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ASPIRES

Vulnerability Assessments

One of the first steps to effective intervention design, goal-setting, and M&E indicator selection for any program is to understand the vulnerabilities and strengths of the participant population. Programs using economic strengthening (ES) interventions require information on the factors that contribute to economic vulnerability, and those using a graduation approach need solid data to demonstrate that participants are resilient when they exit the program. ASPIRES uses its expertise in household economic research to assess vulnerability and identify indicators of resilience that signal readiness for graduation. Vulnerability assessments can help USAID Missions and partners implementing ES interventions to better design their programs to meet the needs of their intended beneficiaries, more accurately target vulnerable households, and set indicative benchmarks for success.

Our Experience

In addition to developing a body of technical guidance and offering training on vulnerability assessment methods, ASPIRES works directly with USAID Missions and implementing partners to design and carry out assessments. In 2014, ASPIRES worked with the USAID Health Office in Cote d'Ivoire to implement a large-scale vulnerability assessment across five regions, identifying key vulnerability factors at the regional level to inform program design and targeting. In 2016, ASPIRES provided technical assistance to implementing partners in South Africa to design, pilot, and validate tools to assess the economic vulnerability of adolescent girls and their households.

ASPIRES Offers

- Training on economic vulnerability assessment methods and tools for Mission staff and implementing partners.
- Technical assistance for economic vulnerability assessments, including review of tools, methods and designs, and support for tool validation.
- Economic vulnerability assessment implementation, ranging from small-scale assessments for partners to large-scale assessments to inform Mission programming and targeting.
- Research to identify and measure thresholds for resilience indicating readiness for graduation.

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Vulnerability assessments can be used to:

- Identify the number and location of vulnerable households
- Quantify the types of assets needed to reach a level of resilience
- Describe economic risks factors for different groups of participants
- Identify coping behaviors of vulnerable or resilient households
- Classify households according to recommended ES interventions

Contact Us

To learn more about how vulnerability assessments can benefit your programs, contact Mike Ferguson, ASPIRES Project Director (mferguson@fhi360.org) or our AOR, Colette Peck (cpeck@usaid.gov). You also can check out our reports on vulnerability assessments and other ASPIRES learning resources at: <http://bit.ly/1rwRue3>.

