



Girl Tok Evaluation

2020 Girl Tok Pilot Program
Outcomes & Evaluation

ONE GIRL

© One Girl, May 2021

Published by One Girl, Melbourne.

Studio C1.17 Abbotsford Convent

1-3 Heliers Street, Abbotsford Victoria 3076

03 9913 4818 | info@onegirl.org.au | www.onegirl.org.au

Summary report: written by Yeniva Sisay, Erica Berthelson and Tove Andersson, February 2021.

Edited by: Ellen Tirant and Anjali Nambissan, May 2021. **Designed by:** Ellen Tirant

Acknowledgments: We would like acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our One Girl team both in Sierra Leone and Australia, who embraced the challenges of 2020 and expertly developed Girl Tok to ensure One Girl scholars were able to remain engaged and safe during lockdown. Thank you to all the phenomenal Girl Tok mentors and Scholars for their commitment, participation and crucial feedback, contributing to the success and longevity of this incredible program.

One Girl reports are written and shared so that we can celebrate our successes, acknowledge our challenges, contribute to public debate, and invite feedback on development practices.

Statement of copyright: This publication is copyright but the text may be used free of charge for advocacy, campaigning, education and research, provided that the source is acknowledged in full. We request that we be notified of such use so that we can better monitor our impact. For any other circumstances, for re-use in other publications or for translation or adaptation, permission must be sought and a fee may be charged.

Email info@onegirl.org.au. The information in this publication is correct at the time of publishing.

About One Girl: One Girl is an Australian not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting girls without access to education in two of the worst places in the world to be born a girl: Uganda and Sierra Leone.

Front and back images: Round 3 Films, October 2019.

Contents

Introduction	1
What is Girl Tok?	1
The Girl Tok Pilot	1
Evaluation Methodology	2
Primary Outcomes	4
<i>Digital Literacy</i>	4
<i>Mental Health & Wellbeing</i>	8
<i>Confidence & Leadership</i>	11
<i>Increased knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and sexual and gender based violence (SGBV)</i>	12
<i>Supportive Learning Environment</i>	12
<i>Health & Hygiene</i>	14
Secondary Outcome	14
Key Learnings & Recommendations	14
Conclusion	16

Introduction

In September 2020, One Girl launched Girl Tok, an online learning and wellbeing pilot program for girls in Sierra Leone, designed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Running until December 2020, the program aimed to help keep girls safe and healthy (both mentally and physically) during the pandemic, supporting them to remain engaged and connected with their peers and ready to re-enrol in school post-lockdown.

The following report outlines program design and implementation, followed by the evaluation methodology, program outcomes and key learnings and recommendations to inform future program rollout.

Overall, Girl Tok participants reported positive outcomes and provided valuable suggestions for program improvement!

What is Girl Tok?

Girl Tok¹ is a **digital wellbeing program**, originally designed to keep girls connected, supported and learning during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdowns in Sierra Leone. In such isolating situations and when face to face lessons are not possible, mobile technology can combat loneliness, create friendship and link people to essential services to help keep them feeling safe and healthy.

Girl Tok has a core focus on mental wellbeing and is designed to be fun, foster friendships and provide access to important information.

The program is delivered online and remotely using the WhatsApp platform; as it is widely accessible and commonly used in Sierra Leone, uses little data and functions well on low-tech mobile phones and in areas with poor internet connection.

Girl Tok has two main components:

Online Girls' Clubs

Girls are invited to join small online clubs where they are connected with their peers and a female mentor. In these clubs, girls complete activities and lessons for learning, self-confidence and life-skills.

Wellness Checks

Staff make weekly calls to each girl to support their psycho-social needs. Staff are trained in psychological first aid and can respond to the trauma and stress associated with current and past crises.

The Girl Tok Pilot

The pilot program began with 69 scholars and 10 mentors across 16 urban and peri-urban communities in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Participants were divided into 10 online groups and participated in 14 weeks of online programming: one week induction, one week countdown and 12 weeks of programming, ending with a graduation ceremony and celebration.

Mentor recruitment and training

Girl Tok commenced with the recruitment of 10 mentors and the facilitation of a two-day training session, inclusive of digital literacy and online leadership. Each of the mentors were skilled teachers recruited from the One Girl Scholarship alumni group, with previously completed training and experience running the Business Brains Sierra Leone program in various schools.

Scholar induction

For Part One of the induction, participants and their parents/guardians were invited to attend a four hour session at the One Girl office. Originally planned as a one-off session, it was identified that running the session across two days, over a period of a few weeks, was actually more suited to the girls.

¹ Girl Tok means Girl Talk in Krio, the lingua franca spoken in Sierra Leone.

Given this insight, a second follow up session was held after the countdown to help reinforce safety messaging and program rules.

Countdown

A 10 day 'countdown' was included in the pilot to maintain momentum between the induction and start of the program. We ran a week of engaging countdown activities for girls to practice and explore using their phones, followed by the second induction session.

Launch!

On Monday the 5th of October, week one of Girl Tok was launched! During each week of the program, a One Girl staff member phoned both mentors and participants to check on their progress and wellbeing. Lockdown restrictions were eased and schools resumed unexpectedly during week four of the program, so Girl Tok was rapidly adapted and reduced from five days a week to three, ensuring girls could maintain participation whilst attending school.

At the end of the 12 weeks, students used all their knowledge and newly developed skills to create an advocacy post as part of their final assessment, which they shared with their group on WhatsApp.

Graduation

On the 18th of December 2020, a graduation ceremony and celebration was held for participants in Sierra Leone. fifty-two scholars (75%) and nine mentors (90%) graduated from the pilot program.

Evaluation Methodology

To fully understand the outcomes and impacts of the Girl Tok pilot for participants, progress was tracked against the following set of intended outcomes:

1. Girls develop technology and internet skills
2. Girls feel connected and supported
3. Role models feel empowered
4. Girls know about sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and sexual and gender based violence (SGBV)
5. Girls' education and personal development continues
6. Girls have access to basic hygiene necessities

At the conclusion of the program, participants, mentors and One Girl staff were asked to reflect on their participation, and identify what the outcomes and impacts were for them personally. As a part of the process, suggestions and recommendations for improving and updating the program were gathered.

We collected the following information from scholars:	Completion rate
A written reflection exercise at the end about outcomes and improvements.	75%
The topics chosen for their final projects.	100%
A survey about digital literacy at the induction and graduation.	97% (pre) 93% (post)
Measures of mental wellbeing and isolation at the induction and graduation.	97% (pre) 86% (post)
We collected this information from mentors*:	Completion rate
Outcomes for mentors and how to improve the program.	80%
We collected this information from staff*:	Sample size
Outcomes and how implementation went.	60%

* Information collected via in-depth interviews.



Girl Tok Graduation party, Sierra Leone. December 2020.

1 Primary Outcomes

This section is divided up into the five primary outcomes that girls identified as the most important personal impacts from their participation in the pilot.

During the reflection exercise, girls were asked to consider what the outcomes of the program had been for them, what changes they had experienced throughout its duration, how they felt about themselves and what they felt they could now do as a result of the program.

The three biggest outcomes identified by participants were major increases in digital literacy, learning about mental health and well being, and becoming more confident leaders. Participants also felt they had increased knowledge about sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) and that Girl Tok had been a positive learning environment. These qualitative reflections were reinforced by an analysis of their final assessment posts, the reflections of mentors and One Girl staff, and quantitative data.

The five outcomes identified by girls have been linked back to the five outcomes that we had set out to achieve at the start of the program. The sixth outcome, girls have access to basic hygiene necessities, is discussed separately in the secondary outcome section of this report, as it was not identified as a priority outcome by the girls.

Overall, participants, mentors and staff offered extremely positive feedback! Participants expressed gratitude for the program and found it to have been valuable:

“Like to change nothing about the Girl Tok because they already have everything in place and I like everything. And I am so thankful for everything they have done.”

One Girl staff expressed satisfaction on being a part of a new and unique program with considerable scaling potential:

“This is not being done by anyone else. Girl Tok was one of its kind.”

Digital Literacy

Outcome 1: Girls develop technology and internet skills

Increased digital literacy was the standout outcome identified by participants, mentors and staff. Participants felt the biggest change for them throughout the program were increases in hard skills from using a smartphone, WhatsApp and the internet. Another significant achievement reported by girls was using Google to research topics and complete activities.

“One example was Mariatu. At first she was a bit shy but later on, she was able to stand out among others. She was able to send voice notes, reply to messages. It built [her] confidence.” – Girl Tok Mentor*

Participants also identified general internet knowledge and use as a key outcome, with increased understanding on safety and topics like cyberbullying and sexting. Girls felt they had learned new knowledge and skills in critiquing information sources, privacy protection, censorship and fake news.

“Kadiatu was one example of someone who had learnt a lot. At the beginning of the program, she was ... unable to even open her own phone, buy megabytes or to send voice notes, or to operate it. At the mid point of the program she was able to do all of those things and was even teaching others.” – Girl Tok Mentor*

It's important to note that while increased digital literacy was seen as a positive and important outcome for participants, it was also found to be a significant challenge. Girls felt that learning to use WhatsApp and the internet for the first time was difficult, as

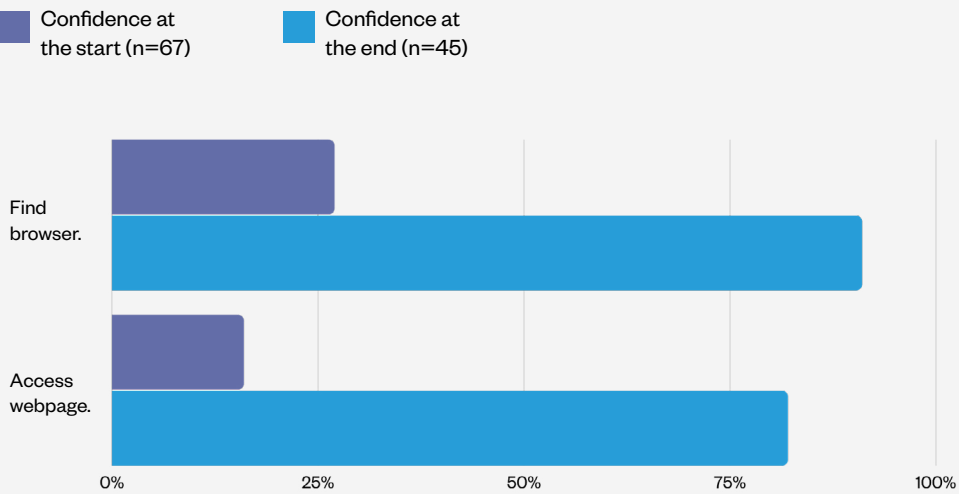
* Names have been changed to protect their identities.

they had little to no exposure to such platforms before, and found themselves overwhelmed at times with so much new information.

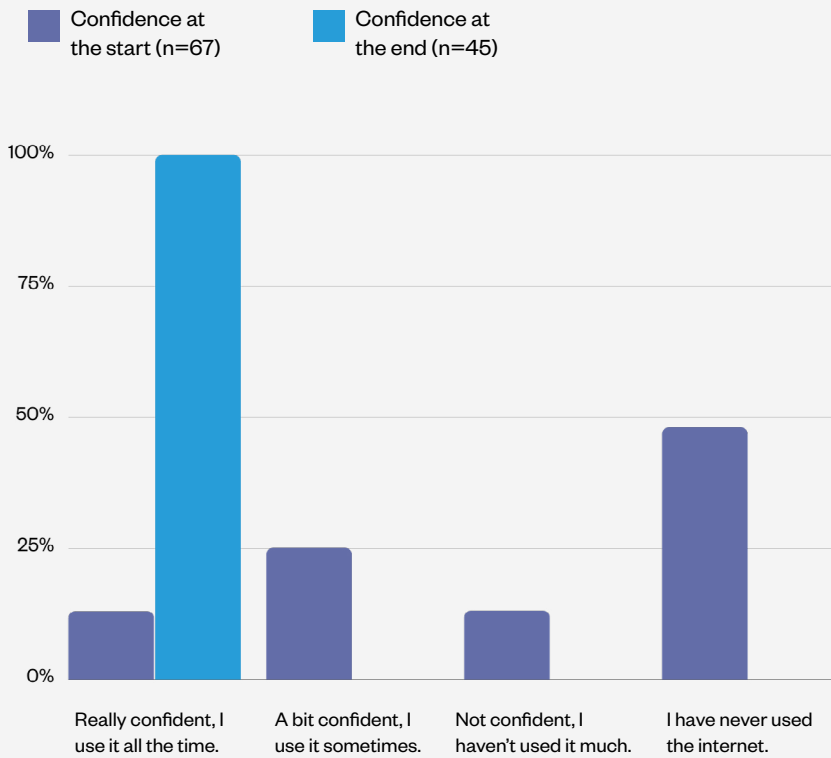
Increased digital literacy was reflected throughout quantitative results, with significant growth in confidence and skills development. 46% of participants had used a smartphone before² the program, but only 18% had used it to access the internet. Participants went from 48% never having used the internet before to 100% using it regularly and feeling exceedingly confident to do so.

Increases in hard skills were also identified, with only 27% of girls at the beginning of the program knowing how to locate the internet browser on their mobile phone and 16% understanding how to visit a website. By the end of the pilot, 82% of girls reported that they could confidently access the internet and use websites to search for information.

INCREASES IN INTERNET SKILLS



INTERNET CONFIDENCE

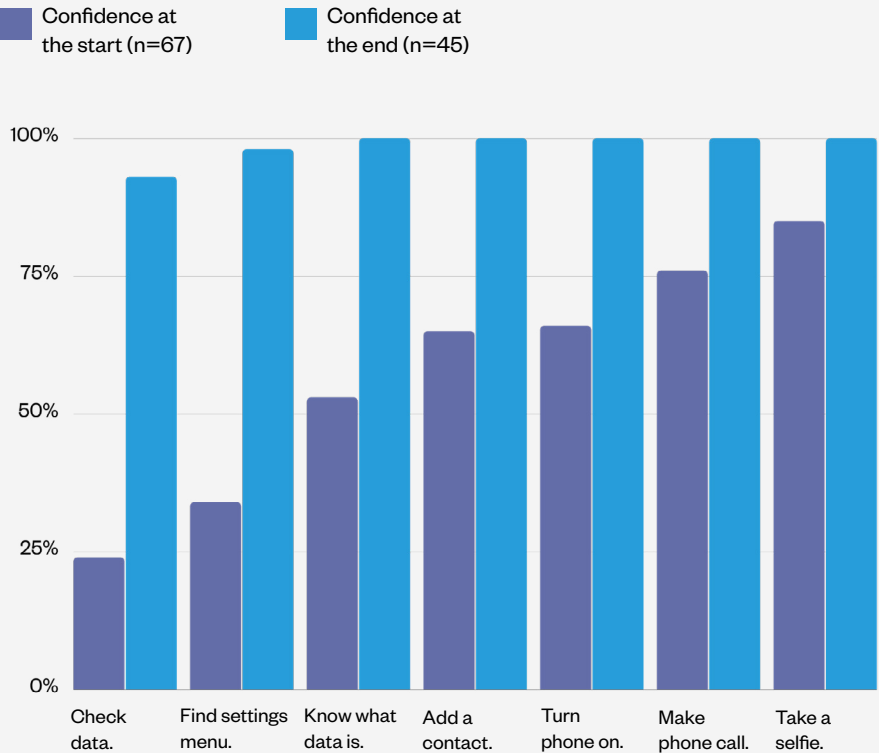


2 88% of families owned a smartphone.

Reflections also highlighted major improvements across the board in mobile phone skills. Girls identified taking 'selfies' as a skill they possessed before commencing the program, with 85% reporting confidence in their ability. Over 50% of girls reported confidence with basic functions like turning the mobile on and off, adding contacts and making phone calls.

A significant portion of girls had no prior knowledge of these functions before participating in Girl Tok, however found themselves feeling comfortable to undertake them by the end. The greatest improvements in knowledge were found to be in performing tasks which were considerably new to the girls, such as navigating mobile phone menus, adjusting settings and checking data.

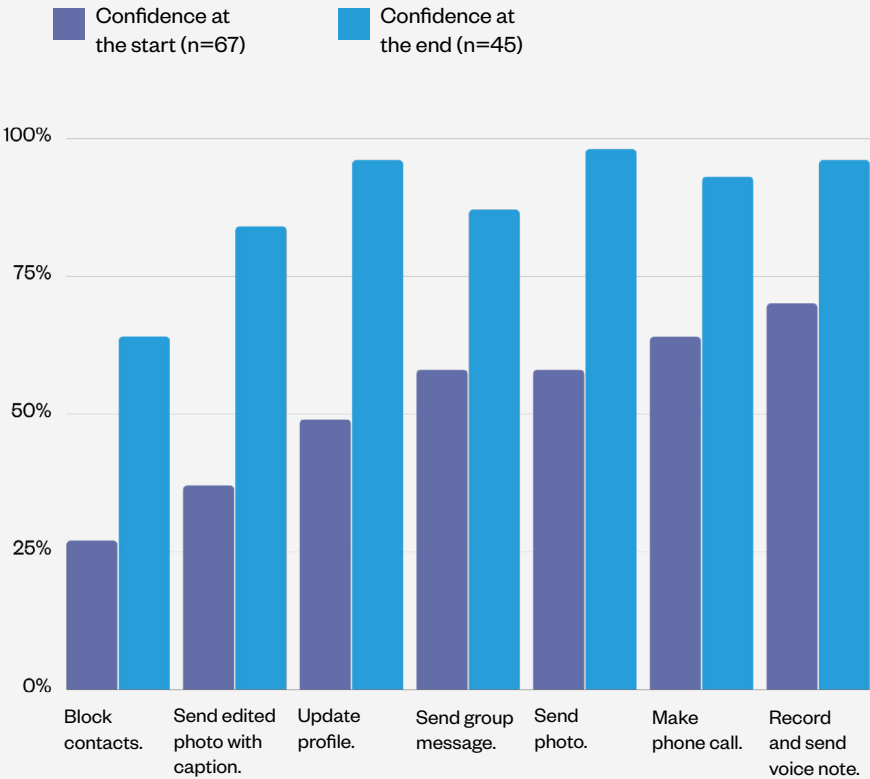
INCREASES IN SMARTPHONE SKILLS



Substantial skills development in using WhatsApp for online learning was identified at the conclusion of the pilot. Girls reported having very little WhatsApp skills at the beginning of the program, with some girls knowing only how to send texts and voice messages, send photos and make phone calls. By the end of the program, knowledge on these basic functions had either doubled or significantly increased.

An interesting factor reported by the girls is knowing how to block contacts on WhatsApp, and understanding the importance of this as a safety measure. Although notable, improvements in this skill were not as high as others, and it will therefore be emphasised in future rollouts of Girl Tok.

INCREASES IN WHATSAPP SKILLS





Girl Tok scholars at the Graduation party, Sierra Leone. December 2020.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Outcome 2: Girls feel connected and supported

The second change identified by participants was increased knowledge about mental health and wellbeing. Girls reported both improved knowledge and feelings of self-esteem as important outcomes. Girls reflected that completing Girl Tok helped them to feel proud of themselves, confident and comfortable with who they are. They reported feeling good, happy and grateful; with strong feelings of empowerment, motivation and fulfillment.

"After Girl Tok I am confident"

"I feel good about myself now"

"I feel like I am a queen"

"I now know that I am unique"

Wellbeing was identified as a completely new topic by participants, with Girl Tok being the first time for most girls to undertake lessons and activities around mindfulness, positive self-talk and affirmations. Girls also identified Girl Tok being the first time they had felt creative and tried expressive activities like journaling.

"I learned about self esteem"

"I learn how to be confident"

"I learned about positive self talk"

Staff identified lessons on mindfulness as a key and crucial aspect of the program, as it's a topic not necessarily taught in schools or explored in local social contexts. Staff expressed that it was therefore important for girls to conclude the program with a useful set of mental health and wellbeing exercises.

Girls reflected on Girl Tok providing the opportunity and space to learn about their talents, work on goal setting, develop their skills and learn useful tools to overcome challenges. Girls now recognise themselves as creative individuals, with exposure to examples of how they can harness their creativity to build

valuable and sustainable careers. With practise in goal setting, girls feel confident in mapping out how to work towards and achieve their goals!

"I have discovered my talent"

"After the Girl Tok - I know more goals and how to achieve goals"

These reflections are supported in the choice of topics posted by girls as part of their final assessment. Many of the girls chose to write about self-esteem, positive body image and self-care. Girls identified the development of a positive, strong sense of self and resilience as key elements to their wellbeing, with respect for themselves and other girls and women noted as very important.

"Positive body image is a major factor in self-esteem which is the way you think about yourself as a person"

"Always be yourself nor matter how times are hard. Respect yourself so that others will respect you. Don't doubt yourself for what others can do, you can do it too"

"Body image and self-esteem start in the mind, not in the mirror."

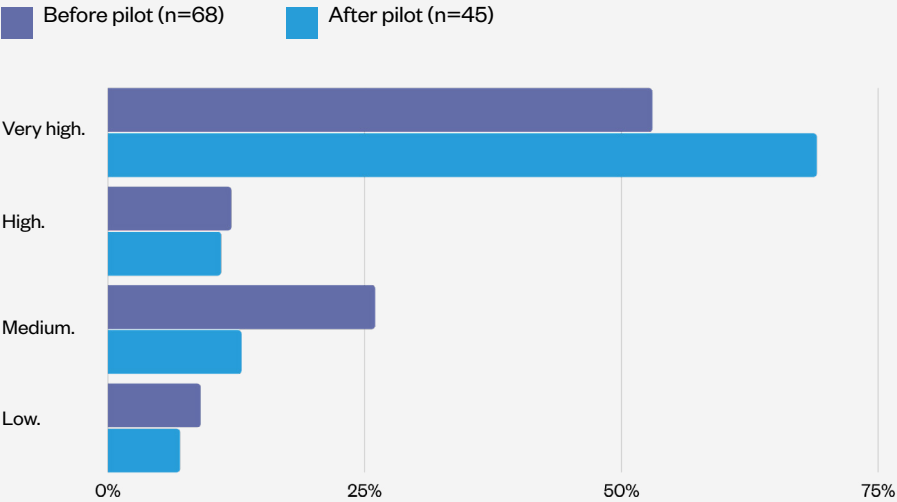
These reflective outcomes are supported by quantitative mental health measures. Given that this program was implemented during a pandemic, our aim was not to significantly increase mental wellbeing and connectedness, rather to maintain steady mental health scores and a sense of connectedness. Overall, either increased or steady mental health and wellbeing scores were achieved, with a slight decline in happiness (likely due to the program ending).

It was great to see that such a high percentage of girls rated their life satisfaction as 'very high' from the start. It was therefore quite amazing to see that these high life satisfaction ratings continued to increase throughout the duration of the program, with 16% more girls reporting 'very high' by the end.

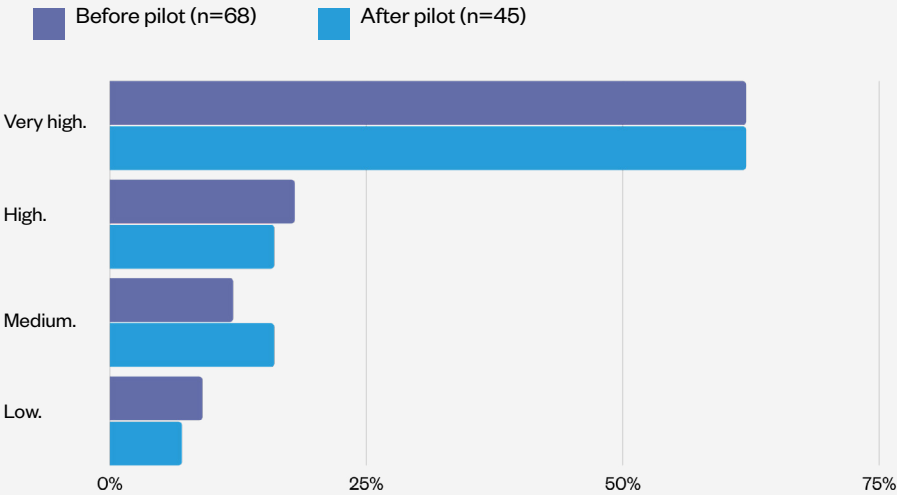
Girls' feelings of worthwhileness remained steady throughout the program at a generally high level, with 78% reporting a 'high' or 'very high' level of worthwhileness at the end. The one mental health category that did decline over the duration of the program however, was the level of happiness; 62% of girls rated their happiness as 'very high' at the start whilst only 33% did at the end of the program.

Staff reflected that this was unlikely to be due to overall feelings of unhappiness, rather that the data was collected during their graduation ceremony and therefore girls were feeling sad that the program was ending and that their mobile phones were being returned.

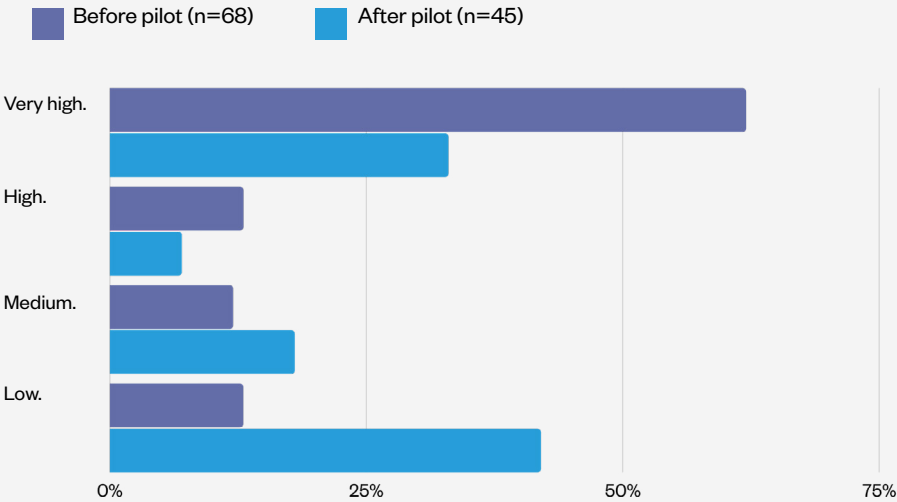
LIFE SATISFACTION RATING



SENSE OF WORTHWHILENESS

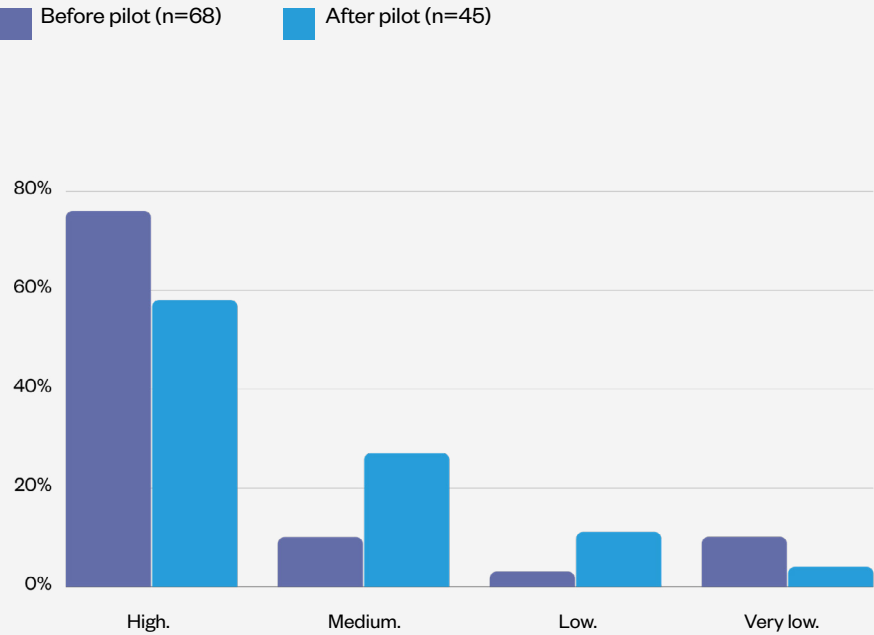


HAPPINESS

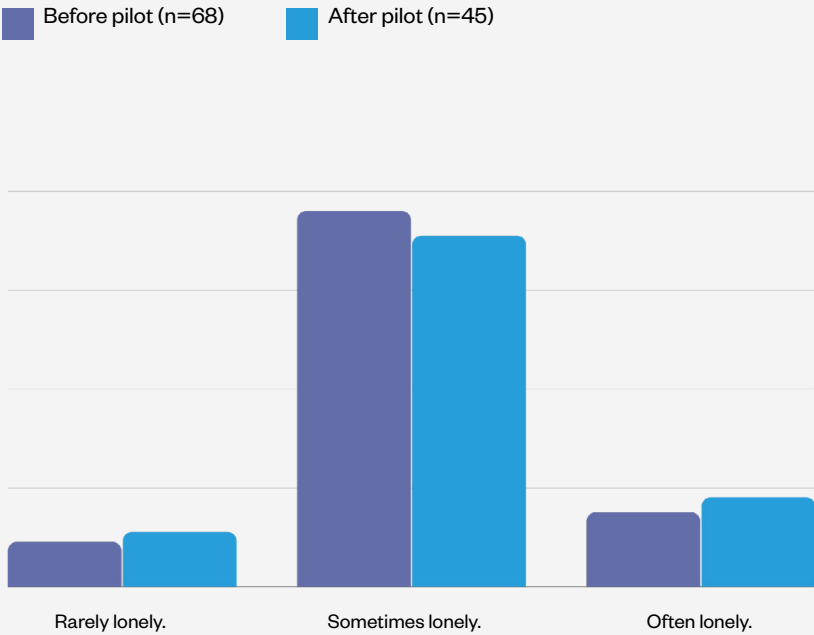


76% of girls reported high levels of anxiety at the start of the program, with this reducing to 58% by the end. The steady loneliness scores are a significant program outcome, considering the program took place during a pandemic, where girls were physically isolated from school and regular support. Scores were similar at the beginning and end, meaning girls felt a moderate level of loneliness.

ANXIETY RATINGS



LONELINESS



Confidence & Leadership

Outcome 3: Leadership through learning and role modelling

The third major outcome reported by participants was increased confidence to share their opinions, as well as learning about leadership and activism. Participants reflected that after Girl Tok, they could “tok to everyone”. They felt Girl Tok provided an important and effective space to talk, express opinions and ask questions.

“I feel a big proud of myself how I can talk”

“I am able to ask question on the internet”

“I can say something about myself now”

Mentors noted that this increase in confidence was the biggest change they had seen in their groups throughout the program. Mentors noticed that girls were more confident engaging in topics that girls typically don’t talk about in Sierra Leone, such as sex, abstinence, menstruation and relationships. They were especially surprised and pleased when participants that had been shy and quiet at the beginning of the program significantly increased their participation and social interactions throughout. Mentors also reflected that they themselves had experienced similar change, with their personal levels of confidence also developing.

“It changes me totally. From being an independent woman to a time conscious person, to being patient and hard working and also to share experiences and feelings and most importantly to be very outspoken and confident as a woman.” – Girl Tok Mentor

Girls reflected that a big change for them was learning about what makes a good leader and that they had the capabilities to be a leader themselves. Girls identified One Girl’s Africa Regional Director as a role model, and saw her as an aspirational figure they would like to be like in the future.

They also felt a big change was knowing about activism and being activists

themselves. Girls reported that they could now independently research to learn about the world.

“I can be a good leader”

“I know that I can empower other girls some day”

“I know what happens around the world e.g. COVID-19”

Girls’ increased knowledge about leadership and activism were reflected in their final assessments, with the language of human rights being evident throughout the posts – some explicitly making the link that “women’s rights are human rights”. The tools of empowerment – education, activism, equal recognition and self-advocacy – were also referenced in the posts, indicating that throughout the program, the girls were not only thinking about what it meant to be empowered, but what actions they could take to empower both themselves and other girls and women:

“Gender inequality underpins many problems which disproportionately affects women and girls, such as domestic and sexual violence and inadequate healthcare”

“Women’s empowerment... this includes the action of raising awareness, literacy, and training.”

In their final assessment, girls emphasised the need for women’s empowerment and gender equality for societal growth and development. Much of the content not only reflected the benefit girls and women would see from greater empowerment directly, but also how such equity contributes to development at the household, community, national and global level:

“‘Because when you educated a girl, you educate a nation’ - Girls we need more opportunities”

“Women’s empowerment and achieving gender equality is essential for our society to ensure the sustainable development of the country”

“By empowering a woman, we empower a household.”

Increased knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and sexual and gender based violence (SGBV)

Outcome 4: Girls know about SRHR and SGBV

The fourth big change identified by participants was that they have greater knowledge and awareness about consent and sexual and gender based violence (SGBV).

“I know my rights and responsibilities as a Girl”

“I feel I know what is my body, my choice”

Staff reflected that body image and self worth in relation to sex and relationships was a new conversation for girls, adding value to the standard sexual and reproductive health and rights lessons taught in Sierra Leonean schools. Communities seem to be falling short in teaching girls and teens these crucial lessons, where staff identified that body image and self worth are crucial for girls to build and maintain positive relationships.

This outcome was reflected in the participants' final assessment posts, where concepts of body autonomy and girls' right to independence and choice were recurrent themes. The differing facets of autonomy (within intimate relationships, family, and when making significant life decisions) were incorporated by many of the girls.

“Bodily autonomy is the act of movement to end sexual violence”

“One of the most important [rights] of a woman is privacy.”

“Education my right, marriage my choice”

From sharing information and evidence about gender based violence to practical strategies to protect and defend themselves and others, and calling for action to end harassment; the posts emphasised girls' and women's rights to safety and security against violence.

The content covered topics such as sexual harassment, child marriage and intimate partner violence, linking each back to underlying causes such as a lack of gender equality. Content also covered potential consequences, such as impacts to health for girls and women.

Supportive Learning Environment

Outcome 5: Girls' education and personal development continues

The final key outcome of Girl Tok as identified by participants was the supportive learning environment. Participants felt a significant aspect of this were the mentors, their teaching style and how they spoke to participants.

“I like the way our mentor is teaching us”

“I like the way the mentor talks”

This outcome was also identified by program mentors, reflecting that they had developed greater patience, learned essential skills to become better teachers and facilitate online lessons, and learned how to identify what motivates their students. Mentors also identified Girl Tok as an opportunity to improve their professional skills, such as time management and teamwork.

Participants highly valued the positive learning environment experienced through working in their small groups. Girls particularly enjoyed that the groups offered a comfortable space where they could have fun and be themselves, whilst also learning about important topics and developing their skills. Girls reflected on the atmosphere of learning, where they could ask questions and be encouraged to learn new things.

These reflections were supported via the regular check in calls, which participants specified that they appreciated.

Girl Tok staff tracked a growing sense of belonging and friendship between the girls, through simple but impactful actions such as the girls regularly sharing selfies and statuses. Staff reflected that this sense of belonging was enhanced by particular mentors, who expertly used their facilitation skills to bring the groups together and foster safe and comfortable learning environments. This friendship and connectedness was illustrated beautifully through the consistent emotions of “joy and elation” expressed by the girls at the graduation party, where one group all wore matching *asoebi*³.

Reflections on a positive learning environment are supported by the quantitative results of how many girls returned to school post lockdown. In January 2021, 83% of girls had returned to school. Of the 69 school age participants, 29 returned in October 2020 and 28 in January 2021. In addition to these numbers, nine scholars in their final year attended graduation classes outside of school in preparation to repeat their final exam. That takes the percentage of girls returning to formal and supplementary education to an incredible 96%.



³ Uniform dress that is traditional in some West African cultures as an indicator of cooperation and solidarity during ceremonies.

2 Secondary Outcome

Health & Hygiene

Outcome 6: Girls have access to basic hygiene necessities

The final intended outcome for Girl Tok was that girls would develop knowledge and understanding of menstruation and basic health needs, whilst also having access to hygiene packs inclusive of sanitary items, soap and face masks.

This in turn was intended to reduce the need for survival strategies such as transactional relationships, that were witnessed in the aftermath of Ebola⁴ in 2014. This outcome sits separately from the above five outcomes, as it was not identified clearly by participants as an important impact for them upon the conclusion of Girl Tok.

Girl Tok offered information and resources on staying safe and healthy during the pandemic and lockdown, as part of the induction process within the first two weeks of the program. Tackling period taboos and menstruation were also covered during week eight of the program. Some girls did report having learnt something new about menstruation and COVID-19 as part of the program.

Participants and staff did not report any instances of survival strategies, like transactional relationships. This could be attributed to a number of reasons, such as the health crisis not being as severe and as long as Ebola, or participants simply choosing not to share this information with staff.

3 Key Learnings & Recommendations

The following challenges and suggestions are a combination of those reported by participants, mentors and staff. Overall, there was consensus on the design of the program, with no major identified adjustments. It is a testament to the 'always learning' culture at One Girl that respondents were so open and honest with their suggestions for improvements.

All learnings need to be read in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as the program was constantly adapted to suit the evolving situation in Sierra Leone and Australia.

1. Designing a program quickly for a pandemic was a challenging yet exciting opportunity.

Launching a program in response to a humanitarian crisis is always a difficult task in terms of time and resources, with insecure funding and disrupted supply chains creating challenges in sourcing equipment.

Getting Girl Tok up and running was an exciting process for One Girl staff, who were involved in both the proposal and design aspects of the program. Moving forward, it is recommended to allocate more time to this stage of the process, expanding and strengthening the consultation and testing phases

2. Initial low digital literacy made the first few weeks difficult

Low digital literacy amongst participants created challenges in getting the girls online and engaged within the first few weeks. Moving forward, it is recommended that the induction phase include more practical activities for faster learning, whilst running over two, more structured days, instead of one.

3. Timing of the sessions was difficult to balance with life and school.

To help promote ownership of their groups, girls discussed timing for each session with their mentors every week. Some girls were unable to be online for morning sessions and others found it difficult to balance evening sessions with their chores. This became especially difficult when school unexpectedly reopened for 50% of participants in October 2020. Changing session times did present a challenge for staff to manage, however, reducing the number of days from five to three was a positive step in mitigating this.

4. Program is best for older students

Looking at both qualitative and quantitative results from the program, it can be identified that girls in secondary school were more engaged and reflective in the program, taking a much more 'mature' approach to their lessons compared to girls in younger grades.

Secondary school aged girls were more capable of problem solving, understanding lesson topics and instructions, and were more responsible with their mobile phones. The oldest participants in the final grade of senior secondary school were found to lose focus due to their impending graduation, and the program outcomes were not designed to support younger students.

5. Poor internet connection

Poor internet connectivity was a challenge at times for participants, especially when lessons involved high bandwidth activities such as YouTube and videos. It is therefore recommended to prioritise adaptations to such lessons, where staff can download and send videos in a compressed format.

6. Staff Time

With Girl Tok being a new program, a lot of time was spent supporting mentors and facilitating program groups. There were also some concerns about partic-

ipants being able to contact staff at all times. Although, it was found that staff having the ability to contact participants via phone made field work considerably faster. Moving forward, it is recommended to lean in on lessons learnt around prioritising tasks and allocating time, whilst also targeting older students who are more likely to have a greater understanding of and respect for boundaries.

7. Parents and guardians are important for outcomes.

Girl Tok allowed for working closely with parents and guardians, highlighting the importance of their role as parents in girls' outcomes for this program and their schooling. It's recommended to include a parent support aspect into this program moving forward.

8. Topics and activities were great but some need adapting

As with any pilot program, some Girl Tok activities and lessons landed better than others, however overall feedback was very positive. Participants loved videos, mindfulness and researching topics on Google. More complex topics like menstruation and sexual and reproductive health and rights require simplification moving forward, with some activities requiring adaptation for more suitability to the cultural context and online delivery.

9. Overall excellent participation, with some challenges

The program received an excellent retention rate, with 75% of participants completing the entire program. Seventeen participants were removed from the program because they were unable to participate, for reasons such as poor literacy, sickness and family responsibilities. This closer insight into the lives of participants is an outcome in itself, and it's therefore recommended moving forward to incorporate greater literacy support and lessons for parents and guardians on the importance of school/life balance.

10. Mentors were excellent but required a lot of support

Overall, the mentors did an incredible job leading the Girl Tok groups. However, some were stronger teachers than others and they all required a considerable amount of support, especially in the first few weeks. Moving forward, it is recommended to strengthen the mentor aspect of the program, lengthening their training to incorporate more online facilitation skills development, as well as offering more in-depth information regarding all lessons and topics.

Conclusion

Given the outcomes outlined in this evaluation, the 2020 Girl Tok Pilot Program was an incredible success!

It's amazing to see that the outcomes identified by participants match perfectly with the intended outcomes of the program. Overall, participants felt that they gained a lot from the program, with the most important changes for them being the development of digital literacy skills, knowledge and understanding around mental health and wellbeing and increased confidence and knowledge about leadership and activism. Girls also identified significant increases in knowledge about sexual and gender based violence, choosing to post about this in their final assessments.

The positive learning environment fostered and facilitated by mentors and staff helped participants feel a strong sense of belonging and connectedness throughout the program (and in the midst of a lockdown), creating space for them to develop new friendships as well as new skills.

The program's overall goal was for participants to remain connected and learning, supporting them to return to school post-lockdown. This was achieved, with 96% of girls returning to either formal or out of school education.

The program received an abundance of positive and constructive feedback

from participants, mentors and staff; ensuring meaningful and impactful improvements to program design and implementation moving forward. This is proof of One Girl's 'always learning' and 'transparent' values in action, at all levels!

Concluding the Girl Tok Pilot Program and this evaluation – all intended goals were achieved and outcomes reached. Most importantly, there is now a brand new cohort of confident, well informed digital leaders ready to change their lives, and the lives of girls around them!



www.onegirl.org.au / info@onegirl.org.au

ONE GIRL