Results to Share

From FIT's NGO CSW 67 Forum Panel Session

Innovative Solutions in Education Delivery to Empower Women and Girls

Attendees from around the globe joined the session to learn about innovative solutions to support women teachers and girls in tackling educational challenges in The Gambia and Burkina Faso. Canadian organizations and their partners in the Global South shared the innovations they are testing, and how technology is used to: empower women teachers through professional learning communities; and create safer learning environments for girls and reduce/prevent the practice of Sexually Transmitted Grades (STGs). Both testing projects aim to affect policy, raise awareness of harmful practice of gender-based discrimination and violence, and show how a multi-pronged approach advances gender equality in educational settings.

Innovation and Empowerment in The Gambia

In rural areas, Canadian Teachers Federation and The Gambia Teachers Union:
- Worked with very young and/or new teachers in need of mentorship.
- Equipped teachers with mobile technology, virtual mentorship and community support.
- Created opportunity and connection that had been otherwise challenging to access.

> **Access to solar-powered chargers and mobile technology really moved young teachers in rural Gambia to another level.**

This innovation used technology to support and empower women and girls by amplifying typical mentoring model:
- In-person became virtual and closed the typical isolation gap in rural communities.
- Technology created safe space, a timely response and personal and professional links/supportive networks and mentorship for young women teachers.

Innovation and Empowerment in Burkina Faso

Focusing on schools, Alitus Femina and Alitus Femona Burkina Faso are:
- Tracking the ways young women students (14-25 years) face sexual coercion and violations by teachers in exchange for grades - also known as Sexually Transmitted Grades (STGs). Girls are motivated to address this issue and help access resources
- Raising awareness with various members of the community to shed light on the advantages of education for girls.
- Raising awareness about the advantages of education for girls, and how the practice of STGs in schools is harmful.
- Creating a secure database so the Ministry of Education and schools can protect women and girl students.

> **Parts of the community see girls' education as a threat. There is a need to explain and reinforce the advantages of education for girls, and how the broader community benefits.**

This innovation used technology to make a taboo subject public and engaged all involved for a community-led solution

With STGs, students try to resist teachers' advances and often eventually give in - becoming pregnant or contracting STIs. When families are made aware – girls often leave school and enter a forced marriage. Many girls avoid telling their parents because they want to make a better life. As a result, victims fear speaking up.

- A digital app now allows students to report their experiences anonymously.
- Students are motivated to share through the app.

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