



## **Career Goal Evaluation**

Project: Nairobi, Kenya

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**Program Background:** As a part of the Youth Development Program, the Nairobi project conducts extra-curricular activities and counseling sessions with the sponsored youths once every year. The program aims to support the youths in exploring their interests and skills, to provide a platform for connecting with one another, and in that process, to help youths better understand their career choices and goals. In this process, the program strives to play a valued role in supporting the youths to form and attain their career goals. There are a variety of economic, social, and environmental factors that influence the career decisions of the sponsored youths' who often explore and change their career goals during the course of their sponsorship. These factors not just influence the sponsored youths' decisions regarding their career goals, but subsequently impact the Youth Development Program and activities in the Nairobi project.

### **Purpose of the Evaluation:**

- To understand the economic, social, environmental factors that are influencing the career choices of the youths
- To evaluate if and how participation in the Unbound program is influencing the career choices of the youths.
- To utilize the findings for exploring potential reforms and developments in the program

### **Methods:**

- Survey of 497 sponsored youths
- Focus group discussions with 12 sponsored youths

### **Key Findings and Conclusions:**

- Most of the sponsored youths were able to articulate their goals for the future.
- Finance was found to be one of the leading factors influencing the youths' academic performance as well as career decisions. It was also found that youths sometimes have to wait for months to accumulate sufficient sponsorship funds until they are able to pay for school and enroll again.
- The youths reported that their passion and talent are some of the factors that they consider while setting their career goals.
- The focus group discussions highlighted some of the pressures the youths feel from their families and society in their academic and professional endeavors. It was also found through the discussion that a number of parents are not aware, and thus not involved, in the career decisions of their children.
- Sponsored youths also reported that the Unbound sponsorship program has been extremely influential in influencing their career.

### **Learnings and Report Recommendations:**

- The project will explore the potential costs and benefits of conducting the extra-curricular activities and counselling programs more than once a year. It was found that while this provides the youths a platform to interact, it does little to allow them to connect and support each other after the program.
- After learning that finance was one of the leading burdens for the youths, the project has started exploring options that can financially assist the youths in the future, such as informing them about scholarships (Unbound and Kenya Government-funded). The project will continue to inform and encourage the youths to learn in schools and ensure that their academic performance is strong.
- The project also discussed the potential of conducting activities that provided the youths with entrepreneurial skills that can support them while they pursue their academic goals.
- The project will discuss how parents can be motivated and influenced to be more active in setting the career goals with their children.