IPA Webcast: The Skills We Really Need: The Impacts of The Educate! Experience, a Skills-Based Education Program for Secondary School Students in Uganda

How do we give youth the skills to succeed in life? It’s a universal question, but one that has particular relevance in sub-Saharan Africa, where high school graduates face very limited formal job opportunities and often aren’t equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge to start their own businesses. Women face particular challenges in the educational, economic, and social spheres. One way to address these challenges may be to teach students the hard and soft skills required to be successful in their future work and lives. But can these skills, particularly soft skills—like self-control, persuasion, creativity, and grit—be taught to adolescents, and if so, what happens for youth who are equipped with these new skills? New and exciting results from a four-year evaluation shed light on these questions, offering new insights into what works. On January 16, 2020, IPA hosted an interactive webinar on The Skills We Really Need: The Impacts of a Soft Skills and Entrepreneurship Program for Secondary School Students in Uganda. In this webinar, Laura Chioda (World Bank) and Paul Gertler (University of California, Berkeley) presented on the 4-year findings from a randomized evaluation in Uganda of the Educate! Experience program, a social leadership and entrepreneurship skill development program targeting students during the last two years of secondary school. Meghan Mahoney and Hawah Nabbuye (Educate!) presented on the program and Educate!’s motivation for the evaluation, and Heidi McAnnally-Linz (IPA) moderated a discussion and Q&A following the presentations. Presenters: Laura Chioda, Senior Economist, The World Bank, Paul Gertler, Li Ka Shing Professor of Economics, Haas School of Business, University of California,