

# EDUCATION AND THE CAPABILITIES APPROACH: Life skills education as a bridge to human capabilities

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## ABSTRACT

According to the capabilities approach, human capability is the “substantive freedom of people to lead the lives they have reason to value and enhance the real choices they have”<sup>1</sup>. Education *per se* is in this respect facilities or arrangements that enable freedom, as well as a “hard” set of outcomes, *ie* capabilities as particular skills acquired<sup>2</sup>. In other words, for education to fully enhance freedom and development it is required that the learning needs of all are met through **equitable access** to an education of such quality that it leads to **learning outcomes** that ultimately enhance individual freedom.

The right to equitable access to education is legally recognized in a vast majority of countries. However, access to education is still not an entitlement for a large number of people. The capabilities approach relates to this question as “*a person’s right to something must be coupled with another agent’s duty to provide that first person with that something*”. Therefore, for education to become a true human right, it has to be seen as a concept that stretches beyond legislation and conventions signed by countries to include the accountability of its provision. In other words, a right that is recognized by the state but that cannot be exercised, is not sufficient.

Also, according to Sen “*it is best to see human rights as a set of ethical claims which must not be identified with legislated legal rights*”<sup>3</sup>. In order to claim their rights, individuals and communities need to be equipped to know these rights, the ways to demand that their rights be respected and the means to enforce their claims, requiring psychosocial proficiencies such as critical thinking and responsibility as central elements along with agency and empowerment. This is related to quality education contents, processes, and contexts that leads to building capability of the individual. The capabilities approach as concerns education is thus larger in scope than the human capital approach which narrows down the contribution of education to a limited range of indirect livelihood skills mainly related to production and income generation.

This paper does not discuss education as a facility, but focuses on **how quality education can build individual capabilities and thus cause individual freedom and development**. It argues that setting capabilities as a goal of educational process and defining and categorizing a (tentative) list of central human capabilities can be the first step towards defining objectives against which progress can be assessed and to which schools and governments would be held accountable. The paper is based on the assumption that education needs to address not only the human resource needs of the society, but also the development needs and aspirations of the individuals, their ability to think and reason, build up self-respect, as well as respect for others, think ahead and plan their future. It looks in particular on recent trends emphasizing education concerning life skills, psychosocial abilities that help people think, feel, act and interact as individuals and as participating members of society, and on how life skills education through a recognized educational framework can be a bridge to human capabilities. This paper therefore aims to in general to present the shift in educational objectives and processes and their links to the capabilities approach, and in particular to:

- Outline objectives of education that enhances capabilities.
- Define and categorize life skills and their links with the definition and tentative listing of human capabilities.
- Propose an educational framework at the programme level with tentative guidelines regarding implementation and assessment of life skills.

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<sup>1</sup> A. Sen, Development as freedom, 1999 (p 293)

<sup>2</sup> E. Unterhalter, The capabilities approach and gendered education: An examination of South African contradictions, 2002

<sup>3</sup> A. Sen, Development as freedom, 1999 (p 229)

## **PART I. THE OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATION THAT ENHANCES CAPABILITIES**

### **The need to increase capability and enhance well-being and the role of education**

Before the 1990s, economists and development programmes adopted a utilitarian vision to comprehend poverty, living conditions and well-being. The negative effects of these development policies, which tended to confuse well-being and living conditions fuelled the debate regarding well-being and development. Since the 1990s, reports of international organisations have given a new vision to the concept of development, rejecting the limited view based on economic growth and putting forward a sustainable human development model.

As a consequence, well-being has now been defined separately from living standards. Moreover, certain social psychologists refer to “subjective well-being” which “encompasses the assessments made by the individual – affective as well as cognitive – about her/his own life. It includes certain aspects such as taking into consideration whether the individual is happy or unhappy, satisfied with her/his life when faced with despair, and satisfied or not with the state of her/his health”. SEN views well-being in terms of the capabilities approach. According to him, the well being of a person cannot be reduced to a quantity of goods that a person consumes. Within this approach, well being in terms of capabilities is related to the possibilities and the choices that a person has “to achieve valuable human functionings”. Within this theory SEN presents a multifaceted view of well being by considering the individual as a person having the ability to act (agency), to think and to communicate with others.

A notion that is central in the capabilities approach is that of “agency”. In order for a person to take action he/she has to be the principal agent responsible for the present and future events of his/her life, to be “*someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her/his own values and objectives, whether or not we assess them in terms of some external criteria as well*”<sup>4</sup>. A person’s well-being is thus dependant on their agency to pursue goals that they value. SEN identifies different sources of variation that explain the relation between income and well-being: personal heterogeneities, environmental diversities, variations in social climate, differences in social perspectives, and distribution within the family.

It can thus be argued that well-being has a subjective dimension. For example women who “have the choices” are often influenced by norms and stereotypes that valorise sacrifice and patience and obedience. As a result, they find social approval and respect when they comply with these roles, sometimes at the cost of essential dimensions of well-being (nutrition, education...).

The objective of education for all must be geared towards enhancing capabilities and enlarging choices and developing agency by building different dimensions of well-being, by building self-image and self worth, which in turn help individuals to be less vulnerable to the variations within a given context. Educational content must therefore be reviewed to remove the stereotypes and age old norms that persist. **Every aspect of education must then work towards fighting all types of poverty, including reducing vulnerability by building potential and increasing agency and well being of individuals and societies.**

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<sup>4</sup> SEN (2000) “Development as Freedom”, p 19

## **Education to fight poverty and vulnerability**

Human development aims at improving people's capabilities and liberties in all dimensions: economic, social, cultural, political and ethical. Sustainable development raises the issue of transmitting an amount of capital to the future generations. It becomes important at this point to define the elements that education must consist of in order to fight not only "poverty" but also "vulnerability".

The theories of human development and the capabilities have also led to define poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon, which does not consist of merely the financial aspect. Poverty can be defined through three perspectives, which are closely linked and interdependent:

- ? **Monetary poverty**, which is calculated according to income and a weak level of consumption.
- ? **Poverty in living conditions** which takes into account the lack of access to goods and essential services (health, education) and a degradation of social relations.
- ? **Poverty in terms of potentiality** which refers to the impossibility of developing a potential that equips a person to deal with the risks throughout life.

Thus, poverty is a process where one type of poverty almost always is accompanied by the others, it becomes difficult to break the poverty cycle.

The vulnerability of a person "is the probability of having his/her situation worsen when facing a dramatic event. Such a focus on vulnerability implies identifying the threats, and more generally the risks that people encounter, assessing their capacity to cope when faced with the realisation of such risks can help define the means required to overcome the social consequences related to this realisation."<sup>5</sup>

Living standards can be assessed through quantitative as well as qualitative dimensions. ROUSSEAU and DUBOIS (2000) bring conceptual precisions to the definition of capabilities. They differentiate two components of capabilities. The first one is represented by the potentialities, which are the assets that a person has. These correspond to different forms of capital that can be mobilised and transformed (physical, human, natural, social, cultural). The second component relates specifically to the capacities of the individual to do something. Within these capacities the authors further differentiate "individual characteristics" (sex, age, physical and mental aptitudes) and social opportunities (institutions, norms and constraints).

For disadvantaged groups, education is a means of fighting poverty and in the long term reducing their vulnerability to events that they face. Enhancing the capability of an individual requires increasing the "ability" needed to escape poverty of all forms as well as "potentiality" to prevent people from falling into poverty. Education today, especially quality education, claims to enhance "potential" as well as "ability", equipping people to escape not only from monetary poverty, but also reduce their vulnerability to risk and increase their potentiality. For education to achieve these objectives it cannot be limited to access and completion but has to look at content, delivery and quality:

### **How can education contribute to the strengthening of capabilities and building of capital that can be transmitted to future generations?**

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<sup>5</sup> ROUSSEAU and DUBOIS, (2001) « Reinforcing Household's Capabilities as a Way to Reduce Vulnerability and prevent poverty in Equitable terms ». Presented at *Justice and Poverty: examining Sen's Capability Approach*, Cambridge, 5-7 June 2001, St Edmund's College, New Hall and Lucy Cavendish College.



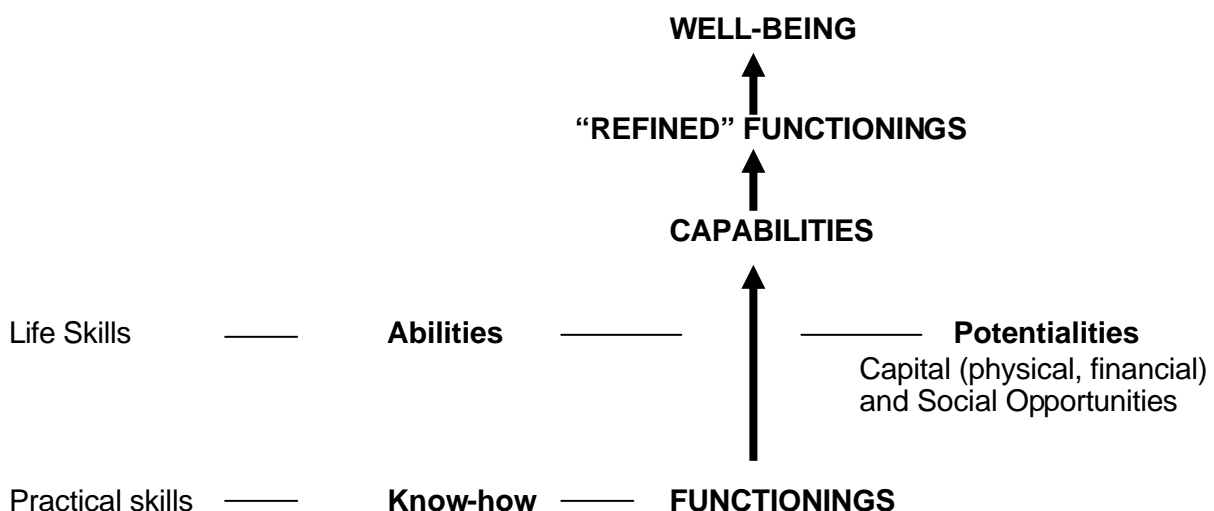
## **PART II. ENHANCING CAPABILITIES THROUGH LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION**

### **From livelihood skills and human capital to life skills and capabilities**

In order to reach the objectives of education to enhance individual freedom and development in mind we need to establish what elements education have to consist of. During the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 2000), the global education community took the clear position that education geared to tapping each individual's talents and potential, and developing learners' personalities in order to improve their lives and transform societies needs to emphasize the acquisition of skills. By specifically including the acquisition of "life skills" in two of its six goals, the resulting Dakar Framework for Action stresses the need for not only psychomotor or practical skills, but also those psychosocial abilities – life skills - that will enable us to learn and use knowledge, to develop reasoning and analytical strengths, to manage emotions and to live with and relate to others.

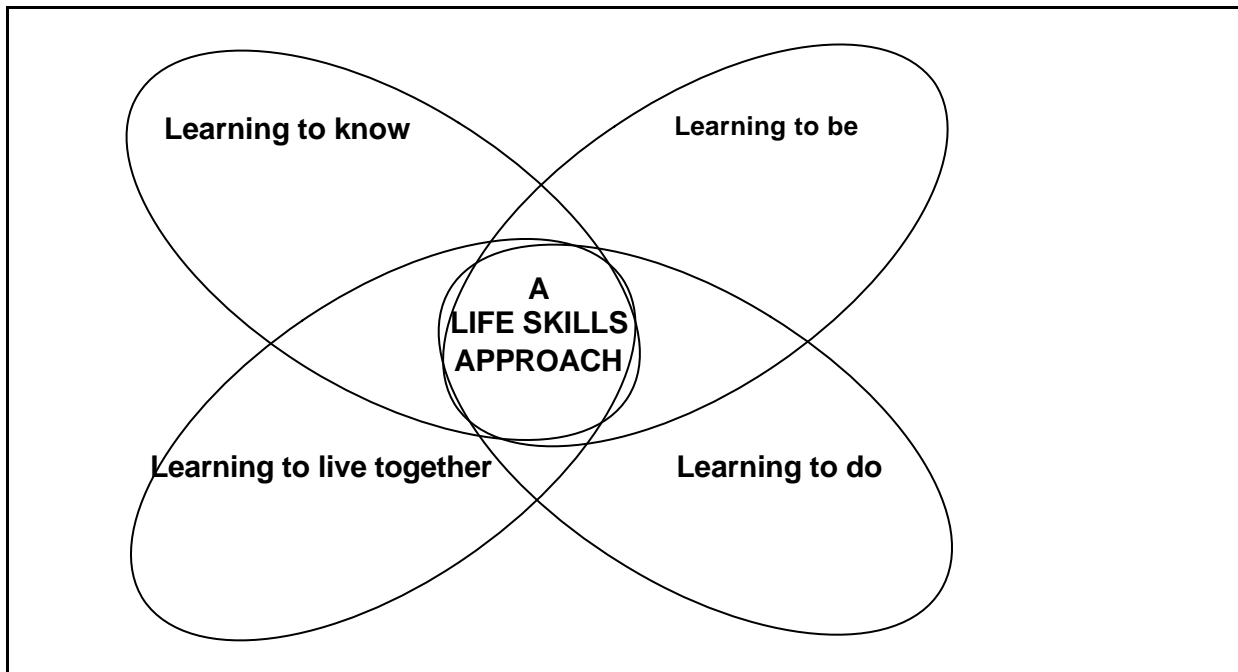
This recognition reflects a shift in education objectives from programmes that work on survival and income generation skills only, limiting their results to monetary poverty and not reducing vulnerability in the long run. Whilst addressing life skills would be meaningless if the practical skills for basic survival and livelihood were not taken into account, stopping at the level of basic needs would be insufficient to achieve long-term results and to break the poverty cycle. A new impetus to education for all is therefore the need for a new family of skills, the psychosocial abilities or life skills, to bridge the gap between the practical know-how and the ability to do things regularly and over time through the development of reasoning, the enhancement of agency and building potential through social capital, in order to understand the consequences of behaviour, feel responsible and have the ability to solve problems and take decisions that don't compromise the choices of future generations.

Obviously, education needs to accommodate both the dimensions of practical and psychosocial skills. Acting on personal characteristics and influencing individual abilities, life skills education can be seen as a bridge between basic functionings and capabilities.



## **Defining the Life skills approach**

The Dakar Framework for Action states that all young people and adults have “the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and fullest sense of the term, an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be”, based on the four pillars of education in the Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century (UNESCO, 1996). This report stresses the importance of enhancing inner capacities in order to meet the challenges of education. It offers a conceptual basis for a life skills approach to education that not only reinforces the definition of life skills as psychosocial abilities, but also proposes an education framework for the essential combination of psychosocial life skills (learning to know, to be and to live together) with practical, psychomotor skills (learning to do).



The life skills approach strengthens the ability of an individual to evolve along with the needs and changing demands of the labour market. Developing self-confidence and the power to act is a primordial aspect of education that enables individuals to effectively use new tools and methods without being restricted to a single hands-on skill. The life skills approach, more than a definition, describes a dynamic multi-dimensional process, ready to evolve and encompass new aspects as our understanding of human development increases.

## **The Four Pillars of Education and the Central Human Capabilities**

Whereas life skills education influences capabilities of SEN's Capabilities Approach, the four pillars of education can be used as a framework for the list of Central Human Capabilities proposed by NUSSBAUM (Life; Bodily Health; Bodily Integrity; Senses, Imagination and Thought; Emotions; Practical Reasons; Affiliation; Other Species; Play; Control over One's Environment).

## **Learning to know : developing reasoning**

This pillar refers to the Central Human Functional Capability of “Practical Reason” according to Nussbaum. It relates to cognitive life skills, such as critical thinking (analyzing different sources of information, interpreting motivations), problem solving and decision-making skills (collecting information, evaluating consequences, defining alternatives, choosing a solution). Learning to know thus refers to both the acquisition of knowledge as well as the use of the knowledge.

## **Learning to be : enhancing agency**

This pillar refers to the Central Human Functional Capabilities of “Senses, Imagination and Thought” and “Play” according to Nussbaum. It relates to self-management life skills related to self awareness, self esteem and self confidence (building an identity, valuing oneself, setting goals, building dreams, etc.), and coping skills (skills for managing feelings and stress). This element is linked with seeing oneself as the main actor in defining a positive outcome for the future, and is close to the concept of “power” or “agency” developed by SEN as a person’s *“ability to form goals, commitments, values etc.”*<sup>6</sup>. It is recognizing a person as *“someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her/his own values and objectives, whether or not we assess them in terms of some external criteria as well”*<sup>7</sup>.

## **Learning to live together : building potential through social capital**

This pillar refers to the Central Human Functional Capabilities of “Affiliation”, “Emotions”, “Other species” according to Nussbaum. It relates to interpersonal and social life skills such as Communication skills, Negotiation skills, Refusal skills, Assertiveness skills, Interpersonal skills, Co-operation skills, and Empathy skills. Skills under learning to live together are essential to define a human being as a social being. This aspect can be reached when a person is not faced with a paucity of resources and when she/he is aware of the importance of social support and collective well-being as a pre-requisite to any individual well-being. This aspect also implies feeling concerned by other’s welfare and feeling an affiliation link to a group, a category, a society and a culture.

## **Learning to do : functionings and capabilities**

This pillar refers to the Central Human Functional Capabilities of “Life”, “Bodily Health”, “Bodily Integrity” and “Control over One’s Environment” according to Nussbaum. This pillar is linked to what actions a person takes, and is closely related to practical skills. When addressed alone in an educational programme, or when an individual is “on survival mode” the results of this pillar is overpowered by practical or psychomotor skills for immediate needs and day to day functioning (“Life” and “Bodily Health”), whereas addressed in an educational approach taking into account the four pillars, this pillar represents an achievement linked to “refined” functionings (“Bodily Integrity” and “Control of One’s Environment”).

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<sup>6</sup> SEN (1987) *On ethics and economics* Oxford University Press

<sup>7</sup> SEN (1999) *Development as Freedom*, p 19

## **PART III. IMPLEMENTING AND ASSESSING LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION**

### **Combating the discouragement effect: creating a learning friendly context**

The view of education through the four pillars presented in Part II might look idealistic when confronted with the reality of education systems as they stand. Recent surveys (PROBE) in India have shown that the reasons for children dropping out or never attending schools concern just about every aspect of the system. *“The initial disposition of children towards school tends to be very positive. (...) ‘lack of interest’ on the part of the child is the most important cause of non-attendance among out of school children, especially among boys”*<sup>8</sup>. It is essential to take into consideration the learner, especially when we are dealing with underprivileged populations who are first generation learners.

DREZE and SEN challenge two common myths that are still strong among policy makers: the first one being that parents have little interest in education (over 90% of parents were convinced of the importance of education) and the second one being the dependency of poor families on child labour. According to the authors these facts are the consequence of the **“discouragement effect”** : *“quite often, unfortunately, the stifling nature of school environment saps the initial enthusiasm. It is not uncommon, for instance, for children to drop out of school after traumatizing experiences of physical punishment. Even when the discouragement effect does not take that brutal form, children are often gradually put off by the schools alienating curriculum, inactive classroom and indifferent teachers”* (p 158).

According to the Dakar Framework for Action, successful education programmes require not only healthy and well-nourished students but also **motivated** students in order to ensure basic education of quality for all. Quality education must respond to the fact that number of young people do not, or no longer, think that their future lies in attending schools, and enable young people to be the principal agent responsible for the present and future events of his/her life. Child centred pedagogy does not mean underestimation the importance of giving the knowledge and following a set programme in order to meet the objectives that are set. Quality education requires valorisation and recognition of the importance of ALL the components of the educational process, and in particular as concerns a learner and learning friendly environment, relevant curriculum and teaching learning materials, and participatory learning techniques.

### **The learning environment**

The Life skills approach is based on the person and his/her capabilities to act, and for such an approach to be effective there is a need to take into consideration the learning environment not only within school premises but also within the homes and the community. It is, for example, not possible to teach gender equity and assertiveness in an environment that in itself is not gender-sensitive or safe.

A positive learning environment goes beyond the provision of basic material and infrastructures such as school buildings (distance, physical safety, lightening and ergonomics, sanitation facilities, etc.) to include ensuring safety and well-being for students and staff and providing a relevant curriculum. This is described in the set of strategies identified to be critical in achieving Education for All. Dakar Framework for Action Strategy N° 8 is

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<sup>8</sup> DREZE and SEN, 2002, p 158

specifically aimed to “Create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments that are conducive to excellence in learning, with clearly defined levels of achievement for all”. Paragraph 66 of the Expanded commentary explains this as follows: “*Learning environments should also be healthy, safe and protective. This should include: (1) adequate water and sanitation facilities, (2) access to or linkages with health and nutrition services, (3) policies and codes of conducts that enhance physical, psycho-social and emotional health of teachers and learners, and (4) education content and practices leading to knowledge, attitudes, values, and life skills needed for self-esteem, good health, and personal safety*”.

## **The curriculum and the syllabus**

A national curriculum for the country’s schools is a reflection of state objectives, beliefs and policies for the future. These objectives are stated in the general curriculum that outlines the elements that education will comprise of and the higher ideals on which it will be based. The textbooks reflect the content through which a specific ideology will be inculcated to the young minds of the country.

The Dakar Framework underlines the need for a relevant curriculum. Life skills approaches addresses real-life applications of essential knowledge, attitudes, and skills, which can ameliorate most curriculum topics, such as: peace, human rights, citizenship, health, science, vocational education etc. Important considerations for curriculum developers is that effective life skills programme, on any given topic, should provide models of and practice in critical thinking skills, problem solving/decision making skills (learning to know), skills for internal locus of control, managing stress and feelings (learning to be) and intra-personal communication skills (learning to live together), as well as the hands-on skills (learning to do) needed to carry out the desired behavior.

A relevant curriculum with a Life skills approach to the issues addressed can help in motivating students, by providing not only the practical skills needed for everyday life, but also the cognitive, self-management and social life skills which are needed to carry out the desired behaviour. This aspect of life skills approaches to quality education also underlines the importance of providing age appropriate life skills in a relevant context.

## **Teaching and learning techniques**

The Dakar Framework for action specifically calls to the need for “well-trained teachers and active learning techniques” in order to impart quality education, and this is all the more important in the field of life skills. For life skills programs to effectively impart skills, teachers must move beyond lecturing and rote learning styles and use a variety of interactive methodologies, including role playing, discussion, and debate. Creativity may be needed to provide adequate in-service training under constrained budgets, in order to allow teachers to understand diversity in learning styles and in the physical and intellectual development of students, and to create stimulating, participatory learning environments. Effective life skills approaches replicates the *natural processes* by which children learn behaviour, such as observation, modelling and social interactions. The role of the teacher is to facilitate this participatory learning of the group members rather than conduct lectures in a didactic style.

Teacher training is perhaps the most important step towards improving education in all aspects. Many will argue that the status of teachers is inadequate and so are the salaries and the career possibilities, sometimes leading to attitudes towards students that can be one

of indifference, contempt and discrimination. There is a need to invest more in teacher training and payments but moreover there is a urgent need to make teachers accountable on a short term basis for the results of the students (DREZE and SEN). “As far as *practical means of restoring accountability are concerned, there is scope for action both ‘from above’ and ‘from below’.* (...) *Accountability from below relies first and foremost on the vigilance of parents. Unlike government inspectors, who often prosper by extorting bribes from errant teachers, parents have a strong personal interest in an improved performance of schoolteachers (...). Reforming the chain of accountability and bringing the levels of control closer to the village, community are important means of improving teaching standards”.*

## **Outlining planning steps for Life skills education**

### **Identifying issues that are essential within a given context:**

*Different types of issues can be addressed using a life skills approach:*

- ? Certain issues can be easily linked to both practical skills and psychosocial abilities: HIV/AIDS, income-generation, environment.
- ? Others are present throughout the learning process and are not attached to a specific practical skill but on psychosocial abilities impacting a variety of different areas; gender issues, conflict and violence, poverty.

### **Identifying the life skills which are relevant to the issue(s) to be addressed**

*Different issues can require different practical skills and life skills in different contexts. It is helpful to address the issue through a life skills approach and ensure that all the four pillars of education are present in the programme.*

**TABLE 1. A LIFE SKILLS APPROACH APPLIED TO GENDER ISSUES (MDG 3 AND EFA GOAL 5)**

<b>BASIC LEARNING NEEDS</b>	<b>PSYCHO-SOCIAL LIFE SKILLS</b>			<b>PRACTICAL SKILLS</b>
	<b>Learning to know</b> (Cognitive skills)	<b>Learning to be</b> (self-management skills)	<b>Learning to live together</b> (Social skills)	<b>Learning to do</b> (practical skills)
<b>GENDER ISSUES</b>	? Learn the difference between “sex” (physical nature) and “gender” (socialized nature) ? Understand stereotypes ? Learn to recognize harassment and discrimination	? recognize and celebrate differences and similarities between men and women ? recognize discrimination and stand up against it ? understand why stereotyping exists ? evaluate effects of stereotyping	? be proud of being a woman/man ? define your own roles ? be able to break out of roles ? recognize when you are being discriminated against ? defend your right to be an individual	? treat men and women equally ? use gender-sensitive language and methods ? defend yourself against harassment and discrimination

## Assessing outcomes : the objectives

The Dakar Framework for action calls for a clear definition and accurate assessment of learning outcomes, including knowledge, skills, attitudes and, values. In this respect, it is important to remember that assessment can be made with different objectives to meet:

- ? Before the defining and implementing of policies and programmes it is necessary to assess the specific need of the population that is concerned.
- ? To measure the impact of existing policies and programmes after a defined period in order to re-adjust them to the needs of the populations.

In both cases, the assessment of a situation can be carried out according to the four pillars that have been cited above.

**Learning to know** - *Societal resources* : do the laws, policies, public services concerning a specific issue exist? Here it is important to evaluate the support systems (public services, associations, social networks...). *Individual resources* : Do the people have all the knowledge they need about the issue as well as about the existing services in their area?

**Learning to be** - Here it is important to see if the people feel concerned by the issue? Do they feel responsible and confident about talking the right steps and measuring the pros and cons of a given situation? This aspect is the most difficult to assess, to see whether the person sees her/himself as the main 'agent' in defining future decisions?

**Learning to live together** - Is the knowledge and the experience shared with other members of the community, are there any support systems for people to fall back on?

**Learning to do** - What steps have the individuals actually taken concerning an issue? This aspect is linked to observable behavioural outcomes.

## Monitoring and evaluation : the challenge

Measuring the outputs of the programme can be done at the individual and project level. This can be done through questionnaires that assess all four pillars through different types of questions.

Learning to know	Learning to be	Learning to live together	Learning to do
<b>Decision-making and Problem Solving:</b> Questionnaire with closed questions or multiple choice questions. Regarding specific knowledge/facts regarding an issue.	<b>Self awareness, self esteem and self confidence</b> Questionnaire with open-ended questions about myself	<b>Communicating</b> Questions on intentional behaviour: Explaining a fact or an emotion to someone (several people: friends, parents, educators, the president...)	<b>This pillar refers to the practical skills that are essential especially when dealing with underprivileged groups: psychosocial abilities can only be addressed through relevant income generation projects.</b>
<b>Critical thinking:</b> Questionnaire with open questions (giving an opinion on a story)	<b>Managing feeling</b> Questionnaire with open-ended questions about myself	<b>Negotiating/ refusing</b> Peer pressure resisting questionnaire (intentional behaviour)	<b>It is essential to link the psychosocial to the practical so that people know their rights and entitlements and gain the confidence to take decisions.</b>
	<b>Building a positive image</b> Questionnaire with open-ended questions about how I think people see me	<b>Empathizing</b> Questionnaire that requires putting yourself in another's place and replying through her/his point of view.	
		<b>Cooperating, working together as a team</b>	

		Asking them to find a common answer to questions.	
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Questionnaires can help assess direct outputs and intended outcomes of programmes once these have been functioning for some time. Other methods can be used to assess the medium and long term outcomes on a group or larger level. This assessment is also useful to see which pillar needs to be strengthened through the programme and adjust the activities accordingly. This framework is based upon the survey methodology developed by Narayan [2000] in order to study the poverty in a multidimensional perspective (income, self-esteem, dignity...). The aims of this qualitative approach is to bring out definitions and understanding criteria for a given issue (by example poverty, gender inequality in education) among a population group living in a specific context. In other words, for a given issue, the objective of the research is to assess the perception of the reality from individuals embedded in a specific environment (social, cultural and economic).

Regarding the assessment of the outputs of programs in a life skills and capabilities approach, the below methodology used for analysing the poverty in both qualitative and quantitative approach may be used. For the issue identified, each individual surveyed gives his opinion and perceptions for each topic of the questionnaire. In order to capture the qualitative dimension of the reply, open-ended questions should essentially be used. Before implementing the project, each person should reply by giving his/her impressions and opinion and by qualifying his situation by specific words and adjectives, and this for each pillar. The criteria expressed are then classified by categories, and analysed taking into account the total number of individuals and the number of individuals in frequencies. The same survey procedure and the same questionnaires are then used after the implementation of the programme in order to observe changes in perceptions in terms of choice of criteria and definitions. By this qualitative and participative assessment approach, for a given issue, there is a focus on the outcomes of programmes in a multidimensional perspective based upon the individual perceptions and aspirations in a capabilities approach where individuals may be seen as an agent of development.

Gondard-Delcroix Claire [2002], "Les analyses qualitatives de la pauvreté: continuité ou rupture?" *Working Paper* n°81, CED, University of Bordeaux IV, France.

Narayan, D. [2000], *Poverty Trend and Voices of the Poor*, World Bank, Washington DC.