

POLICY BRIEF N°001/2025

MIXED METHOD EVALUATION OF FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL LITERACY PROGRAMME FOR GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN IN BURKINA FASO

The AflaYouth Programme

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BACKGROUND

The PROMESSE-FP (Promoting Girls' Access to Quality Education and Vocational Training Systems) programme was implemented to empower adolescent girls and young women in non-formal centres in Burkina Faso. PROMESSE-FP includes the AflaTeen+ project and the AflaYouth project, covering the Sahel, North, North-Central, and East regions of Burkina Faso.

AflaYouth aims to facilitate their social and economic empowerment by equipping them with social and financial skills, as well as the gender-related knowledge necessary to make informed decisions about their financial situation, education, and future employment. AflaYouth targets young women and girls aged 15–35.

The monitoring and evaluation plan of the PROMESSE-FP programme involves implementing mixed-methods evaluative research to document and disseminate the knowledge gained from the programme's implementation.

This policy brief presents the findings of an evaluative research study conducted by the Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results–Francophone Africa (CLEAR FA).

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions were as follows:

- What is the employability rate of the girls and young women who benefit from the project?
- What is the effect of the use of ICTs on the economic activities of young women and girls?
- What is the effect of the project on the income of women and girls?
- What is the effect of the project on the economic empowerment of girls and young women?

METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach consists of a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods.

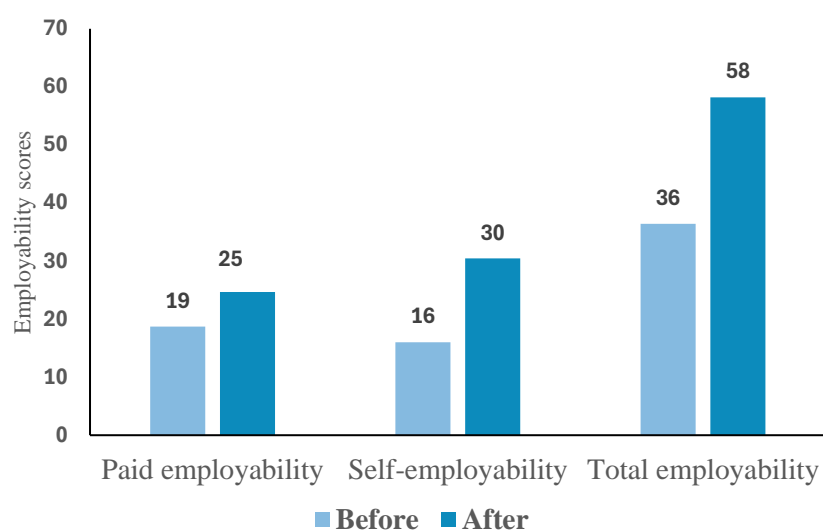
- The quantitative approach relies on pre- and post-intervention data collected between 2023 and 2024. A random sampling strategy was used to select 209 beneficiaries. Data analysis was conducted through descriptive, bivariate, and econometric methods.
- The qualitative approach involves a case study, employing non-participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions with key programme stakeholders. Qualitative data analysis was conducted using an inductive approach, involving the systematic classification, comparison, and interpretation of the data.

CONCLUSIONS

The project improved both paid and self-employability among girls and young women.

- On average, the beneficiaries gain a 90% improvement in self-employability and 32% in paid employability over the status quo.
- More importantly, there is evidence of heterogeneous effects.
- These findings highlight that the improvement in the employability levels benefits more employability-based vulnerable beneficiaries than highly skilled.
- In addition, the improvement in employability levels among beneficiaries is more pronounced among internally displaced girls and women rather than the no internally displaced beneficiaries

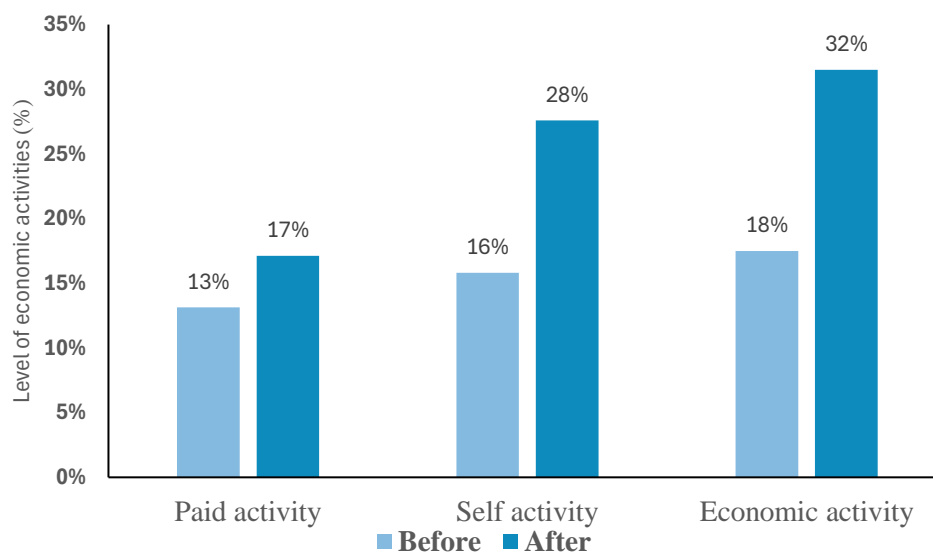
Fig 1: Changes in employability levels



The project increased the level of economic activities of girls and young women.

- The findings underscore that the level of economic activities increases by 0.14 percentage points, indicating an 80% improvement over the status quo.
- This improvement is mainly driven by profit activities that record an improvement of 77%.
- The distributive analysis underscores that the internally displaced beneficiaries mainly drive the improvement in the levels of economic activities, though the change is not statistically significant.

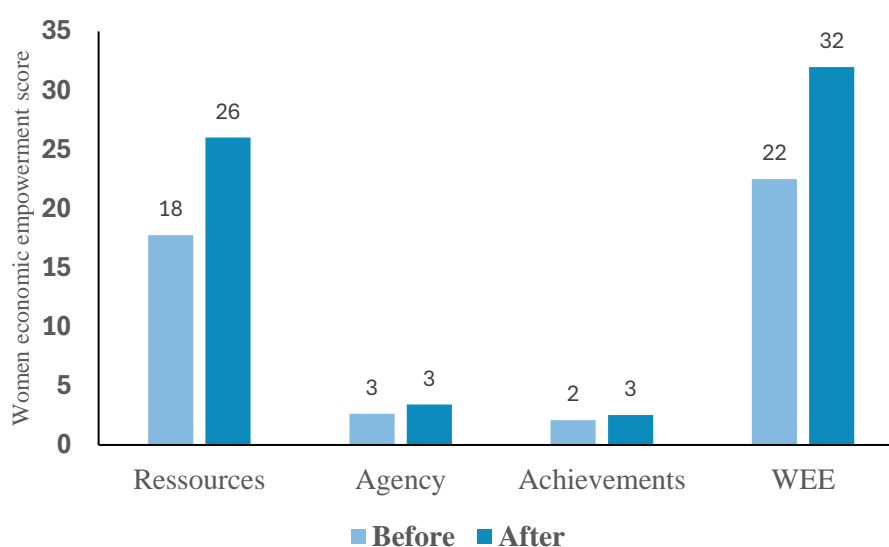
Fig 2: Changes in economic activities (%)



The intervention improved women's economic empowerment (WEE)

- The results indicate an overall increase in women's economic empowerment by 42%.
- More importantly, the project increases women's access to resources by 46%, their agency by 30% and women's achievements by 21%.

Fig 3: Change in women's economic empowerment score



Aflayouth does not improve beneficiaries' income

- There is no evidence of a heterogeneous effect between internally and non-internally displaced individuals.
- This finding should not be interpreted as a lack of effectiveness of the project but rather as a methodological issue, such as the short time between the intervention and the post-intervention data collection (approximately 12 months).
- Moreover, the fact that paid income was used to measure beneficiaries' income may bias the effect of the intervention, as the majority are self-employed.

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) do improve beneficiaries' paid activities and profit activities

- A one-point improvement in the use of ICT services among beneficiaries increases the level of paid activities by 0.09 points after the Aflayouth project.
- A one-point improvement in the use of ICT services among beneficiaries also increases the level of profit activities by 0.05 points after the Aflayouth project, though the effect was not statistically significant.
- The disaggregation of the ICTs underscores the effect is driven by digital wallet and mobile money services.

Voices from the Field

Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with beneficiaries and the project's management team confirmed that the intervention generated significant benefits for the economic empowerment of girls and young women. **Beneficiaries reported improvements in both their economic activities and personal development following the training.**

- "The training has helped me streamline production and get more customers." —Beneficiary 8.

Another participant highlighted the importance of both financial and gender training, stating.

- "The financial education training helps me do business well. Gender training helps me take care of myself." —Beneficiary 11.
- "Before, I didn't save money in my mobile wallet. I kept all the money and used it for business without necessarily saving it. Now, I save the profits". —Beneficiary 14.

Programme managers highlight the role of digital tools and social networks in supporting beneficiaries' economic activities, as well as the challenges in long-term tracking of participants.

- "As part of their income-generating activities, beneficiaries create WhatsApp groups to promote their businesses. Additionally, they make strategic use of voicemail, considering that not all of them can read or write."
- "After the training, 80% of beneficiaries engage in income-generating activities. However, around 20% either marry or leave the region, making it difficult to track their post-project trajectory." —Training centre's Supervisor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this evaluation may have been influenced by implementation challenges, notably the insecurity and conflict environment. Notwithstanding that, the effect of the programme is more pronounced among the internally displaced people.

- We suggest targeting both internally displaced and non-displaced people when designing programmes in conflict-based environments.

The programme has a modest impact on paid employability, paid employment, and income compared to self-employability and self-employment. These findings emphasize that the training programme aligns more closely with the requirements of self-employment rather than those of paid employment.

- The programme design needs to revise the training curricula by aligning the programme with the characteristics of local enterprises and the features of labour market demand, to optimise the impact of the programme on paid employability and paid employment.

Aflayouth significantly impacts women's economic empowerment, including access to resources, agency, and achievements.

- This indicates that the Aflayouth project's approach is effective in the context of this study and could be scaled up, ceteris paribus.

The findings also underscored that access to electricity, motorcycles ownership, and the age at the first birth of beneficiaries moderate the effect of ICTs on women's economic activities.

- These findings indicate that Aflatoun should tailor the programme curricula based on the socio-demographic characteristics and economic status of the beneficiaries. Addressing these challenges is likely to improve the effectiveness of the programme.

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