Girl-Led Research and action manual for adolescent girls' groups

A reference guide for facilitating workshops for girls to design and lead their own research and advocacy processes, contribute to girl-led change, and shift power into the hands of girls.

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Glossary

Co-researchers: This refers to individuals who support girl researchers with their research, for example, individuals who may be part of focus group discussions. This term acknowledges the importance of everyone involved in the research.

Decolonisation: The process of critically re-examining and dismantling the influence of colonial and neo-colonial systems in knowledge production, research practice, and social organisation, with an emphasis on power being held by those historically marginalised by these systems.[1] It helps to understand how these systems shape our policies and processes, as well as our understanding of what is good and bad practice; and how all of this reinforces the exclusion of some and privileges others.

Facilitator: This refers to the individual(s) who will be facilitating the girl researchers through the research process. It could be another researcher who has taken on the task, a relevant mentor, or staff from a women's rights organisation or community organisation.

FPAR: Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) is a methodological approach that combines research, gender justice, and activism.[2]

GBV: Gender-based Violence (GBV) is a systemic form of oppression that affects individuals across the gender spectrum, with particularly severe impacts on women, girls, and LGBTQ+ people. ActionAid's focus on GBV acknowledges that violence is not only intimate partner, domestic, physical, and psychological violence, but also a result of deeply rooted power structures that cause harm through social, economic, political, and cultural systems. GBV disproportionately impacts women and girls who face multiple, intersecting forms of oppression.

GLRA: This is the acronym used to describe the Girl-led Research, and Girl-led Action process.

Power holders: This refers to anyone who may 'hold power' in relation to the researchers. These are not exclusively formal power holders, such as governments, but can also be school peers, parents or community members.

Researcher: This refers to the adolescent girls who are leading the research. 'Girl researcher' and 'researcher' are used interchangeably throughout this document.

Introduction

Adolescent girls face challenges distinct from both younger children (girls) and adult women. Their experiences are shaped by the transition between childhood and adulthood, influenced by structural inequalities stemming from both historical colonial impositions and their continuing manifestations in contemporary systems.[3] Most mainstream literature focuses on either children or adult women, overlooking the specific needs and experiences of adolescent girls – this either infantilises adolescent girls, or burdens them with adult responsibilities.[4]

Moreover, universal approaches to adolescent girls' priorities and experiences fail to recognise their complexity and diversity, overlooking how their lives vary significantly depending on their historical, social, and political contexts.[5] An intersectional lens reveals that girls' experiences are shaped by multiple, intersecting identities and systems of power – including race, class, sexuality, disability, and geographic location – meaning that no single narrative can capture the full spectrum of their needs and challenges.

Why is this guide needed?

This guide highlights the power in girls in conducting their own research, and how it can help us to understand the critical gaps that affect teenage girls, and help to challenge traditional power structures that silence their voices. Across different contexts, adolescent girls have demonstrated remarkable capacity for leadership. Adolescent girls are best positioned to identify the most pressing issues affecting their lives, connect with their peers, and propose relevant and actionable solutions. To achieve this effectively, ActionAid has facilitated girl-led research and action (GLRA) methodologies that prioritise girls' knowledge, experience, strategies and solutions to their own challenges.

This manual aims to fill the gap in adolescent girl-led research and advocacy processes on the ways that patriarchal structures affect their lives, providing activities and guidance for effective girl-led research and advocacy process. The manuals are inherently adaptable and have proven effective across diverse settings; from urban and rural communities, as tools for both research and sensitisation.

What is the aim of this manual?

GLRA approaches employ an intersectional and decolonial feminist participatory framework to ensure we don't treat 'adolescent girl' as a monolithic category. These frameworks help us understand how power operates differently depending on a girl's intersecting identities and how colonial legacies continue to shape their realities. These approaches recognise that systems based on gender, racism, and classism cannot be separated from each other, and are deeply rooted in, and shaped by, colonial and neo-colonial power structures. This means ensuring that girls from marginalised communities can tell their own stories and set policy priorities.

As a participatory and actionable methodology, GLRA centres girls as leaders through the entire process, from identifying research questions, collecting and analysing the data, to developing recommendations and advocacy strategies. This approach recognises adolescent girls as researchers, writers, and advocates, rather than mere research subjects of research conducted by traditional 'knowledge makers'.

There are two girl-led research reports published to date, Building power together: a girl-led research project and Shifting the Power: Advancing Girl-Led Research report, followed by an action phase.[6] This manual lays out a selection of the activities undertaken in the two projects named above. Research, when led by girls, does not merely document injustice – it becomes its own act of resistance

and activism. Reflecting critically on power and asserting girls' lived experiences in spaces where they have historically been excluded disrupts dominant narratives and opens space for change.

Supporting adolescent girls' leadership is essential for gender justice. The GLRA methodology shifts power to girls, enabling them to develop effective, decolonial interventions that transform their lives and communities. Seen this way, research is a political act and powerful advocacy tool. Girl-led research, combined with collective action and reflection, builds evidence that compels governments and decision-makers to act.

The GLRA methodology pulls heavily from Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR). FPAR provides a methodology for feminist social movements to develop, apply, and evaluate strategies across multiple social issues to demand women's human rights and transform neocolonial, patriarchal power structures at the local, national, regional, and global levels.[7] FPAR is a methodological approach that combines research, gender justice, and activism through a cyclical process of community-led planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.[8] This approach rejects the idea that research can be neutral – when facing pain and injustice it is impossible to be objective.[9]

Effective FPAR requires continuous analysis and management of power dynamics. In particular, we must ensure that the feminist research project works towards undermining sustained inequalities using the right of refusal, relational accountability and solidarity building.[10]

Key principles for feminist participatory research with girls[11]

By centring their voices, knowledge, understandings, experiences, and solutions, girls can develop more effective, relevant, and decolonial interventions. The GLRA methodology offers a powerful model for how

to shift power to adolescent girls, paving the way for transformative change in their lives and communities.

Seen this way, research is not just a technical tool, but a political act and a powerful form of activism. ActionAid identifies research as one of the strongest tools for advocacy with governments, international institutions, and duty bearers. When combined with collective action and continuous reflection, girl-led research builds evidence-based alternatives that compel decision-makers to act.

- Research must lead to action, not only provide opportunities for it. It's about doing research to make changes, not only to create knowledge.
- The research provides opportunities to take action that will create change in girls' lives.
- The research centres girls' voices and experiences and is owned by them.
- The research process itself is a political project.
- The research is done collectively, and builds girls' opportunities to take action together.
- The research is safe for everyone involved and prioritises their wellbeing.
- The research shifts power to girls.
- The research challenges colonial

traditional notions of data collection and knowledge production.

Implementation

This manual has been used, developed and reviewed by international stakeholders from Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom. It therefore does not cater to a specific geographical or social context. This is both an advantage and limitation – the global nature of the manual enables them to be adapted for use in a range of contexts, but this adaptation will take time. The manual may be used as a guide for a girl-led research or advocacy process, or as a starting point to identify activities that may be used for other girl-led processes. You may want to use some activities, or all of them, or use the guide as a starting point to develop your own.

Important notes:

- By positioning girls as leaders and cocreators of research and advocacy, the approach naturally adapts to local realities, priorities, and cultural norms rather than imposing a fixed, external model.

- Many exercises are designed with flexible content and openended prompts, allowing facilitators to substitute locally-relevant examples, languages, and scenarios.

- Whilst this manual aims to respond to the needs of adolescent girls of different backgrounds, a basic level of literacy is needed by the girls to take part in most activities. However, with some adaptations and support from facilitators, especially in terms of notetaking and using fully visual cues, activities can – and have – be made suitable for all girls.

- Each section or module can be delivered independently or combined, making it easy to scale up for comprehensive programs or scale down for shorter trainings. Suggested materials are optional and adaptable.

- Each different activities and tools have

'suggested materials' – these are, as the title says, suggested: Each facilitator can use what they have available or what they feel is most appropriate, and adapt the activity accordingly.

- The proposed activities in the manual do not have a timeline – this is intentional, to ensures that the researchers and co-researcher can determine timings based on their needs and wants.

> **Advice from past facilitator:** Activities often require more time and resources than anticipated, especially when involving trust-building, discussions and iterative learning.

While the manuals suggest lowcost materials for activities, delivering girls' trainings and activities for girl-led research and action often incurs significant logistical expenses, such as refreshments and transportation, due to their extended duration. These costs, when not budgeted for, can make implementing girlled research and action challenging. However, it's important to remember that girlled approaches achieve impactful outcomes at a fraction of the cost of conventional studies conducted by traditional 'technical experts'.

- Some activities have been strengthened based on learnings from the use of this manual. These include:
  - Encouraging stronger reflection on the structural causes of the issues identified by the researchers.
  - Working with allies to also engage in action and advocacy to support the advancement of the researchers' recommendations and asks.

"

Listening to and documenting the stories of the girls facing various forms of adversity

> and abuse took a significant emotional toll on me… Even with these, I felt the need to continue the research to know more about the problems of teenage girls out there and finding ways to help them. Despite the draining challenges, I remained hopeful that the research can make a meaningful difference.
>
> **16-year-old researcher, Sierra Leone**

An inherent contradiction: the paradox of guidance for girl-led work

At first glance, the concept of a manual for girl-led research appears to embody a fundamental contradiction. How can something be authentically 'girl-led' when it follows prescribed steps, methodologies, and frameworks outlined in a structured guide? This tension sits at the heart of participatory research approaches that claim to centre young people's voices while simultaneously providing them with predetermined pathways for inquiry and action.

The contradiction is not merely semantic – it reflects deeper philosophical tensions about agency, authenticity, and power that permeate youth participatory research. Youth lead the research process, including defining a research question, collecting data, analysing results, and using research findings to enact change in their school or community.[12] Yet the existence of methodological frameworks suggests that this leadership operates within boundaries established by adult researchers and practitioners. Critics might argue that true girl-led research should emerge organically from girls' own experiences and curiosities, free from the constraints of methodology or structured approaches.

This paradox is not unique to girl-led research but extends across the broader landscape of

youth participatory action research (YPAR). YPAR centralises children and young people in the creation of new knowledge.[13] Informed by lived experiences, children and young people investigate and reflect on issues that matter to them.[14] Youth led approaches also ensures relevancy, and allows for innovation.[15]

The feminist research tradition offers additional insight into this contradiction. By centring not only their voices, but also their analysis and recommendations, the research employed structures to address the labels often given to participatory, feminist, anthropological and/or qualitative methodologies as less 'legitimate' or 'credible'. This suggests that structured approaches may actually serve to legitimise girl-led research within academic and policy contexts, providing girls with tools to navigate systems that might otherwise dismiss their contributions as less rigorous or valuable.[16]

The case for having a manual rests on several pragmatic and philosophical grounds. First, girls do not operate in a vacuum; they navigate institutional contexts, funding requirements, and adult gatekeepers who often demand evidence of methodological rigor. A manual provides girls with the tools to speak these institutional languages while maintaining their own research priorities and approaches. Second, the manual can enhance girls' leadership by providing girls with a choice of multiple methodological options. Rather than prescribing a single approach, this manual offers a toolkit that girls can adapt and modify based on their specific contexts and goals.

Third, the manual recognises the reality of unequal resource distribution. Not all girls have access to research training, academic mentorship, or methodological knowledge, though some do. The manual aims to, partially, level this playing field.

Finally, the contradiction itself may create useful discussion. By explicitly acknowledging the

tension between structure and agency, adult facilitation and youth leadership, a manual can help girls develop critical consciousness about the systems they navigate. This meta-awareness becomes part of the research process itself, encouraging girls to interrogate not only their chosen research topics but also the methodological tools they employ.

This manual's value lies in embracing the productive tension between working within existing power structures while pursuing equitable futures. Rather than seeing the manual as antithetical to girl-led approaches, we might understand it as a form of scaffolding – temporary support that enables girls to build autonomous research and advocacy practice.

Ultimately, by providing girls with methodological literacy, strategic tools, and critical frameworks, a manual can enhance their capacity to challenge existing systems, generate new knowledge, and drive meaningful change in their communities.[17] The contradiction between structure and agency becomes a dynamic tension to be navigated skilfully in service of girls' own research visions and social change goals.

What the girls have said and done

Before jumping into the logistics of the workshop, it's important to highlight the success of the GLRA approach so far:

Bangladesh[18]
The Girl-Led Research and Action project in Rupgonge by ActionAid Bangladesh has achieved remarkable impact across multiple dimensions of community health and empowerment. Most significantly, the project has fundamentally changed menstrual hygiene practices and attitudes in the community, with facilitators conducting door-to-door sessions that reached nearly 500 families.

The establishment of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) corners in four local educational institutions has directly addressed one of the most pressing barriers to girls' education – menstrual justice. Providing sanitary napkins at half the market price and creating environments that support students to study while menstruating have measurably improved female student attendance rates.

> "
>
> I was extremely afraid of public speaking and in such a condition, saying words like 'period' on public platforms was like a nightmare for me. But now, I confidently conduct sessions on menstrual hygiene management in my community.
>
> **Sumaya, 18-year-old researcher, Bangladesh**

Beyond individual behaviour change, the project has achieved systemic advocacy success by engaging key community stakeholders including political and religious leaders. The adolescent girls secured commitments from the local Union Parishad Chairman for infrastructure improvements including washrooms for girls, breastfeeding corners, and permanent long term-government funding for SRHR corners. Equally important, they gained support from religious leaders, who now actively promote menstrual health awareness through mosque communications, helping to dismantle religious taboos. The project's peer-to-peer education model has created a multiplier effect, with trained facilitators not only transforming their own communities but also inspiring neighbouring areas to seek similar interventions.

> " The project's ability to break down intergenerational barriers is captured in Maria's reflection: "I can still remember while watching television together, the advertisement of sanitary napkins used to make me feel extremely awkward in front of Bhaiya (brother)." Through GLA, Maria not only overcame her own shame but became instrumental in educating her brother, who now purchases sanitary products for her.

Maria, 16 year old, Bangladesh

> " I have gained valuable skills in communication, leadership, and advocacy. I plan to apply these skills in my future endeavours to help create positive change in my community. The trainings I took provided me with valuable insights and knowledge on gender issues and ways to address them.

Mahlet, researcher, Ethiopia

Ethiopia

The Girl-Led Research and Action project in Kirkos and Gulele, Ethiopia has achieved significant impact by supporting adolescent girls to confront and address gender-based violence and to champion their rights in their communities. Through a combination of education, advocacy training, partnerships with local organisations, and media outreach, the project built the knowledge, confidence, and practical skills of its participants, leading to tangible changes both for the girls involved and for the wider public. Key accomplishments include advocacy and legal training for dozens of girls aged 17-22, the production and broad dissemination of educational materials and advocacy videos in multiple local languages, and the establishment of peer networks and supportive links with organisations. Adolescent girls led media activities, including TV and radio, reaching millions and helping to break the silence surrounding GBV.

Nigeria

GLRA's work in Jigawa and the Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria has supported girls to amplify their voices, challenge social norms, and strengthen their confidence as advocates for change. Through developing skills in advocacy, public speaking, and community engagement, these girls are now driving conversations around education, gender equality, and social justice – issues they once felt powerless to address. Girls are now stepping into leadership roles and influencing wider community attitudes, particularly on sensitive issues like early marriage and gender-based violence.

> " I'm so excited to share that I am now part of the sensitisation team... conducting sensitisation programs on early marriage and gender-based violence.

Firdausi, 18-year-old researcher, Nigeria

Today, I speak with confidence. I understand that challenges are stepping stones, not stumbling blocks… my greatest aspiration is to help other girls find their voice, just like I found mine.

Zainab, 14-year-old researcher, Nigeria

Sierra Leone

In Freetown, Sierra Leone, the GLRA has had a transformative impact by shifting power into the hands of girls, enabling them to investigate and articulate the challenges they face, and equipping them with the tools to advocate for change. This process supported the development of new skills, self-belief, and the sense that they could be powerful agents of change. The project has also laid the groundwork for long-term advocacy, with the girls preparing campaigns to address key issues such as education, gender-based violence, and child exploitation, and to push for policy reforms that protect girls' rights.

Preparing for the workshops

This section supports facilitators and organisers in preparing effectively for workshops with adolescent girl researchers. It brings together the essential components that ensure workshops are safe, inclusive, and well-resourced. Each part of this section has a clear objective to guide planning and decision-making:

• Checklist: Helps facilitators prepare for all key considerations before workshops begin — from researcher selection and informed consent to budgeting, travel, and session timings.

• Safeguarding: Outlines the standards and responsibilities necessary to create a protective environment for adolescent girls, ensuring that every activity is conducted safely, respectfully, and in line with feminist principles. This section also details the roles of safeguarding leads, mandatory training, and reporting mechanisms.

By combining practical preparation tools with safeguarding guidance, this chapter ensures that both the process and environment of the workshops uphold girls' safety, dignity, and meaningful participation.

CHECKLIST

✓ **Researcher selection:** The facilitator and/or organising organisation need to convene a group of girls. There is an example of girl researcher selection criteria in ANNEX A which was used by ActionAid Bangladesh when they facilitated their girl-led research process.

✓ **Informed consent forms:** These need to be signed by the relevant adults/caregivers (if they are under 18 years old), in addition to the adolescent girls themselves. Prior work should be done to explain the project to girls and their parents/caregivers, and ensure consent is informed and freely given (more information on this in Module 1 activity 5 on Informed consent).

✓ **An up-to-date referral list:** A list of services/organisations and their contact details that you can provide to individuals if additional needs are disclosed during the sessions. For example, if a session on violence leads to a researcher or co-researcher disclosing that they have experienced violence, you should be able to refer them on to appropriate support.[19]

> **"** I was very excited about the research and one of the things that made me happy was because my parents' permission was sought before we even began. What motivated me the most was the fact that the research was about helping girls. I never thought I would be able to do it but with my parents support this boosted my confidence a lot.
>
> **Researcher, Nigeria**

✓ **Comfortable and safe venue:** Ensure that the venue is accessible for all girls, as well as a space they can get to and from safely. Make sure activities are planned at a time which is convenient and suits the girls' needs and responsibilities. Make the venue comfortable for researchers, for example ensuring comfortable seating. Ensure that the venue is safe, and private so that researchers can speak freely. The venue and workshops should follow health and safety guidelines in place at the time of the training.

✓ **Materials:** Provide relevant materials for the adolescent girl researchers. This manual suggests that at a minimum all girls have a notebook they can use both in the activity sessions, and during the data collection, as well as referral lists and safeguarding information. A list of activity-specific material is suggested at the start of each activity, but these can be adapted as needed.

✓ **Travel needs, requirements, and costs:** Consider the transportation challenges that may prevent girls from participating in research activities. This includes covering transport costs such as bus fares or fuel. Plan for safe transportation options, avoiding holding activities in the evening or in areas that are difficult to reach. Consider providing transport vouchers or organising group transportation to ensure all participants can attend safely and affordably. Factor in additional costs for accompaniment by guardians or chaperones where culturally appropriate or required for safety.

✓ **Food and drink:** All activities will require adequate food and general subsistence for the researchers, as well as any other participants.

✓ **Childminding:** When working with mothers, for example, teenage mothers or community members, a lack of creche or suitable child friendly, or child minding facilities and activities, could limit their participation in any activities.

✓ **Timings:** Consult with girls to ensure activities are scheduled at suitable times. Plan sessions around school hours, recognising that girls may have after-school study requirements or household responsibilities. Consider cultural and religious practices that may affect availability, including prayer times, religious observances, and family gatherings.

> **"** My advice to future researchers is ensuring good management of time during the research processes.
>
> **Researcher, Nigeria**

> **"** The biggest challenge I faced was from my father who insisted that I don't miss school or the lessons that I was attending

> but my mother always supported me and made him understand the importance of my participation in the research and then he would allow me to go.
>
> **Researcher, Nigeria**

Advice from past facilitator: Several delays were experienced in conducting the research due to school and Islamic classes in evenings and sometimes weekends. The clashes between normal activities of adolescent girls and being involved in the GLRA sometimes makes it difficult to engage girls effectively.

✓ **Budget:** Ensure the facilitator has the budget needed for this process. In addition to the costs listed above, please consider stipends for the girls' as appropriate, as well as trauma support fund for the researchers/facilitator, in case needed.

SAFEGUARDING

Before launching a project with adolescent girls, safeguarding essentials must be addressed. The list below has been adapted from ActionAid's Safeguarding[20] approach, primarily the Child Safeguarding Policy.[21]

- **Zero tolerance for abuse, harassment and exploitation:** Saff and representatives are prohibited from engaging in or promoting any form of abusive, exploitative, or harmful behaviour towards children, including adolescent girls. There is a clear ban on any sexual activity with anyone under 18, with no exceptions for mistaken belief regarding age. All staff must recognise their duty to protect the rights of children in all aspects of their work. Further information on gender-based violence interventions can be found here [Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action][22]

- **Safer programming and risk assessment:** All activities must be designed with a 'safety lens' to prevent harm to girls. This involves conducting structured risk assessments, particularly identifying additional vulnerabilities for sub-groups such as married girls, girls with disabilities and girls in emergency regions. Risk assessments should be part of the program plan and reviewed regularly to adapt to emerging risks

- **Survivor-centred response:** Confidentiality is critical. Anyone reporting abuse, including the survivor, their family, and community, must not experience any further harm or retaliation as a consequence of reporting. Support mechanisms and referral pathways should be clearly established and survivor focused.

- **Participation and agency:** Safeguarding approaches must ensure that adolescent girls are involved in assessing, planning, and evaluating the project using participatory methods that respect their agency and individuality.

- **Safer recruitment and training:** All staff and those representing its programs (including volunteers and contracted partners) must be safely recruited, thoroughly vetted, receive safeguarding training during induction, and maintain the highest personal and professional standards.

- **Clear and accessible complaints mechanisms:** Staff, partners, and girls must be made aware of, and able to access, complaints and reporting mechanisms appropriate for children and young people. Materials and guidance must be child- and youth-friendly.

- **Community and family engagement:** Collaboration with local communities is essential to ensure safeguarding measures are effective. Parents, guardians, and families

should be informed about project activities and safeguarding expectations.

- **Reflecting feminist principles:** ActionAid embeds feminist leadership principles into its safeguarding. These principles help dismantle bias, protect marginalised girls, and commit to zero tolerance for any form of harm.

- **Content gathering and dignity:** If collecting stories, images, or other forms of content, explicit, informed consent must be obtained from both adolescent girls and their guardians where appropriate, and only positive, non-exploitative images may be used.

Failure to embed these measures can compromise the safety, dignity, and rights of adolescent girls involved in the project and may result in institutional or reputational consequences for any associated organisation.

Key safeguarding requirements:

Safeguarding training: Any adult or individual in a position of power working with the adolescent girls on the GLRA project needs to be appropriately and sufficiently trained on safeguarding – it is the responsibility of the facilitator to ensure this. Mentors and other facilitators working on this project should also have received safeguarding training before they start working with the girl researchers. Training must cover safeguarding roles, SHEA policies, Code of Conduct, handling concerns, child safeguarding practices, power dynamics, and making appropriate referrals.

1. **Safeguarding lead:** The researchers should be made aware of their safeguarding lead, this is the responsibility of the facilitator. The safeguarding lead must be someone who the girls can contact openly and easily.

2. **Reporting mechanism:** In addition to the safeguarding lead, there must be at least

one other reporting mechanisms which is accessible to the adolescent girls. This should be co-created with the adolescent girls, ensuring that it is realistic and accessible. Some things to consider are:

1. An email address might not be suitable for girls without private access to digital tools.

2. If using an anonymous comment box, this needs to be checked regularly.

3. The girls must understand how any issues are processed and addressed, who will process them, how long the process could take and what they can expect after reporting an issue.

4. Consider the accessibility and the practicality of the chosen reporting mechanisms – it may improve access to have several different options.

Activity 4: Reflecting on safeguarding creates a space for this to be developed. When thinking about reporting mechanisms, it is vital to consider the accessibility and the practicality of these being used – sometimes, having many different **reporting** mechanisms is a good option.

Module 1: Setting up a safe and supportive peer space

Before any research-related workshops start, it is important to set up a safe and supportive peer space. Adolescent girls are rarely asked for their opinion or encouraged to think critically about the society they inhabit and how it influences them, so it's crucial to give the groups time to get to know each other and feel comfortable sharing their experiences together.

The following activities will help to break down potential barriers, for example, if the girls do not know each other.[23]

Activity 1: Getting to know each other

The objective of this activity is to help the adolescent girls to start getting to know each other better. It also helps to practice active listening, an essential research skill.

Note - Before the session, request each member of the group to:

- Bring an object that is meaningful to them – this could be anything that represents an aspect of their experiences, ambitions or personality.

Sequencing of activity:

1. Ask everybody to sit in a circle and turn to the person their left and introduce themselves. Invite each participant to share their name, why they wanted to join this girl-led research group, and something about the object they have brought with them.

2. Once everyone has spent a few minutes talking with their partner, suggest they introduce each other to the group.

3. Go around the circle again and this time ask everyone to think of one thing they can contribute to the group, and one thing they would like support with from the group (for example 'I am really good at listening closely to what others are telling me, and sometimes I need support to speak up').

4. Note down what everyone brings to the group, and what support they need from the group on a flipchart.

5. After everyone has been introduced, take a moment to acknowledge your appreciation for the researchers' commitment to this process and the special skills and qualities they bring together.

⏱ Activity 2: Creating a safe, brave space

The objective of this task is to create awareness of what a safe and brave space is, and to foster this space within the group.

📋 **Note -** Explain to the group that to work well together we need to spend some time discussing what will ensure this space helps everyone to feel safe, heard, included and empowered to be their bravest self.

Sequencing of activity:

1. Divide researchers into small groups (approx. 3 people), and explain that you're going to ask the groups to consider three points:

   a. **What does a safe space mean?**
   Please consider:
   What does a safe space mean to you? What will make this space safer for everyone? Ask the group to note down at least three ideas on pieces of card – you may want to suggest prompt words if needed.

   b. **How can we include everyone in the space?** Please consider:
   What will help this space to respond to everyone's differences, a space where we are all able to participate equally and learn from each other? Ask the groups to come up with 2-3 examples and write these on cards.

   c. **How do we make this a brave space?**
   Please consider:
   How we can ensure everyone feels able to step out of their comfort zone, explore challenging topics, and receive feedback from one another? Again, ask the group to come up with 2-3 examples and write these on cards.

2. Once everyone has discussed for a few minutes, invite each group to present their ideas to the rest of the group, and stick the pieces of card up at the front of the room.

3. Once everyone has presented, look at whether any of the groups gave similar suggestions and group these together.

4. Once everyone has contributed their ideas on creating a safe and brave space, look at all the suggestions and as a group decide on the key principles your group will follow.

5. Ensure that you have covered some of the key principles for creating a safe space including non-judgement, respect, intersectionality, and confidentiality – some of these principles might be new, so explain them to the group and ask if everyone is happy for them to be included in the group's guiding principles if they are not in the original suggestions.

6. Once you have agreed the guiding principles write them up on a flip chart and pin them up in the room. Keep a copy of these guiding principles to display at all group sessions. You can always refer to them during challenging moments for the group.

⏱ Activity 3: The balloon game[24]

The objective of this session is to introduce the concept of safeguarding in a fun, interactive way.

Materials needed:
- Several colourful balloons
- String or ribbon

Sequencing of activity:

1. **Preparing the balloons:** Before the activity begins, prepare balloons by blowing them up and attaching string ribbon to them. Explain that these balloons represent different people in their community.

2. **Dividing into groups:** Divide the girls into two groups and explain their roles:
   - Group 1: The protectors – Tie balloons around your ankles with string and try to protect them from any attacks.
   - Group 2: The challengers – Try to safely pop the balloons (without hurting anyone).

3. **Playing the game:** Start the activity and let both groups carry out their roles for about 10 minutes. The protectors will move around trying to keep their balloons safe while the challengers attempt to pop them.

4. **Reflecting on the protector experience:** Ask Group 1: "How did you feel when you were trying to protect the balloons? What made protecting your balloons easier? What made it harder? What strategies did you use?"

5. **Reflecting on the challenger experience:** Ask Group 2: "What made it easy for you to challenge the balloons? What made it difficult? How did you feel about trying to pop them?"

6. **Making the connection:** Explain that the balloons represent girls and adolescents like themselves. The protectors represent themselves, families, caregivers, communities, and organisations who try to keep young people safe. The challengers represent all the different dangers and risks that young people face in their communities and lives.

7. **Understanding safeguarding:** Lead a discussion about what safeguarding means, e.g. protecting people from harm and helping those who have been hurt. Ask the girls what kinds of dangers they might face and what protection looks like in real life.

8. **Personal reflection:** Ask each girl to think about who the protectors are in their own lives and what makes them feel safe and protected.

> **"**
>
> I remember the safeguarding exercise where I was asked to burst the balloons, I was so eager to burst it but the person carrying the ballon was doing everything possible to protect it but I ended up bursting it! This really helped to understand the how abusers think and everyone should prioritise safeguarding.
>
> **Researcher, Nigeria**

⏱ Activity 4: Reflecting on safeguarding

The objective of this activity is to provide space for girls to reflect on what being safe means to them, understand their rights and how they can report concerns. Based on this, you can create a Safeguarding Framework.

Sequencing of activity:

1. **What is safeguarding?** Explain to the group that everyone has the right to be treated equally, and to be free from harm.

Safeguarding refers to the proactive measures and responsibilities put in place to protect everyone who comes into contact with the project/organisation, especially children and young people, from abuse, exploitation, harm, and discrimination. It involves proactive steps to ensure that no one is deliberately or inadvertently caused harm through the GLRA work, embedding a culture of zero tolerance towards all forms of exploitation and abuse. Safeguarding also includes upholding the rights and dignity of children and vulnerable groups by implementing clear policies, safe recruitment, training, risk assessments, and confidential, survivor-centred responses to any safeguarding concerns.

Ensure that the group understands that safeguarding goes beyond protection by ensuring the rights of all girls are respected in every aspect of programming, to prevent harm before it occurs.

Safeguarding practices shouldn't be the same for everyone: people who face multiple forms of systemic barriers have different risks and levels of harm, and have more barriers to accessing to support. The GLRA safeguarding approach needs to ensure that the different individual and group risks are considered.

Figure 1 https://www.safeguard-me.co.uk/blog/tpost/t73ixzpyu1-what-are-the-different-types-of-abuse

2. **Examples:** Ask the group to write down examples of something that could happen that can make them and/or someone else feel unsafe, or that might cause harm. Another option is to have girls discuss in smaller groups and then share with wider group.

Facilitators note: encourage the group to speak from a general point of view, no one needs to share personal experiences. Ensure these are noted down to create a Safeguarding Framework which works for the group.

3. **All areas:** Discuss examples ensuring that the conversation covers all areas of safeguarding, for example:

Tell them that it is the facilitator's responsibility to ensure that girls participating in this research do not come to any harm whilst taking part in activities – however, everyone has collective responsibility to look out for one another, know what is and isn't OK. This can only happen when there is a shared understanding and ownership of safeguarding.

Ensure they understand that they should report anything that harms them, or if they are worried about someone else being harmed. Make clear that will not be negative repercussions for reporting (and ensure this is the case in the space you are operating in).

4. **Reporting mechanism:** Test out the reporting mechanisms that already exist – this way the girls can become familiar with them should they need them.

5. **Safety as defined by the girls:** Ask the group for examples of what you can do to make sure that everyone is safe, for example making sure that everyone is listened to, knowing who to tell/where to report if someone is at risk, etc.

6. **Reiteration:** Reiterate that they have the right to report anything that happens during this process that causes them harm, or makes them feel unsafe.

7. **Create a safeguarding framework:** Together with the girls create a visual aid, for example a poster and/or printout, which can serve as a visual reminder on safeguarding for the girls throughout the project. This framework can cover:

- What safeguarding is
- Different types of safeguarding which are relevant to the girls' lives and the project
- Who is responsible for safeguarding (facilitators, adults, and participants)
- Measures the girls have identified on what safety looks like for them
- Reporting mechanisms – what they are and how they can be used
- Safeguarding lead – who this is and how they can be contacted

⏱ Activity 5: Informed consent

The objective of this session is to both make sure the girls understand what informed consent is, and to ask for their informed consent to be part of the project.

Materials needed:
- Project-specific informed consent forms
- Pens

Sequencing of activity:

1. **Personal experiences with permission:** Ask the girls to think about things that are important to them (their belongings, personal space, time, ideas, stories). Ask them: "How would you feel if someone took these things or used them without asking your permission first?" Allow girls to share their responses and feelings.

2. **Proper vs improper ways of seeking permission:** Building on their responses, ask the girls: "What would you consider as a proper way for someone to seek your permission? What would be an improper way?" Discuss their answers, highlighting themes like being honest, giving enough information, not pressuring someone, respecting their right to say no.

3. **What is informed consent?** Ask the girls to provide their own definitions of what they think it is. Explain that just like in their personal lives, research also requires a special kind of permission called 'informed consent'.

4. **Understanding what needs to be known:** Discuss their answers, then ask what they think they need to know before giving informed consent to their participation in the project. Answers should include things as:

   a. Understanding what they are going to do

   b. Understanding the time commitment

   c. Understanding what kind of

compensation/allowances they will receive for their time spent on this project

    d. Understanding how their work may be used – it is crucial for the girls to understand how the convening organisation will want to use their work, as well as if they intend to share it externally.

5. **Providing the necessary information:** Set out to answer the aspects of informed consent that have been raised.

For example:

    a. What are they going to do: Facilitators should ensure that the group knows that they are there to take part in a research project – over the next few days/weeks together you'll be planning and preparing for this research, conducting the data collection, analysing the results, and doing advocacy.

    b. Time commitment: For example, you could agree to meet to plan the research every Monday for 2 hours, for the next 4 months. This could be followed by the data collection phase over 1 month, and then 1 week where you analyse the data. Lastly, you could agree to undertake advocacy activities on the research findings for 12 months.

    c. Compensation: Researchers will be given a daily allowance for the time they spent on the project and compensated for their transport costs.

    d. Use of their work: ActionAid will use the knowledge, findings and recommendations for fundraising, programme implementation, advocacy, and awareness raising purposes.

6. **Principles of ethical consent:** Discuss how informed consent should be obtained, emphasising that it must be given freely, with full understanding, and with enough time to consider the decision. Explain when informed consent should be obtained (before any research activities begin and as an ongoing process).

7. **Gathering consent:** Remind the group that to participate in this project they, and their parents/caregivers, should have given informed consent, which should include an overview of the project, information about how much time the project will take/when they will be participating/what compensation or allowances they will receive, and permission for ActionAid to take photos/videos of the process.

8. **Consent as an ongoing process:** Remind the group that consent is an ongoing process, and they have a right to change their mind and withdraw their consent/ stop participating in the project at any point (and if they withdraw their consent after the parents/caregivers have provided consent, their right to withdraw will always come first).

Module 2: Gender and power

In this module, we will start unpacking structural inequalities in girls' lives. Our experiences in life are shaped by many factors, including gender (as a girl, boy, non-binary, transgender etc.), age, race/ethnicity, where we live, how much money we have, whether are able to go to school and so on.

To understand these factors, the researchers can explore concepts of gender and power in a series of activities that can be adapted to their specific context and experiences, as well as the time available to them. This will help lead the researchers to the themes and topics that they want to explore in the research.

RESEARCH AS A TOOL FOR ACTIVISM

When adolescent girls design questions, gather evidence, and present their own analysis, they are engaging in political action – challenging the systems that silence them. In this way, research becomes a collective act of resistance and power-building that shifts both knowledge production and decision-making in girls' favour.

The research process in and of itself can be a transformative process, since collaboratively reflecting on power is an activist pedagogy.[25] This understanding positions research as a form of resistance that challenges dominant power structures, where the change starts to happen.[26]
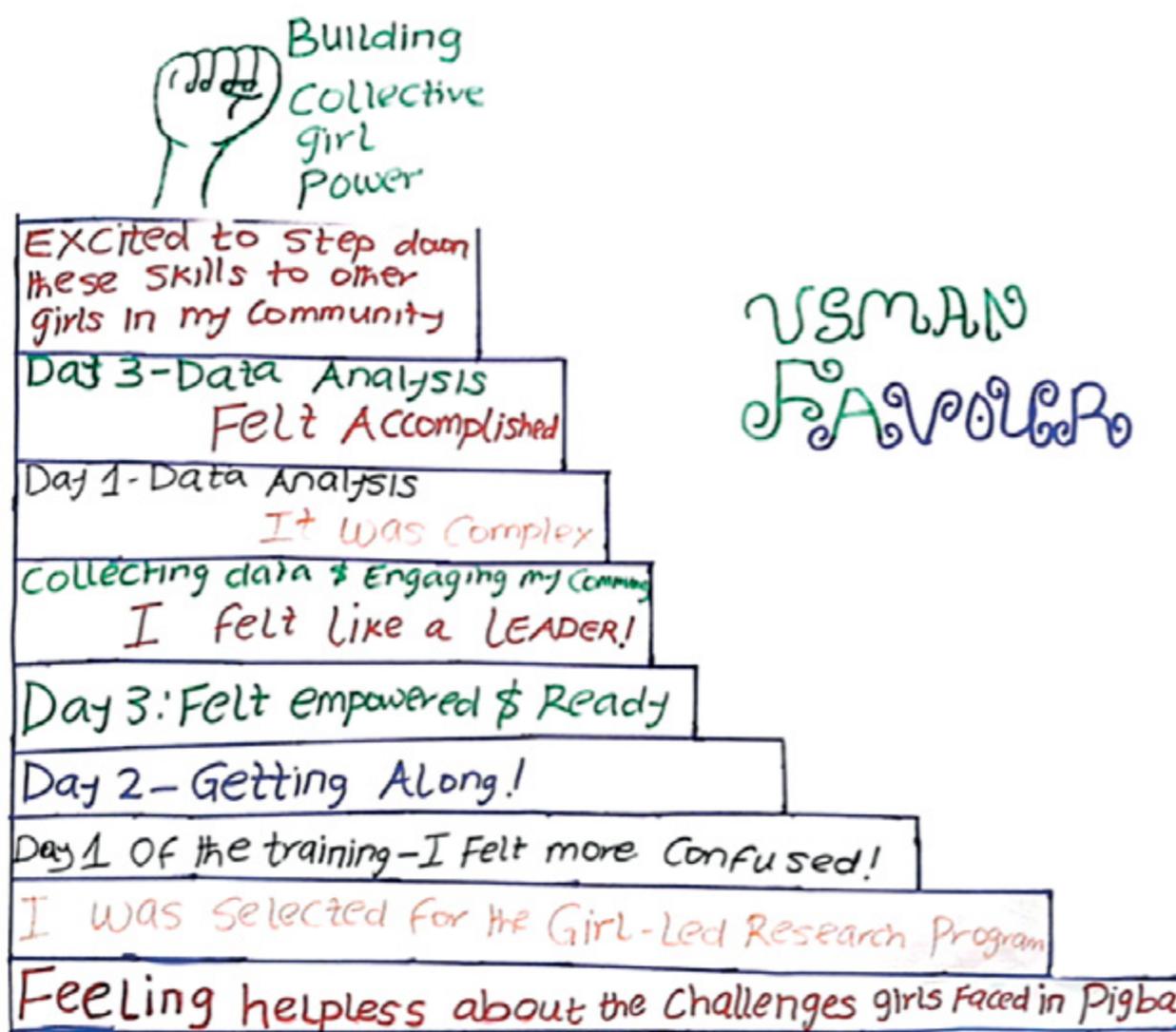
Figure 2 Illustration from a girl researcher after going through the GLRA process

⏱ Activity 1: Know your rights

The objective of this activity is for the researchers to understand that national and international legislation exists to protect their rights.

📝 Note:

- Some of the issues the girls face may break laws/legislations – be sensitive to this.
- Ensure you are aware of the national and international legislation which is relevant to the rights of adolescent girls.

Materials needed:

- Your own notes on the different legislation frameworks

Activity sequencing:

1. **What are 'rights':** introduce the concept of rights for adolescent girls, highlighting the importance of knowing and understanding their rights within both national and international frameworks. Discuss how rights are inherent and not privileges to be earned.

2. **Rights quiz:** Ask a series of questions about girls' rights based on national and international legislation and conventions: Present two statements for each question and ask participants to choose which statement accurately reflects their rights. Clarify correct answers after each response, briefly explaining the relevant legislation or convention. For example:

   a. Which statement is true?

   A. Only adults have the right to express their opinions about decisions that affect their lives

   B. Adolescent girls have the right to express their opinions and be taken seriously in matters affecting them.

   Correct answer is B, as per the CRC

   b. Which statement is true?

   A. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to education regardless of gender or age.

   B. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights only guarantees education rights for boys.

   Correct answer is A as per UDHR

   c. Which statement is true?

   A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) protects indigenous adolescent girls' rights to participate in decisions affecting their communities.

   B. UNDRIP denies indigenous adolescent girls the right to practice their culture and traditions.

   Correct answer is A as per UNDRIP.

   And so on.

4. **Reflection and discussion:** Lead a group discussion focusing on questions such as:

   a. Which rights were surprising or new to you?

   b. Why do you think it's important to know your rights?

   c. Do these rights make a difference in your daily life?

   d. How can girls advocate for their rights in their communities?

   e. Which of these rights feel most important to your daily life?

   f. Have you ever experienced a situation where your rights weren't respected?

   g. What barriers prevent girls in your community from enjoying their rights?

   h. Who are the key people/institutions responsible for protecting your rights?

⏱ Activity 2: The Power Flower[27]

> **Advice from past facilitator:** This exercise helps to teach the concept of power in a manner that's easy to understand, remember and apply.

The objective of this activity is to provide a critical lens for the researchers to start looking at and understanding different forms of power.

📝 **Note:** The types of power are:

Power within – Self-worth, self-confidence, inner strength, sense of identity, dignity. By enhancing the 'power within', people become more aware of their rights, they gain the confidence and skills to organise and take action.

Power with – Collective power and strength, mutual support, cooperation and working together, solidarity and joint action. 'Power with' helps bring diverse groups of people together to work towards a collectively desired change.

Power to – Every individual has the power to take action that can improve the lives of those experiencing injustice and discrimination. When people use this power, especially collectively, they can really make a difference. This is rooted in the belief that every individual has the 'power to' make a difference.

Power over – Domination or control of one person, group or institution over another. Actors such as police, judges, teachers and politicians all have power over us in society, which can be used for positive or negative change, which is why we work to influence them. Changes happen in policies, budgets, practices of state and non-state institutions.

Power under – When those who have faced trauma, discrimination, or oppression adopt controlling or oppressive behaviours
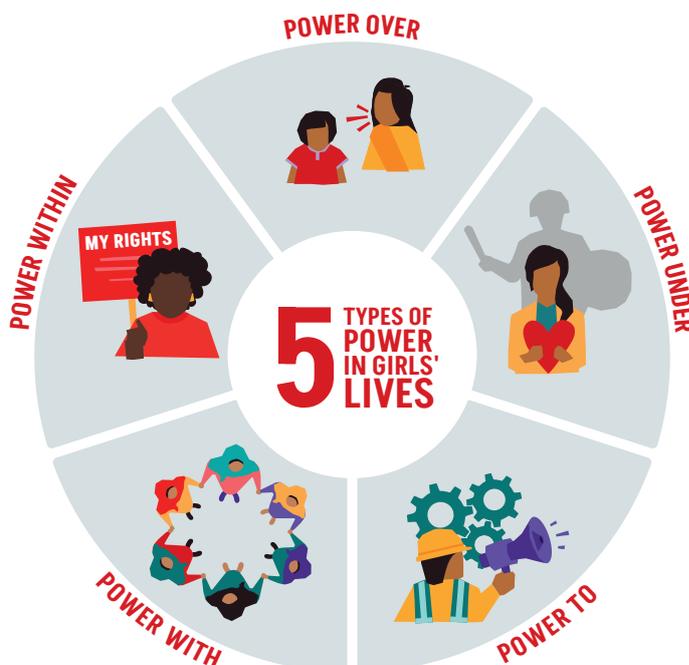
Figure 3 From Decolonising Feminist Research: Mapping and guidance to process and product

after gaining power. This response, often unintentional, can cause girls and women to repeat harmful patterns they experienced, potentially perpetuating cycles of exclusion or harm.

> " The training stressed me to think and also connect with my power within. My favourite activity was the power flower.
> **Researcher, Nigeria**

Suggested materials:
- Paper
- Coloured markers/pens/pencils

Activity sequencing:
1. **Parts of a flower:** Discuss the idea of the flower and its different components, with its base in the centre and a large circle of five petals, covered by smaller petals.

2. **Drawing the flower:** Ask the group

to draw the centre of the flower which represents themselves – they could draw a picture of themselves and/or write their name in the centre of the flower.

3. **Explaining the types of power:** Explain the idea of the five forms of power (explained above) and ask people to draw the five large petals, each representing one form of power.

4. **Discussing types of power:** Take one petal at one time and ask the group to discuss how they, and other girls experience that type of power. Encourage the group to share real life examples they have experienced (remind the group to only share what they feel comfortable with). Refer to the guiding questions as you talk through each type of power.

Guiding questions:

Power within:

- How does it feel to have 'power within'? Do you feel that you have self-confidence? Do you feel that you have good knowledge/awareness of your rights? Do self-confidence and rights awareness contribute to having power within? If so, how?

- Do you feel you can make your own decisions?

- Is it easy for girls in this community to have power within? Why/why not?

- Is there someone you know who has power within? How is it visible?

- What messages about yourself have you had to resist or unlearn?

Power with:

- How do girls work together towards change?

- How do girls support each other?
- Who else supports girls/who do girls work with in the community and/or school for change?
- Where can/could you see power with? How is it visible?
- What would it look like to work with others to address issues you care about?

Power to:

- Do you feel able to create change?
- Have any changes in the community been influenced by the collective action of girls?
- Is it easy for girls to influence change in this community? Why/why not?
- What is an example of something you have achieved in the past/something that you feel proud of?
- Do you feel girls can influence interventions intended to support them?

Power over:

- What people, groups or institutions have power over girls? How does that impact girls' lives?
- What strategies have/can you use to try to influence their agendas or actions?
- How do rules, policies, or traditions in your school or community give some people power over others?
- What changes would you like to see in how power is used by those in authority?
- In what situations do you have power over others? How do you use this responsibility?
- What systems, rules, or structures limit your choices? Which ones protect you?

Power under:

- Can you think of times when someone who has been hurt or excluded acts in a controlling or harsh way toward others?
- Why do you think people who have faced oppression might sometimes repeat those patterns when they have power?
- What feelings or fears might lead someone to use power in a way that harms others, even if they don't mean to?

Reflection:
  - Which types of power do you feel most connected to? Which feel most distant?
  - How do these different types of power interact in your life?
  - What would it look like to strengthen each type of power in your own life and community?

5. **Connecting small and large petals:** As the group reflects on the questions and the different types of power, invite them to draw symbols or write words/phrases in each of the small petals connected to the large petal representing each of the different forms of power. (These petals can also be different in the size representing the scale and impact of the change).

6. **Repeat:** Repeat the process for all five petals and make the flower grow.

7. **Sharing:** Ask people to discuss their flower and share their experiences by explaining
  - Which side of the flower is healthy (with more petals) and why?
  - Which side of the flower is weaker and why?
  - What could have made the flower healthier/stronger?
  - What does this exercise tell us about the power that girls have in our community? What are some the reasons for this?

8. **Keep safe and display:** Take all the drawings and display them in the room as a reminder of the session – the power flowers could be a useful reference as you plan the research together.

> "We learned a lot of new things during the research that we did not know before. Now we know about power. We know how child marriage destroys girls' lives. We want to change our society and work together to stop child marriage. Working together was a big learning. We did not know properly about our community before, now we know our community clearly and we want to work to change our society for a better future."
>
> **Researcher, Indonesia**

⏱ Activity 3: The Power Walk[28]

The objective of this activity is to help researchers to explore the unequal distribution of power amongst different people.

Note: This exercise can evoke strong emotions among researchers and must be used carefully in any community where people experience power inequalities every day. Make sure to reflect when preparing the activity on the different roles you choose, and also, take time at the end of the session to discuss emotions the girls participating in the session might experience, and finish with a simple game/song to help the group end on a positive note.

Activity sequencing:

1. **Character setting:** The facilitator writes on a piece of paper the character each participant is expected to be in this role play. Below is a list of suggested characters, but the facilitator should adapt these to be relevant for the group and context. If researchers have limited literacy skills, then the facilitator can draw each character or whisper to each participant their character for this role play. The researchers must not tell anyone else the character they were given.

2. **Lining up:** All the researchers line up (shoulder to shoulder and facing the same direction) in the middle of the space. The facilitator explains that researchers must take steps forwards or backwards depending upon what they think their character is able to do or not do in response to each of the statements that will be read out (see below).

3. **Stepping forward and backwards:** The facilitator reads out one statement at a time (see below) giving the researchers enough time to step forward or backward. If the researchers think that their character can

do what the statement says, then they take one step forward. If the researchers think that their character cannot do what the statement says, then they take one step backward.

4. **Positional reflection:** After all the statements have been read out ask:

   a. the people who have moved forward the most to reveal their characters and say how they feel.

   b. those who have taken the most steps backwards to reveal their characters and ask them how they feel.

   c. the researchers at the back of the line what would need to change to move them forward.

   d. the researchers at the front of the line how their characters could support those at the back of the line to move forward.

5. **Guided reflections:** Ask researchers to leave their positions and gather in a circle to discuss the exercise, using the questions below as a guide:

   a. How did this exercise make you feel?

   b. Why did the researchers end up in different positions, even though they started at the same place?

   c. What did you notice about how much power girls and young women in these scenarios had access to?

   d. What other factors influenced how much power girls and young women had access to? (Think for example about education levels, disabilities, care responsibilities etc).

   e. Which characters in the exercise had more control over their own lives and who had less? What factors influenced this?

   f. Is this exercise relevant to girls' lives in this community? Why/why not?

6. **Concluding points:** Summarise the exercise

by including some of these key points:

   a. We should all have equal access to rights and opportunities – but this is not always an everyday reality.

   b. Girls and young women can be particularly impacted by power inequalities – but they also have access to power within themselves, power with each other (and other important people in their lives), and power to make changes.

   c. Power can be more balanced if everyone in the community/society reflects on, and challenges, power inequalities. These power structures can be changed, and there are many examples of change in our communities and societies. This is an invitation to continue examining how our own position can give us power over others, place us under others' power, or provide us with power within ourselves.

   d. An important part of challenging power inequalities and balancing power is listening to, and amplifying, the voices of those impacted – conducting research about girls' lives is one way we can do this.

   e. In our research project we should keep in mind what we can do to surface these power inequalities, and consider solutions.

Possible example situations – ensure whichever situations you use are adapted to be suitable and appropriate for both the context and the dynamics within the group:

👣 Step forward if you feel you can speak up when you see something unfair.

👣 Step forward if you feel you can make financial decisions about your life.

👣 Step backwards if you weren't able to study when you wanted to.

👣 Step backwards if you can go out at night without having to worry about your safety.

- 👣 Step forward if you feel your opinions are respected by adults in your community.
- 👣 Step backwards if you have ever been told you cannot do something because of your gender.
- 👣 Step forward if you have access to information about your health and wellbeing.
- 👣 Step backwards if you have ever felt unsafe in your own home.
- 👣 Step backwards if you have ever been pressured to behave in a certain way because of your gender.
- 👣 Step backwards if you have been excluded from activities because of your gender.
- 👣 Step forward if you have a say in decisions about your education.
- 👣 Step backwards if you have experienced discrimination because of your gender, ethnicity, or background.
- 👣 Step forward if you can access support when you need it.
- 👣 Step backwards if you have ever been afraid to express your true self.
- 👣 Step forward if you feel confident to challenge unfair rules or traditions.
- 👣 Step forward if you feel your dreams and ambitions are encouraged by those around you.
- 👣 Step backwards if you have ever been made to feel less important than boys.
- 👣 Step forward if you are able to participate in community leadership roles.
- 👣 Step forward if you feel you can make choices about your own body.
- 👣 Step backwards if you have ever been silenced or ignored when sharing your ideas.
- 👣 Step backwards if you have faced barriers because of a disability or health condition.
- 👣 Step backwards if you have experienced discrimination because of your sexual orientation or gender identity.
- 👣 Step backwards if your immigration status has limited your opportunities.
- 👣 Step backwards if your religious/belief system background is different from the main one of where you live.

> **Advice from past facilitator:** This is a very powerful tool that helps girls understand unequal power within their society. Additionally, the issues that kept girls behind the most can be noted and kept in mind to guide their research topic selections.

⏱ Activity 4: The Human Box[29]

Advice from past facilitator: The Human Box was my favourite tool. Our girls used it as a data collection tool to unpack leadership skills and distribution in their community and it just really helped both the women and men to see the deficit and how exclusion of women from leadership roles doesn't make sense when they have the required skills.

The objective of this task is to start explicitly identifying how power works around being a girl.

Facilitator note: It may or may not be appropriate for your context to not only do this around the binary gender categories of boy and girl, but to also include other gender identities, for example non-binary or transgender identities. In addition, this could also be done for other social categories beyond gender, for example around age, religion, disability, or ethnicity.

Suggested materials:
- Large paper or wall space
- Markers/pens/pencils

Activity sequencing:
1. **Create the 'Girl Box':** Draw a big square on the flip chart for your group. The box should be almost as big as the paper on the flip chart, though leave some space as to be able to write items outside the square.
2. **Brainstorming expected behaviours:** Ask the group to brainstorm a list of what their community/society understands of 'being a good girl'. Place these ideas inside this square on the flip chart. Try to think about:
- What tasks are girls expected to do?
- What role do girls play in the community and their families?
- What characteristics are girls supposed to have?
- What emotions are expected of girls?
- What is expected of girls at different ages?
- Do all girls have the same experiences? If not, how?
- Are the expectations for girls in rural and urban areas different? How?
3. **Brainstorming other behaviours:** Ask the group to place characteristics that their societies label as 'not being a good girl' on the flip chart paper outside the box.
4. **Replicate with the 'Boy Box':** Draw another box on a different flipchart but this time ask the group to brainstorm what their community/society expects of 'being a good boy' - Place these ideas inside this square on the flip chart. Try to think about:
- What tasks are boys expected to do?
- What role do boys play in the community and their families?
- What characteristics are boys supposed to have?
- What emotions are expected of boys?
- What is expected of boys at different ages?
- Place outside the behaviours boys might do which are not expected.
- Do all boys have the same experiences? If not, how?
- Are the expectations for boys in rural and urban areas different? How?
5. **Debrief the activity with the group:** Reflecting on the following questions:
- Where do these messages come from? Who is the messenger? Do the messages differ if they come from a man or a woman (mother, father, teacher, sibling, peers)?
- What are the differences and similarities between the two boxes?
- How does it feel to be in this box?

- What are the advantages for boys and girls who stay in the Girl Box and Boy Box?

- What are the disadvantages to staying in the Boy Box or Girl Box?

- Can you step out of the box? Who or what stops you from doing so? What would you need to step out of if you wanted to?

- Are there advantages of stepping out of the box? What are they?

- What do these boxes tell us about the power that girls and boys, and women and men have?

6. **Create the 'Human Box':** Make another box on a new piece of paper from the flip chart Label this box the 'Human Box'.

7. **Reflecting on the boxes**

- Ask the researchers to point out the positive qualities of what is written inside and outside of the Boy Box. Write them inside the box labelled "Human Box." Explain that there are many positive characteristics inside the Boy Box, ask how many of these positive characteristics are associated with power?

- Ask researchers to point out the positive qualities written inside and outside of the Girl Box. Write them inside the box labelled the "Human Box." Explain that there are also many positive characteristics inside the girl box, and ask how many of them are associated with power?

8. **Summarise the activity:**

- A person, regardless of their gender, can be any combination of characteristics inside the Human Box. Such decisions should be based on their personal choices as individuals and human beings, not forced upon them based on their gender, or any other identity.

- Girls in particular can often feel they are limited to behaving in certain ways to be seen as a 'good girl', and when girls step outside of this box can receive messages that they are 'too much!'. But to live a fulfilling life and contribute all of our unique skills, it is important that we are able to be our 'full selves' – whether or not this fits within our gendered box.

- When we aspire to the ideals of the Human Box, we are changing the question from "how should a girl/boy act/do?" to "how should a human being act/do?"

- Sometimes the messages we get about being a girl/boy are also about power and who has access to it – by thinking about living in the human box we can make sure that power is shared more equally.

Module 3: Exploring the issues relevant to girls' lives

In this module, the researchers will start identifying the main issues that affect them and the girls' in their community, in order to start designing their research methodology.

From developing their observation skills in a community mapping exercise and exploring consent by creating a body map, to documenting how their time is used, these activities help to identify underlying causes of structural inequality.

The exercises in this section require researchers to share sensitive topics related to girls' physical and mental health within a group setting, which may be challenging for some researchers.

Topics may include:
- Body image and self-perception
- Menstruation and reproductive health
- Pregnancy and sexual health
- Mental health challenges
- Social pressures and expectations
- Physical and emotional impacts of daily responsibilities

It's important that the facilitator continues to maintain a safe and confidential space for the researchers, emphasising that:

- Participation is completely voluntary.
- They can step away from the activity at any time if they feel uncomfortable.
- Support will be available if they need to talk about any feelings that arise during or after the activity (ensure that this support is available, either from you and/or a safeguarding trained staff member).

> "
> This research has represented our voice. It is voicing our problems.
>
> **Researcher from Indonesia**

Activity 1: Community maps[30]

The objective of this activity is to map out where adolescent girls may feel they are being treated unfairly or being prevented from realising their rights.

Note: Maps are an effective way of presenting information, problems and opportunities in a clear, visual way.

Suggested materials:
- Paper
- Pens

Or also

- Floor/sand
- Sticks/pebbles

Figure 4 Community map from Women's Right to Land Programme Framework[31]

Activity sequencing:
1. **Prior reflection:** The day before this activity is delivered, the group should be encouraged to think about how they feel when they travel home or to their

accommodation. Otherwise, the group can begin the exercise by taking a walk around the area to note key features they wish to represent and analyse.

2. **Drawing the community:** Initially, a map should be created on a large scale on the floor or any large surface, so that all researchers can actively contribute. The researchers should then identify key spaces on the map, for example a school, community centre, or location of the activity. Features such as main roads and landmarks help people to orient themselves and therefore engage more actively.

3. **Representing different elements:** Different materials can be used to represent the various elements on the map, using moveable objects such as sticks and stones so that the map can be expanded as it develops. The meanings of the symbols should be agreed by the group. Researchers who find speaking challenging respond particularly well to this activity.

4. **Reflecting on positive and negative feelings:** Once all the physical landmarks relevant to the purpose of the map are in place, more qualitative judgements can be considered, for example to indicate positive or negative perceptions of what is represented. Researchers could highlight:

- Where are resources in your community? Who has access to those, who doesn't? Why is this?
- Where are the safe spaces?
- Where are the unsafe spaces?
- What makes these safe/unsafe? How does this impact them?
- What is their experience when they go to the doctor?
- Do they feel they can safely travel to school?
- Are there areas of gathering/roads/parts of town they avoid because they feel unsafe?

Why are these unsafe? What's causing them to be unsafe?

- Are there areas that they feel they cannot access, because of privacy, distance, safety? Why are these unsafe/not private/not accessible? What's causing this?
- Where on the map is a safe area for girls, and where feels more dangerous (and why)?
- Which services are available for girls in the community, and whether they feel those are 'girl friendly'?
- The main places girls can go in the community, and the places that are not accessible to them (for example, community meeting places, youth groups, health care centres, etc.)
- What informal systems of support are available to girls?
- Is this the same for all girls? Which girls might experience more barriers to moving around freely?

5. **Reflection:** Then the group can reflect on the map as a whole, drawing out insights or conclusions to stimulate discussion. The completed map often enables people to see issues or phenomena in a new light.

6. **Dream changes:** Once the 'real' map has been created, this can be used as a starting point for developing an 'ideal' map, showing future changes desired by and for girls in the community, and who those changes would need to involve. This could be either practical and achievable, with a deadline you would like to see it achieved by, or idealistic and visionary (or maybe both!)

7. **Finding themes:** Facilitate the girls to start drawing out themes, based on their discussion. For example:

- Girls might not feel like schools are accessible, because of the lack of menstrual management facilities.
- Girls may avoid certain parks, as men drink

alcohol or take drugs there.

- Girls may not feel safe at home, because of how family members treat them.
- Girls may dread working in the fields, based on the machinery being too heavy, getting dehydrated, or missing school as a result.

It may also be appropriate to probe and reflect on what may be the underlying structural causes of the issues the researchers are raising. For example:

- Who makes the decisions about this?
- Who benefits from keeping things the way they are?
- What rules, laws, or policies exist around this issue? Who created them?
- How do schools/governments/communities respond when girls raise these concerns?
- What systems or institutions should be protecting girls but aren't? Why do you think that is?
- Who controls the money/resources needed to fix this problem?
- Has this always been a problem? When did it start or get worse?
- Are there girls who face this problem more severely? Why?
8. **Keeping safe:** Make sure to take a picture of the final maps and themes, and ensure it includes identifying information (e.g., place names and the date the map was created)

Advice from past facilitator: The 'dream changes' section is very important to support the researchers to envision the future that they want.

Activity 2: Body map[32]

The objective of this tool is to identify areas of concern in the girls' lives. A body map can be used to help researchers to explore issues that affect them, including around physical and mental health, sexuality, girl's rights, and violence against girls.

Figure 5 https://www.unesco.org/en/health-education/cse

Note: This activity can be a good opportunity to discuss consent and comprehensive sex education with the adolescent girls.

Consent and comprehensive sex education:

Comprehensive sexual education provides girls with critical knowledge about consent, boundaries, and healthy relationships. It helps young people develop the communication skills necessary to navigate intimate relationships safely and confidently. Frequently, this type of education falls through the gaps, because the topics are taboo or adults assume someone else is educating girls.

Benefits of consent and comprehensive sex education:

1. **Violence prevention:** Education about consent and boundaries reduces risks

from violence, exploitation, and abuse by teaching girls to recognise warning signs and understand their right to say no.

2. **Power and agency:** Understanding consent is key for girls to make autonomous decisions about their bodies and relationships, fostering self-confidence and personal agency.

3. **Communication skills:** Learning about consent teaches essential communication skills for expressing boundaries, desires, and concerns in all types of relationships.

4. **Healthy outcomes:** Comprehensive education supports better sexual and reproductive health decisions, including reduced STI transmission and unintended pregnancy rates.

5. **Gender justice:** Consent education challenges harmful gender norms and promotes equal, respectful relationships between all partners.

Suggested materials:
- Large sheet of paper/rolls of paper/papers stuck together
- Markers/pens/pencils
- Sticky notes

Activity sequencing:
1. **Draw an outline:** Draw the outline of a girl on the ground or on a large sheet of paper. A quick way to do this is to ask one of the researchers to volunteer to lie down on the floor and draw around them.

2. **Initial ideas:** Have cards/sticky notes available for the researchers to draw or write key ideas and invite them to stick these ideas onto the outline of the girl drawing.

3. **Initial reflections:** Start the exercise with a general question such as: "How does life for girls in this community impact on your body and your health?" Researchers then indicate on the body map the positive and negative impacts that they have experienced (for example, tired from stress because of excessive household chores).

4. **Reflecting on expectations:** Ask "what expectations do people have of girls in this community? How does that impact how girls feel about themselves?" Note ideas down on sticky notes and with the group identify appropriate places on the body to stick them.

5. **Different themes:** Introduce other themes you want to explore one by one. With each new theme ask, "how does this issue impact girls – what impacts does this issue have on girls' bodies, and mental/physical health?" Themes could include:
   - Menstruation
   - Pregnancy
   - Sexual and reproductive health
   - Mental health
   - Daily tasks/responsibilities that girls have in their homes, communities and schools.

1. **Happy and healthy girls:** The group could then draw another outline of a girl – this time ask, "What do girls in this community need to feel happy and healthy? If they had these things what impact would this have on their bodies?". Follow the same process using sticky notes/cards and placing them on body parts on the second outline.

2. **Differences:** Once both outlines have been completed ask the group to reflect on the differences they notice, and what can be done (by girls themselves, by families and communities) to support girls to be healthy, happy and free in their bodies.

3. **Finding themes:** Encourage the researchers to start drawing out themes, based on their discussion.

4. **Keeping safe:** Make sure to store the outlines and notes from the conversations, to come back to later.

DAY IN THE LIFE

Activity 3: Daily activity chart or clock[33]

The objective of this activity is to document how girls' time is used and identify gaps between their reality and what they would like to do.

Note: Below are examples of three different formats that can be used – any combination can be used, depending on what the researchers find most useful.

Example 1: A seasonal grid which enables researchers to mark what type of activities take up their day. The group can brainstorm the types of activities that they do, as well as which they would like to do (for example chores, school, agriculture, playing, sleeping, etc.). You can then develop a grid with a key for the girls to fill out, based on what takes up time in their day.

	midnight	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
June																									
December																									

Wake Cook Eat School Chores Play Sleep

Example 2: A wheel divided up into the different activities that take up an average day.

A circular wheel chart showing hours from 01:00 to 24:00 around the perimeter, divided into activity segments labelled: Work, Housework, Rest, Work, Firewood, Rest, Sleep.
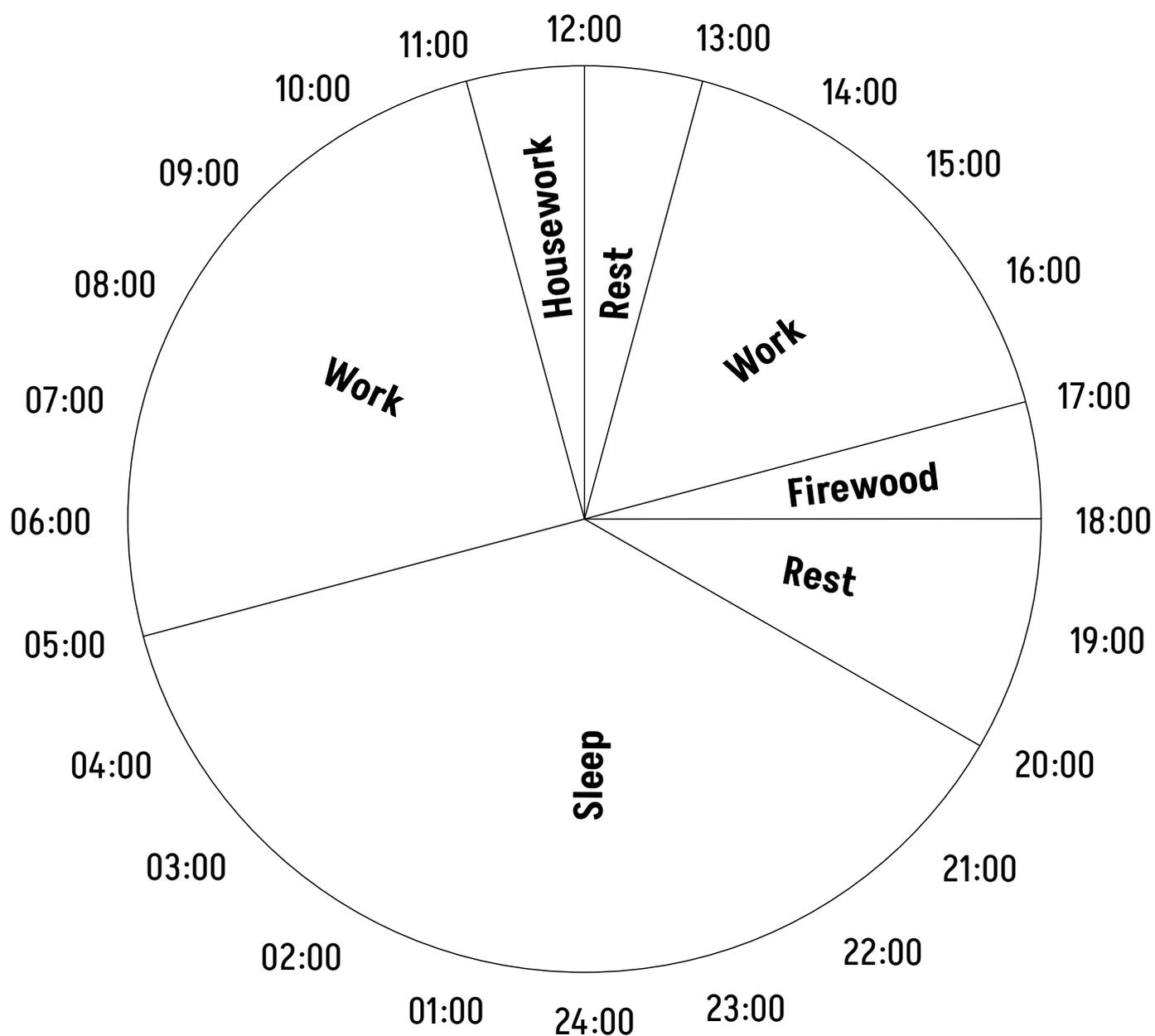
Example 3: Another option is to make a table which lists each hour of the day and asks participants to record their activities and categorize, for example: income generation, household maintenance, education, community activities, relaxation, fun, self-care, friendship time... .

Example 4: A time diary in which researchers can fill out their how their time is taken up each day. They can use the diary in real time.

Materials needed:
- Paper
- Pens/markers/pencils

Activity sequencing:
1. **Draw:** Draw or create whichever format you have chosen from early in the morning until late at night (agree exact time frame with the group).
2. **Fill out:** Ask the researchers to fill in their daily routine using single words or pictures

showing when they sleep, do housework, do income generation, relax, go to school, etc. Encourage the researchers to note simultaneous activities – for example, studying for school whilst caring for siblings. Encourage them to reflect on how their attention may sometimes be needed for multiple things at once.

3. **Ideal time allocation:** The girls can then create another timetable/chart/clock representing how they would ideally like to spend their time.

4. **Reflection:** Facilitate a conversation amongst the researchers to identify themes. Example questions:

- What do you notice about this time schedule?
- What do you regard as work?
- Which of these do you do because you have to?
- Which would you keep doing if you had complete control of your time?
- Which activities do you feel you do because you are a girl?

- How do you think a boys chart/table would look different? How so?
- Do you feel like you have enough time for fun and relaxation? Is this the same as for, for example, a boys' division of time?
- Do girls and boys participate in community activities equally? Why/why not?
- Do girls and boys have equal numbers of household tasks? Why/why not?
- Do girls and boys have equal time for participating in education activities? Why/why not?
- What does this activity tell us about gender equality in our communities and households? What could be done to improve gender equality? Does it give us information on the essential services in the girls' communities?
- What would you like to do more of?
- What would you like to do less of?
- How should care responsibilities should be distributed between family members in an ideal situation?

5. **Keeping safe**: Collate both the themes identified as well as the chart/tables for future analysis. Ensure the researchers validate the themes collated.

Facilitator note: Some activities, such as chores, might be ones the girls would prefer to spend less time on. Conversations around time allocation should follow the gender and power dynamic reflections honed throughout the GLRA process: If girls do less chores, who picks these up, is that fair? How should chores be split across the whole family/community?

Advice from past facilitator: Once girls grasp the concepts; whether independently or with facilitator support, they quickly apply them to reallife situations. In several cases, girl researchers have gone home and immediately shared what they learned with family and friends. For example, using the Activity Clock to reveal the unequal division of time between boys and girls, or the Intergenerational Relationship Tool to show how dialogue across generations fosters better understanding of girls' issues. These practical applications have led to tangible changes, such as girls renegotiating household chores so that male siblings share similar responsibilities.

Advice from past facilitator: We found this tool very interesting. It helped us to assess unpaid labour, rest and technology usage among community members between women vs men, girls vs boys. We found it easiest to break down time into a weekly chart for the researchers to use.

> "
>
> My elder brother used to justify that I do his chores based on that he is a boy he goes out while we are girls and stay at home, so I should do his work. But I explained to him that it is unfair to ask me to his chores because we all have our powers within and is that how he will justify his own children's responsibilities and then he agreed and stopped asking me to do his chores.
>
> **Researcher, Nigeria.**

Module 4: Research for change

Using a decolonial lens, research approaches and solutions should be led by those represented in the research.[34] This approach requires a fundamental shift from traditional research paradigms. Research must foreground affected people's perspectives and must be planned and designed in ways that will strengthen people's organisations in their own efforts to claim their rights.[35]

The overall aim of the GLRA process is to shift power into the girls' hands so that they can advocate for the positive changes they would like to see in their lives and communities. Therefore, the GLRA process aims to equip the girls with the tools necessary for them to be able evidence, advocate and take action on the issues that are affecting their lives. It is important that from the outset the process is framed in the mind of the girls as not only an evidence gathering and research activity, but the beginning of a process aimed at meaningful change through advocacy.

Activity 1: Visioning – Why this research and how is it useful

Objective: For the researchers to create their own milestones and goals for the research they are undertaking.[36]

Note: After initial analysis of the research data, there can be different outputs. These will be decided in a later module, but it may be useful for both the facilitator and the researchers to have a feel of the options. Importantly, their selection of outputs should be directly linked to the action they want to undertake based on their research findings, ensuring that advocacy is planned alongside the research process. Some examples are:

1. An overall **report** that summarises the research findings, looks at similarities and differences across variables, and makes recommendations about how the global community (including government, donors and organisations) can better support girls' rights. The researchers can choose who writes this: if support is sought, the researchers need to have an opportunity to feed into the report.

2. **A communications product** that summarises the key findings and recommendations from the research, to be agreed on by the researchers. For example, the researchers could develop a poster, comic, radio show, short film, drama or music performance. This communication product will then be used to help disseminate the findings of this research to respondents, and the rest of the community.

3. **A video that provides a platform for the researchers** to share the findings of their research in their own voices. This video could enable the researchers to communicate the key insights and challenges uncovered during the research, allowing them to directly engage audiences – including community members and decision-makers.

It is also important to think about how the findings will be disseminated. This will be different, depending on who the girls want to influence. For example:

4. **A learning and sharing event** – This is an opportunity for researchers to come together and share their findings with a broader audience. This can be online or in-person.

5. **Meetings with powerholders** – Researchers, alongside supporting organisations, can organise meetings, or attend existing meetings with key decision-

Figure 7 From Decolonising Feminist Research: Mapping and guidance to process and product

makers such as government officials, to present their research findings and advocate for change. These meetings provide a direct channel for girls to highlight the issues that matter most to them and discuss practical recommendations. The format should be adapted to different audiences, be accessible and engaging and focus on actionable solutions, rather than solely on challenges. This approach helps ensure that those in positions of authority are encouraged to take meaningful action.

6. **Using the media** – Researchers can work with journalists, radio stations, or digital platforms to share their findings through interviews, articles, podcasts, or social media campaigns. Using accessible and youth-friendly formats – such as short videos, infographics, or illustrated stories – can help make the findings more relatable and engaging for both young people and the wider public.

By thinking of the advocacy phase of the research from the beginning, the researchers can set up the rest of the work, especially the data collection and analysis, with a clear vision of what they want to achieve. The girls will decide on their outputs/resources from the research in Module 11 – however, it should be agreed from the outset that this research is intended to be used for advocacy purposes and actions to generate change.

In the annexes you can find links to different outputs and dissemination products and strategies that girls who have been part of the GLRA process have adopted before. You may or may not decide to share with the girls what other GLRA groups from around the world have done – it could be used as inspiration, or it could also limit their imagination.

Activity sequencing:

1. **Check ins:** Ask the group: "How do you feel when you think about participating in this research and then sharing the results?" (If necessary, prompt – do you feel excited? Nervous? Happy? Apprehensive? Etc.). Share how you felt initially to start the conversation if no one is speaking.

2. **Looking forward:** Ask the group to close their eyes and to try and imagine that they have finished the research and are now sharing the research findings. Ask them to think about:

   a. How does it feel to have been involved in this process?

   b. Who would you be excited to share it with/to?

   c. Who would you be nervous about hearing the results?
   What kind of change for girls do you hope the research can contribute to?

   d. Imagine you are at the event where you are sharing the results with the community – who will be there? How do you think you might share the results with them? What kind of conversations do you hope people will have at this event? What kind of changes for girls do you hope this event will inspire?

   e. Imagine you are at an online event with other girl researchers from other countries - what are you interested to hear from them? Who else do you hope will listen in to the event? What message will you want to share? What kind of change for girls do you hope this event can contribute to?

   f. Imagine the recommendations you identified are being read by key decision-makers. How does it feel to be heard by them?

3. **Sharing with the group:** After everyone has had a few minutes to think about this, ask everyone to open their eyes and then ask who is willing to share – note down the

key points from the group's visioning on a flipchart.

4. **Safe keeping:** Make sure to keep the flipchart safe, as they will be used again in a later session.

⏱ Activity 2: Theme sorting and prioritisation circle

The objective of this activity is to enable girls to collaboratively review, categorise, and prioritise the themes that have emerged from the previous three activities (Community Maps, Body Maps, and Daily Activity Charts).

What is needed?

- Large sheets of paper or floor space for creating circles
- All theme cards/notes from Activities 1-3
- Coloured markers or pens
- Sticky dots or small objects for voting
- Additional blank cards

Activity sequencing:

1. **Theme gathering:** Begin by collecting all the themes, issues, and insights that emerged from the Community Maps, Body Maps, and Daily Activity Charts. Write each theme clearly on separate cards or sticky notes. If themes are similar across activities, group them together – do not only write a theme once if it appeared multiple times across the different activities: It is important to see which themes came up often.

2. **Theme clarification:** Lay out all theme cards where everyone can see them. Ask the researchers to review each theme and ensure everyone understands what it means. Allow time for girls to add any new themes they feel were missed on blank cards. Encourage reflection as to whether some themes may stem from the same issues.

3. **Initial sorting:** Create three large circles on the floor or on paper, labelled:

   - **'Immediate impact'** (issues that affect girls right now, every day)
   - **'Growing concerns'** (issues that are getting worse or will affect girls more in

the future) 'Underlying causes' (deeper issues that create or contribute to other problems): Reflecting on the deeper systemic and structural causes that sustain the themes they have identified may lead to the researchers interrogating the historical and ongoing colonial power relations embedded within society, which continue to manifest through institutions, policy, economic systems, and knowledge production itself.

4. **Collaborative placement:** Ask the researchers to work together to place each theme card in the circle where they feel it belongs. Encourage discussion about why certain themes belong in specific circles. Cards can be moved as the discussion evolves.

5. **Dot voting:** Give each participant 5-7 sticky dots (or tell them they have 5-7 votes with their pen). Ask them to place their dots on the themes they feel are most important to research further. They can put multiple dots on the same theme.

6. **Final prioritisation:** Based on the voting, identify the top 5-7 themes that received the most votes. Create a final priority list with these themes, asking the girls to briefly explain why each one is important.

7. **Action pathway discussion:** For each priority theme, facilitate a brief discussion about:
   - What do we already know about this issue?
   - What do we need to find out more about?
   - Who else might we need to talk to about this theme?
   - What small actions could we take while we research this further?

8. **Research planning:** Ask the girls to consider which priority themes they would be most interested in researching deeper through interviews, surveys, or observation. Begin to form research interest groups around the top themes.

9. **Documentation:** Store the final priority circles, and visually display which themes were chosen.

10. **If useful, below are some example guiding questions:**
   - Which themes appeared across multiple activities? What does this tell us?
   - Are there themes that connect to each other? How might solving one issue help with others?
   - Which themes do you feel most passionate about addressing?
   - Which themes do you think adults in your community would be most/least supportive of you researching?
   - What themes would you feel confident researching yourselves versus needing adult support?
   - How do the priority themes relate to your rights as girls?
   - Which themes feel most urgent to address first?
   - What deep-rooted systems of oppression (e.g., colonialism, patriarchy, racism, capitalism) underlie these themes?
   - How do intersecting social categories (gender, race, class, indigeneity, sexuality, ability) shape experiences and access to resources or justice in this context?
   - Are we identifying causes beyond symptoms to uncover embedded historical and structural dynamics?

This activity ensures that the researchers maintain agency over their research direction while building their analytical skills and preparing them for the next phase of the research process.

⏱ Activity 3: Power mapping

Objective:

For researchers to recognise the people and institutions that shape their daily lives, with focus on their prioritised themes. This activity starts to develop the research and advocacy plans by identifying key stakeholders.

Materials needed:

- Large paper or wall space for drawing (keep accessible throughout GLRA process)
- Priority themes from activity 2
- Pens/pencils/markers in different colours
- Sticky notes in multiple colours
- Coloured dots, shapes or stickers

Activity sequencing:

1. **Introduction to power mapping:** Explain that power mapping discovers who has the ability to affect what happens in their lives – at home, school, in the community, and beyond. Understanding power enables them to identify where change can happen.

2. **Power holders brainstorm:** Ask prompting questions to identify all relevant power holders, such as:

- Who makes important decisions that affect your life?
- Who can help you get what you want or need?
- Who sometimes stops you from doing things you care about?
- Who has authority at home? In the community? In the country?

Encourage thinking about different powerholders (the examples below can be adapted to each context):

- **Family:** parents, guardians, siblings
- **Education:** teachers, principals, school staff
- **Community:** traditional leaders, religious figures, local officials
- **Peers:** friends, peer groups, social media influencers
- **Institutions:** government officials, police, military, NGOs, private companies
- Informal groups: youth groups, community organisations, organised crime groups

Write each on separate sticky notes using different colours for different categories.

3. **Reflection and discussion:** Encourage reflection about the identity of people who hold power: Do they come from the same religion, ethnicity, gender? Which structures sustain power to powerholders, for example:

- What rules, laws, or policies exist around this issue?
- What systems or institutions should be protecting the powerholder?
- Who controls the money/resources?
- Has this always been a problem? When did it start or get worse?
- Are there examples of communities where this isn't a problem? What's different there?
- How do things like poverty, disability, ethnicity, or age affect how girls experience this issue?
- What would need to change at the policy/law level to address this?
- Who profits from this issue?
- Who doesn't like it when certain issues are questioned?
- What systems exist to keep certain groups of people 'in their place'?
- Would anything change if wealth and resources were distributed differently?
- How would things be different if your community's traditional knowledge and practices were valued around the world?

4. **Structural links:** After identifying power holders and reflecting on their characteristics, the researchers can reflect

on how these individual power holders connect to larger systems and structures.

a. Mapping structural connections: The researchers could draw lines or use different coloured markers to show how power holders are connected to larger systems (e.g. government, economic, religious, educational, media).

   i. Identify which power holders represent or are accountable to external institutions, international organisations, or global systems.

   ii. Discuss how power holders may be constrained or enabled by rules, laws, funding sources, or expectations from above.

   iii. Document structural patterns: Use arrows or different symbols to show the flow of authority, resources, or influence.

   iv. Note which power holders seem to have independent decision-making power versus those who implement decisions made elsewhere.

   v. Identify where traditional or local systems of power interact with formal power.

This structural mapping will be essential for understanding not just who has power, but why they have it and what limits their ability to create change.

6. **Theme-specific power analysis- for each priority theme:**

   a. Create theme sheets: Write each priority theme clearly at the top of a large sheet.

   b. Power holder identification: For each theme, identify which general power holders (from previous steps) have influence over this specific issue. Try to draw out specific examples, for instance: "My principal decides if we can start a girls' club at school".

c. Support/opposition analysis: Discuss with the researchers which stakeholders could be allies, and those that may be opposed. Do not encourage unfounded speculation, it is ok for the conclusion to be 'we don't know'. Encourage reflection with questions like:

- Who is most supportive of your dreams and needs?
- Are there people with power who could become allies if you reached out?
- Where do you wish you had more power?
- Who may not become an ally but still has an impact on their lives/the issue?

Use coloured dots on each power holder:

- Red dot: Usually works against adolescent girls' interests on this issue
- Green dot: Usually supports adolescent girls' interests on this issue
- Yellow dot: Could go either way/neutral/ unknown
- Blue dot: Has power but doesn't currently engage with this issue

d. Relationship mapping: Draw lines between power holders to show connections:

- **Solid lines:** Strong relationships
- **Dotted lines:** Weak relationships
- **Zigzag lines:** Conflicting relationships

Try to seek real life examples throughout, for example "My teacher reports to the principal".

Discuss: Who influences whom? Is there a person who could help you reach someone with more power?

7. **Structural analysis:** Encourage reflection on power structures:

- What rules, laws, or policies exist around these issues?
- Who controls the money/resources?
- How do things like poverty, disability,

ethnicity, or age affect how girls experience these issues?

- What systems exist to keep certain groups 'in their place'?

- Who profits from these issues?

- What would need to change at policy/law level to address this?

- How have colonial histories shaped who holds power in your community today?

- What role do international laws, agreements, or economic policies play in shaping these issues?

- How do current power structures benefit some groups while disadvantaging others, and what maintains these patterns?

8. **Cross-theme analysis:** Compare across all theme maps:

- Which power holders appear on multiple maps?

- Are there patterns in who supports or opposes girls' interests?

- Which themes have more supportive power holders?

- Are there stakeholders who could be allies in some issues but opponents in others?

- Who has the most power over your daily life overall?

9. **Key stakeholder identification:** Identify the most frequent, relevant, supportive, or powerful stakeholders. Consider creating a power grid for each theme:

- **Vertical axis:** How much power/influence (Bottom = little, Top = a lot)

- **Horizontal axis:** How supportive of girls' needs (Left = not supportive, Right = very supportive).

Place key stakeholders on this grid to visualise priority relationships.

10. **Map discussion:** For each power map, facilitate discussion:

- Who surprised you by having more/less power than expected?

- Which power holders do girls have direct access to?

- Which power holders might be allies but aren't currently engaged?

- Where do girls themselves fit in this power structure?

Assess which stakeholders can be engaged in research using the following framework:

11. **Cross-theme analysis:** Once all maps are complete, ask girls to compare across themes:

- Are there power holders who appear on multiple maps?

- Are there patterns in who supports or opposes girls' interests?

- How and why do power holders have and hold power?

- Which themes seem to have more supportive power holders?

- Are there stakeholders that could be allies in some issues but opponents in others?

Discuss with the researchers who appear to be the most frequent, relevant, supportive or powerful. Make note of these, as they will be key stakeholders for the girls to engage with, if possible, in the research and the action.

12. **Potential co-researchers:** Discuss with the researchers which of these stakeholders will be able to be engaged in the research. Stakeholders may or may not be able to participate, based on different things. Consider:

- Accessibility: Can the researchers access this individual/powerholder? For example, if a key stakeholder is the President, it might be quite hard for the researchers to be able to meet with them. Discuss if the researchers made need support with reaching out, and if this is something the

facilitator can offer.

- Willingness: Do the researchers want to meet with this stakeholder? Depending on their use of power, for example a negative use of Power Over, the girls may not feel comfortable or safe. Likewise, is there a chance this stakeholder may not want to meet with the researchers?

You can fill out a table similar to the one below to start mapping who the girls may be able to engage with in their research.

The researchers could also make a table which helps map potential research participants by identifying relevant stakeholders, connecting them to specific research themes, determining their accessibility, and evaluating both the girls' interest in engaging with them and the stakeholder's probable willingness to participate, using a 1-5 rating scale.

Please note: If any theme does not have any stakeholders which are reachable or there is willingness to meet with the researchers for this piece of work, that is not an issue. The researchers are experts on their own lives and experiences, and their own perspectives and experiences will provide valuable insights for their research. A full safeguarding plan will be developed in Module 9: Advocacy and action plan.

13. **Safe keeping:** Ensure you keep the graph with the notes safe. The different people, groups or stakeholders identified should be kept in mind throughout other activities. This mapping will inform both research methodology and advocacy strategy.

Activity 4: Policy, laws and services

The objective of this activity is to introduce girls to researching and analysing existing policies, laws, services, and resources related to their priority themes. This activity helps girls identify the systems and structures that affect their lives, and question how these maintain power structures while building research and analysis skills. It is particularly useful for identifying gaps in services and opportunities for advocacy.

Note: In addition to examining formal policies and written legislation, it is crucial for girls to think about customary laws that influence daily life in their communities. Customary laws – traditional practices passed down through generations – frequently hold significant power over issues directly affecting girls, including marriage practices, inheritance rights, land ownership, and family decision-making structures. These unwritten rules may contradict or override formal legal protections, creating complex legal pluralism where multiple systems of authority operate simultaneously.

By researching both formal and customary legal frameworks, girls can better understand why gaps exist between written policies and lived realities, identify where traditional practices may either support or undermine their rights, and develop more nuanced advocacy strategies that engage with the full spectrum of power structures governing their lives. This dual analysis is particularly important as it recognises that adolescent girls' experiences are shaped by intersecting formal and informal systems of control, and that effective change often requires engaging with both written law and deeply embedded cultural practices that may not appear in any official document but nonetheless shape community norms and expectations.

For example, in Sierra Leone there is the 2024 Prohibition of Child Marriage act, however, it is still prevalent due to customary practices.[37]

Suggested materials:

- Large sheets of paper for mapping
- Coloured markers
- Access to policy documents, service directories, or internet (if available)
- Sticky notes for categorising information
- Flip chart paper for analysis

Activity sequencing:

1. **Policy and services introduction:** Discuss how policies, laws, and services affect girls' lives:
   - Policies are formal rules or guidelines that affect how things work
   - Laws can also be formal, or also socially imposed (customary)
   - Services are programs or support available to community members
   - Understanding existing policies and services helps identify gaps and opportunities
   - This knowledge is essential for effective advocacy

2. **Research categories:** Girls identify categories to research related to their priority themes:
   - Government policies: Laws, regulations, national/local policies
   - Government services: Healthcare, education, social services
   - Community services: NGO programmes, community organisations, religious groups
   - Informal support: Traditional systems, family networks, peer groups
   - Customary laws and practices: Unwritten frameworks that often govern daily life

3. **Priority theme selection:** Girls choose 1-2 priority themes to focus their policy and services mapping on.

4. **Research planning:** Girls decide how to gather information:
   - What sources of information are available?
   - Who in the community might know about existing policies/services?
   - How can they access policy documents or service information?
   - What questions should they ask when researching?

5. **Collecting information:** Girls spend time researching through available methods:
   - Interview knowledgeable community members
   - Review any available policy documents
   - List services they are aware of
   - Ask family members or mentors about existing support systems

6. **Mapping Creation:** Girls create visual maps of their findings:
   - Draw their priority theme in the centre
   - Map policies, services, and resources around the theme
   - Use different colours for different types of support
   - Show connections between different policies/services

7. **Gap Analysis:** Girls analyse their maps to identify:
   - What policies exist to address their priority themes?
   - What services are available? Who can access them?
   - What gaps exist in policies or services?
   - What barriers prevent girls from accessing existing support?

8. **Accessibility Assessment:** Girls evaluate existing policies and services:

- Are girls aware of these policies/services?
- Are they accessible to girls (location, cost, requirements)?
- Are they effective in addressing the priority themes?
- Are they girl-friendly and age-appropriate?

9. **Opportunity Identification:** Girls identify opportunities for change:

- What new policies are needed?
- What services are missing?
- What existing policies/services could be improved?
- Who has the power to make these changes?
- What evidence would be needed to advocate for changes?
- What customary laws would you put into place, if you could?

10. **Documentation:** Record the policy and services maps, gap analysis, and girls' findings on legislation and customary practices.

> "
>
> So, it's like this, even now there is a rule that children at the age of 17 cannot be married. But we also have customary law (informal Islamic Law) that allows it informally. Sometimes children graduate from junior high school due to their promiscuity so that they become pregnant out of wedlock [unplanned], and so on because of being married off
>
> **Researcher, Indonesia**

Module 5: Conducting the research in line with best practice

The next module will support the researchers to develop a step-by-step plan of the activities needed to complete the research process and analysis, in line with best practice.

When designing a research process, safeguarding considerations must be woven throughout the entire research process, recognising that feminists across the world are at risk when their voices are heard.[38] Comprehensive risk assessments are mandated, and researchers must be aware of the additional risks of being involved.[39]

Ethics are at the forefront of feminist research, including: informed consent, confidentiality, multiple ways of knowing, respect for people and planet, collective reflexivity, intersectional analysis, transparency, and do no harm—reiterated cyclically throughout research.[40]

It is crucial to ensure that all researchers, including children, give informed consent.[41] Consent needs to be ongoing, both in the research language and the prioritisation of explaining the risks involved in the process.[42] When research reveals safeguarding concerns, if an individual reports an experience or suspicion of sexual violence (exploitation or abuse, including child abuse) or suggests that someone's life is in danger in any way then this must be reported through the appropriate lines.[43]

Intersectional risk must also be considered – people experiencing intersecting systems of oppression experience risk differently, and those closest to the research need to be central to risk assessment and mitigation processes.[44]

Advice from prior facilitator: Having a strong safeguarding component to any work with girls always facilitates better planning and execution of activities and ensures greater protection of girls in both research and action processes.

Activity 1: Gaining informed consent

The objective of this activity is to ensure all researchers can confidently gain informed consent from co-researchers.

Notes: Emphasise that informed consent is non-negotiable for all research involving people. Support researchers as they practice the consent process, and help them identify clear, respectful language to use, being attentive to any questions or concerns.

Suggested materials needed:
- Flipchart and markers
- Notebooks or paper for each participant
- Pens
- (Optional) Printed copies of a sample consent script

Activity sequencing:
1. **Introduce informed consent:** Explain to the group what it is, why informed consent is necessary in all research sessions and interviews, and what it means for researchers' rights and safety.
2. **Present the five steps:** Go through the 5 steps for gaining informed consent:
- Explain what the research is about, its importance, and potential impact for girls in the person's first language
- Clarify how information will be used, where it will be shared, and how it will be recorded.
- Assure co-researchers that their names/identities will not be included in the research outputs.
- Explain that participation is voluntary and co-

8. **Record key phrases:** Ask all researchers to write down the key words and phrases relating to gathering informed consent in their notebooks for use during research.

9. **Create a consent script (optional):** If the group agrees, create a written script covering all 5 steps using the identified key words and phrases. Distribute copies to all researchers and remind them to keep it safe and use it in all research activities.

> **Advice from past facilitator:** A challenge we came across was that the researchers sometimes struggled with the ethical principal of allowing co-researchers to not answer any questions, if they didn't want to. This challenge kept cropping up and had to be continuously reinforced to the girls at debrief meetings.

researchers can opt out at any time or skip any questions.

- Check for questions or concerns, then ask for consent before starting.

3. **Develop a research summary paragraph:** Work with the girls to co-create a clear and concise paragraph that summarises what the research is about. This paragraph will be used in all interviews and sessions to ensure consistency in how the research is represented.

4. **Practice in pairs:** Arrange the group into pairs and practice the five steps of gaining informed consent.

5. **Demonstrate to the group:** Invite volunteers to demonstrate the process to the whole group.

6. **Identify key language:** Discuss as a group what essential information, words, and phrases need to be included in the informed consent process for your research. Note these on the flipchart.

7. **Adapt for different contexts:** Discuss if any information or process should change depending on the type of activity or participant, and record key points on the flipchart.

⏱️ Activity 2: Self and collective care

The objective of this activity is to equip both researchers and co-researchers with strategies for discussing sensitive topics while protecting their wellbeing.

📓 **Notes:** Approach this session with empathy and openness, creating a safe space for honest discussion. Emphasise that it is normal for both researchers and co-researchers to feel strong emotions when discussing sensitive issues, and that everyone's wellbeing is a priority. Guide the researchers to develop practical strategies for self-care, peer support, and participant care, and signpost to additional support and services. Reinforce that protecting emotional and psychological safety is just as important as physical safety in research. It is important to ensure the girls are aware that some conversations may tap into traumatic experiences they or researchers have lived. It is down to you, the facilitator, to ensure that the girls have the information they may need when it comes to signposting or accessing services that may be needed.

> "
>
> Navigating cultural norms and power dynamics to obtain informed consent from participants and their families required careful planning and sensitivity. Like those that were afraid to talk and those that have too many traumas, the pain was too much for them to even start talking. They did not want to talk. Also recording them pose a challenge, some did not want to talk because they are being recorded. Seeking their consent was hard.
>
> **Researcher, Sierra Leone**

Trauma-informed and survivor-centred approaches :[45 & 46]

Vicarious trauma is the result of being exposed to stories of trauma, suffering, and violence, and symptoms can include nightmares, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion.

Self-care and collective care as political acts: Collective care involves taking care of ourselves and caring for our peers, friends, family, and communities. When we look after our wellbeing and that of our co-researchers, we're challenging systems that exploit and extract from marginalised communities - in this way, care is a political practice.

Survivor-centred principles:

- **Safety first:** The physical and emotional safety of researchers and co-researchers must be protected.
- **Choice and control:** Researchers and co-researchers should have control over their level of participation.
- **Trustworthiness:** Relationships should be built on transparency and respect.
- **Cultural responsiveness:** Honour different cultural approaches to healing and support.

Essential practices for researchers:

1. **Check-ins:** Regular emotional check-ins with the facilitator after difficult conversations.
2. **Boundaries:** Permission to pause, stop, or step away when needed.
3. **Support networks:** Identify trusted adults and peer supporters before starting research.
4. **Referral resources:** Identify support services and know how to access them.
5. **Collective responsibility:** Wellbeing is a collective responsibility.

> Listening to and documenting the stories of the girls facing various forms of adversity and abuse took a significant emotional toll on me. Even with these, I felt the need to continue the research to know more about the problems of teenage girls out there and finding ways to help them. Despite the draining challenges, I remained hopeful that the research can make a meaningful difference in the lives of the girls. Witnessing the extent of the challenges and hardships faced by the girls made me to reevaluate my understanding of the world and my place in it.
> I also felt a deep sense of responsibility to the girls and my community which are both empowering and burdensome.
>
> **Researcher, Sierra Leone**

Suggested materials needed:
- Flipchart and markers
- Notebooks or paper for each participant
- Pens
- Well-being plan template (optional, can be drawn)

Activity sequencing:
1. **Introduce the topic:** Explain to the group that research often involves discussing personal and sometimes difficult topics, and that these conversations must be handled with sensitivity and respect.
2. **Brainstorm sensitive topics:** Ask the group to identify potentially sensitive topics that may arise during the research and write these on the flipchart.
3. **Discuss sensitive questioning:** For each topic, discuss ways to ask questions that minimise distress and avoid re-traumatising researchers.
4. **Acknowledge researcher wellbeing:** Remind the group that sensitive topics can also be difficult for researchers, and discuss the importance of self-care and mutual support. Emphasise the following points:

- If there are certain topics that are sensitive for one or more researchers, they can ask someone else in the group to take responsibility for facilitating that topic.
- If you are feeling emotional, it is always okay to take a break.
- Conduct a short check-in with each other at the beginning and end of each session to see how everyone is feeling.
- Limit the number of research sessions or activities in each day, and as a group, discuss what amount of activity is reasonable and balances with your other time commitments.
- If you are feeling overwhelmed by these emotions (e.g., unable to carry out your normal daily activities), then it is important to seek additional support.
- Take time as a group to do activities that support wellbeing such as singing a song, taking a walk, or a relaxation exercise.
- Talk to your mentor or supporting staff if you have concerns, they can advise you about accessing additional support such as counselling and health services.

5. **Self-regulation activities:** These exercises can help the researchers to manage strong emotions. It's good to practice them when feeling calm, so that they are easier to use when they are needed.

   1. **Box breathing:** This technique helps calm your nervous system and reduce anxiety.
   - Step 1: Breathe in slowly for 4 counts

- Step 2: Hold your breath for 4 counts
- Step 3: Exhale slowly for 4 counts
- Step 4: Hold empty for 4 counts
- Repeat: Continue for 3-5 cycles

Imagine drawing a square with your breath - up one side (inhale), across the top (hold), down the other side (exhale), across the bottom (hold).

2. **5-4-3-2-1 Grounding technique:** Use each of the five senses to take in the details of your surroundings in the present moment. This helps when you feel overwhelmed or disconnected.

- 5 things you can see (a blue pen, cracked wall, someone's shoes...)
- 4 things you can touch (your hair, the table surface, your clothes...)
- 3 things you can hear (traffic, voices, your breathing...)
- 2 things you can smell (coffee, soap, fresh air...)
- 1 thing you can taste (gum, water, or just notice your mouth)

3. **Heel taps and physical grounding:** Physical movement helps regulate emotions and bring you back to your body.

- Heel taps: Alternate tapping your heels on the ground 10-15 times
- Progressive muscle relaxation: Tense and release different muscle groups (shoulders, hands, face)
- Gentle movement: Stretch your arms, roll your shoulders, or wiggle your fingers

6. **Share self-care and group-care strategies:** Go through key points from the session. Consider finishing each session with a short wellbeing exercise to help everyone switch off from the topics you have discussed together.

Develop a wellbeing plan: The quote below may prompt conversation and reflection on why it is important to take wellbeing seriously: 'Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare' – Audre Lorde.

After the discussion, as a group, fill in a wellbeing plan that includes:

- Ways to look after ourselves individually
- Ways to look after each other as a team
- Ways to ensure the wellbeing of co-researchers
- Wellbeing exercises for the research team
- Wellbeing exercises for co-researchers

You can find an example wellbeing plan in Annex B.

7. **Share and record strategies:** Have each participant record the agreed strategies and exercises in their notebooks for use throughout the research process.

⏱ Activity 3: Reacting to distress

The objective of this activity is to prepare research teams to maintain participant safety through confidentiality practices, emergency response protocols, and appropriate reactions to participant distress during sensitive research.

Notes: This activity addresses critical safety and ethical considerations when conducting research on sensitive topics. Emphasise the serious nature of these protocols and ensure all researchers understand their responsibility to protect co-researchers. The distress response table should be treated as a mandatory reference guide.

Suggested materials needed:

- Flipchart paper and markers
- Notebooks for researchers
- Contact information for local NGOs and support services

Activity sequencing:

1. **Introduction to confidentiality responsibilities:** Explain that researchers have a responsibility to ensure everyone's safety when discussing sensitive topics. Discuss the importance of maintaining confidentiality by identifying quiet, private spaces for activities and establishing safe spaces at the beginning of group sessions, similar to what was done at the start of these workshops.

2. **Discuss unplanned interruptions and safety risks:** Present scenarios where unexpected listeners could pose risks to co-researchers' safety. Use the specific example provided: if women/girls are discussing violence in the community and the discussion is overheard by someone who knows their partner or family, those women/girls may be at increased risk of violence at home if someone told their partner/family what had been discussed.

3. **Brainstorm 'faux' questions:** Lead a group discussion to identify safe topics and conversations that can be used if someone outside the group is listening in. Record all ideas on flipchart paper. Emphasise that these are questions/topics you can start discussing with co-researchers if you become aware that someone is listening in to the conversation.

4. **Select and record practice questions:** Have the group agree on 3-4 specific questions or topics to use during research, ensuring everyone records these in their notebooks.

5. **Introduce distress response protocols:** Explain that even when safety precautions are in place, there may still be times when co-researchers show signs of distress. Present the ethical protocol table (example table in Annex C) that outlines indicators of distress, follow-up activities, and appropriate responses.

6. **Review referral mechanisms:** Ensure researchers understand when and how to provide contact details for local NGOs, support groups, community based organisations, emergency services, doctors, and hospitals. Discuss having varied referral options for different types of distress including violence/trauma, job loss, death, and other factors requiring livelihood support or psychosocial support. Ensure the researchers have easy access to the referral mechanisms in case needed.

7. **Clarify reporting and follow-up procedures:** Emphasise the requirement to immediately notify the facilitator of any incidents and actions taken, following the relevant organisation's safeguarding policy in all situations. Discuss follow-up protocols including next-day contact arrangements with participant permission through researchers or local support representatives.

8. **Practice scenario application:** Have researchers work through hypothetical scenarios using the protocol table to reinforce understanding and ensure they can apply the guidelines in practice during their research.

⏱ Activity 4: Asking open and prompting questions

The objective of this activity is to develop researchers' skills in formulating and using open and prompting questions to encourage authentic participant responses and avoid 'leading questions'.

Notes: This activity focuses on building essential interviewing and facilitation skills. Emphasise the difference between gathering genuine participant perspectives versus making assumptions or leading responses. The practice session should relate directly to the research topics researchers will be working on. Encourage active participation during the question identification exercise and ensure everyone understands the rationale behind each question type.

Activity sequencing:

1. **Introduction to question types and research goals:** Explain that when conducting research, the goal is to genuinely hear what co-researchers know, think, and do. Introduce the concept that encouraging co-researchers to share relevant information requires asking the right types of questions.

2. **Define open questions:** Explain that open questions are questions where there could be many possible responses, allowing co-researchers to share their thoughts and experiences in their own words without being constrained to specific answers.

3. **Define closed questions:** Explain that closed questions can only be answered with one word or a yes/no answer.

4. **Define prompting questions:** Explain that prompting questions are used to dig a little further into something co-researchers have told you, helping to get additional information and encourage deeper reflection on topics already introduced.

5. **Practice question identification:** Read out the following example questions one by one and ask the group to identify whether each is an open question, closed question, or prompting question:

   - "Is your name Mary?" (closed question)
   - "Can you tell me something about your favourite subject at school?" (open question)
   - "Is maths your favourite subject?" (closed question)
   - "That is an interesting point – could you tell me a bit more about why you say that?" (prompting question)
   - "Do girls in this community feel unsafe?" (closed question)
   - "Where are some of the spaces/places in this community that girls feel safe? Why? Are there spaces/places that feel unsafe? Why is that?" (open questions)
   - "How do other people feel about that point?" (prompting question)

6. **Review and explain question classifications:** After going through each question, ensure everyone understands what's meant by 'open', 'closed', and 'prompting'. Discuss how the structure of each question type affects the kind of response it generates.

7. **Pair practice session:** Ask researchers to get into pairs and practice asking open and prompting questions on the topic(s) that their research will cover. Give them 10 minutes to practice, with each person taking turns being both the interviewer and the participant.

8. **Whole group discussion on best practices:** After the practice session, facilitate a discussion with the whole group about what they should keep in mind when asking questions and facilitating

discussions during research. Focus on practical considerations and insights gained from the practice session. Encourage the girls to make note of these in their research notebooks.

> "
>
> The data collection helped me understand how girls within my community truly feel about the things I also do not like. And for the first time, I felt like if girls come together, we might be able to change some things in our community through power with. This research has built my confidence, I have also learnt to be a better listener and not to be judgmental. During the data collection training, several times, I was giving advice instead of listening to what the respondents have to say. I made sure I didn't repeat this on the field and it helped the girls within my community to trust me better.
>
> **Researcher, Nigeria**

⏱ Activity 5: Data quality, assurance and storage

The objective of this activity is to establish the importance of accurate data recording, secure storage procedures, and to create a structured research timeline to ensure ethical and effective data management.

Note: The GLRA research should be the intellectual property of the researchers. Any information to do with traditional knowledge and heritage needs to be dealt with in such a way that ownership remains within the community parameters.[47]

Activity sequencing:

1. **Introduction to data recording:** Explain that it is crucial to accurately record what is said in research sessions and to ensure that data is stored securely and safely. Emphasise that proper data management protects both researchers and the research integrity.

2. **Establish research team roles:** Share guidance that for each research session/activity there should be 2-3 researchers: one person to facilitate the session and one person to take detailed notes.

3. **Discuss voice recording protocols:** Explain that sessions might be recorded with a voice recorder to ensure accuracy. If using recordings, emphasise the importance of explaining to co-researchers that voice recorders will only be used for listening back to conversations to ensure accurate recording. Clarify that recordings will not be shared with anyone outside the research team and will be stored in a safe locked/password protected space.

4. **Review anonymity and confidentiality procedures:** Stress that notes should never record names or other identifying features of co-researchers. Provide examples of appropriate participant references: 'woman 1', 'girl 1', 'man 2', 'boy 2', 'community leader 1', 'teacher 1', etc.

5. **Establish timing for data processing:** Emphasise the importance of writing up notes quickly while the memory of the session is still fresh, within 24 hours of each session.

6. **Review collaborative note-taking procedures:** Explain that completed notes should be shared with co-researchers for their input and review before finalising, ensuring comprehensive and accurate data capture.

7. **Demonstrate secure file storage process:** Show researchers how to upload finalised notes into a secure file system that has been set up by you. Ensure everyone understands the process.

8. **Establish data deletion protocols:** Emphasise that once the files are saved, all data must be deleted from personal devices. Provide the specific example: if a recording was made on a recording device, the recording must be deleted after successfully being stored.

9. **Create research timetable:** Work together to complete a simple timetable with the following columns:
   - Name of researchers
   - Date and time of research
   - Community location
   - Co-researcher group name
   - Type of session

   This will be informed by the research plan made in

10. **Complete timetable collaboratively:** Have the group fill in the timetable together, ensuring all planned research activities are captured and that the timeline is achievable.

Module 6: Developing the research approach

Decolonising research and knowledge production

Current knowledge production systems perpetuate colonial power structures. What is deemed 'evidence' is typically produced and funded by white, elite, heteronormative, patriarchal, and neoliberal actors, who are more often than not men. These individuals and institutions are often located in or connected to the global north.[48] This system consequently tends to silence research 'subjects', often people of colour – and particularly womxn and girls who are framed as lacking in agency.[49]

> "
> I loved that there was no difference between girls and older researchers.
>
> **Researcher, Nigeria**

Challenging and diversifying whose knowledge counts starts with people's role in shaping the priorities and evidence itself and strengthening these alternative narratives which go some way to challenging how people see and understand the world.[50] Decolonial feminist research supports collaborative generation of knowledge that is meaningful, accessible, and useful to those who create, hold, share and rightly own it.[51]

In this module we are trying to understand and apply feminist participatory research methodologies for drawing insights that will be useful for the girls' research. We will explore some of the participatory tools that could be used by the researchers in their community research.

If time allows, it would be useful to pilot these activities with the researchers. If you do not have time to test all of the activities the researchers could try out a couple of activities, and then talk through the other activities.

As you go through each activity below, discuss:

- How would this approach help us to learn more about girls' lives? Which of the key issues for girls would it help us to learn more about?
- Is this a tool that would be easy to use with girls? Could it be used with other community members? Who?
- Could using this tool help to amplify girls' voices and power?
- Is the tool easy for girls themselves to use? Will we as a research team find this tool easy to use?
- Would you be interested to include it in our research tools?

Activity 1: Creating research questions

The objective of this activity is to support adolescent girls to lead in developing meaningful, action-oriented research questions using feminist participatory action research principles.

Notes: This activity builds directly on previous modules where the researchers identified priority themes and identified stakeholders they would like to influence. Support the researchers to think critically about what evidence they need to understand their issues more deeply and influence their chosen power holders, balancing questions that investigate "what is happening" with questions that explore "why it's happening" and "what can change it".

Suggested materials needed

- Large sheets of paper or flipchart paper
- Coloured markers/pens
- Sticky notes (different colours)
- Copies of priority themes and power mapping from previous sessions
- "Question Categories" handout
- "Research Purpose" worksheet

Activity sequencing:

1. **Opening circle:** Begin with a brief reflection where each researcher shares: "One thing I want to understand better about our priority themes is..."

2. **Review and connect:** Post the priority themes identified in previous sessions around the room. Have girls walk around and place sticky notes on the issues they feel most passionate about researching. In pairs, ask the researchers to share: "What don't we fully understand yet about this issue?" and "If I could change one thing about this issue, what would it be?"

3. **Three types of research questions:** Introduce the Question Categories handout with three types of questions girls can develop:

- **UNDERSTANDING questions:** What's really happening?
- What do different girls in our community experience when it comes to...?
- How do girls' experiences of [issue] differ based on age, background, location, etc.?
- What patterns exist in how [issue] affects girls' daily lives?
- What are the hidden impacts of [issue] that people do not talk about?
- **Structural CAUSE questions:** Why is this happening?
- What systems, policies, or practices contribute to [issue]?

- How do [power holders] currently make decisions about...?
- What beliefs or attitudes in our community maintain [issue]?
- How do different forms of inequality intersect to create [issue]?
- **CHANGE questions:** What could be different?
- What would need to change so that girls can...?
- What barriers prevent girls from...?
- What solutions have girls tried, and what happened?
- What evidence do we need to convince [power holders] to act?

Working in small groups (3-4 girls), have them choose 1 priority theme and develop 2-3 questions from each category.

4. **Testing our questions:** Introduce the "Three Tests" for strong research questions:

- **The understanding test:**
  - Will this help us understand the issue more deeply?
  - Will this reveal patterns or root causes we do not fully see yet?
- **The evidence test:**
  - Will this create concrete evidence about girls' experiences?
  - Will this give us data/stories/examples we can use?
- The action test:
  - Will this help us create change?
  - Will this evidence convince the power holders we identified?

Have groups use coloured sticky notes to mark how well each question meets all three tests. Focus on developing questions that score well on all three.

5. **Balancing understanding and action**

Have girls review their final question list to ensure they have:

- Questions that will deepen understanding of girls' lived experiences
- Questions that will investigate root causes and systems
- Questions that will create evidence for advocacy and change
- Questions that centre girls' voices and challenge power imbalances

6. **Finalising research questions:** Each group presents their top 3-4 research questions to the larger group. Use dot voting to collectively identify the most important questions that the group wants to pursue together, ensuring a balance of understanding, evidence-building, and action-oriented questions.

7. **Closing circle:** Have girls complete two sentences: "This research will help us better understand..." and "This evidence will help us change..."

> **Advice from past facilitator:** Developing the questions for the research based on the prioritized themes was difficult because initially too many questions were developed, making the research scope unmanageable.

Activity 2: Making a research action plan

This activity will enable the researchers to develop a comprehensive research plan that connects their research questions to specific methods, data collection tools, researchers, timelines, and advocacy goals.

This activity builds directly on the research questions developed in the previous activity and is closely connected to all earlier modules, including priority themes, power mapping, stakeholder identification, and research methods.

It is important to emphasise that a strong research plan should be realistic, achievable, and clearly link research activities to advocacy and change goals. Facilitators should support girls to think strategically about how they sequence their research activities and manage their time and resources, while also helping them consider how different research methods and data collection tools will generate various types of evidence for different audiences. Encouraging girls to incorporate flexibility and reflection points into their plan is key, and it is essential that they maintain ownership of their research plan, with facilitators providing guidance and support for their decision-making. Throughout the process, facilitators should be ready to help girls address practical challenges, always keeping the girls' vision and priorities at the centre.

Secondary data[52]

It is worth considering using secondary data for some research questions, with researchers seeking existing literature on their chosen theme. Secondary data is an excellent tool to avoid re-traumatisation and ensure protection, in particular for survivors of gender-based violence.

People should not need to be telling their stories repeatedly for the sake of research.

Consider:

- Prioritising national or regional sources
- If researchers cannot do the literature review themselves, they can contribute by reading short articles or watching documentary videos.

Suggested materials needed

- Large sheets of paper or flipchart paper
- Research Planning Template (see activity sequence)
- Coloured markers/pens
- Sticky notes (different colours)
- Copies of finalised research questions from previous activity
- Copies of stakeholder mapping and research methods from previous modules
- List of data collection tools
- Timeline template or calendar pages

Activity Sequencing

1. **Opening circle:** Begin with a brief reflection where researchers share: "One thing I am excited about in planning our research is…" and "One thing I am concerned about in planning our research is…"

2. **Review and organise:** Post the finalised research questions from the previous activity and display the stakeholder mapping and research methods explored in earlier modules. Ask researchers to use sticky notes to connect research questions with stakeholders, research methods which might work best for different questions, potential data collection tools for each methods, and which questions might need multiple methods or researchers.

3. **Research planning template introduction:** Introduce the Research

Planning Template with suggested columns detailed below.

4. **Introducing different data collection tools:** As the facilitator, you could talk through different tools (potential ones in Annex D) which the girls may want to use for their research. You could also print out the tools, and have girls familiarise themselves in pairs with different tools and then present back to the group. Another approach, could be for the girls to come up with their own tools – they key here is to understand different ways in which the researchers can, in line with participatory research methods, gather relevant information.

5. In small groups, researchers begin filling out the template for their priority research questions.

The researchers could also make a table which guides researchers through planning each priority question with the following prompts:

- What do we want to find out? (research question)
- How will we find out? (research methods)
- What tools do we need?
- Who will we work with? (co-researchers)
- What kind of information/data will this give us? (evidence created)
- When will we do this? (timeline)
- What do we need to make this happen? (resources needed)
- How will we use this evidence for change? (advocacy connection)
- Who will lead this part? (researcher responsible).

For each research question, researchers can consider the best research method, tool (if needed), participant selection, and practical considerations such as participant accessibility, skill requirements, evidence type, and safety.

Researchers can map potential methods and researchers around each question, use different coloured sticky notes for types of evidence, and draw lines connecting methods to evidence.

6. **Sequencing and timeline planning:** Researchers consider the order of their research activities: which research should happen first, what can happen simultaneously, how much time each activity needs, and when evidence is needed for advocacy. Researchers can also consider when data collection tools need to be prepared or tested. They create a visual timeline on a large sheet of paper, placing research activities in sequence.

7. **Resource and skills assessment:** For each planned research activity, researchers assess the skills needed, materials required, support needed, potential challenges, and solutions. They use a 'Traffic Light' system: green for activities they can do easily, yellow for those needing some support, and red for those requiring significant help or resources.

8. **Advocacy integration planning:** Researchers plan how to use the evidence including identifying the target audience, deciding on the evidence format, determining the best timing for advocacy, and choosing advocacy methods. They create an 'Evidence to Action' map showing how each piece of research connects to advocacy goals and activities.

9. **Responsibility and ownership:** Researchers decide who will be responsible for different research activities, matching skills and interests, identifying learning opportunities, and coordinating between research activities. Ensure every researcher has a meaningful role that matches her interests and builds her skills.

10. **Flexibility and reflection planning:**

Researchers build in flexibility and learning opportunities by establishing check-in points, reflection on learning and creating support systems for challenges.

11. **Final research plan review:** Each group presents their complete research plan to the others, covering priority research questions, planned tools, methods and researchers, timeline and responsibilities, and connections to advocacy and change. The other groups provide feedback using praise, questions, and suggestions.

12. **Collective commitment:** The whole group reviews the complete research plan and makes collective decisions about shared activities, coordination between research teams, support strategies, and communication methods.

13. **Closing circle:** Researchers complete the sentences: "I am committed to being responsible about…. leading...", "I am excited about our research plan because...", and "One thing I want to remember as we start our research is..."

To support this activity, in the Annexes you can find:

- Guidance on the different tools listed above – Annex D
- An example plan template – Annex E

Data collection tools

As creators of knowledge over their own realities and experiences, the researchers will have collated ample information on their lives through the activities detailed throughout the manual already. In Annex D, there are a series of tools which can further support the researchers - A 'tool' is a data collection tool is something the adolescent girl researchers can use as part of their research methodology. An 'activity' is done with the adolescent girls as part of the GLRA process.

Through a series of different participatory tools, the researchers can choose to engage with relevant co-researchers in their contexts, to gather and map further findings on the issues that the researchers are choosing to explore. The researchers may also want to further explore their own experiences and further document the knowledge that they already hold.

The tools which can be found in Annex D are:

WITH CO RESEARCHERS

Tool 1: Peer-to-Peer interview circles

Tool 2: Friendship circles

Tool 3: Intergenerational circles

Tool 4: Focus group discussions with stakeholders

Tool 5: Survey design and implementation

Tool 6: Comparing daily activity charts

RESEARCHERS

Tool 7: Creative expression and visual storytelling

Tool 8: Community walks and observation

Note: In line with the girl led ethos, the researchers can also create different tools, these are only examples.

Module 7: Safety and security

The safety and security of the adolescent girl researchers, co-researchers, facilitators, community members and associated organisations is paramount.

This module focuses on safety protocols that are needed to ensure security of all researchers and co-researchers, emphasising that risk assessment is a proactive and protective step, not a barrier to action.

The activities include developing a comprehensive safety checklist that will be used throughout the research process. By creating a risk assessment matrix, researchers can also consider the possible consequences and develop strategies to minimise and/or mitigate these risks.

For more information on safeguarding, please refer to this earlier section of the manual on Safeguarding.

Activity 1: Research risk assessment matrix[53]

The objective of this activity is to support researchers to identify and plan for potential risks during the research process.

Notes: Guide the group through this activity with sensitivity, encourage open discussions about possible risks, and ensure that all voices are heard, especially those who may be more at risk. Remind researchers that some risks may be too great to accept, even with mitigation, and that it is okay to adapt research plans to prioritise safety. Your role is to help the group weigh the seriousness and likelihood of each risk, and foster a collaborative approach to finding practical solutions.

Suggested materials needed:
- Copies of the risk assessment matrix (printed or on flipchart paper)
- Markers or pens
- Sticky notes (optional)
- Reference document for signposting to service providers as needed

Groups:	Potential risks for this group A) During research B) During dissemination	Likelihood (1 – very unlikely. 5 – highly likely)	Impact (1 – insignificant. 5 – very serious)	Total risk rating (Likelihood x impact)	Actions to minimise or mitigate the risk	Acceptable level of risk once actions have been taken? (Yes/No) Reasons
Girls						
Women						
Other community members/ stakeholders						
The researchers						

Activity sequencing:

1. **Introduce the risk assessment matrix:** Explain that this tool will help the group identify and evaluate potential risks related to their research and the sharing of results.

2. **Identify and list risks:** For each group (girls, women, other community members/ stakeholders, researchers), brainstorm and write down risks that could arise during research activities and the dissemination phase.

3. **Discuss risk context:** For each risk, discuss why it might happen and at what stage of the research process it could occur.

4. **Assess likelihood:** Assign a likelihood rating to each risk, using a scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (highly likely).

5. **Assess impact:** Identify the main consequences for each risk and rate the seriousness of these consequences from 1 (insignificant) to 5 (very serious), considering safety, wellbeing, assets, and environment.

6. **Calculate total risk rating:** Multiply the likelihood by the impact rating to get a total risk score for each risk.

7. **Plan mitigation actions:** For each risk, brainstorm actions that could reduce the likelihood and/or impact and write these in the appropriate column.

8. **Determine acceptability:** Discuss whether, after mitigation, the risk is at an acceptable level (Yes/No) and record the reasons for this decision.

9. **Review and adapt:** If any risks remain unacceptably high, facilitate a discussion about alternative research strategies or changes to the plan that could further reduce risk.

Remember - If risks are identified that are considered highly likely to occur, the consequences are considered to be serious, and even with mitigating actions the risk remains then this part of the research should be reconsidered.

⏱ Activity 2: Creating a safety checklist

The objective of this activity is to develop a comprehensive safety checklist that will be used throughout the research process.

📝 **Notes**: Facilitate a collaborative discussion where all group members contribute ideas for the safety checklist, making sure everyone's voices are heard. Review the list and add any essential points that may not have been discussed. Emphasise that the checklist should be referred to regularly and updated as needed. Ensure that every participant understands each point and feels comfortable with the procedures outlined.

Suggested materials needed:
- Large sheets of paper or a whiteboard for brainstorming
- Markers or pens
- Notebooks or paper for each participant
- A way to replicate the checklist (e.g. writing copies, taking photos, or photocopying…)

Activity sequencing:
1. **Introduce the safety checklist:** Explain to the group that, following the risk assessment, they will now create a safety checklist to use throughout the research process.

2. **Brainstorm safety measures:** Invite all group members to suggest ideas and actions that would help ensure everyone's safety during research activities.

3. **Review and add essential points:** After the group has contributed, review the list and add the following points if not already discussed:

- Make sure you have a timeline for activities, and always conduct activities during daylight hours.

- Share your timeline with the group (or at least 3 people) and always let them know when you have finished.

- Mentors should record everyone's timelines.

- Everyone should check in with the mentor each day they conduct research: in the morning, during the research process, for example 2 hours after the first check-in, and to check out when finished and back home or at the relevant office.

- No-one should work alone – always conduct research in groups of 2-3.

- Always have a phone with credit and battery; emergency phone credit will be provided by the project. Store emergency numbers (mentor, ActionAid office, etc.) in your phone.

- Carry copies of the referral list to share with researchers if needed.

- Know that your safety is the most important thing. If you feel unsafe or threatened, stop the interview immediately, leave, and inform your mentor.

- Do not keep concerns to yourself or try to act alone; seeking support is safer for everyone involved.

- Ensure research activities are conducted in private locations to maintain participant confidentiality.

- Always check that research locations are safe and secure, and keep each other updated if the situation changes.

4. **Finalise the checklist:** As a group, agree on the final safety checklist, ensuring all necessary points are included and everyone understands them.

5. **Distribute the checklist:** Write out all the points clearly and ensure each group member has an individual copy, either by photocopying or having everyone write the list in their notebooks.

Module 8: Analysing the data

Intersectional analysis examines how structural oppressions (class, caste, race, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, etc.) overlap and interconnect. Data should be collectively analysed and verified, linking findings to identified issues and desired changes, with an action-oriented focus on individual, systemic, and institutional transformation.[54]

On decolonial feminist data analysis:[55]

- **Collective ownership:** Data should be collected, analysed, and validated by those the research is about.
- **Critical reflexivity:** Researchers must remain aware of their own opinions and accountability. This reflexivity should be explicit from the start and revisited during analysis.
- **Participatory analysis:** Use popular participatory methods – some of these are explored below.
- **Subtle evidence:** Consider silences, taboos, symbolic language, and non-verbal communication often missed in standard qualitative work.
- **Gender analysis:** Build in reflection from the start, avoiding stereotypes.
- **Indigenous data sovereignty:** Treat statistics as human artefacts that must be interpreted critically and contextually.

Questions for reflexive analysis

- Who is included and excluded from the analysis process?
- How do power dynamics shape what gets coded and surfaced?
- What silences or sensitive issues may be present?
- How do expectations limit or direct the outputs?
- Which stakeholders hold power around these issues, and which are allies?
- What behaviours or structures sustain the problem, and how can collective action challenge them?

Towards action

- Researchers are not just "informing" the findings, but also creating the recommendations and advocacy strategies.

Activity 1: Sharing our stories

The objective of this activity is to have a space for the researchers to present their research findings, creating information exchange across the group. The aim is to transform the findings into powerful presentations.

Suggested materials (depending on the researchers' preferences):

- **Art supplies:** Large paper, coloured markers, paint, collage materials
- **Drama materials:** Simple props, scarves, costume pieces
- **Writing materials:** Paper, pens, sticky notes
- **Presentation space:** Area for performances and displays
- **Large chart paper:** For mapping and planning
- **Audience seating:** Comfortable spaces for sharing

Activity sequencing

1. **Data gallery walk:** Girls display all their research materials around the room. This will depend on the tools they ended up using, so may include their friendship

circle diagrams, intergenerational insights, community walk observations, focus group notes, creative expressions, etc. Everyone can then walk around the space to learn about the findings of others.

2. **Creative presentation planning:** The researchers can then spend some time preparing a presentation on their findings and experiences of doing the research collection. Some examples are:

   a. **Theatre:** Short skits showing research findings

   b. **Gallery exhibition:** Visual displays with interactive elements

   c. **Mock podcast/Radio show:** Presentations with interviews and discussions

   d. **Song writing:** Song lyrics explaining their experiences and what they heard

3. **Pattern recognition circle:** After hearing from the different groups of researchers on their findings, the group sits in a circle to discuss:

   - What patterns did you notice?
   - What findings surprised you most?
   - What stories keep appearing in different forms?
   - Which findings feel most important to share with others?

4. **Finding selection:** Issue by issue (drawing from the key issues that framed the research), the girls can collate the different information from their research, for example on a poster. Keep these issue posters for the following activity.

⏱ Activity 2: Problem Tree Activity[56]

The objective of this activity is for the researchers systematically analyse the issues they identified, using the information they gathered.

Notes: Validate the girls' experiences throughout the process, by helping them see connections between their personal experiences, the research information, and broader social issues.

Suggested materials needed:

- Large sheets of paper or wall space
- Coloured sticky notes
- Markers
- Problem tree template
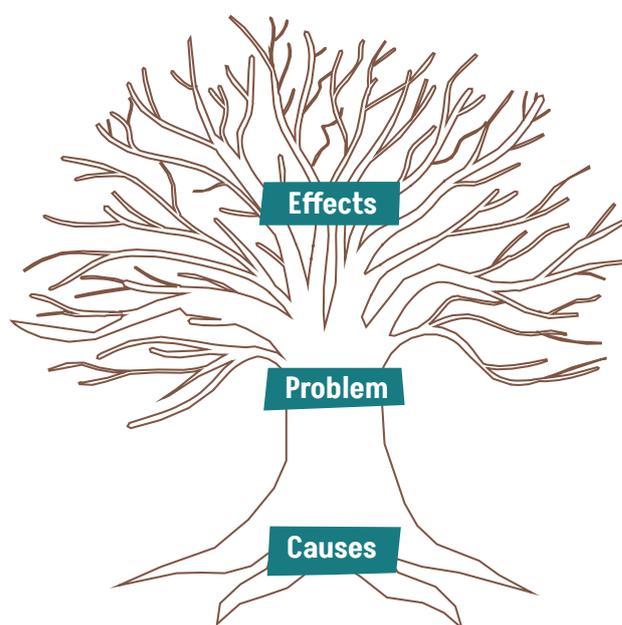
Figure 8 Example problem tree template from Urbact.eu

Activity sequencing:

1. **Experience sharing circle:** Begin with girls sharing one reflection from the previous activity.

2. **Root cause analysis:** Going through each issue poster, facilitate deep exploration of causes, linking it to the research information the girls have gathered. Girls should also be encouraged to share information based on their own personal experiences and reflections (and not exclusively from what collected via the research).

   - Immediate causes: What directly leads to this problem?

- Underlying causes: What are the deeper reasons this happens?
- Root causes: What are the fundamental systems, attitudes, or structures that create this problem?

3. **Personal to political connections:** Help girls see how their individual experiences connect to broader social issues and systems of power.

4. **Intersectional analysis:** Discuss how different identities (gender, age, class, race, religion, ability, etc.) affect how girls experience these problems.

5. **Effects mapping:** Map out the consequences of each problem, for example:

   - **Immediate effects:** What happens right away?
   - **Long-term effects:** What are the lasting impacts?
   - **Ripple effects:** How does this problem affect families, communities, and society?
   - **Unrecognised effects:** What may be a side effect of this issue, which many people are not aware of?

6. **Strength and resilience identification:** Discuss how girls and their communities already cope with and resist these problems.

7. **Visual representation creation:** Help girls create compelling visual representations of their problem trees using colours, symbols, and images that are meaningful to them.

8. **Validation and prioritisation:** Have girls review their problem trees and identify which causes they feel most motivated and able to address through advocacy. Ask the girls to reflect on what they would like to be done, or to be different.

9. **Thorough note taking and documentation:** As the facilitator, ensure you have a good way to document the conversations and to store this information, as this is vital for the dissemination strategies.

⏱ Activity 3: PESTEL Analysis

The objective of this activity is to further the researchers' analysis of their findings by analysing the external factors affecting their identified issues.

Suggested materials needed:
- PESTEL analysis templates
- Large paper
- Coloured markers
- Sticky notes
- Local context information sheets

Activity sequencing:

1. **Context setting:** Begin with girls sharing examples of how 'outside forces' or 'big picture issues' affect their daily lives.

2. **PESTEL framework introduction:** Explain each category using language and examples relevant to adolescent girls:

3. **Key issue PESTEL analysis:** Think through each problem tree, and issue findings posters, and do a PESTEL analysis for each issue. Encourage the group to think about:

   - **Individual level:** How does this affect me personally?

   - **Household level:** How does this affect my family?

   - **Community level:** How does this affect my neighbourhood/community?

   - **National level:** How does this affect my country?

4. **Intersectional analysis:** Discuss how different PESTEL factors interact with each other.

5. **Opportunity identification:** Help girls identify PESTEL factors that could support their advocacy efforts.

6. **Reflection and learning:** Have girls share what surprised them most about this analysis and what they learned about the complexity of change.

7. **Thorough note taking and documentation:** As the facilitator, ensure you have a good way to document the conversations and to store this information, as this is vital for the dissemination strategies.

Advice from past facilitator: The researchers benefitted from using the Problem Tree and the PESTEL analysis as an advocacy tool as well – they found it was useful to clearly convey their realities and research without disclosing any sensitive information from co-researchers.

Example PESTEL analysis templates for brainstorming	
PESTLE Factor	Potential examples relevant to teenage girls
P – Political	School rules and codes Youth political representation Education funding and access Local government youth services Curfews or community safety rules Political instability or conflict
E – Economic	Allowances Informal work Cost of travel Cost of school fees/supplies Cost of activities Family income Savings Unpaid labour
S – Social	Family expectations Social norms Friendship dynamics and identity Mental health awareness Stigma
T – Technological	Access to technology Online safety Online opportunities
E – Environmental	Climate resilience Access green spaces Climate change induced responsibilities Impact of weather on routine
L – Legal	Age-related laws (e.g. work, consent, marriage) Birth registration rights Anti-bullying and harassment regulations Health rights (e.g. mental health access, GBV service access) Enforcement of equality and discrimination laws

Module 9: Advocacy and action plan

This module on advocacy and action addresses a critical juncture in girl-led research where knowledge production intersects with social transformation. Research findings are crucial for building effective influencing campaigns grounded in lived experience evidence.[57] This includes building solidarity and sharing learnings on influencing with other organisations and allies, such as women's rights organisations and youth-led movements.

Feminist research is a powerful tool for advocacy, endeavouring to achieve social justice and policy transformation through amplifying community voices and priorities.[58]

> "
> I want the research to be disseminated and not left in a book.
>
> **Researcher, Nigeria**

Traditional advocacy often replicates colonial power structures, where 'experts' speak for communities and where Western models of change are imposed. Action, impact, and change are also often not measurable or are hard to measure and are often linked to stakeholder agendas and funding requirements.[59] A key dimension of FPAR is the honouring of many forms of action[60] and rejecting the notion that a metric needs to be added for change to be legitimate.

Sometimes, the impact of girl-led research is the personal breakthroughs that are difficult to capture.[61] In the GLRA contexts, transformation occurs on both personal and group levels.

Critical considerations include what narratives are being shifted as a result of leading research, and whether there is transformation of shared consciousness. In addition, 'action' in FPAR encompasses "changes in social structures and, equally, to transforming and shaping the shared consciousness of a collective based on a shared concern." This includes using research findings to engage with governments and other key decision makers to address policies, linking to advocacy and influencing with knowledge holders to shift power and challenge inequalities.[62]

Policy advocacy where adolescent researchers address decision makers and policymakers directly proves especially useful in decolonisation efforts. Research findings can feed directly into policy and practice.[63]

Advocacy can also target social change at the level of culture, community and norms. This type of advocacy may involve challenging dominant narratives and belief systems that normalise gender inequality and marginalisation. This work often manifests through creative expression, storytelling, media engagement, and educational initiatives that offer counter-narratives to dominant discourses.

Community-level organising represents another essential dimension of advocacy beyond formal policy channels. Grassroots organising builds collective power at local levels, creating networks of support and resistance that can sustain long-term change efforts. Girl-led research groups can support community organising that contributes to short-term change and long-term transformation.

This module aims to encourage decolonial advocacy methods that:

- Centre the knowledge and experiences of the researchers
- Challenge dominant narratives that marginalise girls

Figure 9 From Decolonising Feminist Research: Mapping and guidance to process and product, p38

- Build on existing community strengths and wisdom
- Create space for multiple ways of taking advocacy and action
- Support community self-determination rather than external solutions

Some critical questions[64] to consider before starting advocacy strategy may be:

- **What are we sharing?** The research findings? The experience? The analysis? Recommendations? A vision for change?

- **Who is involved in the decision-making?** Researchers should maintain control over how their knowledge is shared and used.

- **Who are we sharing our research with?** Identifying allies, decision-makers, and communities who can amplify and support the researchers' messages.

- **How are we sharing it?** Using methods and platforms that are accessible, culturally appropriate, and effective for the context.

- **Why are we sharing it?** Ensuring that it helps to create positive change for girls.

- **What does this sharing do?** Understanding the potential impact, both positive and negative, of the action and advocacy efforts.

- **Who does the sharing?** Ensuring researchers lead their own advocacy while building supportive coalitions.

- **Who has access to it?** Making sure your message reaches those who need to hear it while protecting sensitive information and community privacy.

The researchers have used several activities to analyse the systems that maintain patriarchal values, for example by identifying the key players and institutions that hold power in their community or issue area (Power mapping exercise in module 4), and deconstructing the power that surrounds their priority themes (PESTEL analysis and Problem Tree Analysis).

⏱ Activity 1: Alliance building

The objective of this activity is to support adolescent girls in mapping and developing potential partnerships and support networks for the dissemination of their research.

Suggested materials needed:
- Large flip chart paper
- Coloured markers
- Sticky notes
- Alliance mapping template
- Community asset mapping sheets
- Access to research, if available

Activity sequencing:
1. **Opening circle and intention setting:** Begin with researchers sitting in a circle sharing one word describing how they feel about building alliances.

2. **Cultural wisdom exploration:** Ask girls to share proverbs, sayings, or stories from their cultures about working together. Discuss what these teach about collaboration and mutual support.

3. **Personal network mapping:** Revert back to the power maps the girls created in Module 4, activity 2. Ask them to reflect on if it feels the same or different, now that they have conducted their research collection.

4. **Power and privilege reflection:** Facilitate a discussion about who has power in their communities and how different identities (age, class, ethnicity, etc.) affect access to power.

5. **Strategic alliance identification:** Using a structured template such as the diagram below, help girls identify potential allies across different levels, these could be:
   - Individual allies (peers, mentors, family members, strong leaders in their organisation)
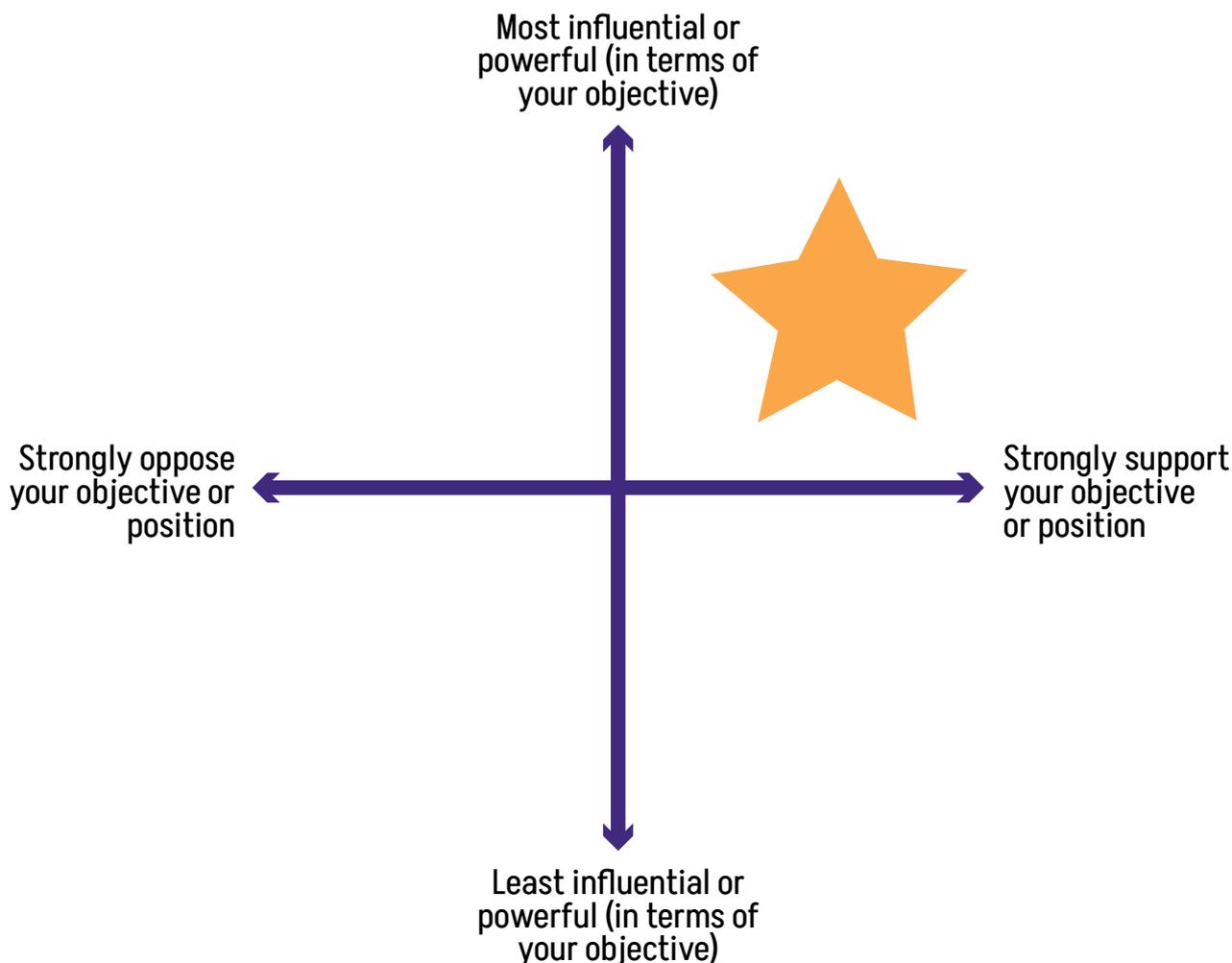
Figure 10 Adapted from The Change Agency

- Community organisations (schools, youth groups, religious organisations, women's rights organisations)
- government representatives
- Women rights movements
- Media contacts
- Online communities or movements (if appropriate)

6. **Relationship assessment:** For each potential ally, discuss:

- Which potential allies have both the MOST influence, and STRONG support for our objectives?
- What is our shared interest?
- What can we offer them?
- What do we need from them?
- What are potential barriers?

- How can they help us?

7. **Approach strategy development:** Help girls develop specific strategies for approaching each potential ally, including key messages and timing. Reflect on what format of the research findings would be most suitable for different allies

For example:

- Local government representatives might want to read a long report on the research finding
- Media contacts might want an interview or video on the research findings
- Family members might be best approached with a simple conversation

8. **Mutual support planning:** Discuss how the group will support each other in building these alliances.

9. **Action commitments:** Each participant commits to approaching one specific ally within an agreed timeframe.

10. **Follow-up accountability:** Plan check-in sessions to share experiences and learn from each other.

Activity 2: Advocacy action planning[65]

The objective of this activity is to help researchers develop concrete, achievable advocacy actions that link to the allies and stakeholders they have identified.

Notes: Emphasise that advocacy can take many forms and that girls' voices are the most valuable evidence in this process. Help researchers think about actions that are realistic given their circumstances, while still being meaningful.

Suggested preparatory materials:

- Action planning templates
- Timeline sheets
- Risk assessment forms
- Mobile phones for research (if appropriate)
- Art supplies for creating advocacy materials
- Voice recorders (if available)

Activity sequencing:

1. **Confidence circle:** Start with each researcher sharing one thing they are proud of that they have already done to create change.

2. **Issue familiarisation:** Go through the different issues the group has researched to familiarise themselves with the breadth of topics of their work.

3. **Action brainstorming:** Facilitate a creative brainstorming session about different types of advocacy actions, for example:

   - Direct action (petitions, rallies, peaceful protests)
   - Education and awareness (social media campaigns, peer education, community presentations, theatre, music, art exhibitions)
   - Policy engagement (meeting with officials, submitting recommendations)
   - Storytelling and testimony (sharing personal experiences, creating videos)
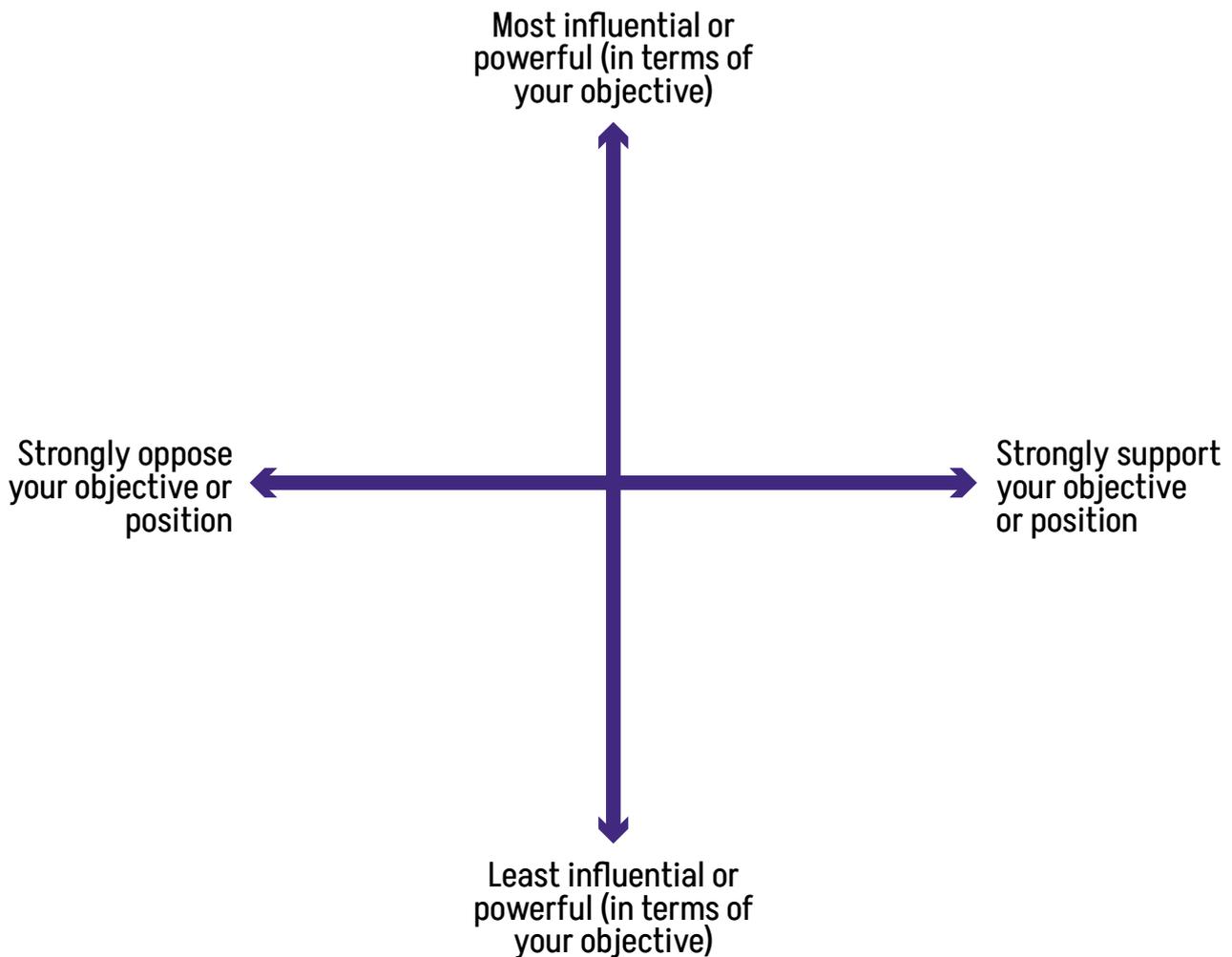
Most influential or
powerful (in terms of
your objective)

Strongly oppose
your objective or
position

Strongly support
your objective
or position

Least influential or
powerful (in terms of
your objective)

Figure 11 Adapted from the Change Agency

4. **Stakeholder and power mapping:** Refer back to the exercise the researchers did in module 4 activity 3: Power mapping, PESTEL analysis in module 8, as well as the power maps from Module 4, activity 3, and the alliance building activity in this module: Have these on show.

5. Help researchers identify who they want to influence through their advocacy – some of these reflections may be similar to the ones done in prior relevant activities, but remind the girls that we are now not asking them to be involved in the research, but considering if we a) want to influence them and b) how might this be done.

   • Level of influence (high, medium, low)

   • Current attitude toward the issue (supportive, neutral, opposed)

   • Best ways to reach them

The same template can be used as above, but now the researchers may want to also reflect on those stakeholders who maybe hold influence but oppose their objective.

6. **Stakeholder assessment:** Discuss which stakeholders they would like to approach and influence with their advocacy and action.

7. **Resource and skills assessment:** Discuss what they would like to achieve with each stakeholder, and what information/ strategy will be needed to achieve that. For example:

   • If an issue that the researchers have identified is how their periods affect school attendance, they might want to target the below INFLUENTIAL but OPPOSING stakeholders by:

   a. Parents: Raise awareness amongst

parents on how periods can be managed in schools

b. Schools: Advocate to schools and local government on why period products should be made available for free

c. General public: Do a national media campaign on ending the stigma around periods, and advocating on how governments need to invest in gender responsive public services

8. **Action design:** For each chosen action, help girls plan:

- Specific objectives (what exactly do they want to achieve?)

- Target audience (who are they trying to reach/influence?)

- Key messages (what do they want people to know/understand?)

- Methods and tactics (how will they do it?)

- Resources (what research related resources will they need?)

- Timeline required (how long will each step take?)

9. **Collaboration planning:** Discuss how they will work together, including roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes. A table could map out advocacy and action activities with the following planning elements: What will we do? (the activity), Who is the advocacy/action target? (the audience), What issue is being addressed? (the focus), What do we want to achieve? (the goal), What key messages or information do they need? (communication strategy), What resources are needed? (requirements), and How long will this take? (timeline).

Ensure that there is at least one action for each issue initially identified.

The girls will create the resources needed in Module 10.

10. **Pilot action planning:** Help the group plan one small pilot action they can implement quickly to build confidence and learn.

11. **Documentation strategy:** Plan how they will document their advocacy efforts (photos, videos, written reflections) for learning and accountability

⏱ Activity 3: Risk assessment and mitigation activity[66]

The objective of this activity is to help researchers identify and plan for potential risks in their advocacy and action plan, as well as raising their safety awareness through collaborative risk analysis.

📝 **Notes**: Girls are likely to face backlash when undertaking action and advocacy activities, especially if they have increased visibility. It is important that the researchers can be honest about their fears. Emphasise that identifying risks is not meant to discourage action, but to help come up with mitigations. If mitigations do not sufficiently mitigate the risk, reinforce to the girls that is OK to not do everything.

Suggested materials needed:
- Risk assessment matrices
- Safety planning templates
- Emergency contact forms
- Anonymous suggestion box (for sensitive issues)
- Local resource directories

Activity sequencing:
1. **Safety circle opening:** Begin with a grounding exercise where girls share one thing that makes them feel safe and supported.
2. **Risk categories exploration:** Help the researchers identify different types of risks they might face. For example:
   - Physical safety risks (harassment, violence, retaliation)
   - Emotional/psychological risks (stress, burnout, criticism)
   - Social risks (family disapproval, peer pressure, community backlash)
   - Educational/professional risks (school consequences, loss of opportunities)
   - Legal risks (if applicable)
   - Digital safety risks (online harassment, privacy concerns)
3. **Context-specific risk assessment:** For each planned advocacy action, help the researchers assess:
   - What could go wrong?
   - How likely is it to happen?
   - How serious would the consequences be?
   - Who might be most at risk?

Researchers can fill out a risk matrix similar to the one in Module 7 Activity 1: Research risk assessment matrix.

4. **Power dynamics analysis:** Discuss how different types of power (age, gender, class, ethnicity, etc.) affect risk levels and what risks different girls might face. The researchers may want to fill out a table which maps out a risk assessment for each advocacy action with the following elements: the action being taken, potential risks for the group both during and after the action, likelihood rating (1 – very unlikely to 5 – highly likely), impact rating (1 – insignificant to 5 – very serious), total risk rating (calculated by multiplying likelihood × impact), mitigation strategies to reduce risk, and whether the risk remains acceptable once mitigation measures are in place (Y/N)."
5. **Protective factors identification:** Help girls identify what protective factors they have:
   - Supportive relationships
   - Safe spaces
   - Knowledge and skills
   - Community resources
   - Legal protections
6. **Action reassessment:** If any action cannot be sufficiently mitigated via preventive measures, suggest removing or changing

the activity (these are now referred to as confirmed actions).

7. **Mitigation strategy development:** For each confirmed identified action, help girls brainstorm, in addition to the mitigation strategy:

   - Response strategies (what to do if it happens)

   - Recovery strategies (how to heal and move forward)

8. **Safety planning:** Help each girl create a personal safety plan including:

   - Trusted contacts

   - Safe spaces

   - Communication strategies

   - Emergency procedures

9. **Collective care planning:** Discuss how they will look out for each other and provide mutual support

10. **Review and adapt:** Plan regular risk assessment reviews as their advocacy work evolves – remind girls that they can change their mind at any point, and that they can re-evaluate activities if they think the risk level has changed.

Module 10: Creating resources and next steps

Now that the researchers have completed their research, analysis, and advocacy planning, they are ready to create the materials and resources needed to share their findings and implement their advocacy actions. This final module focuses on transforming their research into accessible formats for different audiences and creating a realistic timeline for their advocacy work.

As discussed throughout the manual, the aim of the GLRA process is not just as an evidence gathering and research activity, but the beginning of a process aimed at meaningful change through advocacy and action – therefore, dissemination is crucial for creating change.

Research dissemination should be purposeful, communicating key research findings to targeted audiences. The objective of this can be varied, from enhancing awareness, informing practice, to influencing change.

For the adolescent girl researchers, this process could involve both traditional academic channels – such as reports and formal presentations to decision-makers – and more creative strategies, including direct engagement with their own communities and the general public.

Effective dissemination requires a deliberate and structured approach to identifying relevant audiences and adapting communication strategies to ensure that research outcomes are appropriately understood, applied, and utilised to their fullest potential.

Activity 1: Research dissemination material creation

The objective of this activity is to help researchers transform their research findings into accessible, compelling materials tailored for different audiences identified in their alliance building and advocacy planning.

Note: This activity may not be suitable to be done in one day, depending on which resources the researchers want to create. In addition, it may be useful to have a research report which consolidates the findings, which can then support the other activities. If this is the case, hold a discussion about whether this should be done prior to the specific advocacy resources being developed. The data analysis module should have prepared the research data so that the researchers can create their own report.

Suggested materials:
The materials needed will be depend on what dissemination resources were chosen in the previous module.

Activity sequencing:
1. **Revise the takeaways:** Look at the table created in the Activity 2 in Module 9, and discuss with the researchers what they are looking forward to in this plan.

2. **Strengthening key messages:** Go through each advocacy action, either in groups or together. The researchers should develop key messages for each advocacy target, drawing on the activities from Module 8. These could be prompted by questions such as:

   - What are the most important findings from their research?

   - What do they want people to know, feel, or do?

- What makes the research findings unique and credible?
- What personal experiences illustrate the findings?

3. **Reassess:** Once the key messages have been developed, ask the group if they need to add any resources to those already listed in the action table.

4. **Material creation workstations:** Set up different stations/workshops for creating the materials. For example:

Media package:
- Press release template
- Story pitch outlines
- Photo captions and descriptions
- Spokesperson talking points

Community presentation materials:
- Visual presentation slides or posters
- Discussion guide for community meetings
- FAQs addressing common concerns
- Call-to-action materials

Peer education resources:
- Interactive presentation materials
- Social media content templates
- Peer discussion guides
- Shareable graphics and quotes

Policy brief creation:
- One-page summary of key findings
- Clear recommendations for action
- Supporting data and quotes
- Contact information

Activity 2: Timeline planning

The objective of this activity is to help researchers develop a comprehensive timeline for their planned action and advocacy activities.

Note: Consider factors around the researchers' availability and capacity to commit time, and the availability of the stakeholders they want to target.

Suggested materials:
- Completed action and advocacy activity table

Activity sequencing:

1. **Advocacy and action activity prioritisation:** Review the advocacy action activities table, and discuss:
   - Are any of these activities time sensitive?
   - Which issues are most urgent?
   - Which campaigns align with our current capacity?
   - Does capacity change in the holidays?

2. **Timeline creation:** A timeline plan could provide an implementation framework with columns that ask: 'What is the action and advocacy activity?', 'Who is leading it?', 'Is there more preparation work to do? If so, are there date(s) to do this?', 'When should it take place?', 'How long will it last?', and 'When should the group debrief and think about next steps?

3. **Check ins:** Check in on the researchers as they do their advocacy and action activities, continually assessing the risks that this work could create.

4. **After action and advocacy reflection:** Decide with the researchers if they would like to come together after their action and activities have taken place. If appropriate, set a month/week to do so now.

⏱ Activity 3: Closing circle

This is the final activity included in this manual. Below are two suggested activities to help end this module with reflection and inspiration:

Activity A. Conversation circle

The researchers gather in a circle, and each girl shares:

1. One specific commitment they are making for the next month
2. One person they will ask for support
3. One way they will measure their progress
4. One hope they have for the impact of their work

Activity B. Visual circle

Provide each researcher with paper and colours to draw a map and/or a visual representation (could include words, pictures, symbols) of:

- The most important things we have learnt together
- The strengths of this team
- A piece of advice/something to remember as we start this work together

Give the researchers 10-15 minutes to work on their map/drawing and then invite everyone back into a circle. Ask each person to share their map/drawing/poster and say something about what they have created.

Note from past facilitator: The girls' confidence, leadership, and communication skills have grown markedly following the trainings based on the manuals. All the researchers report significant improvements in selfassurance and public speaking. Many admit they had never recognised their own power, but now see themselves as capable and empowered. These transformations are a powerful testament to the impact of the manuals' theoretical foundations and practical tools on the girls' personal and leadership development.

Annexes

Annex A: Girl researcher selection criteria

The below is the girl research selection criteria used by the ActionAid Bangladesh team in 2021.

Researcher selection criteria for the Girl-led Research Project - ActionAid Bangladesh

- A girl between the age range of 15 to 19.
- Living in urban slums in Dhaka (in the selected research areas).
- Fluent in Bangla speaking, reading, writing, and listening.
- Enthusiasm and ability to collect data from the research area/communities and actively participate in different stages of this research project.
- Good understanding of the community dynamics and demography and well-networked within her own community.
- Priority will be given to girls who are the most marginalised and most vulnerable in their communities.
- Parents/guardians are willing for their girls to participate in this research project.
- Active in different educational and creative initiatives in the communities and schools.
- Confidence, good communications skill, and creativity to present/discuss research findings with different stakeholders and design advocacy/campaign plans for their respective communities based on the research findings.
- Interested in girls' lives, believes in empowerment of girls, and want to lead positive changes in girls' lives.
- Able to commit up to 2/3 days per week, over the next 3-4 months to complete the training and research, and then able to commit a few hours each month (up to 5 hours) following the research to continue engaging with AA Bangladesh and local partner organisations on girls' issues.
- Committed to share the research findings and new skills with other girls and people in the community.

Annex B: Example wellbeing plan

Wellbeing	Examples
Ways we can look after ourselves individually	(Take regular breaks, plan for food and water to be available, take a rest at the end of the day etc) i ii iii
Ways we can look after each other	(Daily check-ins, working in pairs, doing fun activities together etc) i ii iii
Ways we can ensure the wellbeing of research researchers	(Ensuring questions are asked sensitively, making sure they have water/snacks, conducting sessions in a comfortable and private space etc, having access to a referral list etc.)

	i
	ii
	iii
Wellbeing exercises we can do as a research team	(Breathing exercises, songs, games etc) i ii iii
Wellbeing exercises we can do with co-researchers	(Breathing exercises, songs, games etc.) i ii iii

Annex C: Example ethical protocol table for immediate response

Level of distress	Indicators	Immediate actions	Follow-up required	Referral considerations
Mild emotional response	• Quiet withdrawal • Brief emotional reaction • Slight discomfort • Hesitation to participate	• Take breaks during data collection • Check in privately • Provide reassurance • Respect self-determination to voluntarily choose whether to continue	• Document in research notes • Monitor throughout session • Follow up within 24 hours	• Provide information about sources of support • No immediate referral needed
Moderate distress	• Sustained emotional distress • Visible anxiety • Difficulty continuing • Withdrawal from group • Expressing safety concerns	• Stop discussion immediately • Move to private space • Active listening and validation • Provide appropriate support • Assess safety concerns	• Notify facilitator within 2 hours • Follow up within 24 hours	• Provide appropriate referrals if participants experience distress • Discuss options with participant

Severe distress/crisis	• Uncontrollable distress • Panic symptoms • Disclosure of abuse to researcher • Self-harm indicators • Suicidal ideation • Reports of immediate danger	• End session immediately • Ensure participant safety • Stay with participant • Follow instructions to report what the coresearcher has told you as soon as possible • Inform facilitator immediately	• Facilitator to contact local support services • Facilitator to complete incident report • Facilitator to follow up daily for 1 week • Review with safeguarding team	• Immediate professional referral • Emergency services if required • Contact local protection services • Coordinate with authorities as required[68]

Annex D: Data collection tools

TOOL 1: PEER-TO-PEER INTERVIEW CIRCLES

The objective of this tool is to introduce girls to conducting interviews with each other about their experiences with priority themes, to practice both interviewing and sharing skills in a supportive environment. This tool can be used as both a practice and a data collection tool.

Notes: This tool emphasises girls controlling the conversation flow and creating safe spaces for sharing experiences. It builds interviewing skills while allowing girls to explore their priority themes through peer dialogue.

Suggested materials:
- Interview question guides (prepared based on priority themes)
- Template of ethics/ongoing consent/data protection/confidentiality/withdrawal of data
- Notebooks or paper for recording responses
- Comfortable seating arranged in small circles
- Timer for managing interview segments
- Flip chart paper for recording reflections

Activity sequencing:

1. **Interview skills introduction:** Explain basic interviewing principles:
   - Ask open-ended questions that start with 'how', 'what', and 'why'
   - Listen actively without interrupting
   - Ask follow-up questions for clarity
   - Respect if someone doesn't want to answer a question
   - Keep conversations confidential

2. **Question development:** Using priority themes from previous activities, the girls work together to develop 5-7 interview questions they want to explore. Examples might include:
   - "How do you experience [priority theme] in your daily life?"
   - "What support do you have when dealing with [priority theme]?"
   - "What would need to change for [priority theme] to improve?"

3. **Circle formation:** Divide girls into circles of 3-4 researchers each. Each circle should have diverse representation if possible.

4. **Practice round:** Each girl takes turns being interviewer and interviewee:

   - 10 minutes per interview
   - Interviewer asks questions and takes notes
   - Other circle members observe and can suggest follow-up questions
   - Rotate until everyone has been interviewed

5. **Reflection within circles:** After all interviews, circles discuss:

   - What common themes emerged across interviews?
   - What surprised you about the responses?
   - What was easy/difficult about interviewing?
   - What was easy/difficult about being interviewed?

6. **Whole group sharing:** Each circle shares 2-3 key insights from their interviews without revealing personal details.

7. **Tool evaluation:** Girls discuss:

   - How would this approach help us learn more about our priority themes?
   - Would this be comfortable to use with other community members?
   - Is it appropriate to use this in the community?
   - Could this tool help amplify girls' voices and experiences?
   - Is this tool easy for girls to use and lead? Are the questions easy to understand?
   - Would you be interested to include it in our research approach?

8. **Documentation:** Record key insights about the interview process and girls' assessment of the tool's usefulness.

TOOL 2: FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE[68]

The objective of this tool is for researchers to meet with other girls outside of the project, to validate their own findings/experiences from module 4. It also creates an opportunity for the girls to hear from and learn from girls' and groups of girls who aren't represented within the research cohort.

Note: This activity uses a structured friendship circle discussion format to understand the role of peer relationships in girls' experiences of power, support, and agency. It helps identify how girls' social networks can be both sources of strength and potential co-researchers.

> "
> Gaining the respect and trust of the girls was also a real struggle. The girls thought that because I was their age mate I do not have any way to help them. Also dealing with the illiterate girls. There were some interview questions which needed the navigation of local language and dialects. I mean, ensuring the accurate translation and interpretation of the research findings was a complex task.
>
> **Researcher, Sierra Leone**

What is needed?

- Small groups of 2-5 girls who are friends/peers
- Large circle diagram divided into 4 sections: Activities Together, Discuss Together, Avoid Together, Dream Together
- Comfortable seating arranged in a circle
- Flip chart paper for recording key insights
- Coloured markers

Activity sequencing:

1. **Positionality and reflexivity:** Start the exploration of this tool by inviting the girls to reflect on their positionality. Invite the girls to walk slowly around the space. As you call out different identity prompts or statements

related to positionality, they pause and stand if they feel the prompt applies to them. Example prompts:

- I speak more than one language.
- My family has special traditions.
- I have faced a challenge others may not know about.
- I help care for someone in my family.
- I feel proud of where I come from.
- I sometimes feel misunderstood because of who I am.

After the walk, gather the group and facilitate a reflection using questions such as:

- What did you notice about yourself and others during the walk?
- How do these different parts of our identities shape how we experience the world?

Encourage reflection on how the different and diverse points of view shape understandings, and explore how this strengthens their research.

2. **Group formation:** One of the girl researchers should invite 2-5 of her friends/peers, aiming to have diverse representation of girls in the community (different ages, backgrounds, experiences, class, caste, etc).

3. **Warm-up questions:** Begin with relationship-building questions to help girls feel comfortable:

- Have you met before? If so, how do you know each other, and where did you meet?
- What do you like to do together? What would you like to do together?
- What is your favourite thing about your friendship? What is your favourite thing in this space?
- Have you had any challenging moments in your friendship?

- What different opportunities are there for girls to socialise/connect with their friends and peers?

4. **Friendship circle introduction:** Present the friendship circle diagram and explain that you will move clockwise through each section, starting with Activities Together and ending with Dream Together.

5. **Activities together discussion:**

- What kind of activities do you do together?
- Which activities are fun, and which are not so fun?
- Do you participate in any clubs or classes together?
- What do you learn from those activities?
- Which activities would you like to do more of together?
- Are the activities girls do together different to the ones boys do together? Why?

6. **Discuss together exploration:**

- What kinds of things do you talk about together?
- Do you discuss relationships? Families? What about your health, menstruation?
- Do you ever discuss issues to do with your community? Do you feel you have any opportunity to influence change in your community?
- Is it easy to talk about sensitive topics together?

7. **Avoid together analysis:**

- Do you ever talk about places in the community that are unsafe, activities that are risky?
- Do you ever discuss politics or religion together? Do you ever have different opinions on these issues? How do you deal with differing opinions?
- What are the aspects of life that feel more difficult for girls – for example, are there chores girls are expected to do at home/

difficulties at school? Do you discuss these together? Do you support each other?

8. **Dream together visioning:**
   - What do you plan for the future? How do your plans differ and/or what do they have in common?
   - What would you like to see change for girls in your school and community? Do you ever discuss this together?
   - What is your biggest dream/ambition?
   - What do you imagine you might talk to each other about in the future? What activities might you do together?

9. **Cross-section analysis:** After completing all sections, ask girls to reflect:
   - What surprised you about your friendship patterns?
   - Are there topics you'd like to discuss more but haven't?
   - How do your friendships help you deal with challenges?
   - What role do friendships play in your sense of power and agency?

10. **Theme connection:** Connect the discussion back to priority themes from previous activities:
    - How do your friendships relate to the issues we have identified as important?
    - Could your friend networks be part of addressing these issues?
    - What support do you give each other around these themes?
    - Did the co-researchers have the same understanding about the issues as researchers?
    - Do they have different information about them?
    - Are they affected by them differently?

11. **Documentation:** Record key insights about how friendship networks function, what support they provide, and how they

might be leveraged for information on the priority themes.
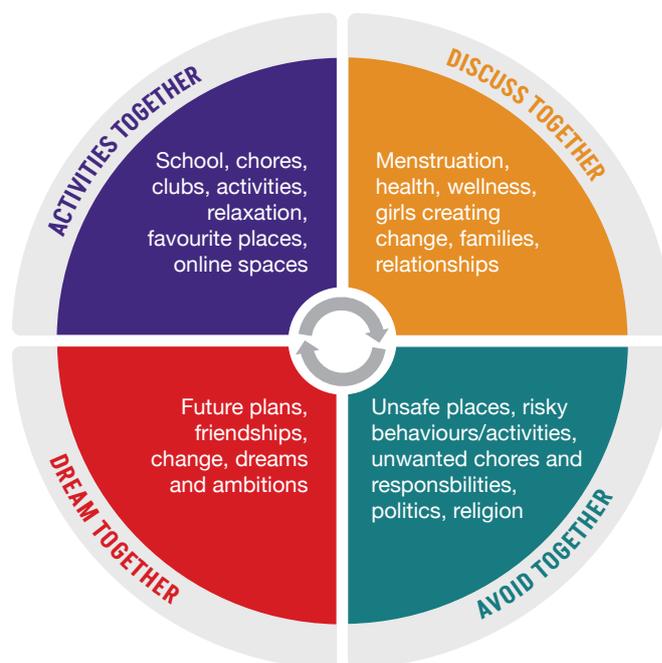
TOOL 3: INTERGENERATIONAL CIRCLE[69]

The objective of this tool is to explore how relationships between adolescent girls and older women function as sources of support and influence, and to understand how intergenerational dynamics impact the issues girls have identified as priorities.

> "
> Since I was told that the research would involve older men and women in communities I became a little afraid because I have experience with working with those that are older than me they will always try to show that you don't understand how things are, but when we started it wasn't like that at all. [The older women] played and laughed with us and they constantly wanted to know how we felt about things.
>
> **Researcher, Nigeria**

Notes:

- You could encourage the researchers and co-researchers to bring an item or phrase which is representative of the women's experience, in line with the themes the researchers are exploring. For example, the item could be a news article, court record, medical record, letter or religious pamphlet, and the phrase could be a common saying, metaphor or comment which has been said to a participant.[70]

- The co-researchers in this group may also be powerful allies for the adolescent researchers advocacy and action.

- This discussion could help identify long-term issues, as some of the women may have faced similar barriers when they were girls. The researchers could also learn from the strategies these women put in place (if any), the barriers they faced, or why they didn't act to address them.

What is needed?

- Mixed group of adolescent girls and older women (mothers, grandmothers, mentors, etc.)

- Large circle diagram divided into 4 sections: Activities Together, Discuss Together, Avoid Together, Dream Together

- Comfortable seating arranged in a circle

- Flip chart paper for recording key insights

- Coloured markers

Activity sequencing:

1. **Group formation:** Invite 3-5 girls to participate alongside a similar number of women who are involved in their lives.

2. **Warm-up questions:** Begin with relationship-building questions:

   - What is your name and one thing you would like others to know about you?

   - Do you all know each other? If yes, how do you know each other, and what is your favourite memory together?

- Share one thing you appreciate about the other generation represented here
- How do younger and older women support each other in this community? What do you learn from each other?
- What is one tradition or piece of wisdom that gets passed between generations of women here?

3. **Intergenerational circle introduction:** Present the circle diagram and explain that you will move clockwise through each section, starting with Activities Together and ending with Dream Together, with both generations contributing to each discussion.

4. **Activities together discussion:**
   - What kind of activities do younger and older women participate in together?
   - Which activities are fun, and which are not so fun?
   - Do you participate in any clubs/groups or classes together?
   - What support is available for younger women from women's groups?
   - Do older women in this community provide support/guidance/mentorship to younger women? If yes, how?
   - Would younger women like more/different support from older women? What would that look like?
   - Are there any activities that are available to younger women only or only older women only? Why?
   - Are there activities you would like to do together that are not currently happening?

5. **Discuss together exploration:**
   - What kinds of things do you talk about together?
   - Do you discuss relationships? Families? What about your health, menstruation?
   - Do you ever discuss issues to do with your community?

- Do younger and older women have opportunities to influence change in your community? Are these opportunities different for younger and older women?
- Is it easy to talk about sensitive topics together?
- What topics do each generation feel most comfortable discussing with the other?

6. **Avoid together analysis:**
   - Do you ever talk about places in the community that are unsafe, activities that are risky?
   - Do you ever discuss politics or religion together? Do you have different opinions on these issues? How do you deal with differing opinions?
   - Are there things that are difficult for older women and younger women to discuss together? Why, and what are they?
   - Are there generational differences in how you approach sensitive topics?

7. **Dream together visioning:**
   - What do you plan for the future? How do your plans differ and/or what do they have in common?
   - What changes would you like to see for women and girls in your school and community? Do you discuss this together? Are there differences between the changes you envision for younger versus older women?
   - What is your biggest dream/ambition for the next generation of girls?
   - How can different generations work together to achieve these dreams?

8. **Cross-generational reflection**: After completing all sections, ask both groups to reflect:
   - What surprised you about the other generation's perspectives?
   - Where do you see the strongest

connections between generations?

- What barriers exist to stronger intergenerational relationships?
- How could intergenerational support be strengthened?

9. **Theme connection:** Connect the discussion back to priority themes from previous activities:

- How do intergenerational relationships relate to the issues we have identified as important?
- What different perspectives do different generations bring to these issues?
- How might working across generations strengthen efforts to address these themes?

10. **Documentation:** Record key insights about intergenerational dynamics, support systems, and potential for collaboration on priority themes, noting both commonalities and differences between generations. Note key information specifically pertaining to the priority themes.
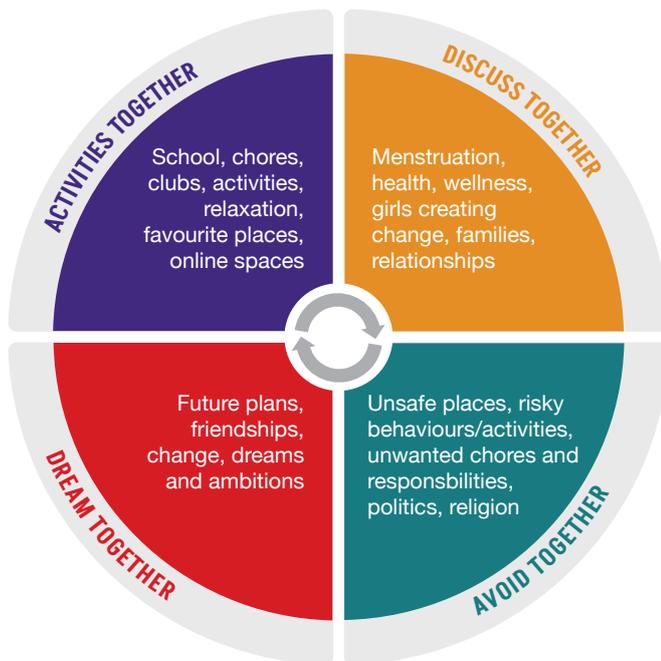
TOOL 4: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The objective of this activity is to introduce researchers to facilitating structured group discussions with different stakeholder groups about priority themes, building their facilitation skills while gathering diverse perspectives.

Suggested materials:

- Flip chart paper and markers
- Comfortable seating arranged in circles in a safe location
- Question guides for different stakeholder groups
- Notebooks and pens for recording responses

Activity sequencing:

1. **Focus group facilitation introduction:** Explain key facilitation skills:

- Create a welcoming environment for all researchers
- Ask open-ended questions that encourage discussion
- Ensure everyone has a chance to speak by discussing reflexivity and positionality
- Manage time and keep discussion focused
- Remain neutral and avoid leading responses
- Summarise key points at the end

2. **Stakeholder group selection:** Researchers choose one stakeholder group from their previous mapping to practice with (e.g., other adolescent girls, young women, mothers, fathers, teachers, community leaders…).

3. **Question development:** Researchers develop 5-7 focus group questions based on their priority themes, such as:

- What do you think are the biggest challenges facing girls in this community?
- How do you think [priority theme] affects girls' daily lives?
- What support exists for girls dealing with [priority theme]?

- What changes would you like to see regarding [priority theme]?

4. **Role assignment:** Researchers decide who will:
   - Lead the discussion (main facilitator)
   - Take notes and record responses
   - Manage time and materials
   - Ask follow-up questions

5. **Practice session:** Researchers practice facilitating a focus group with each other:
   - One group acts as facilitators
   - Others role-play the chosen stakeholder group
   - Practice for 20-30 minutes using their prepared questions

6. **Feedback and improvement:** After the practice session:
   - Discuss what went well in the facilitation
   - Identify areas for improvement
   - Refine questions based on how they worked
   - Adjust facilitation approach as needed

7. **Switch roles:** The researchers can switch roles and take in turn being the facilitator and the co-researcher.

8. **Real stakeholder session:** Invite 3-5 members of the chosen stakeholder group to participate in a focus group facilitated by the researchers.

Please note that the logistics around organising sessions is covered in Module 6 activity 2.

9. **Analysis and summary:** Researchers review their notes and identify:
   - Key themes that emerged from the discussion
   - Surprising or unexpected responses
   - Areas where more information is needed
   - Points of agreement and disagreement

10. **Documentation:** Ensure that the key insights from the focus group discussion are appropriately stored.

TOOL 5: SURVEY DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The objective of this activity is to introduce researchers to designing and conducting simple surveys, developing quantitative research skills while gathering measurable data from community members. It is particularly useful for understanding how widespread certain experiences or opinions are.

Note:
- The usefulness of a survey will depend on the theme and the context where it will be applied.
- This tool can be adapted for contexts in which literacy levels are low, or excluded if not appropriate.

Suggested materials:
- Paper and pens for survey creation
- Clipboards for survey administration
- Calculators for basic data analysis
- Flip chart paper for displaying results
- Sample surveys for reference

Activity sequencing:
1. **Survey methodology introduction:** Explain how surveys work:
   - Surveys ask the same questions to many people
   - They help us understand how common certain experiences/opinions are
   - Questions should be clear and easy to understand
   - Responses can be counted and compared
   - Surveys work best for specific, factual questions

2. **Question type exploration:** Explain different question types:
   - **Yes/no questions:** Have you experienced [priority theme]?

- **Multiple choice:** How often do you experience [priority theme]? Daily/Weekly/Monthly/Never

- **Rating scales:** How safe do you feel in [location]? Very safe/Safe/Unsafe/Very unsafe

- **Open-ended:** What would help improve [priority theme]?

3. **Survey topic selection:** Researchers choose one priority theme to focus on for their practice survey.

4. **Question development:** Researchers work together to create 8-10 survey questions on their chosen theme:

   - Start with basic demographic questions (age, role in community)

   - Include questions about experiences with the priority theme

   - Add questions about opinions or suggestions

   - Ensure questions are clear and not leading

   - Consider safeguarding issues related to the questions you want to ask

5. **Survey testing:** Researchers test their survey questions with each other:

   - Take turns being surveyor and respondent

   - Identify confusing or unclear questions

   - Refine wording based on feedback

   - Practice administering the survey

6. **Data collection planning:** Researchers discuss:

   - Who should they survey (target population)?

   - How many people should they survey?

   - Where and when should they conduct surveys?

   - How will they approach people respectfully?

   - What will they do if people do not want to participate?

7. **Data collection:** Researchers conduct their survey with chosen stakeholders. Ensure stakeholders are notified on how the researchers plan to use the information.

8. **Data analysis:** Researchers analyse their survey results:

   - Count responses for each question

   - Calculate percentages for different response options

   - Identify the most common responses

   - Note any surprising findings

9. **Results presentation:** Researchers create a simple presentation of their survey findings.

10. **Documentation:** Save the survey questions and results.

TOOL 6: COMPARING DAILY ACTIVITY CHART[71]

The objective of this activity is to enable researchers to compare their daily activity patterns with those of different community members (e.g. boys, men, women, elderly…). The aim is to identify patterns of inequality and explore how gender, age, and other factors influence time allocation and responsibilities in their community.

Note: This activity builds directly on Module 3 activity 3 Daily activity chart or clock. Using the same format that the researchers chose in Activity 3 (seasonal grid, wheel, table, or time diary), the researchers will now gather information from other community members to analyse and compare.

Suggested materials:
- Paper
- Pens/markers/pencils
- Copies of the daily activity chart format used in Activity 3
- Interview guidelines

Activity sequencing:

1. **Preparation:** Review the researchers' own daily activity charts from Activity 3. Ask the researchers to identify 3-4 different types of community members they would like to compare their schedules with (for example: boys their age, adult women, adult men, elderly community members, or people from different socio-economic backgrounds).

2. **Interview planning:** Work with the researchers to develop simple, respectful interview questions they can use to gather information about daily routines from other community members. Ensure they understand how to approach people respectfully and explain the purpose of their research.

3. **Data collection:** The researchers conduct brief interviews with the identified community co-researchers. The researchers fill out daily activity charts for each co-researcher, using the same format they used for themselves.

4. **Chart creation:** Using the information gathered, the researchers create daily activity charts for each type of community member interviewed, following the same format as their own charts from Activity 3.

5. **Comparison analysis:** Display the researcher and co-researcher charts together and facilitate a group discussion using these guiding questions:

   - What similarities do you notice between your daily schedule and those of others?
   - What are the biggest differences you observe?
   - How do the schedules differ between women and men of different ages?

   - Which community members seem to have the most/least leisure time?
   - Which groups spend the most time on household tasks? On income-generating activities? On education?
   - Are there activities that only certain groups do? Why might this be?

6. **Analysis questions:**

   - What does this comparison tell us about how responsibilities are distributed in our community?
   - How do age, gender, and economic status affect daily routines?
   - Which groups seem to have more choices about how they spend their time?
   - What patterns of inequality do these charts reveal?
   - Are there any surprising findings from this comparison?

7. **Action-oriented questions:**

   - Based on these comparisons, what changes would make daily life fairer for everyone?
   - What would an ideal distribution of responsibilities look like in our community?
     - Which community members might be allies in working toward more equitable time distribution?
     - How can we use this information to advocate for positive changes?

8. **Documentation and validation:** Document the key themes and patterns identified through the comparison, linking the findings to the priority themes.

TOOL 7: CREATIVE EXPRESSION AND VISUAL STORYTELLING[72]

The objective of this tool is to utilise the power of visual storytelling to document and share experiences with priority themes, as well as creating powerful advocacy materials while developing creative and media skills.

Notes:

- This activity is particularly effective for researchers with less literacy, and for those who prefer visual or creative communication over verbal expression.
- Creative expression can help process difficult experiences while communicating powerfully with different audiences.

Suggested materials:

- Art supplies for creating visual stories and artwork (paper, markers, paint, coloured pencils)
- Cameras/phones for taking photos, if appropriate
- Large paper for mounting photos/creating storyboards and displaying creations
- Materials for drama (scarves, simple props)
- Musical instruments or voice recording capability
- Writing materials
- Markers, glue, scissors

Activity sequencing:

1. **Creative expression introduction:** Explain how creativity can be used for research and storytelling:

   - Creative expression (art, drama, music, writing, photography) can capture feelings and experiences that words alone cannot
   - Images and creative works can show problems, solutions, dreams, or daily realities

   Each creation tells part of a story about your life and experiences. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' ways to express experiences creatively.

2. **Ethics and safety discussion:** Discuss important ethical and safety considerations:

   - Always ask permission before photographing or drawing people or private spaces
   - Consider safety when taking photos or creating in different locations
   - Decide together what images and creative works are appropriate to share publicly
   - Avoid images that can stereotype, or put any participant or community into a position of increased vulnerability
   - Images and creative works need to be validated by co-researchers

3. **Creative method options:** Present different creative approaches:

   - **Visual art:** Drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, textiles (quilting, embroidery, looms)
   - **Photography/image voice:** Taking photos or creating illustrations that represent experiences
   - **Drama:** Role-play, skits, movement, tableau
   - **Music:** Songs, rhythm, chanting, instrumental
   - **Writing:** Poetry, stories, letters, dialogues
   - **Other methods:** Dance, storytelling, or other culturally appropriate creative forms

4. **Theme selection:** To move forward with this tool, suggest that researchers choose 1-2 priority themes to explore through creative expression.

5. **Method selection:** Researchers choose which creative method appeals to them most or form small groups around different methods.

6. **Planning and brainstorming:** Researchers brainstorm what their creative expressions might include:

   - Places that relate to this theme
   - Objects that symbolise this theme
   - Activities connected to this theme
   - People who influence this theme (with permission)
   - Feelings and experiences they want to express

- Messages they want to communicate

7. **Creative exploration:** Researchers spend time creating their artistic expressions in their chosen creative method:

    - **Visual art group:** Create artwork representing their experiences with the priority theme

    - **Photography/image group:** Take photos or create illustrations around the venue or immediate area that relate to their chosen themes

    - **Drama group:** Develop a short skit or role-play about the priority theme

    - **Music group:** Create a song or rhythmic piece about the priority theme

    - **Writing group:** Write poems, stories, or letters about the priority theme

8. **Story creation and arrangement:** Researchers organise their creative works, for example:

    - Arrange photos or artwork in a chosen order

    - Write captions or explanations for visual works

    - Prepare performances or readings

    - Add titles and brief stories connecting all elements

9. **Sharing circle and performance:** Researchers share their creative works with the group:

    - **For visual/photo stories:** Explain what each image represents, why they chose these images, what story the images tell together

    - **For performances:** Present drama, music, or readings

    - **For written works:** Read or share their creations. Share what they learned from creating this work

10. **Audience feedback:** After each presentation, others share:

    - What they understood from the creative work

    - What emotions or thoughts it evoked

    - What new perspectives it offered on the priority theme

11. **Creative analysis:** Researchers discuss what their creative works reveal about their priority themes:

    - What common themes emerged across different creative expressions?

    - What aspects of the priority theme were easier to express creatively than through words?

    - How did the creative process help you understand your experiences differently?

12. **Documentation:** Store the completed creative works, including visual art, and record/document performances and conversations. Consider how these materials might be used for advocacy and dissemination processes, and if the artist agrees, how the artist could work with researchers to ensure they have a say in how their work is used.

TOOL 8: COMMUNITY WALKS AND OBSERVATION[73]

The objective of this activity is to introduce researchers to observation walks through their community to document how priority themes manifest in physical and social spaces. This tool allows researchers to lead data collection in their own environment while developing observation and documentation skills.

Note:

- A variation of this, for example for urban contexts, could be to suggest that the researchers take different types of public transport and document how conditions change between neighbourhoods.

Suggested materials:

- Clipboards and paper for taking notes

- Cameras or phones for documentation (if available)
- Observation guide sheets (example observation guide sheet is in ANNEX F)

Activity sequencing:

1. **Observation skills introduction:** Explain systematic observation:
   - Look for both obvious and subtle signs of priority themes
   - Notice who is present/absent in different spaces
   - Observe how people interact with environments
   - Document what you see, hear, and feel
   - Ask "why might this be happening?"

2. **Safety and ethics planning:** Discuss important considerations:
   - Stay together in groups for safety
   - Respect private property and personal space
   - Ask permission before photographing people
   - Be respectful and non-intrusive in observations

Plan safe routes and meeting points – ensure this considers which spaces are safe and accessible at different times

3. **Observation guide creation:** Researchers develop observation prompts based on their priority themes, such as:
   - Where do you see signs of [priority theme]?
   - Who is using these spaces? Who is not?
   - What makes spaces feel safe/unsafe?
   - What resources are available/missing?

4. **Route planning:** Researchers identify 2-3 locations to visit that relate to their priority themes (e.g., school area, market, community centre, health facility).

5. **Observation walk:** In small groups, researchers conduct 15-20-minute observations at each location:
   - Use observation guides to focus attention
   - Take detailed notes about what they observe
   - Photograph relevant spaces/objects (not people without permission)
   - Discuss observations quietly within groups

6. **Documentation and mapping:** Back at the starting point, researchers:
   - Map their observations on a simple community map
   - Identify patterns across different locations
   - Note unexpected findings or surprises

7. **Sharing and analysis:** Groups share key observations:
   - What did you notice about [priority theme] in different spaces?
   - What patterns emerged across locations?
   - What questions arose from your observations?
   - What would you want to investigate further?

8. **Tool evaluation:** Researchers discuss:
   - Did you notice something about your community that you hadn't noticed before?
   - What was easy/challenging about systematic observation?
   - How could community walks help us learn more about our priority themes?
   - Would you feel comfortable leading community walks with other people?
   - Could this tool help document girls' experiences in community spaces?

Annex E: Research action plan template

Feminist participatory action research planning tool

Research team information

- **Research group name:** _____
- **Planning date:** _____
- **Team members:** _____
- **Project duration:** _____

Priority research questions
(List your finalised research questions from the previous activity)

1.
2.
3.
4.

Research Planning Matrix

Research question	Research method(s)	Researchers	Evidence created	Timeline	Resources needed	Advocacy connection	Responsible girls
What do we want to find out?	How will we find out?	Who will we work with?	What kind of information/ data will this give us?	When will we do this?	What do we need to make this happen?	How will we use this evidence for change?	Who will lead this part?

Research timeline

Month 1: _____

Week 1:

- [ ] Activity: _____
- [ ] Responsible: _____
- [ ] Resources needed: _____

Week 2:

- [ ] Activity: _____
- [ ] Responsible: _____
- [ ] Resources needed: _____

Week 3:

- [ ] Activity: _____
- [ ] Responsible: _____
- [ ] Resources needed: _____

Week 4:

- [ ] Activity: _____
- [ ] Responsible: _____
- [ ] Resources needed: _____
- Month 2: _____

(Repeat structure for additional months)

Method and participant matching

- Research question 1: _____

Best research methods:

- Primary method: _____
- Secondary methods: _____
- Rationale: _____

Target researchers:

- Primary stakeholders: _____
- Secondary stakeholders: _____
- Recruitment strategy: _____

Practical considerations:

- Are researchers reachable and willing? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
- Do we have skills for this method? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Need training
- Will this create needed evidence? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially
- Can we do this safely and ethically? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Need guidance

SKILLS AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Traffic light system

Green (we can do this easily):

-
-
-

Yellow (we need some support or preparation):

-

-

-

Red (this needs significant help or resources):

-

-

-

Support needed

- Skills to develop: _____
- Materials required: _____
- Adult supporters: _____
- Potential challenges: _____
- Solutions identified: _____

EVIDENCE TO ACTION MAP

Research activity 1: _____

- Target audience: _____
- Evidence format: _____
- Advocacy timing: _____
- Advocacy method: _____
- Expected outcome: _____

Research activity 2: _____

- Target audience: _____
- Evidence format: _____
- Advocacy timing: _____
- Advocacy method: _____
- Expected outcome: _____

(Continue for additional activities)

TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Research teams

Team 1: _____

- Members: _____

- Research activities: _____

- Skills/interests: _____

Team 2: _____

- Members: _____

- Research activities: _____

- Skills/interests: _____

Coordination roles

- Overall coordinator: _____

- Communication coordinator: _____

- Resource coordinator: _____

- Advocacy coordinator: _____

FLEXIBILITY AND REFLECTION PLANNING
Check-in points

- Week 2 check-in: _____

- Month 1 review: _____

- Mid-project assessment: _____

- Final reflection: _____

Adjustment opportunities

- When can we change our plan? _____

- Who decides on changes? _____

- How will we document changes? _____

Learning reflection

- How will we capture learning? _____

- How will we support each other? _____

- How will we celebrate progress? _____

COMMUNICATION PLAN
Internal communication

- Team meeting schedule: _____

- Communication methods: _____

- Progress sharing: _____

External communication

- Stakeholder updates: _____

- Community sharing: _____

- Documentation methods: _____

COLLECTIVE COMMITMENTS
Shared activities

-
-
-

Coordination agreements

-
-
-

Support commitments

-
-
-

FINAL REFLECTION
I'm committed to leading: _____

I'm excited about our research plan because: _____

One thing I want to remember as we start our research is: _____

_____

APPROVAL AND SIGN-OFF
Team members:

- _____ Date: _____
- _____ Date: _____
- _____ Date: _____
- _____ Date: _____

Facilitator: _____ Date: _____

This template supports feminist participatory action research by centring girls' voices, connecting research to advocacy, and building leadership skills. Remember: this is your research plan – adapt it to serve your goals and community needs.

Annex F: Example observation guide for community walks

Community walk observation guide

This has been adapted from the Safety with Dignity Toolkit community walk observation guide
Safety With Dignity Toolkit (English)-compressed.pdf

Researcher names: _____

Community / Area observed: _____

Date and timew: _____

Section	Priority theme link	Observation questions	Problem? (Yes/No)	Comments
1. Lighting	Violence in the community	Is there lighting in public areas (streets, markets, paths)?	☐ YES ☐ NO	
		Are there dark areas or places without light?	☐ YES ☐ NO	
		Does lighting turn off at a certain time?	☐ YES ☐ NO	
		How do girls feel in these spaces at night?	☐ YES ☐ NO	
2. Bus route	Accessing education	Are there safe spaces for girls to sit?	☐ YES ☐ NO	
		Are there girls on the bus?	☐ YES ☐ NO	
		Is it overcrowded?	☐ YES ☐ NO	
		Does it feel safe?	☐ YES ☐ NO	

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