Assessment of Life Skills and Values in East Africa – ALiVE Launch

What is ALiVE?
Introduction

Since the ‘Education for All’ Initiative was launched in 1990, there has been growing recognition that the world we are living in is becoming increasingly complex, and the future evermore unpredictable. Our world is now driven by innovation and knowledge, but also confronted by unresolved political, environmental, and health challenges. The call to focus on sustainability (since 2015) has given us one lens to look through in addressing the challenges we are facing, but the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, at least for Sub-Saharan Africa, necessitates resilient effort to transform education systems to graduate learners well-equipped for 21st Century living and working.

Fortunately, education systems in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda are integrating values and life skills, but at varying levels. Kenya is already implementing a curriculum that has integrated 8 values and 7 core (21st Century) skills. Uganda has integrated life skills in both policy and curriculum. A new curriculum has been introduced for the secondary level, and this includes 21st-century competencies. Tanzania is revisiting and revising the National Life Skills framework and through the support of UNICEF, has even developed a detailed strategy and tools for formative assessment of selected life skills at primary and secondary levels. In all three countries, the Values and Life Skills group of the Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI) has given a significant contribution to the processes and tools. The first battle is already won – governments have acknowledged the worth of these competencies in determining success in learning, life, and work for the 21st-century learner. However, the real work is just beginning.

First, there is little clarity on what works, and support and accountability are needed to move ‘beyond written intentions’ to ‘working classroom practices' and 'outcomes' that are sustainable across the life spectrum. The region is yet to document evidence on whether some life skills are more critical than others. In all three countries, there is an acknowledgment that appropriate and contextualized tools are needed to assess outcomes in these areas to measure progress and improve policy and practice.

To address these challenges, RELI has initiated a three-year project on Assessment of Life Skills and Values in East Africa (ALiVE). The ALiVE program, targeting adolescents aged 13 to 17 years in and out of school children, aims to:

i. Develop context-relevant, open-source tools for assessing life skills in East Africa;
ii. Undertake a household assessment targeting adolescents aged 13 to 17 years, both in and out of school (generate the evidence);
iii. Use the evidence to draw attention to and increase awareness on the worth of these competencies among stakeholders (public policy advocacy);
iv. Elevate RELI-VaLi to a regional community of practice on methods and measurement of life skills, replicable at the national and regional levels for sustainability (transnational alliance building);
v. Enhance peer learning and feedback among the RELI member organizations working on improving learning outcomes in East Africa (learning, sharing & capacity strengthening.)

The initiative focuses on 4 competencies; Self-awareness, Collaboration, Problem-solving, and Respect.
What is RELI?

The Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI) is a collaborative learning network of 70 organizations that work on improving learning outcomes in East Africa – especially for the most disadvantaged. Founded in 2017, RELI is a member-driven initiative. Its goal is to empower its members to become effective, influential organizations through peer-to-peer collaborations and learning and joint policy engagement.

https://reliafrica.org/