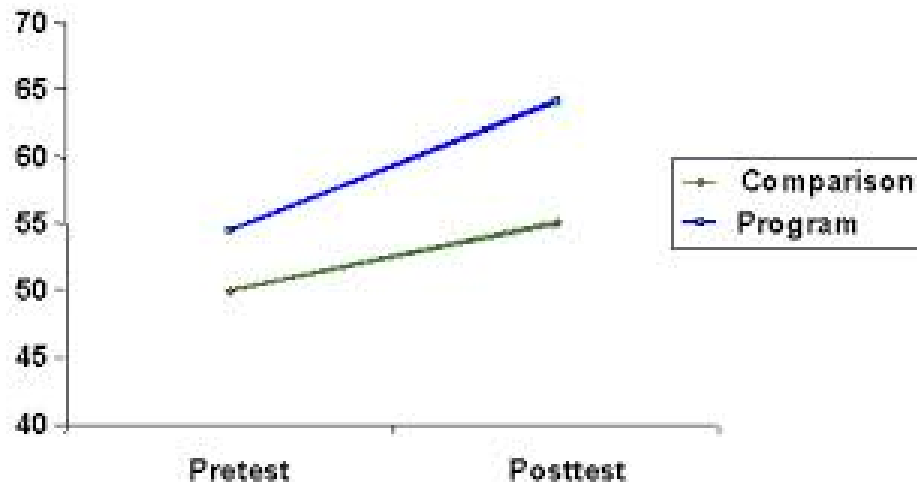
# Objectives of 3ie evidence gap maps (EGMs)

1. To facilitate strategic and efficient research procurement.
  - a) Impact evaluation evidence gap maps can identify *promising* questions for synthesis research.
  - b) Impact evaluation evidence gap maps combined with information on evidence demand can identify *priority* questions for impact evaluation investment.
2. To enable policy-makers, and practitioners to explore the findings and quality of the existing evidence on a topic quickly and efficiently.



# What do we mean by evidence?

- A 3ie gap map covers impact evaluations and/or systematic reviews of effectiveness studies from L&MICs.
- Impact evaluations are studies that measure an attributable net impact using a counterfactual—what works.



# YTS evidence gap map

Intervention Categories/ Types		Outcome & impact measurement categories														
		Learning & behaviour							Academics, employment, livelihoods & demography					Institutions		
		LB1 Individual knowledge	LB2 Individual beliefs & attitudes	LB3 Measured transferable skills	LB4 Social participation & interaction	LB5 Health & safety behaviours	LB6 Livelihoods & employment behaviours	LB7 Criminality	EL1 Demography & health	EL2 Academic, schooling outcomes	EL3 Employment	EL4 Wages, income & assets	EL5 Other livelihoods measures	I1 Educational institutions	I2 Private sector	I3 Societal & political
FORMAL EDUCATION	FE1 Teacher training programmes & curriculum reform	2	2	2		1										
	FE2 Teacher networking & support															
	FE3 Teacher incentives															
	FE4 Skills courses at school	23	29	22	2	25		2								
	FE5 Institutional management & capacity building															
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	EC1 Student clubs, groups & associations	1	1	1	1	1						1				
	EC2 Career counseling & job fairs															
PEDAGOGY	PM1 Learner-centred teaching															
	PM2 Experiential & participatory learning	11	13	11	2	13		5		1	1					
SKILLS TRAINING	ST1 Transferable skills training	8	11	8	4	11		6		2	2	1		1		
	ST2 TVET & transferable skills combined training	5	9	8	6	7	4	2	5	2	13	15	5			
	ST3 Foundational & transferable skills combined training	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2		2	1				
WORK-PLACEMENT	WP1 Job-matching, apprenticeship & internship programmes	2	3	5		2	2		3		10	9	4			
	WP2 Public & community service programmes		2	2	2	1	1		2	1	1	2	1			
	WP3 Military-style programmes															
ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PATHWAYS	AL1 Media & edutainment	2	2	2		2										
	AL2 Community centres & civil society groups	10	11	5	3	9	2		4	2	2	1	1			
	AL3 Distance learning	1	1			1										
	AL4 Mentoring, tutoring & coaching	2	4	2	2	5	1	1	3	1	5	5	2			
	AL5 Peer-to-peer learning or peer encouragement	11	13	10	2	9	1		3			1				
	AL6 Parent or family involvement	4	6	4	2	2	1		1	1		1				
	AL7 Therapy & transferable skills			1	2				5							
FINANCIAL SUPPORT	FS1 Education-related financial support & services	1	4	1	1	2			2		2	4	2			
	FS2 Job-related financial support & services	2	3	3	4	3	2	1	3		6	7	5		1	

# YTS evidence gap map

Intervention Categories/ Types		Outcome & impact measurement categories														
		Learning & behaviour							Academics, employment, livelihoods & demography					Institutions		
		LB1 Individual knowledge	LB2 Individual beliefs & attitudes	LB3 Measured transferable skills	LB4 Social participation & interaction	LB5 Health & safety behaviours	LB6 Livelihoods & employment behaviours	LB7 Criminality	EL1 Demography & health	EL2 Academic, schooling outcomes	EL3 Employment	EL4 Wages, income & assets	EL5 Other livelihoods measures	I1 Educational institutions	I2 Private sector	I3 Societal & political
FORMAL EDUCATION	FE1 Teacher training programmes & curriculum reform	2	2	2		1										
	FE2 Teacher networking & support															
	FE3 Teacher incentives															
	FE4 Skills courses at school	23	29	22	2	25		2								
	FE5 Institutional management & capacity building															
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	EC1 Student clubs, groups & associations	1	1	1	1	1						1				
	EC2 Career counseling & job fairs															
PEDAGOGY	PM1 Learner-centred teaching															
	PM2 Experiential & participatory learning	11	13	11	2											
SKILLS TRAINING	ST1 Transferable skills training	8	11	8	4											
	ST2 TVET & transferable skills combined training	5	9	8	6											
	ST3 Foundational & transferable skills combined training	1	1	1	2											
WORK-PLACEMENT	WP1 Job-matching, apprenticeship & internship programmes	2	3	5												
	WP2 Public & community service programmes		2	2	2											
	WP3 Military-style programmes															
ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PATHWAYS	AL1 Media & edutainment	2	2	2												
	AL2 Community centres & civil society groups	10	11	5	3											
	AL3 Distance learning	1	1													
	AL4 Mentoring, tutoring & coaching	2	4	2	2											
	AL5 Peer-to-peer learning or peer encouragement	11	13	10	2	9	1		3			1				
	AL6 Parent or family involvement	4	6	4	2	2	1		1	1		1				
	AL7 Therapy & transferable skills			1	2				5							
FINANCIAL SUPPORT	FS1 Education-related financial support & services	1	4	1	1	2			2		2	4	2			
	FS2 Job-related financial support & services	2	3	3	4	3	2	1	3		6	7	5		1	

**Impact Evaluations:**

- IE014. Jordans et al. (2010) Classroom-based psychosocial intervention [Nepal]
- IE022. Lotrean et al. (2010) Peer-led smoking prevention [Romania]
- IE026. Cowan et al. (2008) Regai Dzive Shiri project for community based HIV prevention [Zimbabwe]
- IE028. Kaljee et al. (2005) Theory-based risk reduction for HIV [Vietnam]
- IE032. Louw et al. (2012) Adventure based experiential learning programme [South Africa]
- IE035. Martinez-Donate et al. (2004) School-based HIV prevention interventions [Mexico]
- IE041. Romero et al. (2010) Student and teacher training to reduce physical violence [Mexico]
- IE069. Ndebele et al. (2012) Information, motivation and behavioral skills for HIV risk reduction [South Africa]
- IE070. Pronyk et al. (2006) Structural intervention to prevent IPV and HIV [South Africa]
- IE075. Calero et al. (2014) Arts-based intervention for labor market outcomes [Brazil]
- IE078. Li et al. (2010) School-based HIV/AIDS peer-led program for children of migrant workers [China]

**find Evidence**

**inform Policy**

**get Funding**

**improve Evaluation**

**engage with 3ie**

- Find Evidence**
- pb Policy Briefs
- sr Systematic Reviews
- ie Impact Evaluations**
- 3ie-Funded Impact Evaluations
- Impact Evaluation Repository
- egm Evidence Gap Maps

**ie** Impact Evaluation : 2010 | Journal Article

print page [back to results](#)  
[< Previous](#) 5 of 14 [Next >](#)

# Evaluation of a Classroom-Based Psychosocial Intervention in Conflict-Affected Nepal: A Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial

**Publication Details**

Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, July 2010, vol.51, iss.7, pp.818-826. Available from:

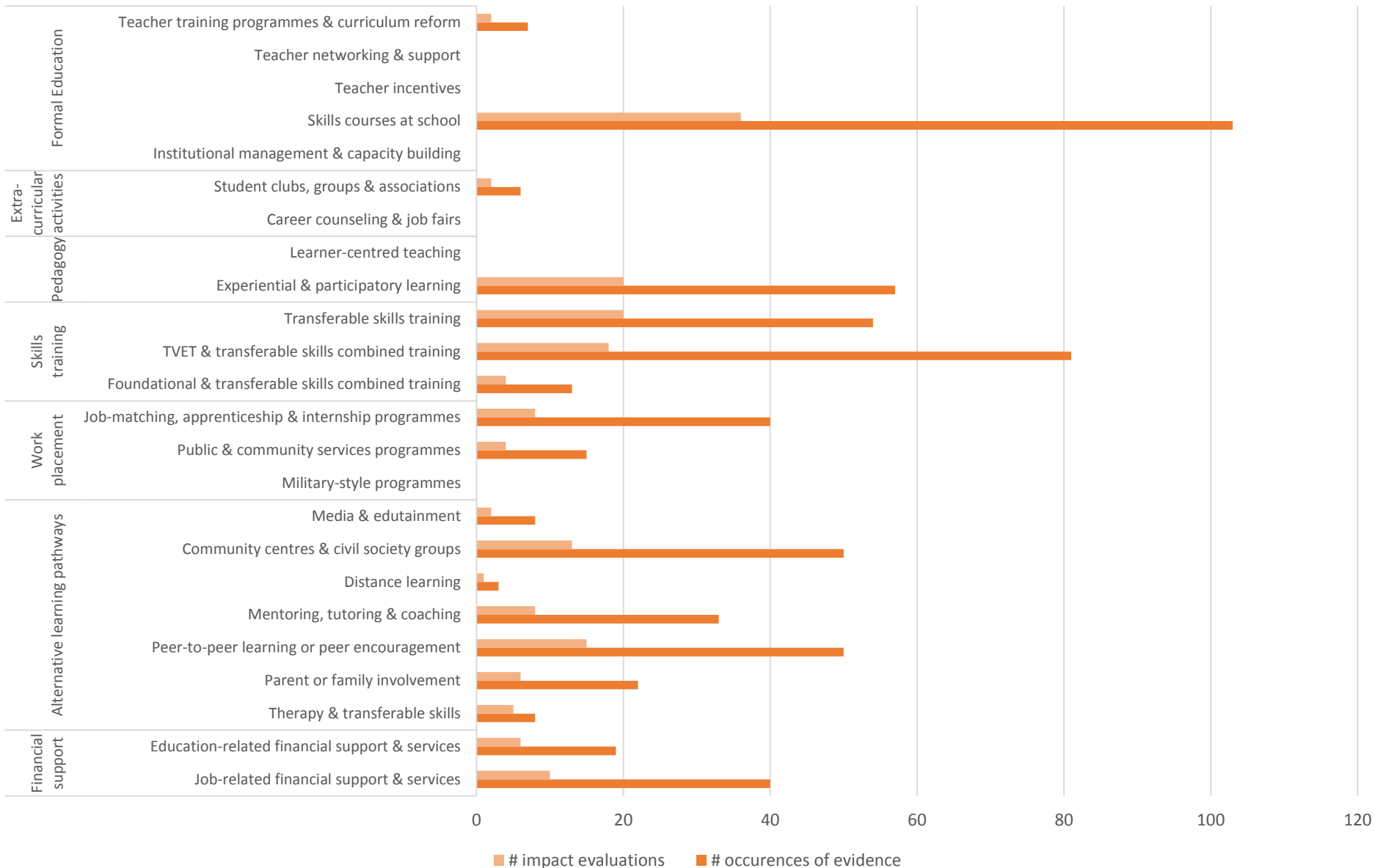
[Link to Source](#)

<b>Author</b>	Mark J.D. Jordans, Ivan H. Komproe, Wietse A. Tol, Brandon A. Kohrt, Nagendra P. Luitel, Robert D. Macy, Joop T.V.M. De Jong
<b>Country</b>	Nepal
<b>Region</b>	South Asia
<b>Sector</b>	Education, Health Nutrition and Population, Multisector
<b>Subsector</b>	Secondary Education, Health Services, Preventive Health and Health Behavior, Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction
<b>Equity Focus</b>	Conflict Afflicted
<b>Evaluation design</b>	Randomised Control Trials (RCT)
<b>Status</b>	Journal Article

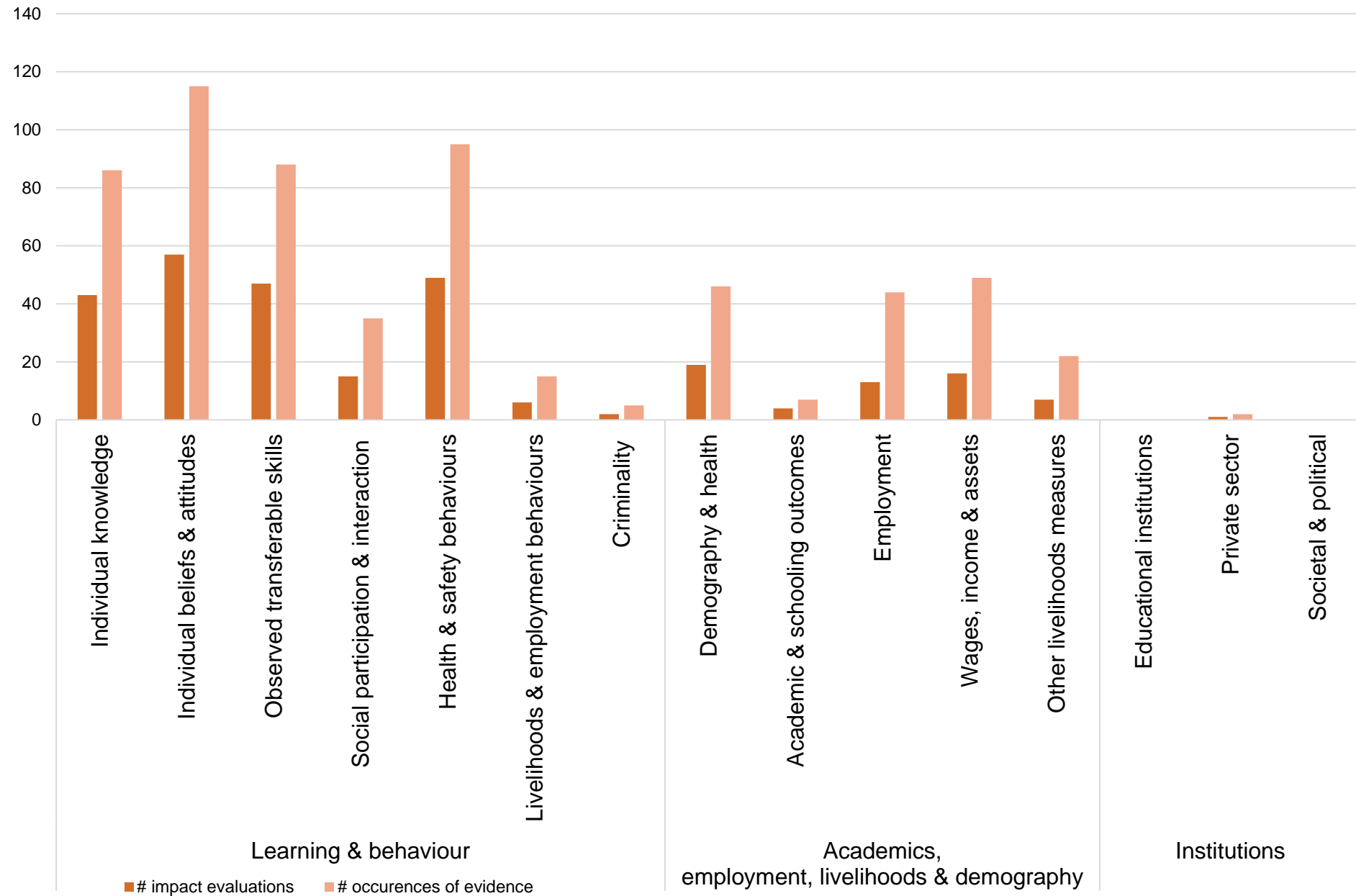
# FINDINGS ON THE EVIDENCE BASE



# How much evidence by intervention type?

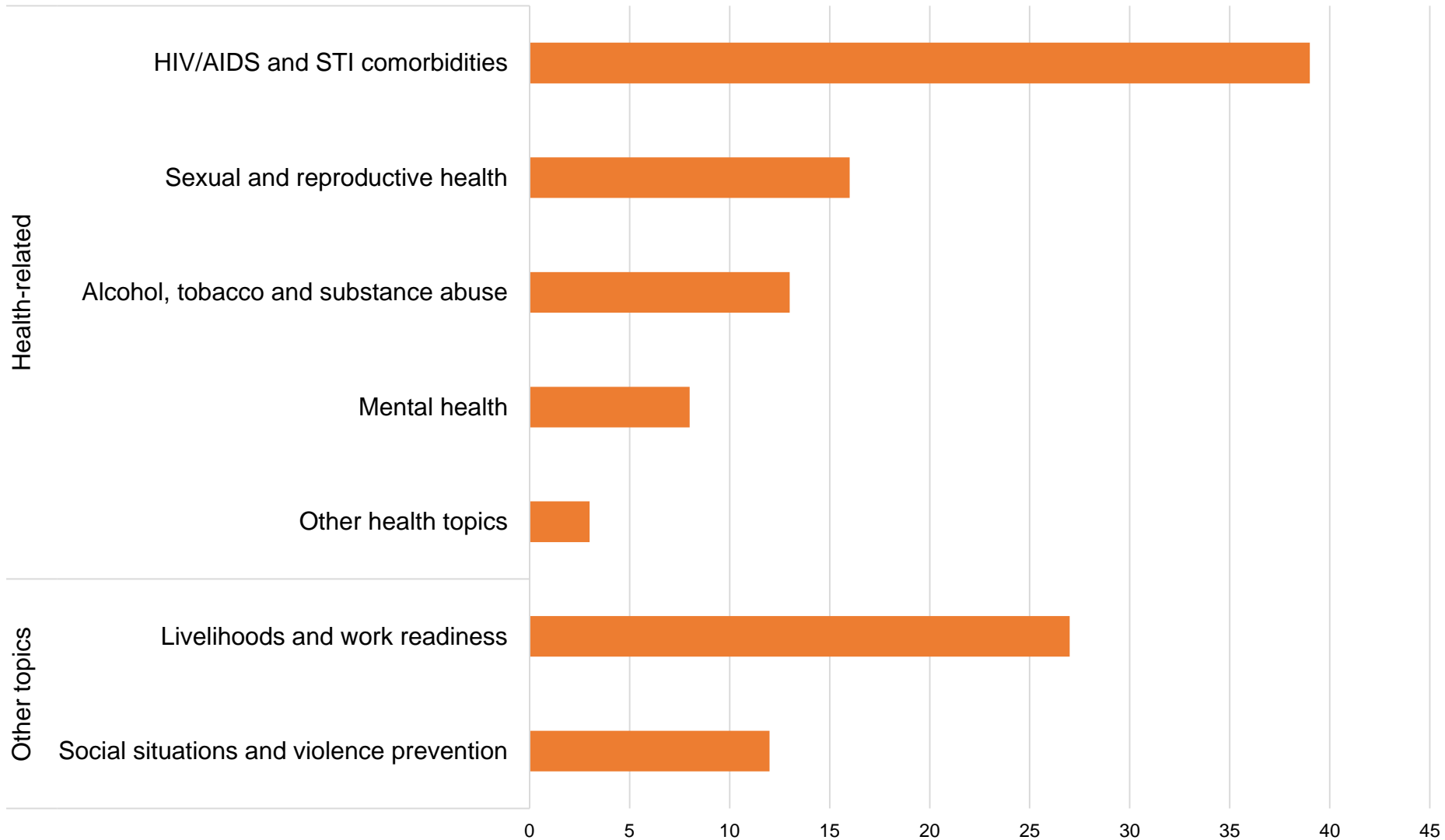


# How much evidence by outcome type?





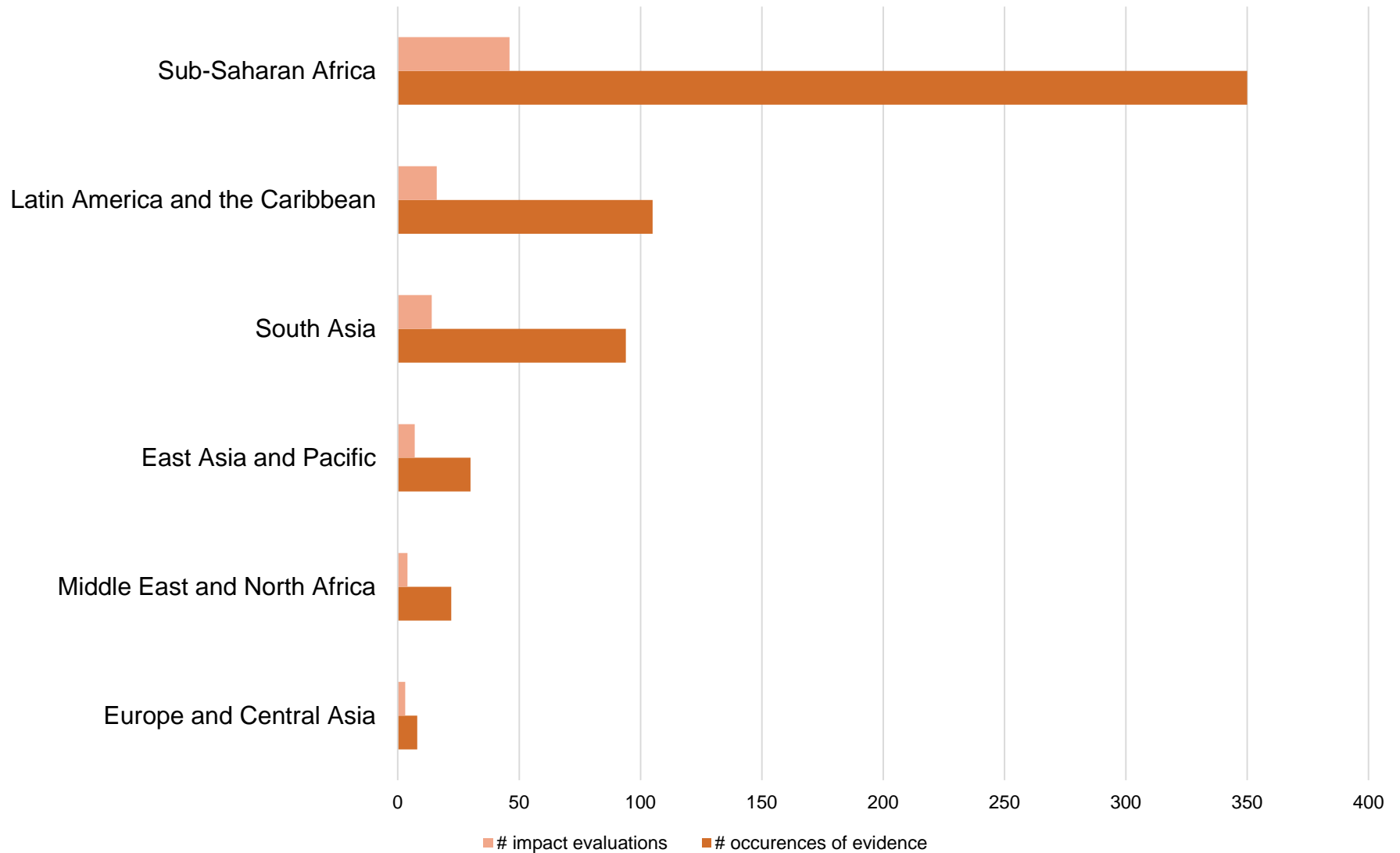
# Study topics



# Cross-Cutting Themes

Intervention categories	CC1 Measurement of long-term outcomes	CC2 Gender- specific analysis	CC3 Cost- effectiveness analysis	CC4 Early school leavers
FORMAL EDUCATION	16	8	1	2
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	1	1		
PEDAGOGY	12	10		2
SKILLS TRAINING	18	18	7	6
WORK-PLACEMENT	2	6	3	3
ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PATHWAYS	16	14	3	3
FINANCIAL SUPPORT	6	8	4	2

# How much evidence by region?



# Priorities for investments in new evidence

## ***Evaluating what interventions?***

- Impact evaluations of interventions working in formal education settings
- Impact evaluations of interventions using learner-centered approaches

## ***For what outcomes?***

- Impact evaluations of interventions focused on non-health objectives such as livelihoods, employability, and general well-being
- Impact evaluations that measure outcomes further along the causal chain

## ***What about existing clusters of evidence?***

- Systematic reviews around skill courses at school for individual outcomes

# Thank you



[www.3ieimpact.org](http://www.3ieimpact.org)

 @3ieNews

 International-Initiative-for-Impact-Evaluation-3ie

 /3ievideos

 international-initiative-for-impact-evaluation

---

New Delhi London Washington, DC

# What did we learn?

- Large amount of evidence on skills courses in school, but mostly health-related
- Big gap in evidence for interventions in formal education other than inserted skills courses
- Growing base for stand-alone courses, but stand-alone transferable skills different from TVET incorporating transferable skills
- Big gap in evidence on academic and schooling outcomes
- Very limited evidence on cost effectiveness
- Only 10 studies measure outcomes specifically for school leavers

## Outcomes

## Interventions

	Learning and behaviour							Academics, employment, livelihoods and demography					Institutions		
	Individual knowledge	Individual beliefs and attitudes	Observed transferable skills	Social participation and interaction	Health and safety behaviours	Livelihoods and employment behaviours	Criminality	Demography and health	Academic and schooling outcomes	Employment	Wages, income and assets	Other livelihoods measures	Educational institutions	Private sector	Societal and political
Teacher training programmes and curriculum reform	●	●	●		●		●	●	●	●	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A
Teacher networking and support										N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A
Teacher incentives														N/A	N/A
Skills courses at school	●●	●●	●●	●	●●			●							

## 2 Impact evaluations

Jordans et al. (2010) Classroom-based psychosocial intervention [Nepal]

Hayes et al. (2005) MEMA kwa Vijana: peer learning for sexual health [Tanzania]



# COMPLEMENTARY SLIDES FOR DISCUSSION

# Priorities for investments in new evidence

- Impact evaluations of interventions working in formal education settings
- Impact evaluations of interventions focused on non-health objectives such as livelihoods, employability, and general well-being
- Impact evaluations that measure outcomes further along the causal chain
- Impact evaluations of interventions using learner-centered approaches
- Systematic reviews around skill courses at school for individual outcomes

# What skills?

- The studies provide limited information about the specific skills targeted by the interventions and about how the skills fit in the theory of change.
- The studies that do measure skills often use an index that aggregates answers to self-reported information about behaviors and attitudes.

# Promising questions?

Intervention categories		Learning & behaviour							Academics, employment, livelihoods & demography					Institutions		
		LB1 Individual knowledge	LB2 Individual beliefs & attitudes	LB3 Measured transferable skills	LB4 Social participation & interaction	LB5 Health & safety behaviours	LB6 Livelihoods & employment behaviours	LB7 Criminality	EL1 Demography & health	EL2 Academic, schooling outcomes	EL3 Employment	EL4 Wages, income & assets	EL5 Other livelihoods measures	I1 Educational institutions	I2 Private Sector	I3 Societal & political
FORMAL EDUCATION	TT1 Teacher training programmes & curriculum reform	2	2	2		1										
	TT2 Teacher networking & support															
	TT3 Teacher incentives															
	TT4 Skills courses at school	23	29	22	2	25		2								
	TT5 Institutional management & capacity building															
PEDAGOGY	PM1 Learner-centred teaching															
	PM2 Experiential & participatory learning	11	13	11	2	13		5		1	1					
SKILLS TRAINING	ST1 Transferable skills training	8	11	8	4	11		6		2	2	1			1	
	ST2 TVET & transferable skills combined training	5	9	8	6	7	4	2	5	2	13	15	5			
	ST3 Foundational & transferable skills combined training	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2		2	1				
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	EC1 Student clubs, groups & associations	1	1	1	1	1						1				
	EC2 Career counseling & job fairs	1	1	1						1	1					
WORK-PLACEMENT	WP1 Job-matching, apprenticeship & internship programmes	2	3	5		2	2	3		10	9	4				
	WP2 Public & community service programmes		2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1				
	WP3 Military-style programmes															
ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PATHWAYS	AL1 Media & edutainment	2	2	2		2										
	AL2 Community centres & civil society groups	10	11	5	3	9	2	4	2	2	1	1				
	AL3 Distance learning	1	1			1										
	AL4 Mentoring, tutoring & coaching	2	4	2	2	5	1	1	3	1	5	5	2			
	AL5 Peer-to-peer learning or peer encouragement	11	13	9	2	10	1	3				1				
	AL6 Parent or family involvement	4	6	4	2	2	1	1	1	1		1				
	AL7 Therapy & transferable skills			1	2				5							
FINANCIAL SUPPORT	FS1 Education-related financial support & services	1	4	1	1	2		2		2	4	2				
	FS2 Job-related financial support & services	2	3	3	4	3	2	1	3		6	7	5		1	

Intervention categories		Learning & behaviour						Academics, employment, livelihoods & demography					Institutions			
		LB1 Individual knowledge	LB2 Individual beliefs & attitudes	LB3 Measured transferable skills	LB4 Social participation & interaction	LB5 Health & safety behaviours	LB6 Livelihoods & employment behaviours	LB7 Criminality	EL1 Demography & health	EL2 Academic, schooling outcomes	EL3 Employment	EL4 Wages, income & assets	EL5 Other livelihoods measures	I1 Educational institutions	I2 Private Sector	I3 Societal & political
FORMAL EDUCATION	TT1 Teacher training programmes & curriculum reform	2	2	2		1										
	TT2 Teacher networking & support															
	TT3 Teacher incentives															
	TT4 Skills courses at school	23	29	22	2	25		2								
	TT5 Student leadership & community building															
PEDAGOGY	PM1 Learner-centred teaching															
	PM2 Experiential & participatory learning	11	13	11	2	13		5		1	1					
SKILLS TRAINING	ST1 Transferable skills training	8	11	8	4	11		6		2	2	1			1	
	ST2 TVET & transferable skills combined training	5	9	8	6	7	4	2	5	2	13	15	5			
	ST3 Foundational & transferable skills combined training	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2		2	1				
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	EC1 Student clubs, groups & associations	1	1	1	1	1						1				
	EC2 Career counseling & job fairs	1	1	1						1	1					
WORK-PLACEMENT	WP1 Job-matching, apprenticeship & internship programmes	2	3	5		2	2	3		10	9	4				
	WP2 Public & community service programmes		2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1				
	WP3 Military-style programmes															
ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PATHWAYS	AL1 Media & edutainment	2	2	2		2										
	AL2 Community centres & civil society groups	10	11	5	3	9	2	4	2	2	1	1				
	AL3 Distance learning	1	1			1										
	AL4 Mentoring, tutoring & coaching	2	4	2	2	5	1	1	3	1	5	5	2			
	AL5 Peer-to-peer learning or peer encouragement	11	13	9	2	10	1	3				1				
	AL6 Parent or family involvement	4	6	4	2	2	1	1	1	1		1				
	AL7 Therapy & transferable skills			1	2			5								
FINANCIAL SUPPORT	FS1 Education-related financial support & services	1	4	1	1	2		2		2	4	2				
	FS2 Job-related financial support & services	2	3	3	4	3	2	1	3		6	7	5		1	

## Intervention categories

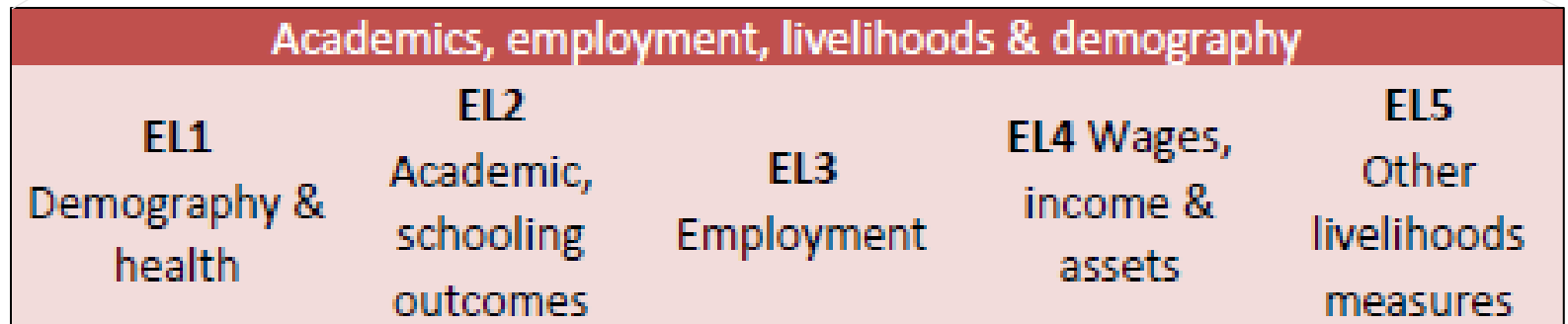
FORMAL EDUCATION	<b>FE1</b> Teacher training programmes & curriculum reform
	<b>FE2</b> Teacher networking & support
	<b>FE3</b> Teacher incentives
	<b>FE4</b> Skills courses at school
	<b>FE5</b> Institutional management & capacity building
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	<b>EC1</b> Student clubs, groups & associations
	<b>EC2</b> Career counseling & job fairs
PEDAGOGY	<b>PM1</b> Learner-centred teaching
	<b>PM2</b> Experiential & participatory learning
SKILLS TRAINING	<b>ST1</b> Transferable skills training
	<b>ST2</b> TVET & transferable skills combined training
	<b>ST3</b> Foundational & transferable skills combined training
WORK- PLACEMENT	<b>WP1</b> Job-matching, apprenticeship & internship programmes
	<b>WP2</b> Public & community service programmes
	<b>WP3</b> Military-style programmes
ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PATHWAYS	<b>AL1</b> Media & edutainment
	<b>AL2</b> Community centres & civil society groups
	<b>AL3</b> Distance learning
	<b>AL4</b> Mentoring, tutoring & coaching
	<b>AL5</b> Peer-to-peer learning or peer encouragement
	<b>AL6</b> Parent or family involvement
	<b>AL7</b> Therapy & transferable skills
FINANCIAL SUPPORT	<b>FS1</b> Education-related financial support & services
	<b>FS2</b> Job-related financial support & services

Learning & behaviour							Academics, employment, livelihoods & demography					Institutions			Cross cutting themes			
<b>LB1</b> Individual knowledge	<b>LB2</b> Individual beliefs & attitudes	<b>LB3</b> Measured transferable skills	<b>LB4</b> Social participation & interaction	<b>LB5</b> Health & safety behaviours	<b>LB6</b> Livelihoods & employment behaviours	<b>LB7</b> Criminality	<b>EL1</b> Demography & health	<b>EL2</b> Academic, schooling outcomes	<b>EL3</b> Employment	<b>EL4</b> Wages, income & assets	<b>EL5</b> Other livelihoods measures	<b>I1</b> Educational institutions	<b>I2</b> Private Sector	<b>I3</b> Societal & political	<b>CC1</b> Measurement of long-term outcomes	<b>CC2</b> Gender-specific analysis	<b>CC3</b> Cost-effectiveness analysis	<b>CC4</b> Early school leavers

Learning & behaviour						
<b>LB1</b> Individual knowledge	<b>LB2</b> Individual beliefs & attitudes	<b>LB3</b> Measured transferable skills	<b>LB4</b> Social participation & interaction	<b>LB5</b> Health & safety behaviours	<b>LB6</b> Livelihoods & employment behaviours	<b>LB7</b> Criminality



Learning & behaviour							Academics, employment, livelihoods & demography					Institutions			Cross cutting themes			
LB1 Individual knowledge	LB2 Individual beliefs & attitudes	LB3 Measured transferable skills	LB4 Social participation & interaction	LB5 Health & safety behaviours	LB6 Livelihoods & employment behaviours	LB7 Criminality	EL1 Demography & health	EL2 Academic, schooling outcomes	EL3 Employment	EL4 Wages, income & assets	EL5 Other livelihoods measures	I1 Educational institutions	I2 Private Sector	I3 Societal & political	CC1 Measurement of long-term outcomes	CC2 Gender- specific analysis	CC3 Cost- effectiveness analysis	CC4 Early school leavers



Learning & behaviour							Academics, employment, livelihoods & demography					Institutions			Cross cutting themes			
LB1 Individual knowledge	LB2 Individual beliefs & attitudes	LB3 Measured transferable skills	LB4 Social participation & interaction	LB5 Health & safety behaviours	LB6 Livelihoods & employment behaviours	LB7 Criminality	EL1 Demography & health	EL2 Academic, schooling outcomes	EL3 Employment	EL4 Wages, income & assets	EL5 Other livelihoods measures	<b>I1 Educational institutions</b>	<b>I2 Private Sector</b>	<b>I3 Societal &amp; political</b>	CC1 Measurement of long-term outcomes	CC2 Gender- specific analysis	CC3 Cost- effectiveness analysis	CC4 Early school leavers



# Recommended Key Soft Skills for Youth Workforce Success

**Social skills**

**Communication**

**Higher-Order Thinking Skills**

Self-control

Positive self-concept

