



Hands of married girls, ITS in Jordan @ Natalie Bertrams / GAGE 2020

Engaging adolescents in research: reflections from GAGE

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Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE):

A longitudinal research programme (2016-2026)



By finding out '*what works*,' for whom, where and why, we can better support adolescents to maximise their capabilities now and in the future.

We are following 20,000 adolescent girls and boys - the largest cohort of adolescents in the Global South

What works to support adolescents?

UNICEF's Makani programme (Jordan)

Makani (My space) adolescent and youth one-stop centres



Community based organisations (Palestine)

Update: engagement & application of participatory findings



LOST & Na'baa (Lebanon)

UNICEF's Makani programme



Act with Her (Ethiopia)

Multi-level gender transformation programming w/ younger and older adolescents



Girls' education and mentoring programme

Room to Read (Nepal)



World Bank adolescent education (Bangladesh)

Growth Mindset and Girl Rising awareness-raising programmes in host communities and Rohingya camps



GAGE's design: broad, intersectional, inclusive, and longitudinal

GAGE is employing a mixed-methods research and impact evaluation design, including:



20,000

Quantitative survey

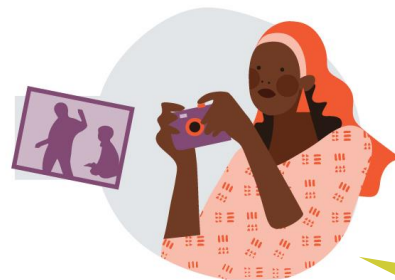
- Surveys with adolescent girls and boys aged 10–12 and 15–17
- Surveys with their female and male caregivers
- Surveys with community leaders and school personnel



800

Qualitative research

- In-depth interviews with nodal adolescents, their siblings, caregivers and community leaders
- Key informant interviews and historical process tracing
- Policy and legal analysis to understand the politics of policy and programme implementation



200

Annual participatory research

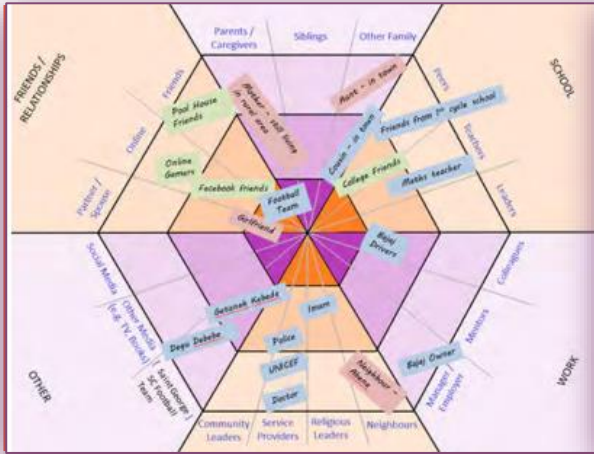
- Peer research and participatory photography with nodal adolescents and their peer networks to better pinpoint shifts in adolescent capabilities over time
- Social network analysis to understand the evolving influence of peer groups throughout adolescence

Adolescents with disabilities

Married girls/adolescent parents

Adolescents from refugee and IDP communities

Tools to capture diverse adolescent voices



Our **qualitative tools** allow adolescents to tell us about themselves and their needs in their own ways.

- **My favourite things**—What do you love and why?
- **Community mapping**—What services and spaces can you access? How adolescent-friendly are they?
- **Social network hexagons**—What trusted adult and peer networks can you turn to for support?



Case study:
Participatory research pilot study in Gaza



Purpose and approach

Why?

- To explore the challenges and opportunities adolescents face in a chronically conflict-affected contexts like Gaza,
- Help to empower girls/boys to critically reflect and articulate their concerns and priorities to programme implementers and policy decision-makers

Approach?

- A purposive group of 35 diverse adolescent girls and 10 boys, 16-19-years, mostly refugees
- Participated in weekly activities including peer-to-peer interviews and photography, drawing, theatre, documentary film making



What motivated adolescent researchers to participate?

- ✓ Treating young people in a respectful way, fulfilling promises
- ✓ Being involved in the project design and implementation
- ✓ Feeling of empowerment, sense of achievement and using innovative approaches
- ✓ Convenient place for meetings and providing mentoring support
- ✓ Ensuring no negative impacts of participation on their school attendance and achievement
- ✓ Involving their parents and facilitating inter-generational dialogue
- ✓ Securing transportation expenses
- ✓ Certificate of participation



Takeaways from the reflection ceremony

- At the Role Models Quiz, adults highlighted that adolescents now have less resources than before, more psychosocial problems, risk of violence, loss of hope and lack of recreational opportunities.
- Caregivers noted that adolescents today have to contend with living in vacuum/empty life, lost generation, less commitment to the community and national issues, misuse of IT.
- Adolescents highlighted issues that adults are unaware of including lack of services tailored to adolescents' age and gender-specific needs, lack of effective communication with parents, lack of agency due to limited mobility and a heavy toll on their psychosocial wellbeing.



Lessons learned about participatory research

- Supporting adolescent to appraise services and undertake an action agenda to meet age and gender needs provides rich insights about adolescents' lived experiences
- Involving adolescents and their parents in planning is essential; families mostly concerned about school achievement.
- On-the-job training is essential to build capacity of facilitators and young researchers, supported by facilitation materials
- Obtaining ethical approvals and community buy-in is essential
- Realism in planning is essential (feasibility) - avoid overwhelming young people with tasks
- Participatory research is resource and time intensive, requiring a lot of energy
- Using a variety of methods to present issues facing adolescents is essential, photos alone cannot capture everything



I am holding a model of the globe. I wrote on my hands siege on the left hand and freedom on the right. Also I am wearing a bracelet with the slogan "Free Gaza". I did this because I need to tell people that we need liberty, freedom of movement and our right to travel. Photo is taken by Ghada Al Qassas August 2016



Challenge for audience

Adolescents with disabilities

By exploring how sex, age and disability intersect with other identifying characteristics, GAGE cross-country research endeavours to understand the unique needs of adolescent girls and boys with disabilities and to explore how services can best respond to their daily lives. While understanding that many adolescents with disabilities in low- and middle-income and humanitarian contexts remain excluded from education, risk social isolation, face barriers in receiving health care and are often shut off from skills building and employment opportunities, GAGE research underscores key areas for context-specific interventions while tackling gaps in disability data, policy focus and funding.



Access our publications on adolescents with disabilities by scanning the QR code



gage
GENDER & ADOLESCENCE:
GLOBAL EVIDENCE

- The Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) programme is a ten year (2016 – 2026) mixed methods longitudinal research and evaluation study funded by UK aid involving 35 global partner organisations.
- GAGE is following the lives of approximately 20,000 adolescents in six low- and middle-income countries from 10-19 years.

Adolescent refugees and IDPs

GAGE's research on adolescents from refugee and internally displaced persons (IDP) communities addresses key knowledge gaps about young people's experiences of forced displacement. Our mixed methods research explores compounding vulnerabilities that young people face in humanitarian and fragile contexts and what works to improve outcomes for girls and boys during the critical age of 10-19. GAGE findings underscore that risks can be amplified for displaced adolescents, including their heightened exposure to sexual and gender-based violence, the limited quality of educational opportunities, the increased likelihood of engaging in hazardous work and the heightened prevalence of negative coping mechanisms, including child marriage. GAGE also, however, shines a light on opportunities for adolescent resilience and agency in the face of crisis.



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Check out the publications that are advertised in the GAGE postcards by clicking on the QR codes.

If you can name a publication title from 3 thematic post cards you will get a prize. Just speak to one of the GAGE team.

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GenderandAdolescence

About GAGE:

- Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) is a decade-long (2016-2026) mixed-methods longitudinal research programme focused on what works to support adolescent girls' and boys' capabilities in the second decade of life and beyond.
- We are following the lives of 20,000 adolescents in six focal countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

