



A PRACTICAL HANDBOOK FOR CREATING AND LEADING A GIRLS' CLUB



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STRONG GIRLS make STRONG WOMEN

A PRACTICAL HANDBOOK FOR CREATING AND LEADING A GIRLS' CLUB



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INTERNATIONAL

2018

Julia Fan and Susan M. Blaustein

Start-Up Guide

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS (hyperlinks are underlined)

AGI: Adolescent Girls' Initiative	JHS: [in Ghana] Junior High School
ARHF: Adolescent Reproductive Health Forum (Fora), a program of Women's Health to Wealth	KAP: Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice
AVFP: Alice Visionary Foundation Project	LGBT: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
BOM: [School] Board of Management	LSTC: Life Skill Training Course, a program of the Adolescent Girls' Initiative
DCE: [in Ghana] District Chief Executive	MCI: Millennium Cities Initiative, a project of Columbia University's Earth Institute
DEO: [in Ghana] District Education Office	MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
DHAN: DHAN Foundation	NGO: Nongovernmental Organization
FGM/C: Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting w	S.M.A.R.T. Goals: Goals that are Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Timely
GAGE: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence	SHS: [in Ghana] Senior High School
GBV: Gender-Based Violence	SoCCs: Social Capital Credits
GCC: [in Ghana] Girl Child Coordinator	STI: Sexually Transmitted Infection
GES: Ghana Education Service	UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights
GS&L: Group Savings & Loan	UN: United Nations
H.O.P.E.: Haiti Outreach Pwoje Espwa	USAID: United States Agency for International Development
HAGN: Haiti Adolescent Girls Network	VAW: Violence Against Women
HIV/AIDS: Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	WASH: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
IRC: International Rescue Committee	WHW: Women's Health to Wealth

Acknowledgments

Strong Girls Make Strong Women was developed by WomenStrong International Senior Research and Program Associate Julia Fan and edited by WomenStrong's Founder and Executive Director Susan M. Blaustein. The impetus for writing this Handbook came from four WomenStrong Consortium Members, who have also played an integral role in the creation of this Handbook, from topic selection, to introduction of and feedback on specific content, to final editing. Thank you to the directors and staff at the following WomenStrong Consortium Members: Alice Visionary Foundation Project, in Kisumu, Kenya; DHAN Foundation, in Madurai, India; Haiti Outreach Pwoje Espwa (H.O.P.E.), in Borgne, Haiti; and Women's Health to Wealth, in Kumasi, Ghana.

Additionally, this Handbook draws from experts in the field of youth and girls' development and education, and would not have been possible without the enthusiastic support of the following organizations and individuals:¹

(Click to link to website)

- ◇ Amnesty International
- ◇ Asia Initiatives
- ◇ Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University
- ◇ Elisa Knebel
- ◇ FHI 360
- ◇ Girl Effect
- ◇ Girl Pride Circle
- ◇ Haiti Adolescent Girls Network
- ◇ Human Rights Campaign Foundation
- ◇ Institute of Reproductive Health, Georgetown University
- ◇ International Rescue Committee
- ◇ IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre
- ◇ LitWorld
- ◇ Live & Learn Environmental Education
- ◇ Melissa Donohue
- ◇ Peace Corps
- ◇ Population Council
- ◇ Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
- ◇ Safe Schools Program, DevTech Systems
- ◇ Save the Children
- ◇ Simply Outrageous Youth
- ◇ South African Medical Research Council
- ◇ Teachers College, Columbia University
- ◇ United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- ◇ World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts



WomenStrong is sincerely grateful for these organizations' support for this Handbook and for their commitment to open-source knowledge-sharing in service of improving the lives of girls around the world.

¹ For more information on the contributions of these organizations to this Handbook, see Part V: Works Cited.

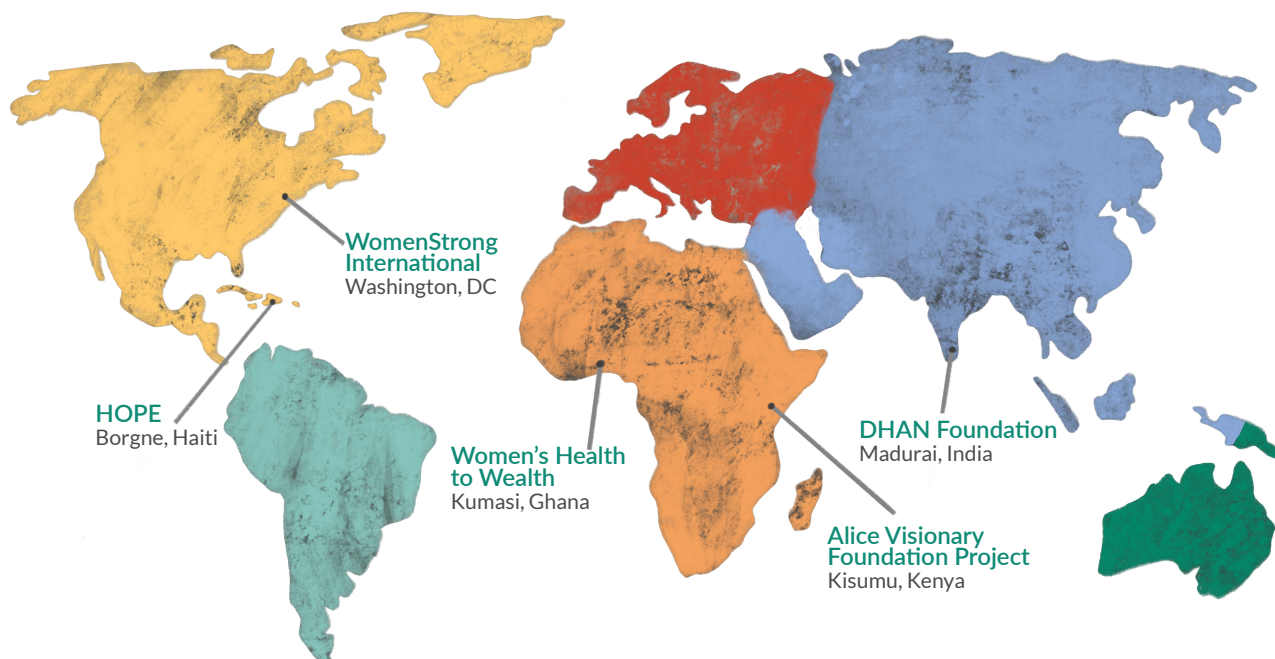


About WomenStrong International

At WomenStrong, we know the path out of poverty and toward a more just and prosperous world can be found by making women and girls strong.

WomenStrong International is a global consortium of nonprofit organizations working with women and girls to end extreme urban poverty. In collaboration with the Consortium, WomenStrong develops, finances, and shares powerful, women-driven solutions that transform the lives of women and girls, their families, and their communities. In health, education, safety, and economic empowerment, WomenStrong solutions are for women, by women, on their journey toward more fulfilling lives and the creation of a more just and prosperous world.

One such solution across four of WomenStrong's Consortium Members is our Girls' Clubs—spaces for girls' growth, education, support, and empowerment. Each program's Girls' Clubs have their own unique characteristics based on the local context and on the needs of the girls with whom they work. The experiences of these Consortium Members in implementing Girls' Club programs deeply inform this Handbook.



About WomenStrong International Consortium Members



Alice Visionary Foundation Project (Kisumu, Kenya)

Alice Visionary Foundation Project (AVFP), located in Kisumu, Kenya, works on health, economic empowerment, education, and safety for women and girls. AVFP's director founded the Girls' and Boys' "Empowerment Clubs" program in Kisumu as part of her earlier work with Columbia University's Millennium Cities Initiative (MCI), whose work in Kenya's third largest city has continued under AVFP and WomenStrong, since MCI closed in 2015.² MCI's partner in launching the Kisumu Empowerment Clubs was the New York nonprofit LitWorld, whose "7 Strengths" curriculum was utilized in order to focus on strengthening literacy skills and self-esteem.³ AVFP has since incorporated a number of other widely used resources (many of which are shared here) and has also localized its Empowerment Club curriculum considerably, using local readings and activities deemed well-targeted for the population it serves. As of July 2018, AVFP currently runs four Empowerment Clubs, serving 113 girls and 38 boys, in public primary schools in the Manyatta informal settlements of Kisumu.⁴



DHAN Foundation (Madurai, India)

DHAN Foundation (DHAN) works in 14 states across India and runs WomenStrong-supported programs in Madurai City, in Tamil Nadu State. DHAN is rooted in community mobilization, starting with Self-Help Groups, or Kalanjiam, in which women develop greater financial literacy, economic stability, and freedom. DHAN also works on health, advocacy, shelter, urban infrastructure, sanitation, and education. DHAN's Girls' Clubs are part of the organization's community health program and have a deep health focus. DHAN has run Girls' Clubs for over a decade in other parts of India, but WomenStrong support has enabled DHAN to launch Clubs in the city of Madurai, beginning in mid-2015. DHAN's Clubs are community-based and run by Club-elected peer educators, Self-Help Group members, and DHAN field staff. DHAN's Clubs do not have a set curriculum, as the curricular material is developed by the peer educators and DHAN field staff, based on the needs of the girls in each Club. As of July 2018, DHAN has 8,175 girls in its 536 Clubs. DHAN also established Boys' Clubs in Madurai in March 2016, to address boys' and men's roles in effecting gender equality and to reduce drug and alcohol addiction. As of July 2018, DHAN had 64 Boys' Clubs, with 785 members.

² Founded in 2014, WomenStrong International builds on the work of Dr. Susan M. Blaustein and Columbia University's Millennium Cities Initiative by continuing partnerships with AVFP and Women's Health to Wealth (WHW) and adding innovative non-profit organizations in India, Haiti, and the United States.

³ LitWorld, *LitClub Curriculum: The 7 Strengths* (LitWorld, 2011).

⁴ The Clubs operate in several Kisumu "upper primary" schools—that is, in public school grades 5–8—and are designed for students aged 10–15. Given repeated and fervent requests of Empowerment Club graduates for continued support once they have moved on to boarding school (high school), AVFP now runs Teens' Clubs for Empowerment Club alumnae when they are back in town during the long breaks between school terms, as a way to continue the education and support they had received in the Empowerment Club. The teens are also trained as peer educators and mentors and provide support and mentorship to Empowerment Club participants. For the purposes of this Handbook, unless otherwise noted, discussion of AVFP's Clubs will primarily refer to the Empowerment Clubs that meet regularly in school for upper primary-aged students.



Haiti Outreach Pwoje Espwa (H.O.P.E.) (Borgne, Haiti)

Haiti Outreach Pwoje Espwa (H.O.P.E.) operates in Haiti's northernmost commune of Borgne, an area of 80,000 inhabitants who live in several agglomerations of villages and in the impoverished seaside town of Borgne. H.O.P.E. runs a comprehensive health program, including a hospital, mobile health services, and health education. It also provides community outreach and capacity-building programs, including adult literacy and commune-wide women's and girls' empowerment programs such as Mothers' Clubs, and is also developing income-generating opportunities and training for women and girls.

H.O.P.E. officially launched its Girls' Clubs program, called Espas Pa'm or "A Space of My Own," in January 2017, in partnership with the Haiti Adolescent Girls Network (HAGN) and the affiliated New York-based Population Council. H.O.P.E.'s Girls' Clubs were conceptualized and built using the Population Council's Girl Roster and Girl-Centered Program Design tools, which helped identify girls of appropriate ages in Borgne who were potentially at risk.⁵ H.O.P.E.'s Girls' Clubs use a HAGN-developed, *kreyol* language curriculum, customized for the Haitian context.⁶ As of July 2018, H.O.P.E. operated five Clubs, with 110 girls participating.



Women's Health to Wealth (Kumasi, Ghana)

Women's Health to Wealth (WHW) works in Kumasi, Ghana, on the issues of health, economic empowerment, education, and safety for women and girls. WHW established its own Girls' Clubs in February 2015, in partnership with Ghana Education Service in government schools. WHW's executive director revised and expanded a program she had first introduced in Kumasi City schools as part of Columbia University's Millennium Cities Initiative, which preceded and led to the creation of WHW and its own ongoing work with women and girls. The Millennium Cities program, initiated in conjunction with MCI partner LitWorld, initially used LitWorld's curriculum to increase self-esteem and literacy. MCI's Kumasi project director gradually localized the curriculum by including more culturally attuned readings, indigenous (Twi language) songs, and other activities.⁷ When MCI closed, and its Ghana director founded WHW as a WomenStrong Consortium Member, WHW and WomenStrong set up three dozen Girls' Clubs, of which, as of July 2018, 34 were operating in four districts in and around Kumasi, with 1,069 participating girls.⁸

5 Karen Austrian and Dennitah Ghati, *Girl-Centered Program Design: A Toolkit to Develop, Strengthen, and Expand Adolescent Girls Programs* (Population Council, 2010), <http://www.popcouncil.org/research/girl-centered-program-design-a-toolkit-to-develop-strengthen-and-expand-ado>; and Population Council, *The Girl Roster Toolkit* (Population Council, 2015).

6 Haiti Adolescent Girls Network, *My Own Space* (Haiti Adolescent Girls Network, November 2016).

7 Abenaa Akuamo-Boateng, *2015 WHW Girls' Club Curriculum* (Women's Health to Wealth, 2015); and Abenaa Akuamo-Boateng, *2016 WHW Girls' Club Curriculum* (Women's Health to Wealth, 2016).

8 In addition to its Girls' Clubs, WHW also runs Adolescent Reproductive Health Fora (ARHF) for girls in Senior High School (grades 10–12). The ARHFs are held approximately once per term or per school year and are organized in conjunction with several health care partners on topics related to sexual and reproductive health. While some Handbook lessons would be relevant for the ARHFs, this Handbook is primarily designed for Clubs that meet more regularly and that (in general) serve younger girls, between the ages of 10 and 14. Thus, discussion of WHW's Clubs refers to its Girls' Clubs, not to WHW's ARHF program, unless otherwise noted.



Letter from WomenStrong Founder/Executive Director Susan M. Blaustein ———○

✱ All of us would agree: our children are the future.

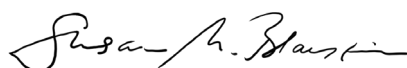
They are all precious, and each is unique, with boundless potential. Together, they will redefine our planet for generations to come.

Regardless of their circumstances, all children must have support, love, nourishment, and skills in order to thrive. At WomenStrong International, given the special vulnerabilities of girls worldwide, we focus on their ability to meet their essential needs and on equipping them with the critical strengths and awareness that will enable them to lead healthy, fulfilled, and productive lives. Working closely with girls in impoverished communities in Ghana, Haiti, India, and Kenya, our WomenStrong Consortium Members know the world of difference a trained mentor and a sense of sisterhood can make in helping them feel loved, respected, and able to thrive. The power of groups, so intrinsic to the power of Girls' (and Boys'!) Clubs, reveals that you are part of something larger than yourself, that others may have experienced similar challenges and are eager to share solutions, and that together, with learned strength, skills, and confidence, you can overcome those challenges and move on.¹⁰

The 16 chapters offered here, each of which is also a downloadable module online, represent a universe of best practices for empowering *all* children with the tools and skills that can make this vision possible. The values, lessons, activities, and takeaways shared here include those imparted daily in a wide array of settings by our own WomenStrong Consortium Members in our Girls' and Boys' Clubs. Topics range from building self-confidence, to acquiring financial literacy skills, to understanding the mechanics of reproductive health, to navigating complex relationships: the knowledge needed to lead fully actualized lives.

The Start-Up Guide that leads off this volume is designed to help teachers, mentors, school administrators, parents, and/or peers set up and operate a Girls' or Boys' Club and anticipates some of the hurdles you may encounter, based on our own and others' experience. We invite you to read, test, and use whatever portions of our Start-Up Guide and Curriculum seem most appropriate for your setting and for the children and youth with whom you work, in any sequence, in any setting, at any time. We at WomenStrong International welcome your feedback, which you can contribute by writing to us at info@womenstrong.org. We look forward to improving our offerings on the basis of your experience. We are in this together, sharing the keen desire to see our children thrive.

Let us share what we know, therefore, and share broadly what we learn from each other—with the common aim of imparting vital skills and knowledge to those we are raising to inherit the earth.



Dr. Susan M. Blaustein
Executive Director
WomenStrong International

¹⁰ As noted in the Girls' Club Start-Up Guide, if you are using this Handbook to organize and operate Boys' Clubs or coeducational Clubs, simply substitute or add in "boys" wherever "girls" are mentioned.

INTRODUCTION

“ If you educate a man, you educate an individual,
but if you educate a woman,
you educate a nation. ”

– Dr. Kwegyir Aggrey, Ghanaian educator



Educating women starts with educating girls, and WomenStrong International believes that educating girls makes girls strong. Strong girls will create a strong world in which we all want to live. Educated girls grow into educated women who earn more income, marry later, have fewer children, and make healthier life choices than those not able to complete their education. All these impacts are good not only for girls and women, but also for their families, their communities, and their countries. But accessing a good education for girls living in extreme urban poverty can be very difficult.

WomenStrong International, in partnership with four of its Consortium Members, began its own Girls' Clubs to meet the greatest needs of girls in their respective communities. Girls' Clubs provide girls with a safe space to grow and develop into confident and powerful young women. Clubs can deliver supplemental education on important topics, such as sexual and reproductive health, that may not be taught in schools, and are essential for out-of-school girls to learn, as well. Most importantly, Clubs serve as a social connection for adolescent girls at a crucial time in their development, when girls may be at risk for abuse, violence, or pressured to drop out of school. This social connection gives girls a resource and a place to turn to in the face of those coming-of-age challenges. WomenStrong's Consortium Members began their Girls' Club programs to support adolescent girls during this crucial time. After running these Clubs for a number of years, each of these organizations has valuable lessons to share about how it has adapted the Girls' Club program model to meet the needs of girls on the ground in four distinctly different sociocultural contexts, in Ghana, Haiti, India, and Kenya.

This Handbook includes both a Girls' Clubs Start-Up Guide for designing, planning, and implementing a Girls' Club, and a modular Girls' Clubs Curriculum that WomenStrong has developed out of its own Consortium Members' experience, as well as from the knowledge of other experts on girls' education and empowerment.

This Handbook is written for Girls' Club Facilitators, whether they are teachers or community members, but it can also be useful for education or gender program officers or administrators working in individual schools, government education departments or ministries, nongovernmental or community-based organizations, parents, and others who share WomenStrong's passion for helping strong, educated girls to build their confidence and fulfill their potential. Designed to be easily consumable for busy Facilitators without the time to sort through hundreds of curricula, the Handbook includes chapters on topics crucial to adolescent girls' successful development. It is intended to serve as a quick reference guide and curriculum for Facilitators who want to create a customized Club that teaches what their girls most need. Our Handbook draws on many existing curricula and reworks specific learning materials to be customizable for most contexts, so that they can address the needs of local girls and boys. By citing the practices of WomenStrong's four Consortium Members, users of this Handbook can see different ways in which this Girls' Club model and curriculum might usefully be adapted to suit their own contexts.

The Handbook's Start-Up Guide offers a broad overview of how to set up a Girls' Club, enriched by experiences from WomenStrong's four Consortium Members. The Start-Up Guide's first section provides background information most relevant for Girls' Club Program Administrators about Club formation and then provides more general information useful for Program Administrators and Facilitators alike. Our Start-Up Guide does not attempt to dictate the best way to set up a Club; rather, it raises questions and issues to consider when forming a Club. The different innovations devised by WomenStrong Consortium Members to address the challenges their girls face serve as guiding examples of ways in which a Girls' Club might function and might be adapted to the local context.

The second part of the Handbook is a 16-chapter curriculum to be used during Club sessions by Facilitators. Each chapter consists of 2–5 approximately 60-minute lessons and is written such that it can be taught alone or in conjunction with other chapters.¹¹ Because the curriculum is modular—that is, it is designed to be used or downloaded as needed, without necessarily following in sequence—Facilitators can skip chapters that are not relevant and go straight to those that can help meet their girls' most urgent needs. The chapters are arranged in a suggested order, but again, they can be re-ordered and customized as needed, based on context and on Club members' ages. The materials for this curriculum come from WomenStrong's own sites, as well as from experts and organizations with long track records of working with adolescent girls.

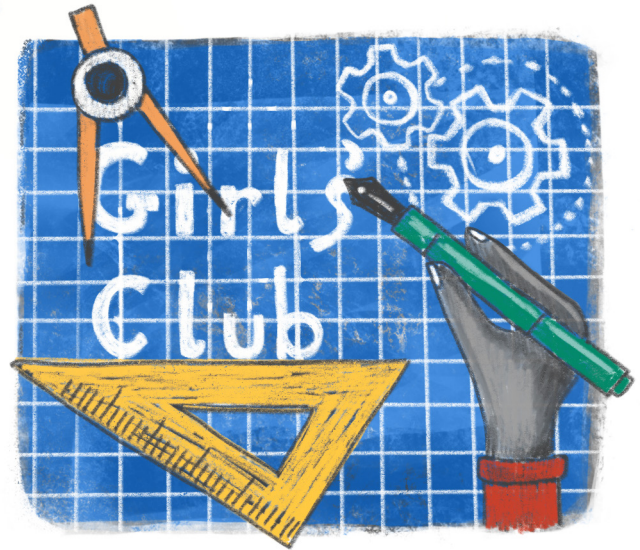
While throughout this document the term "Girls' Clubs" is used, many Girls' Clubs also include or engage boys in some way. Most of the topics in this Handbook are applicable to boys and to Boys' Clubs. How these materials are taught, though, may need to be modified, depending on the gender composition of your Club. Throughout this Handbook, Club participants are frequently referred to as "girls," but again, these lessons can readily be applied to address the needs and interests of boys.



¹¹ While each chapter can be taught on its own, lessons *within* a given chapter may be codependent and should be taught in order.

Part 1: Girls' Club Start-Up Guide

This section of the Handbook, the Girls' Club Start-Up Guide, is a simplified reference guide for how to design and implement a Girls' Club. This Guide is intended for individuals and organizations interested in and/or in the process of building a new Girls' Club or Girls' Club program. The success of a Girls' Club is largely determined by the structure and management of the Club and can vary depending on the Club's objectives, which are developed during the program design and planning phases. Therefore, WomenStrong chose to include this Start-Up Guide in its Handbook, so that all Girls' Club Facilitators and Program Administrators have the tools they need, first to create and then to implement a successful Girls' Club that will produce the intended results in the lives of your Club participants.¹



This Start-Up Guide discusses key topics to consider in planning, designing, forming, and managing a Girls' Club. For each topic related to creating and running a Club, this Guide provides examples selected from the experiences of WomenStrong Consortium Members to demonstrate the different ways a Club might be run, depending on your setting and the needs of the girls with whom you intend to work.² This Guide does not attempt to prescribe "best practices" to be used in all settings, but rather presents the most important program design points to consider when creating your own Club and offers examples of how WomenStrong Consortium Members structured their own programs in relation to each point. You should then consider your own context, resources, and needs, as you address each of these key Girls' Club design and management topics.

The first section, "Planning for a Girls' Club," is written specifically for Girls' Club Program Administrators, rather than for Facilitators. Program Administrators may have access to more resources and may be more familiar than a Club Facilitator with this kind of program planning. For a Facilitator interested in starting your Girls' Club immediately, you are welcome to skip to Section 2, "Club Design and Formation."

¹ Girls' Club Facilitators are the individuals teaching or leading the Girls' Clubs. Facilitators may be teachers, parents, community leaders, or development practitioners. For more on Facilitators, see the section entitled, "Recruiting Facilitators." Girls' Club Program Administrators are those organizing and operating the Girls' Clubs. They may or may not be the same people as those facilitating the Club.

² This Handbook draws on the experiences of four of WomenStrong International's Consortium Members: Women's Health to Wealth (WHW) in Kumasi, Ghana; DHAN Foundation (DHAN) in Madurai, India; the Alice Visionary Foundation Project (AVFP) in Kisumu, Kenya; and Haiti Outreach Pwoje Espwa (H.O.P.E.) in Borgne, Haiti. To learn more about these four organizations, see "About WomenStrong International Consortium Members," or visit www.womenstrong.org.



1 PLANNING FOR A GIRLS' CLUB (for Girls' Club Program Administrators)

A Identifying the Problem, Devising the Solution

If you are reading this Handbook, you have probably already decided to establish a Girls' Club or Girls' Club Program. A Girls' Club may be the right program for your community, but, if possible, before deciding to set one up, a needs assessment of the community should be conducted. A needs assessment can be as simple as facilitating an informal focus group with girls in your community. This is important for your Girls' Club Program because the problem(s) identified by your assessment will inform the Club's objectives, which, in turn, will inform the design of and programming for your Club(s).



What is the problem you are trying to solve? Which girls' needs are not currently being met in your community? The problems in the community must first be understood, in order to solve them. How did each identified problem begin? Why does this problem exist? There are many needs assessment tools that can be used to analyze challenges within a community.³ This process should be as participatory as possible, ideally, involving girls, parents, community leaders, and local government representatives.⁴

Once the key problems in the community have been identified, you can then evaluate whether a Girls' Club Program can help provide the most appropriate solutions. If possible, try to research other program models that may be relevant to addressing the identified problems, what outcomes those programs produced, and how reproducible or applicable those programs might be in your community. A review of 44 different evaluations of Girls' Clubs and life skills programs by Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) found that Girls' Clubs positively impact girls' knowledge and empowerment in the following areas:

- ◇ gender equality, including changing gender discriminatory norms and practices,
- ◇ psychosocial gains, including confidence in expressing one's opinions and feelings, growing friendships, and developing a stronger relationship with adults, such as the girl's own parent(s),
- ◇ educational achievement and knowledge,
- ◇ economic wellbeing, through vocational training, financial literacy education and support for savings, and
- ◇ civic engagement, including girls "negotiating with elected officials to improve local services and reporting child abuse or planned child marriages to the authorities, to taking part in village councils."⁵

3 A few useful needs assessment tools include: Peace Corps Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support, *Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) Training Manual* (Peace Corps Information Collection and Exchange, 2007), <http://files.peacecorps.gov/multimedia/pdf/library/PACA-2007.pdf>; JBS International, Inc. and USAID, *A Rapid Needs Assessment Guide: For Education in Countries Affected by Crisis and Conflict* (JBS International, Inc. and USAID, February 2014), <https://eccnetwork.net/wp-content/uploads/USAID-RNAG-FINAL.pdf>; and Population Council, *The Girl Roster Toolkit* (Population Council, 2015).

4 In some settings, such as in a post-conflict, drought-afflicted or acute crisis zone, only a narrower consultation will be possible, to ascertain the primary challenges facing girls in a given community that might prompt the formation of a Girls' Club.

5 Rachel Marcus, Nandini Gupta-Archer, Madeleine Darcy, and Ella Page, *GAGE Rigorous Review: Girls' Clubs, Life Skills Programmes and Girls' Well-Being Outcomes* (Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE), September 2017), <https://www.gage.odg.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/GAGE%20Girls%20Club%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>.

There are many factors to consider when evaluating program models, including the demographics of the community, the specific target of the intervention, local cultural norms, socioeconomic and geopolitical factors, and existing initiatives and programs offered by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and government. Those deeply affected by or related to the problem, especially girls, may have valuable input into the program design, so girls and boys themselves should be consulted as much as possible. Engaging leaders, local government, and parents creates community buy-in that will make the program more successful and sustainable. You might consider engaging even such seemingly unrelated segments of the community as religious and business leaders—both to get their understanding and buy-in to the program, and possibly to obtain some meaningful support, whether formal or in-kind (e.g., an offer of the use of space, transport, supplies, or volunteers). Other programs in the community should also be researched so that you are aware of existing programs or activities that may be addressing the same issues.

According to the World Bank’s Adolescent Girls Initiative’s (AGI) “Resource Guide,” Girls’ Clubs are “most appropriate in cases where there are severe supply-side social constraints; particularly relevant in conflict-affected settings with low social capital and where gender discrimination is pervasive.”⁶



Women’s Health to Wealth (WHW): The Problem and the Solution

When WomenStrong Consortium Member Women’s Health to Wealth (WHW) first began speaking with district governments and school administrators in the peri-urban areas around Kumasi, Ghana, about ways in which WHW could help local women and girls, WHW learned that many girls in these communities did not like going to school and felt uncomfortable doing so. For one thing, girls struggled at school when they were menstruating, due to the lack of sanitary hygiene products and the near-universal absence of safe, sex-segregated toilets at school. Boys, and even teachers, made fun of or bullied many girls at school. This behavior diminished the girls’ self-esteem, as they internalized many of the insults hurled at them.

Additionally, many of the girls were unable to continue in school due to financial issues, such as their families not being able to pay for school fees, uniforms, or basic school supplies. Teen pregnancy, due to sexual abuse and to a lack of sexual and reproductive health education, also led girls to drop out. Thus, WHW determined that a program was needed to help keep girls in school and to educate them about their health, self-esteem, and the value of education.



DHAN Foundation (DHAN): The Problem and the Solution

While female infanticide in India has decreased, son preference and discrimination against girl children are still common, due in part to the high “bride price,” or dowry, which a girl’s parents must pay. Despite free education provided by the Government of India to all children through grade 10, families do not always consider girls’ education to be a priority and often encourage their daughters to marry before they turn 21.⁷ Gender-based violence, often fueled by substance abuse, is another major issue for girls and women across India. In addition to compromising their safety, gender discrimination also affects girls’ health and nutrition. Men and boys are regularly given the best food in many households, leaving less nutritious food for girls and women, resulting in shockingly high anemia rates for girls (85.5 percent of girls were anemic when they joined DHAN’s Girls’ Club). WomenStrong Consortium Member DHAN Foundation (DHAN) thus saw the need for supplemental education to combat these issues and chose to root its Clubs in health education.



⁶ Adolescent Girls Initiative (AGI), “Diagnosis and Targeting” (webpage) in *Adolescent Girls Initiative: A Resource Guide* (online) (World Bank, 2015), https://www.s4ye.org/agi/html/Targeting_And_Diagnosis_Selecting_A_Program_Model.html.

⁷ The legal age for a girl to get married in India is 17; for a boy, the legal age is 21.



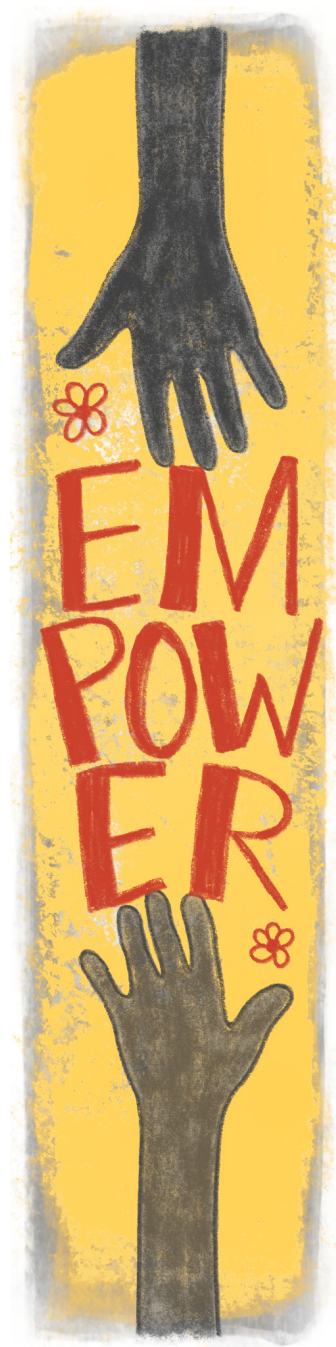
Alice Visionary Foundation Project (AVFP): The Problem and the Solution

WomenStrong Consortium Member Alice Visionary Foundation Project (AVFP)'s Girls' Clubs, called Empowerment Clubs because they serve both girls and boys, address several different issues. In Kenya, and across much of sub-Saharan Africa, talking about sex is taboo, so many young people do not know even the most basic things about sex, puberty, and reproductive health. This makes children particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse, because they do not know their rights or how to handle abuse. Additionally, in Kisumu where AVFP works, HIV/AIDS has long been rampant, with infection rates as high as 22–25 percent, leaving many children orphaned and some HIV-positive themselves.⁸ Lastly, AVFP sought to bring attention to the unique vulnerabilities of the girl child and the challenges she faces in completing school. AVFP therefore saw the need for a program to educate girls and boys about gender, sexual and reproductive health, human rights, self-confidence, leadership skills, and, together with these topics, the vital importance of education.



Haiti Outreach Pwoje Espwa (H.O.P.E.): The Problem and the Solution

Dr. Thony Voltaire, medical director of WomenStrong Consortium Member Haiti Outreach Pwoje Espwa (H.O.P.E.), was alarmed at the high local rates of teen pregnancy and girls' lack of understanding about their own bodies. Gender-based violence, the high dropout rate for adolescents from poorer families, and discrimination are also major problems in Haiti's northernmost seaside town of Borgne. These challenges for girls led H.O.P.E., in partnership with Haiti Adolescent Girls Network (HAGN), to utilize the Population Council's Girl Roster Toolkit so as to better understand the needs and vulnerabilities of girls in their communities and to identify the most at-risk girls, initially, in the town of Borgne.⁹ With the data from this survey, H.O.P.E. decided that a community-based Girls' Club program was the most effective way to meet these vulnerable girls' needs. H.O.P.E. started five Clubs in different neighborhoods in Borgne.



⁸ Okun Oliech, "The State of HIV AIDS in Kisumu County," *U Report*, January 30, 2017, <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/ureport/article/2001227683/the-state-of-hiv-aids-in-kisumu-county>.

⁹ *The Girl Roster Toolkit* provides program managers tools and materials to identify specific populations of girls, usually vulnerable or at-risk girls, and to design more targeted programs that can meet the needs of those girls. For more information, see: Population Council, *The Girl Roster Toolkit*.

B Community Engagement and Support

Gathering support for a Girls' Club program from key community members and parents is important at each stage, from Club formation, to its management, to scaling. Support for the Club can be gathered by holding community meetings, disseminating information, conducting a training, or making house visits. In any community, the understanding and support of key stakeholder groups are critical to the Club's eventual success. Although those groups deemed essential will differ from context to context, we have identified several common critical segments of any community whose positive influence can help ensure that a new Girls' Club gets off to a good start. Additionally, GAGE finds that continued engagement and sustained outreach with these key stakeholders through meetings and trainings, such as the Positive Discipline training that AVFP runs (to be discussed below), will increase the impact and effectiveness of the Club.¹⁰

i) Parents:

Prior to the introduction of or in the early stages of a Girls' Club, it is recommended that you hold a workshop, meeting, or information session with parents, to explain the objectives and purpose of the new Club. This is important for three reasons. If parents do not understand what the Girls' Club is, they may be hesitant to let their girls (or boys) participate in the Club. Additionally, parents should know what the Girls' Club is teaching their children, in the event that girls have questions or want to share what they are learning in the Club with their parents. Finally, parents may begin to see positive changes in their girls due to the Club, so it is helpful to tell parents about the work that you are doing with their girls.

ii) Community Leaders (e.g., Civic Leaders, Business Leaders, Religious Leaders, Women's Rights Advocates):

Broader community support for your Girls' Club program is very important. Community support and understanding of the Club's objectives is especially important if the Club is sharing information about such sensitive topics as gender-based violence or sexual and reproductive health. Misunderstandings about the teaching of such topics could threaten your Club's continued operation in the community. If community support is high, this support could be leveraged into engagement and additional resources for the Club, such as the use of a community space or church, an in-kind donation, or the recruitment of community members as volunteer Facilitators or mentors.

iii) Local Government:

Support from local government is vital, especially if the Club is based in a government school. School administrators, teachers, health administrators, local politicians, and even law enforcement officers should be informed about the purpose and general content of your Girls' Clubs program so that they understand how the program can support their own work and initiatives (ensuring that the girls within their jurisdictions have the opportunity to be healthy, safe, and well-educated, with bright futures ahead of them) and, in turn, how they might support the program. A local government, school district, or health department, for instance, might be able and willing to provide supplies, funding, human resources, or other resources to the Clubs. Conversely, a lack of government support could at some point pose a threat to your Club's sustainability.

¹⁰ Marcus et al., *GAGE Rigorous Review*.

iv) Men and Boys:

Lastly, support from men and boys is essential, given that, in most of our WomenStrong settings, men tend to be the final decision-makers. In some communities, men may also be one of the biggest threats to girls' safety, so educating men about the importance of safe education and development for girls may also serve to protect girls. Additionally, boys should be educated about gender equality and encouraged to support girls. Teaching boys about gender equality and sexual and reproductive health helps boys better protect themselves and understand why they should support girls in their community.

Men and boys need not be singled out, however. Men will inevitably be involved in meetings as parents and local officials, and should be especially encouraged to attend community outreach meetings that include a broad array of community stakeholders and where their buy-in can be important in solidifying support for anchoring your Club within the community.¹¹ To win the understanding and support of boys at a coeducational school where your Girls' Club is being established, a new Girls' Club can be announced and explained as part of a school or grade-wide assembly. It is important to emphasize why girls need additional support, given the discrimination and unique challenges girls face, so that boys are not jealous or feel left out by not having their own Club.



WHW: Community Engagement and Support

WHW worked very closely with each local district government to set up its Girls' Clubs program. WHW first met with the district chief executive, as well as the relevant district officers, to explain WHW's mission and programmatic model and to learn about the challenges girls face in their district, from their perspective. WHW then signed a written partnership agreement with each district education office, and each district chief executive selected schools a) where WHW was most needed, and b) that met the following criteria, which were developed by WHW to ensure the Clubs' feasibility and effectiveness:

1. A small Junior High School (JHS) so that WHW would be able to reach at least 50 percent of the girls at the school with its Clubs program—given that WHW's maximum Club size is 30 girls, a school with no more than 60 JHS girls was determined to be ideal.¹²
2. An area where the rates of girls continuing from Primary School to JHS and from JHS to Senior High School were particularly low.
3. A school with at least one, preferably two female teachers who reside in the community.
4. The school should be close enough to Kumasi that WHW staff would easily be able to monitor and meet with Facilitators as needed.

Having the district government choose the schools ensured political buy-in from both local government and the individual schools themselves. WHW then met with the headmasters, potential Facilitators, and community leaders (anyone active in the schools, government and religious institutions, and the local sheriff), to get their support and to learn what issues they believed girls faced in their community.

11 If a separate Boys' Clubs program is planned, much of this discussion can take place in the same setting, with special attention paid to boys' own challenges during adolescence. If you are planning on setting up a coeducational Empowerment Club, you might consider explaining to those attending your community outreach meeting(s) that when delicate or sensitive subjects are addressed in the course of the Club sessions, you plan to separate the girls from the boys so that these topics can be discussed in a single-sex environment.

12 Junior High School (JHS) in Ghana is equivalent to the former junior high schools in the U.S. (grades 7–9). Students enter JHS after Primary School, spend three years in JHS, and then, if they pass their Senior High School (SHS) entrance exams, they enter SHS for another three years of secondary education.



DHAN: Community Engagement and Support

When DHAN forms new *Kalanjiam* or Self-Help Groups for women in the communities where DHAN works, it first conducts a comprehensive community survey and collects data on each member's household and family, including the ages and sex of her children.¹³ Often, women who have begun to reap some of the benefits of participating in the *Kalanjiam* will ask DHAN to start a Girls' Club so that their daughters might also have the chance to participate, learn, and grow, as they themselves have. When this happens, DHAN can be assured of community support, without which the organization will not open a new Club.



AVFP: Community Engagement and Support

AVFP engaged local and county government officials in the formation of its Empowerment Clubs. AVFP first met with the county education officer and the sub-county education officials to introduce AVFP and its mission and to explain the AVFP Empowerment Clubs model. The sub-county education official then selected a specific Kisumu education zone with challenges AVFP could address with its Empowerment Clubs. Once the specific education zone was identified, AVFP met with the zonal education official to pick the specific schools where AVFP would initiate its Empowerment Clubs. AVFP then met with those school principals and signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the individual schools.

AVFP also engaged parents once the Clubs were established. Special festive celebrations are sometimes held on international commemorative days, often with mothers and daughters together, to promote closer family ties. Many women in AVFP's Group Savings and Loan (GS&L) groups noticed the impact of the Empowerment Clubs on Club members (their children), and, like DHAN's *Kalanjiam* members, asked AVFP if their own girls could join the Clubs.¹⁴ This has made AVFP's Clubs very much in demand, indicating strong community support. Additionally, AVFP conducts Positive Discipline trainings for teachers, school board of management members, and some parents, which have helped deepen their understanding of children's rights and to alter the school environment for students, including the girls in AVFP Empowerment Clubs.¹⁵



C In-School Clubs, or Out-of-School Clubs?

The first key question to consider when forming Girls' Clubs is whether this will be an in-school Club (held at school, during the school day or after school, and/or with teachers from the school as Facilitators) or an out-of-school Club (held somewhere else in the community, not necessarily affiliated with or related to any school).

There are advantages and disadvantages to each type of Club. The choice of an in-school or out-of-school Club also depends on your Club's objectives and the target population you hope to reach. If your target population is out-of-school girls because these girls seem to most lack access to information and/or other resources, then clearly an in-school Club would not advance your objectives. If your objective is to help keep girls in school, then meeting during school time may be a positive incentive and might give them the critical support they need to stay in school.

13 DHAN's *Kalanjiam* are the organizing structure for its economic empowerment programs that begin by training women in savings and loans, linking them with formal banking institutions, training them in vocational skills, and lastly, providing other important information for their development, such as on nutrition and health.

14 AVFP's Group Savings and Loan (GS&L) program empowers women, organized into a group, to save and loan each other money so as to improve or start new businesses and increase their financial stability.

15 For more on Positive Discipline training, see "AVFP: Facilitator Training" and these resources: Pepa Horno Goicoechea, *Non-Violent Discipline: A Guide for Training Professionals* (Save the Children, 2008), <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/non-violent-discipline-guide-training-professionals>; and Joan E. Durrant, *Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting (Fourth Edition)* (Save the Children, 2016), https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/7509/pdf/pdep_2016_4th_edition.pdf.

As already discussed, when creating an in-school Girls' Club, there must be buy-in from local school administrators, teachers, and, if operating in a government school, then also from the local government. If there is support from the school where you plan to establish the Club, there can be many advantages to working with a school, including the provision of a classroom, supplies, a government-trained teacher whom you can train as a Facilitator, relatively easy recruitment of girls, and easy access to the Club for girls. However, when working in a school, the Club loses some autonomy, because the Club must work within a given school's rules and schedule. For example, the Club may be limited in time or space, due to the students' schedules and the needs of other teachers and programs. As a condition of a given school's support, the Club may also be required to do specific kinds of testing or evaluations.

With an out-of-school Girls' Club, Clubs can be more flexible and have complete autonomy. The Club can be held wherever is safest and most accessible for the girls and can take place at times when girls are most likely to attend. However, organizing a Club out-of-school requires more initial set-up work, because the organizer is starting from the beginning. This includes identifying a location, informing all relevant stakeholders, finding a convenient time, and recruiting Facilitators.



WHW: In-School Clubs

Given that one of the objectives of WHW's Girls' Clubs is to help girls stay in school, running its Clubs in school best aligns with this objective. WHW chose to establish its Clubs in school for two additional reasons: first, Ghana's public school programs are strong and well-regarded, in the sub-Saharan context; second, the Ghana Education Service recognizes both the importance of girls' education and the lack of parity in post-primary enrollments. Ghana Education Service placed a girl child coordinator in every school district, but has not provided those coordinators with the resources or curricula that would help them carry out their mandate. Therefore, girl child coordinators are predisposed to be receptive to a thoughtfully conceived, planned, and articulated program that would help the school districts retain and continue to motivate their girls.¹⁶ As mentioned above, the in-school setting brings additional support from teachers and administrators and makes the set-up and scaling of the Clubs significantly easier.



H.O.P.E.: Out-of-School Clubs

H.O.P.E.'s Clubs are neighborhood-based and serve the poorest and most vulnerable girls in the town of Borgne. Being out of school is one of the factors that make girls vulnerable, so H.O.P.E.'s Clubs are held outside of school, so as to reach those girls.

¹⁶ The Ghana Ministry of Education established the Girl Child Education Unit in 1997 and expanded this unit upon the government's embrace of the Millennium Development Goals, the third of which was to ensure gender parity in primary education. The girl child coordinator is the main official responsible for implementing this girls' education agenda. There are girl child coordinators at every level of government, down to the district level.

Recruiting Facilitators

Recruiting dedicated, sensitive, and passionate Facilitators is essential to the success of any Girls' Club. A high dropout rate for Facilitators is not good for the program, so recruiting and maintaining trained Facilitators is very important. One way to decrease Facilitator dropout is by ensuring that the Facilitator program is "demand-driven," meaning that Facilitators see the value of the Club and actively want to participate.



"We are producing quality leaders. Maybe I will have one girl who will say, 'Mary made me like this.'"

"I will be part of their futures."

— Mary, a WHW Girls' Club Facilitator

Why would someone want to be a Facilitator in your Girls' Club? One way to incentivize Facilitators is through compensation. Facilitators will spend a significant amount of time mentoring and facilitating the girls, and their own socioeconomic status may make facilitation a hardship, so these issues should be considered when deciding whether or not to compensate Facilitators. However, Facilitators ultimately should be committed to their Club members' growth and success and not solely motivated by compensation.

Many Facilitators report that working with girls in their Club is very rewarding and fulfilling. As mentors to the girls, they are aware of the impact these Clubs have on the girls and thus feel mentally and emotionally "compensated" for their work. They may have participated in a similar Club when they were younger, which may motivate them to "give back" as a Facilitator; or they may wish they had been able to participate in such a program, back when they were girls or boys. Facilitators may also see the impact of this work on the community at large. WHW's female Facilitators report that their own self-confidence and public speaking have improved because of the positive environment fostered by the Girls' Clubs program.

Girls' Clubs Program Administrators should also develop criteria or basic standards that Facilitators must meet before their recruitment or hiring is finalized. These criteria might address the Facilitator's sex, geographic location, minimum education level, employment, or age. When running a Club in school, Facilitators are often teachers, who are relatively easy to recruit. When working out-of-school, Girls' Club Program Administrators may need to recruit volunteers personally or solicit nominations from the community. Facilitators could also be recruited through an application process.



WHW: Recruiting Facilitators

WHW's Facilitator recruitment was conducted within the existing school system. After preliminary meetings with school heads and district Ghana Education Service staff, where selection criteria were discussed and agreed upon, the school heads then conferred with the female staff and selected those teachers who met the criteria. The criteria for selection required that the Facilitator should: reside in the community where the Club is located; be a female teacher; and teach either English Language or Social Studies in JHS, as WHW also wanted to help the girls improve their oral and written English.¹⁷ Starting in 2015, WHW trained 85 teachers as Facilitators, with 69 of them currently still serving as Facilitators. In its third year of operation, WHW also had four male teachers assisting lead female Facilitators in four schools.

¹⁷ Living in the community is an especially important Facilitator criterion to WHW, which has found that many of the challenges and threats girls face tend to happen outside of school. Having Facilitators reside nearby means that they understand the context of the girls' lives and that in an emergency, they can intervene as needed, outside of school hours.



H.O.P.E.: Recruiting Facilitators

H.O.P.E. held a three-day training workshop for potential Girls' Club mentors (as Facilitators are called in H.O.P.E.'s program) a few months prior to the launch of the Clubs. Members of the commune-wide Young Adults volunteer group were invited to apply to attend the training workshop, and 70 were selected to attend. After the training, the list of candidates for Girls' Club mentors was narrowed to 15 trainees on the basis of their post-training evaluation test scores. In order to manage and evaluate these first few Girls' Clubs, H.O.P.E. chose to begin its five Clubs in and around the town of Borgne. Two of the 15 mentors who live near Borgne were selected to run those five Clubs. The other 13 mentors worked with community leaders to start 23 Clubs in the mountainous areas. Due to limited capacity, H.O.P.E. cannot directly monitor and support all of those other Clubs, but H.O.P.E. frequently checks in with and provides supplies to four of them.

E Training for Facilitators

While this Handbook is a stand-alone guide to starting and running a Girls' Club, Facilitator training is always vital to a successful Club. An initial orientation training should cover: why this Girls' Club is being established; the objectives of the Club; the role and responsibility of being a Facilitator; and an overview of the curriculum to be used. In covering the curriculum, Facilitators should be trained in how to relate to the girls during Club sessions, how to handle sensitive subjects, and how to adapt the lessons to address the needs and demographics of their girls. Furthermore, Facilitators serve as a resource for the girls during a potentially risky time in their lives, so it is important to also train the Facilitators in mentorship. Training does not replace thoughtful preparation for each lesson, though — a reality that should also be communicated at the initial Facilitator training. Refresher trainings held each month, each semester, or each term are also useful, as they afford an opportunity for Club Administrators to correct any questionable practices and may enable the Facilitators to share amongst each other, give feedback to the Administrators, and have their questions answered.

The AGI Life Skills Training Program summarizes as follows its authors' method of training the mentors who facilitate its Clubs:

AGI Life Skills Training Program's Facilitator Training Schedule ¹⁸



¹⁸ Adapted from BRAC Southern Sudan, *Adolescent Girls Initiative (AGI) Program: Operational Manual* (BRAC Southern Sudan, April 2010), 19, https://www.s4ye.org/agi/html/Implementation_Delivering_Life_Skills_Training.html.



WHW: Facilitator Training

WHW has a robust Facilitator training program that includes providing a transportation stipend and lunch during the training and meetings. If the training takes place far from the community, WHW also provides overnight housing for Facilitators. The objectives of the Facilitator training are:

- To identify and explore factors adversely affecting the education of girls in their communities;
- To explore together some possible strategies to address the issues raised;
- To orient Facilitators to WHW as an organization;
- To review and train Facilitators on the WHW Girls' Club draft curriculum; and
- To finalize timelines for the start of Girls' Clubs in their schools for the coming term.

New Facilitators go through a comprehensive four-day residential training that covers the WHW Girls' Club curriculum, as well as general training on how to relate to the girls and to create a "safe space" for them.¹⁹ New Facilitators are taken through the entire Girls' Club curriculum by existing Facilitators as if they themselves are girls in the Club. Additionally, new Facilitators are also encouraged to observe existing Clubs as much as possible, but not fewer than three times.

New and existing Facilitators participate together in a one-day training at the beginning of each term, which includes training in and a review of the curricular content. Suggestions for the improvement of activities are made at these refresher trainings.

There is also a one-day meeting at the end of every term with the lead Facilitators, to review things that occurred during the course of the semester that were positive, that may have raised questions in the Facilitators' minds, or that may have caused concern. WHW also provides any additional training it deems necessary, based on Facilitators' weekly reports submitted to WHW throughout each term.

4

1-Day Orientation Before Starting LSTC

Provides mentors with orientation on LSTC administrative issues and preparation of all the materials needed for the course.

5

1-Day LSTC Refresher, Conducted At The Midpoint Of The Course

Allows mentors to share their experiences, discuss solutions to their problems, and learn about the content for the remainder of the course. Participation is required for all mentors and is held at the mentor's branch office.

6

1-Day Refresher

Allows mentors to share their experiences managing and running Clubs and to develop solutions to problems they face. Participants include other mentors and staff.

¹⁹ A "safe space," while physically safe, also refers to a physical space or group in which girls feel comfortable talking about any issues they are dealing with, without fear of being teased, scolded, harassed, or punished.



AVFP: Facilitator Training

AVFP Facilitators, who are all school teachers, attend a training session during which they learn about AVFP, review the curriculum, and set expectations. Sometimes local Ministry of Education officials also attend the trainings, having been invited by AVFP and the school district so that they can be fully apprised of what is involved in the program and hopefully lend their encouragement and institutional buy-in. Facilitators also attend bimonthly meetings at which they discuss new ideas and activities for the Clubs and any problems or challenges that may arise.

As child abuse and corporal punishment (primarily caning) have been identified as chronic problems in Kisumu, AVFP introduced the “Positive Discipline: What It Is and How to Do it” training for teachers, interested administrators, and parents.²⁰ Eliminating corporal punishment is essential to creating a safe space for students and Club members so that they can feel free to express themselves and to ask questions without fear of a beating. Studies have also shown a correlation between the reduction of corporal punishment and the reduction of sexual violence; in this case, AVFP introduced the training, developed by Save the Children, during a particularly acute spate of sexual violence perpetrated against young girls in and around the Manyatta slums, where AVFP and WomenStrong work.²¹



2

CLUB DESIGN AND FORMATION



Objectives of the Girls' Club

Defining the objectives of your Girls' Club is one of the most important steps in establishing one. The Club's design, curriculum, target participants, recruitment methods, logistics, and evaluation methods may all differ, based on the objectives and desired outcomes for your Club.

Girls' or Boys' Clubs can address many different problems for girls and boys. Problems can be identified through a needs assessment and in conversations with parents, community leaders, girls, and others in the community, as discussed above in the section, “Identifying the Problem, Devising the Solution.” Then, taking into consideration your resources and capacity to address these problems, you can choose on which issues to focus in your Club, and what outcomes you hope to achieve in relation to these problems. To get you started, here are some possible objectives for a Club:

- ◇ Helping to keep girls in school
- ◇ Getting at-risk girls back in school
- ◇ Increasing girls' self-esteem and confidence
- ◇ Preparing girls to be economically stable and successful
- ◇ Empowering girls to be leaders in their respective communities
- ◇ Filling the curricular gaps in girls' schooling and education
- ◇ Improving girls' overall health
- ◇ Preventing teen pregnancy
- ◇ Helping to protect girls from unsafe practices, such as child marriage or female genital mutilation
- ◇ Increasing girls' resiliency and awareness of their rights in order to reduce gender-based violence and child abuse

²⁰ Durrant, *Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting*.

²¹ Laetitia Antonowicz, *Too Often in Silence: A Report on School-Based Violence in West and Central Africa* (UNICEF, March 2010), https://www.unicef.org/cotedivoire/Too_often_in_silence_Report.pdf; and Lana Wells and Alina Tanasescu Turner, “Corporal Punishment and Domestic Violence: The Case for ‘Anti-Spanking’ Legislation,” *Law Now*, January 6, 2014, <http://www.lawnow.org/corporal-punishment-and-domestic-violence/>.



WHW: Objectives

One problem WHW identified was the high dropout rate for JHS girls. WHW began Girls' Clubs to teach girls the necessary skills and knowledge to keep them in school and to enable them to continue on to SHS. Through their participation in one of WHW's Girls' Clubs, WHW believes girls will:

- Improve their self-esteem
- Be confident in themselves
- Feel comfortable speaking in front of others and voicing their opinions
- Be knowledgeable about their rights
- Be and feel knowledgeable about their bodies and their health
- Be motivated to stay in school, with dreams that inspire and excite them to work hard



DHAN: Objectives

DHAN's Girls' Club objectives are to:

- Increase the overall development of adolescent girls in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitude
- Instill positive nutrition behavior
- Promote a healthy and hygienic environment
- Build confidence in girls
- Form a healthy generation of young women

To meet those objectives, DHAN's programs focus on the following five subjects: nutrition, health, sanitation, mental health, and guidance counseling regarding their future. In October 2016, DHAN added financial literacy to its curriculum, with a girls' savings group program.

DHAN also chose to establish Boys' Clubs, to accelerate social change. The objectives of the Boys' Clubs are to promote gender equity and to create awareness about the dangers of drug addiction, which fuels gender-based violence and is a serious local health problem and risk for boys and young men.



AVFP: Objectives

AVFP's Club objectives are the social, academic, emotional, mental, and physical development of in-school children, to increase resilience and to improve literacy for members of the Empowerment Clubs. Given the rampant sexual abuse and lack of sexual and reproductive health knowledge, the Club also aims to increase Club members' knowledge, so that they can be safe, understand the power of decision-making, and achieve their long-term goals.



H.O.P.E.: Objectives

H.O.P.E.'s Girls' Club objectives are for girls to be safe, protected, and prepared for a future of their choice. H.O.P.E. aims to decrease teen pregnancy and the prevalence of domestic violence among participants.

B Who Is the Target Population?

Given the objectives and goals outlined above, the target population for your Girls' Club must be articulated, as well. The first step in defining your target population is to understand the characteristics of the girls in the community where you are setting up the Club. This may have already been done in the first step of the Girls' Club formation, during the needs assessment process. There are several helpful tools that you can use to better understand the girls in a community.²²

After identifying who is in the community, in order to accomplish the previously defined objectives, you may need to narrow those to whom you plan to reach out.

Here are some questions to consider:

- ◇ Will your Club only work with girls, or also with boys?
- ◇ What age range of girls is your Club intended to reach? Will you include girls of different ages together in one Club?²³
- ◇ Are the girls you hope to recruit for the Club currently enrolled in school, or are they out of school?
- ◇ Are the girls vulnerable in some way (that is, are the majority or a sizable number of them orphaned, HIV-positive, married, pregnant, or have children)?²⁴
- ◇ Is there a geographic limit circumscribing girls' participation in your Club?
- ◇ Is there a socioeconomic class or level you would like to target for participation in the Club?
- ◇ Is the Girls' Club connected to any other programs your organization is running, such as Mothers' Clubs or Group Savings and Loan Groups? And if so, are there any criteria related to participation based on these other programs (e.g., the mother must participate in the Mothers' Club in order for the daughter to participate in the Girls' Club)?



DHAN: Target Population

Girls in DHAN's Clubs are aged 10–18 and range from grades 6–12. All of the girls are in school, due to the Indian government's robust school system that provides free education, books, lunch, and transportation to and from school through 10th grade. DHAN's Girls' Clubs grew out of their mothers' *Kalanjiam*, or Self-Help Groups, at the request of the women in the group, who wanted the same for their daughters. While having a mother in a *Kalanjiam* is not a prerequisite to becoming a Girls' Club member, approximately 80 percent of Girls' Club members do have mothers in a *Kalanjiam*. For DHAN's Boys' Clubs, boys aged 10–17 are eligible.

Another important point to consider when defining the target population for the Club is to ensure that the Club is “demand-driven,” meaning that it is something the target population would demand or want. Again, the Club must be something that meets a critical need in the community. Once your participants have been selected, therefore, consider whether a Girls' Club is something the participants you have chosen would want or demand. Why would the girls or boys whom you hope will choose to participate decide to join the Club? Will the benefits of participating be apparent to them?

22 See footnote 3 for more needs assessment tools.

23 It is highly recommended to begin your Girls' Club with girls as young as possible. As a girl child ages into an adolescent girl, she will face many challenges and become more vulnerable. A Girls' Club can provide much needed support and valuable resources and knowledge to its members, so starting the Club as young as possible can ease that transition and protect those girls.

24 These vulnerabilities must be addressed in your Club's program design, such as by providing transportation, childcare, and/or additional medical care.



AVFP: Target Population

The criteria for participation in AVFP's Empowerment Clubs are that the adolescent should be between the ages of 10–16, must be a registered student at the school, and must be particularly vulnerable in some way.²⁵ All participating schools have significant populations of vulnerable students. AVFP accepts both girls and boys but usually holds the Empowerment Clubs' sessions separately, especially when covering sensitive topics.



H.O.P.E.: Target Population

H.O.P.E.'s Girls' Clubs target Borgne's most vulnerable girls ages 10–24, including girls who are out of school, are orphaned, and/or have only one parent. Given that H.O.P.E.'s Girls' Clubs program is still in its pilot phase, all the girls live in or near to the town of Borgne so that they can easily access the Club.



Recruiting Girls

Girls who fit into the target population profile developed above should be recruited for the Club. In general, Girls' Clubs tend to have 20–40 girls. Yours can be any size, depending on the level of personal attention you would like to provide to the girls and the number you believe is critical for ensuring lively sessions and high morale. Either Club Program Administrators or Facilitators are responsible for recruiting girls to join the Club.

Recruitment methods include:

- ◇ Conversations with individual girls (this works best if the recruiter, likely the Facilitator, is from the community and personally knows at least some of the girls in the community)
- ◇ An information session about the Girls' Club, to explain to potential Club members the purpose of the Club and what they will do in the Club, should they choose to join
- ◇ Visiting house-to-house, to inform individual households about the Girls' Club and to ask whether there might be any girls in the community whom you might not be aware of, who might be part of your target population, and who would like to join the Club (local norms and safety should be considered for this method)
- ◇ Enlisting community leaders and influencers to spread the word about the Club
- ◇ Advertising on posters, local radio, or whatever local forms of information dissemination are known to be successful in reaching ordinary community members and households

As the Club Facilitator, you must also decide when girls can join the Club: At the beginning only? At the start of a new semester? Anytime? This depends on the structure of your curriculum, as well as on other processes your Club (and the school, if your Club is school-based) may have in place. The curriculum in this Handbook is organized in modules that can be taught separately, meaning that no single lesson is dependent on the others. Thus, girls can join a Club using this Handbook's curriculum at any time, because they will not have missed prerequisite lessons.

As mentioned above, the reasons why a girl might join the Club should also be considered when recruiting. Girls may want to join because they are genuinely interested in learning about the Club's curricular topics. They may want to join because someone they respect, such as a teacher, parent, community leader, or enrolled friend, has already invited them. They may think the Club sounds like fun and promotes friendship. Whatever the reason, for the Club to be sustainable, the Club must be an activity in which girls are eager to participate.

²⁵ "Vulnerable" for AVFP can be defined as children who are HIV-positive, orphaned (defined as having lost at least one parent), low-income, those who live in abusive, violent, or unhappy homes or who have a history of behavioral problems in school.



H.O.P.E.: Recruiting Girls

H.O.P.E.'s potential Girls' Club participants were identified based on the results of the Girl Roster survey, which aids in identifying "vulnerable" girls, as discussed above. The Girls' Club Program Coordinator visited these girls' homes to explain the program to parents and to invite them to an orientation meeting. At the orientation meeting, parents and guardians learned more about the program and gave permission for their girls to participate. Girls were divided into three age groups: 10–12; 13–18; and 18–24 (this group is for women with children). Each group of about 25 members of a similar age then became an official "Girls' Club."



AVFP: Recruiting Girls

AVFP runs its Girls' Clubs through schools, so the primary recruitment method is through teachers and school principals. The Club Facilitators present the Girls' Club program to other teachers at the school and explain the criteria for participation.²⁶ Then the teachers select students from their class roster whom they consider "vulnerable" and submit those names to the school principal. The principal verifies that the students do in fact meet the "vulnerable" criteria. Lastly, students are notified of their selection. AVFP's Empowerment Clubs are very popular, and many students wish to join. This recruitment method was created to ensure that AVFP's Clubs are of manageable size.



D Logistics

Realistic and locally specific logistics for your Club are vital to its success. When deciding on the time, location, and length of your regular Club sessions, consider the resources available, the local context, and the constraints (physically, geographically, safety- and transportation-wise, and financially) the girls may face in participating in the Club.

i) A Safe Location:

First and foremost, the Club must meet somewhere that is safe for all of its members.

A safe location is one where girls can get there and back without having to take unsafe transport or pass through dangerous neighborhoods. The Club must also be held at an hour when it is safe for the girls (or boys) to travel and at a place where girls feel safe speaking openly and freely. Additionally, the location should be covered and protected from bad weather, with enough space for all the girls. For in-school programs, this will likely be a classroom; for out-of-school programs, this could be a community center, religious space, or even a protected outdoor space (one of DHAN Foundation's Girls' Clubs takes place in a cul-de-sac!).²⁷

ii) Length of Session:

The curriculum in this Handbook is designed such that each lesson takes 60 minutes.²⁸ Depending on the age and energy level of your girls, 10–15 minutes at the beginning of each session may be necessary, to gather the girls and to get them settled in their seats. Thus, up to 90 minutes may be optimal for a single session, including teaching time and management of the girls.²⁹

²⁶ See "Target Population."

²⁷ Finding a safe and amply large location may be a constraint for some programs. For in-school Clubs, classrooms may be in short supply and may lead to the Clubs being held before or after school. For out-of-school Clubs, finding a safe space may be limited by the community's support or by the local safety situation, such as in a conflict or post-conflict zone or a refugee camp.

²⁸ Some Facilitators report that complicated subjects may take more than 60 minutes and could readily be split into two lessons or sessions. If you find this as well, and if at all possible, feel free to divide the lesson into two.





²⁹ Particularly for in-school Clubs that meet during the school day, a session's length will likely be restricted by the amount of time allotted by the school. For example, the schools where AVFP operates its Clubs only allow 40 minutes per session; as this is not enough time to complete the full lesson, these Clubs often take more sessions to complete a lesson or chapter than originally designed. Of course, if your time is limited by a school schedule, competing need for the space, or other factors, you can adjust the number and length of your warm-ups and other activities to suit the context in which you find yourself.

iii) Time:

Ideally, Girls' Club sessions should be held at a time when the girls do not have classes and are not too tired. For in-school Clubs, most students tend to be exhausted by the end of the school day. Some schools have free periods or break times in the middle of the day, which is an ideal time to hold a session for in-school Clubs. As mentioned above, the Clubs should take place during a time of day when it is safe for girls to travel to and from the Club.

iv) Frequency:

Girls' Clubs can meet as often or as infrequently as needed, or as will work, given your local context. Some Clubs meet once per week, which provides continued support to vulnerable girls. For Clubs with girls in more stable situations, once a month may be enough. Some Clubs, such as AVFP's Teens' Clubs or WHW's Adolescent Reproductive Health Forum (both designed for high school students), only meet a few times per year, usually during their long boarding school vacations. The information and lessons in this Handbook are designed for Clubs that meet regularly (once per week to once per month).

Girls' Club Logistics at WomenStrong Consortium Member Clubs			
 WHW (Ghana)	 DHAN (India)	 AVFP (Kenya)	 H.O.P.E. (Haiti)
Meets: In school	Meets: Out of school	Meets: In school	Meets: Out of school
Location: Classroom	Location: Public places, such as in a cul-de-sac or a rented space	Location: Classroom	Location: Church
Session Length: 90 minutes, giving girls time to gather and settle down; the lessons take 60 minutes to complete	Session Length: 90 minutes	Session Length: 40 minutes ³⁰	Session Length: 90 minutes
Time: During a free period in the school day	Time: Varies	Time: During the school day, in the afternoon	Time: Friday, Saturday, or Sunday
Frequency: Once per week during the school semester, for 10 weeks	Frequency: Once per month	Frequency: Once per week	Frequency: Once per week

³⁰ As mentioned above, the school only allotted its standard academic period length of 40 minutes to AVFP's Club sessions; however, Facilitators report that this is not enough time to complete each week's lesson.

E Suggested Materials

All Clubs can be customized depending on the resources available, and all lessons can be carried out even without the suggested materials. For this curriculum, it is suggested that each girl have a pen or pencil and a notebook or journal to use throughout the term. Ideally, the Facilitator should have:

- ◇ Chalkboard and chalk
- ◇ Sheets of large paper (such as flipchart paper) that can be attached to a wall or chalkboard
- ◇ Notebooks or paper for each girl
- ◇ A4 (or 8.5"x11") sheets of paper
- ◇ Tape, paste, string, or some kind of adhesive
- ◇ Markers or thick pens for Facilitator
- ◇ Pen or pencil for each girl
- ◇ Colored pencils, crayons, pens, or markers
- ◇ Erasers
- ◇ Pencil sharpener(s)
- ◇ Ruler
- ◇ A pair of scissors
- ◇ Ball, rock, or other small object that can be held in hand (this is used for activities to encourage all girls to share)
- ◇ A large plastic container with a lid, for storing and preserving these supplies for Club use

If resources allow, technology can also be incorporated in your Club. Mobile phones can be used to connect the girls between Club sessions and to communicate important reminders and messages to the girls.

F Budgeting

A budget should be created for your Girls' Club that includes all items you anticipate will be needed in the course of the term or year. These items could be purchased by the Club if there is funding available, or they could be obtained through partner or parent donations, community contributions, or provided by the school. Some items that may be included in the budget are:

- ◇ Facilitator compensation or stipend (e.g., for transportation, refreshments during trainings, etc.)
- ◇ Supplies
- ◇ Rewards for the girls or boys, if applicable ³¹
- ◇ Snacks and drinks for the Club
- ◇ Possible trainings, as desired or needed
- ◇ Space rental, as needed
- ◇ Transportation to/from a special outing, as appropriate



3

MANAGEMENT OF THE CLUB

A Preparing for Each Session

At least one week prior to each session of the Girls' Club, you should begin re-reading the lesson plan for the next session, to ensure that you understand the content, are familiar with the suggested activities, and have all the materials you may need to execute that particular lesson plan. Other Facilitators report that they also use that time to customize the lessons, based on the interests and needs of their specific girls. As long as the content

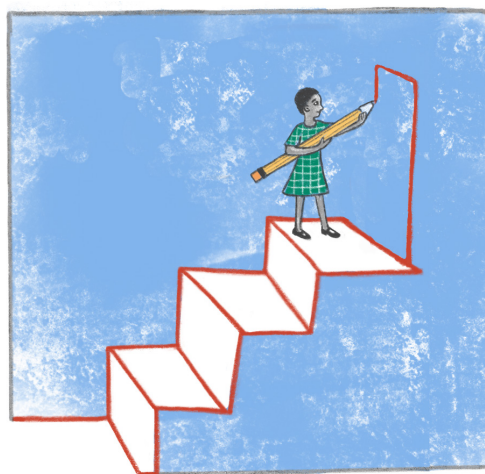
³¹ For example, WHW uses the Social Capital Credits program (see Part II: Chapter 15) to incentivize positive behavioral change in its girls, such as good school attendance or high grades. Through such good behavior or performance, the girls can "earn" such desired goods or "rewards" as school supplies, school uniforms, or a sanitary kit prepared by WHW that includes essential hygiene items (underwear, toothbrush, and sanitary pads).

is taught accurately, the specific activities and methods for teaching are open to customization. For newer Facilitators, you may wish to stick to the original lesson plans until you feel comfortable with the material. WHW Facilitators report spending 60–90 minutes each week preparing for their lessons.

Contingency plans for Facilitators when they have to miss Club sessions should also be created. Some Clubs have two Facilitators, one primary and one secondary, and other Clubs have a back-up Facilitator or Club Administrator who is prepared to step in, if needed. If no Facilitator is available to fill in, care must be taken to communicate to the girls that their session has been cancelled, given that some girls may travel or forgo other activities to attend the Club.

B Selecting Club Leaders

To encourage leadership and increase self-esteem, many Clubs have girl leaders, who can be helpful to the Facilitator in running the Club and managing the group of girls. The exact duties of Club leaders and the positions they hold can be determined by the Club Facilitator or by the girls themselves. A Club leader can help organize sessions, gather and settle girls for a Club session, take attendance, lead songs or dances, manage supplies, and even lead the Club. Girls can elect their own Club leaders, or the Facilitator can choose them.³²



WHW: Club Leaders

In WHW's Clubs, five girls are elected to be President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two additional supporting members of the Club, and they serve in those positions for two years. The President of the Club starts all Club sessions with the "opening greeting/song" and ends it with the "goodbye song." The President also conducts sessions in the absence of the Facilitator, or assists the Facilitator with sessions and plans community-building activities with other Club leaders. The Club Secretary assists the Facilitator with roll call and the marking of the attendance register, supports the Facilitator with record-keeping (compiled from menstrual cards and Social Capital Credits [SoCCs] cards), keeps records of special activities such as health visits, excursions, and visitors, and generates information on Club activities to be shared with members and nonmembers alike.³³ The Treasurer keeps records of the Club's assets and is responsible for bringing the Club supplies box to and from Club sessions. The two supporting members are responsible for getting the girls to Club sessions on time, keeping order during sessions as needed, helping the Facilitator and Secretary share materials during Club sessions, and sharing information on Club activities with other students at the school. In honor of their hard work, these five girls are awarded 10 SoCCs points each at the end of each term if they perform their duties satisfactorily. On exiting the Club when the girls graduate JHS, they also receive a special certificate of service and a badge of honor.

³² Indeed, these are exactly the roles played by the girl leaders in WHW's Clubs, who are elected by each Club's membership at the start of the term.

³³ For more information about SoCCs, SoCCs cards, and SoCCs points, see Part II: Lesson 15C on Social Capital Credits.



DHAN: Club Leaders

DHAN's Girls' Clubs are run by their Club leaders, who play a central role in DHAN's Girls' Club program. Each DHAN Club elects three leaders from among its members: President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The President is responsible for presiding over Club sessions, the Treasurer keeps Club minutes, and the Secretary relays messages and other information to the members. DHAN invites these girl leaders to its Girls' Leadership Forum, where they meet together with all the girl leaders across the region.³⁴ Girls learn about their Club responsibilities, the subjects to be covered in the Club, peer mentorship, and public speaking. Each Club leader is responsible for that Club's lessons and activities in two of the Clubs' six areas of focus: health, nutrition, hygiene, sanitation, mental health, and guidance/career counseling. Trainings on these topics are led by DHAN health associates, all longtime *Kalanjiam* participants who have been trained in all six of these areas. Ideally, for peer-to-peer mentoring and Club sustainability, two of the Club leaders would be between the ages of 14 and 16, with one girl over the age of 16.

Like the Girls' Clubs, DHAN's Boys' Clubs also have a President, Treasurer, and Secretary. These leaders undergo a smaller training program, with different topical focus areas, given their slightly different objectives.



AVFP: Club Leaders

AVFP's Club leaders are Club graduates who act as mentors to current Club members. AVFP has two tiers of mentorship for their two Clubs: the Empowerment Clubs for ages 8–13 and the Teens' Clubs for ages 13–19. Graduates of AVFP's Teens' Club have the opportunity to serve as mentors and leaders in the Teens' Club. They are responsible for mentoring the current Teens' Club girls, answering the often embarrassing or sensitive questions from the Club's anonymous Questions Box, and sometimes also visiting their former Empowerment Clubs as motivational speakers. The criteria to be a Mentor in the Teens' Club include: being a graduate of the Teens' Club; passing one's primary and high school examinations; attending college; being well-spoken and expressive; and being eager to attend Teens' Club sessions and to share and learn with other girls. The Mentors are chosen based on meeting these criteria, expressing interest in being a Mentor, and having demonstrated confidence when they were Teens' Club members. Once chosen, the Mentors meet with AVFP staff and go through a mentorship training.³⁵

C Having Fun!

It is important to remember that girls are children who not only need to play, but who also learn through play. Given the often serious content of the curriculum, it is important to communicate this content in fun and creative ways, as many of the activities suggested in this Handbook do. Whether the topic is intrinsically funny or potentially embarrassing, or when the girls seem stressed or distracted, perhaps by intense exam preparation or by having sat still all day in a particularly hot classroom, the girls should know that their Girls' Club time is special and will afford them the opportunity to share, learn, and have fun.

When things seem particularly stressful, it can be helpful to be a bit spontaneous! You might consider taking the girls outside, playing a game, or changing your activity plan so that the girls have an opportunity to relax and play. You may find that sometimes Club discussions are freer, livelier, and franker, when you are all doing something together that is fun and that requires part of the girls' attention.

³⁴ Over the last two years, DHAN has held six peer educator and leadership trainings for 1,523 adolescent girls.

³⁵ AVFP uses the following training guide: Karen Austrian and Dennitah Ghatai, *Girl-Centered Program Design: A Toolkit to Develop, Strengthen, and Expand Adolescent Girls Programs* (Population Council, 2010), <http://www.popcouncil.org/research/girl-centered-program-design-a-toolkit-to-develop-strengthen-and-expand-ado>.

Another way to ensure that the girls have some relaxation time together is to schedule and plan such times. These might be planned for after school, before school, over the weekend (if there is a safe place to gather, and if transport is not too costly), or on special commemorative days that can be fun to celebrate together, while giving you the chance to impart certain information.

For such before-school, after-school, or weekend playtime, you might consider organizing a game of football, holding a songfest or dance festival, taking a trip to a local attraction the girls have chosen (possibly by voting), or presenting some of their songs, dances, a skit, or an art show to the school community or to a wider community.³⁶

D Observing Special Commemorative Days

Throughout the year, there are a number of commemorative days related to girls' rights and girls' health that you may wish to observe, such as:

- ◇ **January 31:** Street Children's Day
- ◇ **February 12:** Sexual and Reproductive Health Awareness Day
- ◇ **February 20:** World Day of Social Justice
- ◇ **March 8:** International Women's Day
- ◇ **April 22:** Earth Day
- ◇ **May 28:** International Menstruation Day
- ◇ **June 1:** Children's Day
- ◇ **September 8:** World Literacy Day
- ◇ **October 11:** International Day of the Girl Child
- ◇ **November 19:** World Toilet Day
- ◇ **November 25:** International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- ◇ **December 1:** World AIDS Day
- ◇ **December 10:** Human Rights Day



These days are an opportunity for the girls to connect with the global community on a specific issue, enabling them to feel part of a larger movement beyond themselves. Commemorative days also help raise awareness regarding the featured issue within the community. These occasions also give the girls an opportunity to show their peers, teachers, parents, and the community some of the things they have been learning and to demonstrate their leadership skills. As examples, Table 3 below describes how WomenStrong Consortium Member Girls' Clubs celebrated the International Day of the Girl Child in 2016.

³⁶ If you and your Club members choose to prepare a presentation about what the girls are learning either for the school or the community, this, too, could be a fun undertaking that might include preparing artwork (or songs or dances or a skit) during a brief portion of each session over a number of weeks.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

Activities by WomenStrong Consortium Members, 2016



WHW

On International Day of the Girl Child on October 11, 2016, WHW's Girls' Clubs held special school assemblies at which Club members spoke about the importance of girls' education, participated in school and community trash collection, marched through their community with songs and chants about girls' rights, and made announcements on the community PA (public address) speaker system in support of girls' rights and education.



DHAN

DHAN gathered all 7,000+ of its Girls' Club participants together for a large celebration in honor of Girls' Day. DHAN also launched its new Girls Savings Program to teach girls financial literacy and to instill in them positive financial behavior, even at this early moment in their lives. Girls danced and sang, too!



AVFP

AVFP brought together three different Clubs for a special assembly, after which Club members broke into small groups, where they discussed some of the challenges they face and brainstormed their own solutions to those challenges. Facilitators introduced Club members to the Sustainable Development Goals and to essential human rights principles, including their rights as children. The children then did a body-mapping exercise, sang, danced, and ate lunch together.³⁷



H.O.P.E.

In honor of International Day of the Girl Child, H.O.P.E. brought together 50 adolescent girls and their parents to launch its new Girls' Clubs program, called *Espas Pa'm*, or "A Space of My Own." Parents and girls learned about H.O.P.E.'s plans for the Clubs, what kinds of activities they would be doing, and what kinds of information would be shared during Club time. This event was used to create excitement around the new program, which, as the newest WomenStrong Girls' Club program, officially began the following year, in January 2017.

E Support for Girls Beyond the Club

Some of the girls you are working with may need additional support beyond Club hours. Some girls may simply want to stay after the Club session to talk, if they have something particular on their minds, while others may want to come back outside of school hours, to have a chance to sit down with the Facilitator in private. Simply being available supports the girls, who then know there is a trusted adult to whom they can turn, in a moment of need. It is ideal if the Facilitator lives in the community, close to the school so that the girls know where to reach her/him and can visit them in the evenings or over the weekend, should the need arise.

³⁷ Body-mapping is a way of expressing oneself artistically by representing aspects, facts, and/or keepsakes one wants to share on a tracing of one's body (or head and shoulders), either through painting, drawing, collage, or mixed media.

Peer or community mentors may also help provide this additional needed support. Obviously, as a teacher or Girls' Club Facilitator, you have your own life and family and cannot always be available to the girls when emergencies or needs for a private conversation arise. It makes sense, therefore, for those girls most in need of such outside consultations to have the name(s) of one or more of those mentors. Well in advance of sharing anyone's contact information, you will need to secure the permission of any peer or community mentors willing to serve this important function on an as-needed basis; you should also take the time to orient these thoughtful volunteers about the purpose and work of the Club, including an overview of the topics covered and some sense of the issues concerning your girls, so that they can be prepared, should they be called upon by a girl in crisis. If there are helplines or mobile phone applications for adolescent girls or for people experiencing specific issues, those resources should also be shared with girls, if they have access to a phone or smartphone.

Missing multiple days or weeks of school is usually a sign that the girl is at risk in some way. She may simply lack funds for sanitary pads and feel she needs to stay home during her period, or her absence may be due to pregnancy, illness, or death in her family, abuse, or financial hardship. If a girl is absent often, or for several days consecutively, it is recommended that you try to figure out what is happening with her, and support her, if appropriate. This could mean visiting her home, calling her or her parents, notifying the principal at her school or other community leaders. You should judge what is culturally appropriate and safe for you and the girl.



WHW: Support for Girls

One of the main objectives of WHW's Girls' Clubs is to keep girls in school. When a girl has been absent from school for several days, the Facilitator often goes to the girl's house to see how the girl is doing. The Facilitator may have some idea of what is going on with the girl based on her menstrual cycle tracker, or from information from other students or peers. In several cases, a Facilitator, with the support of WHW staff, has counseled girls to come back to school after getting pregnant or having a child. The Facilitator will speak with the girl about her future and explain to her that even with a child, her education will be her most important tool for realizing her dreams.



DHAN: Support for Girls

Keeping girls in school is not a major problem where DHAN works, because it is compulsory by law for girls to complete 10 grades of school. However, DHAN does provide counseling to parents of anemic girls. DHAN health associates visit the households of each anemic girl, educate her family on the causes of anemia and its impact, and offer counseling on iron/folic acid and nutrition, including tips for recipe preparation.

F Working with Other Clubs

Girls often enjoy casual competition with other Clubs and meeting other girls from nearby areas. When possible, coordinating activities among Clubs, such as a football match or advocacy march, is a great way to encourage bonding and community for the girls, beyond their own Club.



WHW: Working with Other Clubs

WHW's 34 Girls' Clubs often compete through football matches. This is a fun and safe way for girls to get out of their own communities, meet new girls, exercise, and compete! Sports also build self-esteem, promote a healthy lifestyle, and teach teamwork. The Girls' Clubs provide transportation for the girls to the other communities where they play their matches, usually on Friday afternoons, when they have free periods at school.



AVFP: Working with Other Clubs

AVFP's Clubs, which take place in three different schools in the same informal Kisumu settlement and one in the rural area, come together to celebrate special events, such as the International Day of the Girl Child, International Day of Menses, or Mother-Daughter Day. For Mother-Daughter Day, AVFP brings the Club members and their mothers together for a picnic, presentations on sexual and reproductive health, and some interactive exercises where they have the (sometimes rare) opportunity to speak frankly to each other. Club members enjoy meeting each other, and their anticipation and the excitement of preparing for these gatherings creates a lively and festive atmosphere for those special days.

G Building Partnerships

Another way to enhance the Club experience is for the girls to have the opportunity to work when possible with partner schools, organizations, or government agencies. These other organizations may have additional resources, knowledge, or skills that could enrich the subjects you are teaching and boost girls' communications and relationship skills. However, it is important that these partners be trained appropriately before they begin to work with girls in your community and that they be informed of any unique characteristics of your participants (e.g., poverty, a disability, a recent or traumatic death in the family, etc.).

One important focus of many Girls' Clubs is health. This is an area where numerous partners can provide additional resources and support. Working with local health care providers, government health ministries, and/or health-focused NGOs can greatly enhance the health outcomes of the girls in your Club. In some cases, health issues may negatively impact girls' school or Club attendance, making it an even more important issue to address. To avail your Club of health partners, it is first important to identify your girls' health needs. After that, the Club Administrator or Facilitator can reach out to the relevant local organizations, to see whether they might be open to collaborating. Health care providers or NGOs can conduct health screenings for such common issues as anemia and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) for girls in your community or can even provide immediate care, such as administering pregnancy tests, medications, or eye or dental exams. Health partners can also provide more detailed health education and even health care products, such as toothbrushes or sanitary pads, to your Club. Even if health is not a major focus of your Club, health-related emergencies may occur, so it is important that each Facilitator knows where they can refer girls, if they need medical attention.



WHW: Partnerships

WHW receives a lot of support from local government and schools, as demonstrated by the organization's close collaboration with the school districts in forming the Clubs. As the district administrators began seeing the positive impact of WHW's Girls' Clubs, they asked WHW to expand into other schools, and more districts began requesting Clubs. WHW wanted to expand, but had limited staff, so it asked the government for additional support from the district government's girl child coordinators. The girl child coordinators agreed and participated in WHW's Facilitators' training, to be better prepared to support the Clubs. They now provide monitoring and evaluation support to WHW by visiting each Club in their district once a month and reporting back to WHW.³⁸

WHW also utilizes many partnerships to meet the health needs of the girls in their Clubs. WHW receives sanitary pads and toothbrushes from AmeriCares, a U.S.-based nonprofit that distributes surplus medicines and medical supplies worldwide. Given the high prevalence of teen pregnancy and STIs borne by the girls in WHW Club communities, WHW formed a relationship with Marie Stopes International, a sexual and reproductive health NGO that provides pregnancy counseling, abortion services, and prenatal care at low to no cost. WHW even arranged for teams of local opticians and dentists to travel to its Girls' Club schools, to (respectively) screen the girls' vision, perform refractions, teach the girls about dental hygiene, and conduct dental cleanings.



DHAN: Partnerships

One of the first activities for any new DHAN Girls' Club is an anemia screening, which is conducted by DHAN health associates. This provides DHAN with robust data on anemia rates of the girls in their Clubs, making it possible for DHAN to ensure that those girls with worrisome levels of anemia are able to obtain quickly the appropriate medication and counseling. Given the high rate of anemia among Club members (85 percent of girls who joined WomenStrong's and DHAN's initial Clubs), DHAN wanted to provide iron and folic acid tablets to the girls. Government schools provide these free of charge, so DHAN contacted the local government schools, informed them about those girls in need of the supplements, and the schools then confirmed that the girls were taking the tablets. For girls in private schools or out of school, DHAN acquired the supplements from government hospitals, which DHAN then distributed directly to the girls.



H.O.P.E.: Partnerships

H.O.P.E.'s Clubs are run in partnership with the Haiti Adolescent Girls Network (HAGN). With an introduction and support from WomenStrong and the New York-based Population Council, and after a Girl Roster workshop and training session in Haiti's capital led by the Population Council and attended by H.O.P.E.'s leadership, H.O.P.E. implemented the Girl Roster Toolkit and Girl Roster Survey in the town of Borgne and submitted the data to HAGN and the Population Council, which returned the analyzed data to H.O.P.E., along with a HAGN-customized curriculum in Haitian *kreyol* that is tailored to the girls' identified needs.

38 See the next section, "Record-Keeping, Monitoring, and Evaluation," for more information about WHW's monitoring and evaluation practices.

Record-Keeping, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Record-keeping, monitoring, and evaluation are important in measuring the accomplishments of your Club, as well as areas for improvement. As the Facilitator, understanding how your Club may have affected participants will allow you to see what you are doing well, what can be improved, and the important difference you are making in the girls' lives. Funders, partners, and community members may also ask to see this information, so it is important to keep as much data as possible. Doing so, though, does not need to be complicated!

A roster of all girls in the Club should be kept in a single notebook. The following basic information should be recorded when a girl joins the Club: name, grade in school (if in school), date of birth, date she joined the Club, age at the time of joining, and comments (if needed). Additional data may be collected throughout the Club term, including attendance and school grades. Finally, given that the girls are learning about their own reproductive health, you should assist them in tracking their menstrual cycles. This will help the girls better understand their reproductive health, get to know and respect their own bodies, and will allow you to verify whether a particular girl may be pregnant or why she may be absent from school at a particular time of the month. As mentioned above, tracking attendance and menstrual cycles helps the Facilitator to identify at-risk girls, to follow up with them at home, and to understand how the Club might be able to support them.



WHW: Monitoring and Evaluation

WHW has a robust reporting system in place that provides it with information about the strengths and weaknesses of its Girls' Club program. Each week, Facilitators submit a report to WHW program staff. This report includes data on attendance, any changes to Club membership, the session covered, any issues with girls' menses or health, and the spending report for the Clubs' Social Capital Credits program (SoCCs). This information is used in WHW's grant reporting to donors and informs the end-of-term training that WHW conducts with Facilitators.

Additionally, given WHW's strong relationship with the district ministries of education, the district girl child coordinators assist in the monthly monitoring of the Clubs. As previously mentioned, the girl child coordinators visit each Club in their district at least once during the month and then submit a report to WHW that, very much like the Facilitator's own reporting, provides data on attendance, changes in Club membership, issues with girls' menstruation or health, and any other challenges and comments they may observe or hear about from girls, teachers, or administrators.

WHW is tracking the following concrete outcomes from the Girls' Clubs:

- increased school attendance
- increased grades and test scores
- increased number of girls continuing on to SHS
- decreased number of girls dropping out of JHS
- decreased days of school missed due to illness
- increased number of girls taking on leadership roles in their classes, school, family, and/or community
- increased participation (raising hand, speaking up in class, etc.) on the part of girls in the classroom, in the course of the normal school day

In addition to this basic record-keeping used for Club management, evaluation of the Club is also useful. This impact data could be gathered by measuring change in girls' knowledge, attitudes, and practices. This can be measured with pre- and post-tests before and after each lesson, each chapter, each term, each year, or over the course of a girl's participation in the Club.

Some common impact indicators for your Girls' Club that can be measured through surveys or interviews are:³⁹

- ◇ Girls' confidence about participating in class discussion and answering questions
- ◇ Girls' knowledge of their rights and of what to do if their rights are not being respected
- ◇ The degree of positive change in girls' participation in public life, including by assessing their relative comfort appearing in public spaces
- ◇ Opportunities available for girls to network with peers
- ◇ Girls' participation in decision-making processes (particularly those related to her rights), at the household, school, and community levels
- ◇ Girls' access to services available in the community
- ◇ Degree of change in the school and learning environments (i.e., gender-equitable learning opportunities and safer, girl-friendly school environments)
- ◇ Girls' ability to articulate issues and barriers they face
- ◇ Girls' meaningful and consistent participation in civic action
- ◇ Equitable allocation of resources and workload at home, especially in comparison to boys
- ◇ Improved education outcomes, retention, and progression through the education cycle
- ◇ Awareness of gender-based violence and mechanisms for redress/prevention⁴⁰



³⁹ A few useful monitoring and evaluation guides include: Gerison Lansdown and Claire O'Kane, *A Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation: A 10-Step Guide to Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation. Booklet 4* (London: Save the Children, 2014), <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document-collections/toolkit-monitoring-and-evaluating-childrens-participation>; Corinne Davey, *Girl Safety Toolkit: A Resource for Practitioners* (Girl Hub), 83–103, <http://www.viva.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Girl-safety-toolkit.pdf>; and Youth Scotland and Evaluation Support Scotland, *Measuring Outcomes 2* (Edinburgh: Youth Scotland), http://www.youthworkessentials.org/media/51546/measuring_outcomes_lres.pdf.

⁴⁰ FHI 360, "Girl-Centered Programming: What Are We Really Doing?" FHI 360 on behalf of Interagency Youth Working Group, USAID, 2013, <http://www.youthpower.org/resources/girl-centered-programming-what-are-we-really-doing-summary-recommendations-promising-programs-resources-and-tools-shared>.



DHAN: Monitoring and Evaluation

Health is the core focus of DHAN's Girls' Clubs, so baseline health screenings are conducted when girls join a Club. As mentioned, of all the girls screened for DHAN Girls' Clubs at their inception, 85 percent were shown to have some level of anemia. DHAN was able to conduct these screenings itself because it runs a comprehensive health program, maintains and trains health care staff, and collaborates closely with the public health service, to which it refers the most severe cases. Other Clubs might need a health partner (whether from the public, nonprofit, or private sectors) in order to conduct this kind of screening.

DHAN also uses Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) surveys to measure behavior change and knowledge education in their Clubs, each with its own set of indicators to measure these outcomes.



AVFP: Monitoring and Evaluation

AVFP conducts pre- and post-tests for each year that help the organization evaluate "key takeaways." Because AVFP's Clubs are schools-based, these kinds of direct learning indicators are important for securing continued school support. AVFP also tracks Club members' performance on national standardized tests, as indicators of girls' academic prowess, progress, and changes over time in their levels of confidence. AVFP also tracks Club attendance and any additional leadership roles Club members take on outside the Club.



4

CONCLUSION

This Girls' Club Start-Up Guide is intended to help you think through the most important aspects of your Girls' Clubs as you are in the process of setting up your program. The examples provided for each aspect demonstrate how WomenStrong Consortium Members customized their Clubs based on their resources, context, local partners, government support, and, most importantly, the needs of their girls. Once you have thought through these questions and have set up your Club, you are ready for Part II: Girls' Club Curriculum.

The Curriculum covers 16 topics for adolescent girls (and boys) and can be taught in any order, although a suggested order is provided. You can also choose to only teach selected chapters, based on what is needed in your community. Each chapter contains several lessons that can be customized, depending on your Club's resources, time, location, culture, age, and gender composition. The most important aspect of the Club, after all, is that it provides the support that your girls need!

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