



At-Risk Youth Program

Susan Kippels

The Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi
Foundation for Policy Research

DOHA Evidence Symposium, March 6-8, 2014

Background

- Ras Al Khaimah (RAK), United Arab Emirates (UAE)
- Result of a study on boys dropping out of school in the UAE
 - Less than 30% Emirati males are in federal universities and colleges (Ridge & Farah, 2012)
 - In secondary education, dropout rates are as high as 20% a year for males (as cited in Ridge & Farah, 2012).
- Program aims to:
 - Address the root issue of why boys drop out of school
 - Increase their future career choices
- Based off of a similar in program called Hands On Learning (HOL) in Australia
 - “The net benefit of providing HOL to students between 1999 and 2012 is \$1.6 billion in present value terms. This represents a \$12 return to every \$1 of investment in ensuring year 12 completions.” (Deloitte, 2012, p.i)

Project Description

- Program components:
 - Hands on projects out of school time for at-risk boys (e.g. building boats, bridges etc.)
 - Trainings for teachers, principals, community members, and the RAK Education Zone
- Pilot phase will include 30 students and their families
 - Scaling up in Spring 2015
- Rollout timeline:
 - April 2014 trainings in Australia start for school principals and teachers
 - September 2014 pilot program begins at 2 government boys' secondary schools in RAK

Preliminary Research Ideas

- Evaluation questions
 - Are boys in the program staying in school longer?
 - Do the boys have more career choices after participating?
 - How is the program socially and economically benefiting RAK?
- Evaluation design
 - Co-Principal Investigator in April
 - Preliminarily planning on pre/post quasi-experimental design
 - Ongoing monitoring and evaluation