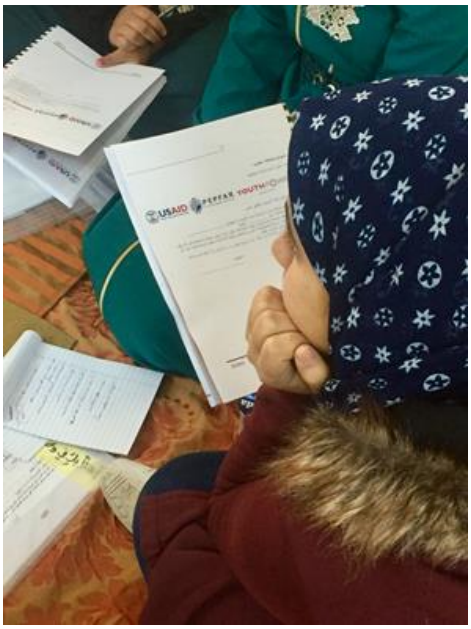
Milestones of the Second Phase of GRL Power



Introduction

This report contains information on milestones of the second phase of GRL Power. The required draft research plan and questions are found in the appendix. In addition, this report describes the pre and post evaluations of girl researchers, the training process and shares the reflections of the girls.

Preparing for the Girl Research Unit (GRU) Training

At the end of October, together with our partner Action Aid, Mercy Corps trained GRL Power's three female research mentors on girl-led research. Following the training, Mercy Corps and Action Aid held three supporting meetings with the research mentors to ensure consistent project understanding and adherence to child protection policies and processes. Before the mentors' training, the original plan was to have one training for the girl researchers in one of the three areas; however, the three research mentors recommended that three separate trainings take place in each of the respective areas to accommodate the girls' challenge of moving from one area to the other.

> *"This is the first time I facilitate a training around research, I learnt how to develop a research question and how to conduct research. I think this experience will allow us to dig deeper into information and problems that girls are facing"* – *Abeer,* Research mentor; Balqa

Recruiting Girl-Researchers

18 girls were recruited from the three areas, 6 from each, through community based organizations along with Mercy Corps and Action Aid. We ensured the most diverse group of girls possible. The girls are between the ages of 16 and19 years old; there are school and university students and out-of-school girls in the three girl research units. Moreover, the research units include Jordanian, Palestinian, Iraqi and Egyptian girls. It was challenging to recruit Syrian adolescents as researchers; however, one of the mentors is Syrian. To further ensure the inclusion of Syrian girls, the girl researchers made

GRU training in Madaba

Syrian adolescents one of their main target interviewees.

The GRU training took place in January, in the areas of Amman, Madaba, and Balqa. The findings in the report below combine the pre and post evaluation results of the three areas together, and then speak in detail to each area's research questions and plans.

Pre and post evaluation

The pre and post evaluation (see Appendix A) aimed to assess the girl researchers' understanding of research, their understanding of the connection between research and social change, and their interest in conducting research and how they perceive their abilities to conduct research.

GRU training in Amman

The results of the surveys showed a change in the girls' understanding of the characteristics of a researcher and their perceived abilities as girl researchers.

The general rating of their characteristics as researchers improved; there was also an increase in what they know about research, and a clearer understanding of objectivity in research and in the way questions should be objective. The girls also were able to define what research is, and point to previous research experiences that they could not name as research before the training.

> *"What's nice about the project is that it challenges the norms of what girls do and the stigma of "'aib" shame."* – Girl Researcher, Balqa

In a collaborative, safe space, the research mentors trained the girls on qualitative research skills, including: ethics and safety, interview techniques, data recording and analysis, as well as, life and leadership skills such as self-esteem and critical thinking. During the training they developed their research question and plan.

Research Question:

The girls used drawing to develop their research question: the research mentors asked them to dream of what makes a safe city for them, and then to draw it. Each GRU came up with criteria for a safe city as well as challenges to creating and keeping cities safe, which was reflected in the girls' research questions.

GRU training in Al Balqa

Girls' drawings, GRU training in Al Balqa

In Amman, the girls were interested in exploring what would girls their age need to feel safe while on the street.

In Madaba, the girls were concerned with harassment, and decided to explore further the reason behind harassment in the city of Madaba. In Balqa, the girls expressed their frustration with the change in their relationship with their city after sunset, and decided to explore further how the relationship between their peer adolescent girls and their area changes after sunset. (see Appendix B for summary of findings).

Research Plan:

The girls developed a research plan to answer their research questions in the coming few months. Each GRU came up with its own plan, in which each girl researcher in the GRU will take the lead on four interviews, and attend four interviews with her peer researcher as a note taker. The girls will conduct their interviews in pairs and will be accompanied by their research mentors. Their plans included their research question, where they will conduct their research, and when they will conduct their interviews. They also planned their target group, including the age, gender, and nationalities of the interviewees. The girls are still in the process of developing the detailed research questions, which they will finalize in upcoming meetings with their research mentors. (Appendix B has the detailed plans.)

GRU training in Madaba

Evaluating Safe Cities' indicators

Within the scope of qualitative research, the girls were introduced to the Positive Youth Development (PYD) indicators of Action Aid's Safe Cities project. The girls discussed how adolescent girls could evaluate a project and ensure that it engages youth, along with their families, communities and/or their governments so that youth reach their full potential. Through drawing and discussions with the girl researchers, the girls were able to identify and understand PYD indicators, in order to evaluate the Safe Cities indicators based on the PYD indicators.

GRU training in Al Balqa

The girl-led research training included components central to Positive Youth Development that are also necessary for research, such as goal setting and

interpersonal skills such as effective communication. This orientation helped the girls foster a sense of agency and engagement with GRL Power that extended to their evaluation of ActionAid's Safe Cities project. The girls were able to approach their evaluation of the Safe Cities' indicators from the empowered perspective that youth should always be engaged in community projects, and that girls in particular should be engaged with a project that focuses on their own safety in public places. The girls grappled with how Safe Cities, GRL Power or any project can increase their safety in public spaces, reflecting on the potential impact of a project that engages them versus the potential impact on a project that does not. Specifically, the girls pointed out to how they see GRL Power increasing their self-confidence and positive identity.

This evaluation of indicators influenced how the girls framed their research plans. The girls are able to target any audience as research participants; however, all three groups decided to target their peers to ensure that youth are central to their research and remain heavily engaged in every aspect of GRL Power. They understand the value of the insights of their peers, and they also understand that they- as adolescent girl researchers themselves- are uniquely positioned to collect data from their peers on this sensitive topic.

Reflections:

Girls' reactions after and during the training were positive, as they were very excited to learn about research. Most of the girls mentioned that this will be their first time conducting research, and expressed their enthusiasm in being the first GRU in the Middle East and North Africa.

> *"I feel that this will make my personality stronger, and will allow me to speak up and raise my confidence".*–Girl Researcher; Amman

The girls were most excited about the idea of taking the lead on researching their own issues and interviewing girls their own age, and expressed that this will have a positive effect on their personalities and knowledge. One of the girl researchers in Balqa expressed her excitement saying "*I will benefit from this training in the future! I have a course related to research in my coming semester in university and I feel that I already know something*".

GRU training in Al Balqa

The girls in the three areas are looking forward to being in the field and to get these interviews rolling. After the training was completed, one of the girl researchers in Balqa mentioned that she had a dream of herself conducting an interview for the research. Now she and her peers in the GRU will make this happen!

> *"I thought research was boring, it turned out to be fun!"* –Girl Researcher; Madaba

Appendix A.:
Pre and post survey:

A.

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
I have the characteristics to become a girl researcher					
I know what research is					
Objectivity is one of the main characteristics of a girl researcher					
I think research plays an important role in creating change					
I think that working as a researcher is fun					
I think that working with girls of my age will help me gain self-confidence and a new experience					

B.

- How do you imagine your day as a girl researcher?

-Have you conducted researcher in the past?

Yes No

If your answer is yes, tell us more about your experience

Appendix B.

Research Questions:

Amman:

Research Question:

What is required to make adolescent girls feel safe on the street?

Purpose of choosing this question:

When the adolescent girls from Amman's GRU drew what makes a safe a safe city for them, they dreamt of being able to go to a park with a group of friends without being harassed. They also dreamt of going out at any time of the day without being judged by the society for breaking a taboo. The girls turned their dream into their research question and are asking what is required to make adolescent girls feel safe on the street.. With this research, they want to investigate what girls in the Jabal Al Nadheef area of Amman need to feel safe, and then share this with decision makers to make their area safer for them as adolescent girls.

Interview questions (developed in the following meeting with the GRU after the training):

1. How often do you go out whether alone or accompanied?
2. Do you feel safe when you walk on the street? Why?
3. What is the difference when you go out alone and accompanied with someone?
4. What might make you feel unsafe?
5. Have you faced any situation where you were in danger in a public space?
6. What do you need to have in a public space to make you feel safe? How will it make you feel safe?

Madaba:

Research Question:

What are the reasons behind harassment in Madaba city?

Purpose of choosing this question:

When the adolescent girls from Madaba's GRU drew what makes a safe city for them, they drew themselves walking on the street without being harassed. In the discussions that followed, they identified harassment as one of the main challenges faced by adolescent girls in Madaba. In order to explore the intensity of the problem and shed light on the reasons behind it, they chose to investigate the reasons behind

harassment in Madaba.

Interview Questions (developed in the following meeting with the GRU after the training):

1. What is harassment?
2. How would you react if you got harassed from someone on the street?
3. What are the reasons behind harassment?
4. In your opinion as a girl, what are the types of harassment?
5. What is the type of harassment that is most common?
6. In your opinion, what are the characteristics of a safe city for women?
7. How would you feel if these characteristics were in your city?
8. In your opinion, will safe cities decrease the percentage of harassment?
9. What is the role of schools and other institutions in fighting harassment?
10. Who is a harasser?
11. Who gets harassed?
12. When does harassment happen?
13. Have you been harassed before?
13. A. If yes:
13. A. 1 How was your feeling after this experience?
13. A. 2. Can you tell us what happened?
13. A. 3. How did you react?
13. B. If No:
13. B. 1. If it happened with you, how will you react?
13. B. 2. Did you see one of your friends being harassed, or did any of your friends tell you about being harassed?
14. Who is responsible for this problem?
15. What are some solutions, or ways to avoid being harassed?

Balqa:

Research Question:

How do adolescent girls define their relationship with their city after sunset? Does it change? How? Why?

Purpose of choosing this question:

While discussing what makes a safe city for the adolescent girls from Balqa's GRU,

they all drew themselves walking on the street at night. Normally, girls in Balqa do not go out at night. In their discussions, they tried to figure out why they are not able to go out after sunset, mentioning harassment, wild animals on the street, lack of lighting and the society's expectations as potential reasons of the social curfew. The girls were interested to explore more how other girls in their area define their relationship with the city after sunset, and explore the changes that take place if any, and the challenges that girls might face, if any.

Interview Questions (developed in the following meeting with the GRU after the training):

1. Describe the area you are living in
2. Where do you feel safe in your area?
3. At what time of the day do you feel most safe?
4. Compare between your area before and after sunset?
5. Does it change?
5. A. If yes:
5. A. 1. How does it change?
6. Describe the route you take to your house after sunset
7. Where do you usually go if you leave your house?
8. At what time do you usually leave your house?
9. Are there specific times which you avoid going out of the house at?
9.A. If yes:
9.A.1. When do you avoid going out?
9.A.2. Why do you avoid going out at these times?
9.B. If no:
9.B.1. What helps you to leave your house at any time?
9. B.2. Do you know of other girls in your community that avoid going out at certain times? Why?
10. What do you like the most and the least about your area after sunset?
11. What do you hope changes in your area in the future?
12. What are things that girls in your community need to feel safe at any time?

Research Plan:

Balqa's: Girl Research Unit's plan is as follows:

- Research method followed: interviews and observation
- Research timeline: February and March, 2018
- Number of interviews that each researcher will do: Minimum of 4 interviews as a main interviewer and attend 4 as a note taker
- Interviewees' gender: Females
- Interviewees' age group: 14-19 years old
- Interviewees' nationalities: Jordanian, Egyptian, Syrian, Pakistani (These nationalities live in the area)
- Interviewees' social status: Single, engaged, married, divorced
-Area of research: Jawfa, Rawda (areas in Balqa)

Madaba's Girl Research Unit's plan is as follows:

- Research method followed: Interviews and observations
- Timeline: February and March, 2018
- Number of interviews that each researcher will do: Minimum of 4 as a main interviewer and attend 4 as a note taker

Interviewees' gender: Females

- Interviewees' age group: 16-19 years old
- Interviewees' nationalities: Egyptian, Syrian, Palestinian
- Area of research: Central Madaba (area in Madaba)

Amman's Girl Research Unit's plan is as follows:

- Research method followed: interviews and observations
- Research timeline: February and March, 2018
- Number of interviews that each researcher will do: Minimum of 4 as a main interviewer and attend 4 as a note taker
- Interviewees' gender: Females
- Interviewees' age group: 16-19 years old
- Interviewees' nationalities: all available nationalities in the area with a focus on Syrians
-Area of research: Jabal Al Nadeef (area in Amman)

The three Girl Research Units agreed upon the following in their research plans:

- Method of inviting interviewees: The girl researchers along with the local mentor will suggest girls from their area who might be interested in taking part of the interview. This is along with the CBOs in the area which will help in recruiting interviewees in the 3 different locations as follows:

Amman's CBO: Ruwwad/ Jabal Al Nadheef

Madaba's CBO: Women's Association Collective

Balqa's CBO: Association of Development and Reconstruction of Jordan Valley/ Jawfa

- Length of the interview: Around 30 minutes

- Structure of the interview: The girl researchers will lead a semi-structured interview. They already planned their questions, but depending on the interviewees' answers might elaborate on points that will help find an answer to their research questions. However, each interview will follow this format:

- Welcoming and introductions (Introduce yourself and everyone in the room)
- Introducing the project and the purpose of it
- Purpose of the interview
- Rights of the interviewee (Can stop the interview at any time, does not have to answer all the questions, confidentiality of the information, and shared anonymously)
- Estimated length of the interview
- Signing the consent form (Available in the Girl-led research training curriculum)
- Asking the questions

-Plan of information analysis: The 6 girl researchers will be divided into 3 groups, each will include a girl researcher and a note taker. The note taker will be using the interview report format (sample below) that includes the questions and the main information of the interviewee, after each interview the girls will debrief with their research mentor and submit the summary report of their findings. After the girls collect and summarize the data collected, they will submit it to Mercy Corps and Action Aid who will together analyze and report on the results.

Interview report format:

Interview's general info:

Name of interviewer:

_____

Name of note taker:

_____

Date of interview:

_____

Time of interview:

_____

Location of the interview:

_____

Length of the interview:

_____

Interviewee's info:

Name of interviewee:

_____

Age of interviewee:

_____

Interviewee's nationality:

_____

Social status of interviewee:

_____

Other:

_____

_____

Research Questions:

1. _____

Interviewee's answer:

_____

_____

Note taker's observation:

_____

_____

Debrief notes:

_____

_____

2. _____

Interviewee's answer:

_____

_____

Note taker's observation:

_____

_____

Debrief notes:

_____

_____

… etc.