



INSIGHTS SUMMARY

UNLEASHING GIRLS' ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

Hosted with Futuremakers by Standard Chartered



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We would like to thank the following speakers:

Natasha Kwakwa, Global Head, Community Impact, **Standard Chartered**; **Yvonne Henry**, Director, Brands, **Women Win**; **Elsie Potlako Lebese**, Goal alumna and Biotechnology Student, **University of Johannesburg**; **Jamal Khatoun**, Goal Coach and Project Assistant, **Right to Play, Pakistan**

Moderator: Alice Allan, Director of Collaboration, **Business Fights Poverty**

This summary distils a recent webinar discussion on the Futuremakers 'Goal' programme by Standard Chartered, which aims to expand the uptake of education and life skills amongst young women and girls across the globe. The programme has reached over 1 million women and girls since it began 17 years ago and has adapted and continues to evolve over time, with a new 'Goal Accelerator' programme soon to launch.

This summary focuses on three key insights derived from the discussion, offering concrete, action-oriented guidance for other stakeholders invested in enhancing equity and inclusion.

INSIGHT 1: BUILD WOMEN AND GIRLS' 'POWER SKILLS' TO PREPARE THEM FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

Empowerment through Education:

The cornerstone of fostering an equitable future lies in equipping women and girls with 'power skills' such as problem-solving, financial planning, self-confidence, mental resilience, and creativity. These skills are not merely supplementary but are central to thriving in the future job market and entrepreneurship landscape. They enable women to not only navigate the challenges of the evolving workplace but also to innovate and create new opportunities for themselves and their communities.

I think it's those power skills. I don't call them soft skills anymore, but power skills – resilience, and problem-solving, and creativity, and entrepreneurship, and self-confidence to put yourself out there and propose new ideas.

Natasha Kwakwa, Global Head, Community Impact, **Standard Chartered**

The way we describe people really shapes how we perceive and act towards them... So, seeing recognition that girls and women are co-designers and decision-makers and not considered as recipients of programming really matters.

Yvonne Henry, Director, Brands, Women Win

Actionable Strategies:

- Incorporate 'power skills' into educational curricula at all levels, ensuring that girls have early and consistent exposure to these critical competencies.
- Facilitate mentorship and networking opportunities that allow women and girls to learn from leaders and peers, thereby reinforcing their skills and self-confidence.
- Invest in community-based initiatives that promote the development of these skills outside formal education settings, leveraging sports and play as powerful tools for learning.

INSIGHT 2: PUT THE VOICES OF WOMEN AND GIRLS AT THE CENTRE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS PROGRAMME DESIGN

Inclusive Design for Meaningful Impact:
True innovation in programme design necessitates a participatory approach, where the beneficiaries – in this case, women and girls – are actively involved in shaping the initiatives meant to support them. This approach ensures that the programmes are responsive to their actual needs and aspirations, thereby enhancing their effectiveness and impact.

Actionable Strategies:

- Implement co-design sessions with programme alumni and current participants to gather insights and feedback on curriculum development and delivery.
- Utilise surveys and focus groups to continuously assess the needs and preferences of women and girls, ensuring programmes remain relevant and impactful.
- Create platforms for ongoing dialogue between participants and programme administrators, fostering a culture of openness and adaptability.

INSIGHT 3: HARNESS CREATIVE APPROACHES TO SKILLS-BUILDING, INCLUDING THROUGH THE USE OF SPORT AND PLAY

Innovative Learning Modalities: The use of sport and play in education is a transformative strategy that transcends conventional learning paradigms. This method has proven to foster resilience, as participants learn to navigate challenges, setbacks and teamwork in a supportive environment. It not only facilitates the acquisition of essential life skills but also enhances engagement, enjoyment and the overall learning experience.

Actionable Strategies:

- Expand access to sports and play-based learning programmes across communities, prioritising inclusivity and accessibility.

Many of the girls who graduated from the Goal programme are now pursuing their dreams. They're in universities, playing sports professionally, working in various jobs, or even running their own businesses from home. So it's a journey filled with sports, learning and fun!

Jamal Khatoun, Goal Coach and Project Assistant, Right to Play, Pakistan

- Share and adapt successful curriculum tools like those developed by Standard Chartered and Women Win, encouraging cross-sectoral collaboration to scale effective practices.
- Engage diverse stakeholders from government, civil society and the private sector to invest in and advocate for innovative education models that leverage sport and play.

CONCLUSION

The insights garnered from the Futuremakers 'Goal' programme by Standard Chartered underscore the imperative of adopting a holistic, inclusive and innovative approach to empowering girls and young women. By building 'power skills,' centring the voices of women and girls in programme design, and harnessing creative approaches to learning, stakeholders can significantly contribute to building women's resilience and equity.

This mental resilience didn't come from just being mentally resilient; it was nurtured through sports, where I struggled a lot at the beginning – I was really bad. Every day was all about perseverance, trying over and over again.

Elsie Potlako Lebese, Goal alumna and Biotechnology Student, University of Johannesburg

RESOURCES

- [Women Win: Teaching life-skills based education through Goal](#)
- [Standard Chartered. Futuremakers: Unleashing the economic potential of girls](#)