

Appendix B: Operational Definitions of the Life Skills Domains

World Health Organization (WHO) has defined the concept of life skills as “The abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of every day life.” UNICEF defines life skills based education as basically being a behavior change or behavior development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills. There have been several educational programs using various strategies to promote life skills in India and abroad. Review suggests focus of these programs mainly on the Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health component.

Based on the definitions by different institutions and organizations, the shortcomings and future recommendations of earlier programs, the project attempts to conceptualize life skills into six domains namely self, thinking skills, management skills, social skills, communication skills and adolescent reproductive and sexual health. These domains are further divided into sub-domains. Each domain and sub-domain is defined operationally for the purpose of the project is attached herewith.

Domains and Sub-domains

1. **Self** - Self – awareness, self – concept, and self - esteem
2. **Thinking skills** - Creative thinking, critical thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills
3. **Social skills** - Relationships and emotions
4. **Communication skills** – Intrapersonal, Interpersonal and Group
5. **Management skills** - Time management, resource management, leadership skills, conflict management or negotiation with self and others, stress management, life management

6. **Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health (ARSH) - HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Reproductive Health**

List of Operational Definitions of Life Skills Domains

Self

Self: “Person’s own individuality or essence”. (The Oxford Dictionary of Current English, 1990)

Self - awareness: The conscious knowledge of what you are.

Self - concept: Self-concept is the belief/knowledge that one has about self. It is the notion about oneself – one’s abilities, character, physical appearance, traits, strengths and weaknesses.

Self - esteem: Self-esteem is the worth/ value/ judgmental view that one attaches/ holds about oneself.

Thinking Skills

Creative thinking: Creative thinking is an individual’s capacity to use imagination, intuition and inventiveness to construct original thought.

Critical thinking: It is the ability to analyze, explain, evaluate and choose the appropriate alternative, objectively and effectively.

Decision-making: It is the ability to take decisions after analyzing the consequences of possible decisions.

Problem-solving skills: The capacity to solve problems constructively arising in one’s daily life situations.

Social Skills

Social skills: Social skills are the skills required for competent functioning in the society.

Family: It is the basic biological and fundamental unit of society. It includes parents, siblings and close kin.

Authority positions: People and adults holding power positions in institutional settings such as schools, governmental and non-governmental offices and markets.

Social responsibility or civic sense: The sense of responsibility towards public property and resources

Emotions

Empathy: It is stepping into others' shoes and understanding through listening and questioning exactly what it is they are feeling, what it is like to be them at this moment (Acland, 1999).

Sympathy: Being simultaneously affected with the same feeling as another; Sharing emotion or sensation or condition with another person. (The Oxford Dictionary of Current English, 1990).

Communication Skills

Communication skills: The ability to express one's ideas, feelings and messages verbally and non-verbally, so that the sender and the receiver of these have a mutual understanding of the content.

Intrapersonal: It is the communication with self.

Interpersonal: It involves one to one communication.

Group: Is the communication involving two or more people.

Management Skills

Management skills: Ability to plan, implement and evaluate one's own actions in order to organize daily life situations or activities.

Time management: Ability to optimally utilize available time to yield maximum output and also prioritizing based on values.

Resource management: Skill to locate and identify resources for judiciously and responsibly in daily life situations and in the time of need.

Leadership skills: The ability to take initiative in various activities and being assertive and showing readiness to take up any challenging task with confidence.

Conflict management or negotiation with self and others: Conflict management with self and others is the skill to resolve difficult and conflict causing situations arising within self and between others in a constructive way.

Stress management: Ability to recognize stress causing factors and use skills to deal with the same, effectively.

Life management: Ability to manage one's own life in terms of meeting short term goals involving day to day activities and long term goals involving future decisions. It is the skill to identify values important to him or her and see a positive future for one self.

Adolescent Reproductive and Health Awareness

HIV/AIDS: AIDS is an acronym for Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome.

The virus causing AIDS is HIV – Human Immuno- deficiency Virus. AIDS is the last stage of infection. The virus attacks the immune system and leads to AIDS (Shreedhar & Colaco, 1996). AIDS is a sexually transmitted disease that is fatal (Bell, 1988).

Sexually Transmitted Diseases: Disease transmitted through sexual activity (Sreedhara & Colaco, 1996).

Reproductive Health: WHO defines reproductive health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well being”, and merely the absence of diseases or infirmity. RH addresses the reproductive processes, function and system at all stages of life” (Benagiano in Nair & Pejaver, 2001). RH affects and is affected by HIV/AIDS, Nutrition, Infant and child health, Adolescent health and sexuality, life style and environmental factors.