

**MONITORING and EVALUATING COMMUNITY IMPACT of the  
*BUILDING YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP THROUGH SPORTS*  
(BYLTS) PROGRAMME**

**BRAC  
Adolescent Development Programme  
January 2016**

## ACRONYMS

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<b>ADP</b>	Adolescent Development Programme
<b>AGYW</b>	Adolescent Girls and Young Women
<b>BYWLTS</b>	Building Young Women Leadership through Sports
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interview
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>GBV</b>	Gender based violence

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The BRAC Adolescent Development Programme (ADP) is a development programme aimed at adolescent girls. The ADP works for the empowerment of girls, through a wide range of outreach programmes aimed at helping young women break down social barriers and empowering them for a better future. Building Young Women Leadership through Sport (BYWLTS) is one such programme that aims to instil confidence and independence in young girls. This is done through skill sessions for girls and through sports like football, cricket, netball and karate. The program provides the life skills course and sports activities at the secondary school and community level to reach all types of adolescent girls. The BYWLTS programme that focuses on engaging girls in football, and also teaching them about key issues in their lives including health, women's rights and financial management.

The programme also engages with the community through different forums like mothers meeting, parents meeting, community meeting/workshop and events like sports competition, adolescent fair organized with parents, and other community members. The aim is to challenge traditional stereotypes about girls' outdoor games and to create a supportive environment for the girls to play sport. Ultimately, the programme seeks to help young women develop as leaders and the future change maker of society.

This evaluation used a combined method of both quantitative and qualitative data collection. The two types of data were used to validate each other. Informed consent was taken from the respondents (parents or guardians of programme participants) after explanation of the various aspects covered in the consent form, before the commencement of the interviews. The names of girls participating in the programme have been changed, but parents' guardians' real names have been used, with their informed consent.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through a questionnaire administered to a random sample of 46 respondents. Qualitative data was gathered through key informant interviews (KII). A total of 46 Key informant interviews were conducted and data synthesized appropriately to help better validate the quantitative data.

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# CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

## 1.1 Background Information

In 2001, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), adolescents (aged 10-19 years) accounted for around one-third of the total population of Bangladesh. Sood (2011) mentions that 22% of Bangladesh's population is made up of 28 million adolescents of whom 13.8 million are female. They have the potential to become 'human capital' and contribute positively towards development. However, in developing countries like Bangladesh, they are also one of the most vulnerable groups. In these countries, for only a privileged group, the period of adolescence is marked by sound health and stable family conditions. Nevertheless, it can also be a period of vulnerabilities because of intense and rapid transitions to new roles and responsibilities as caretakers, workers, spouses, or even parents (Chong et al. 2006).

Gender discrimination against girls and women is an unpleasant reality of Bangladesh's socio-cultural landscape. Girls and women are placed at a disadvantage when it comes to opportunities of any kind. For many families, girls are seen as a financial burden. They are often married off at a young age to ease this burden, especially in the case of poor families. The conservative culture of Bangladesh puts emphasis on the strict chastity of women which is perhaps a potential threat to adolescents in terms of their complete social and psychological development. With the advent of puberty, differences in the ways that adolescent girls are treated become much more restrictive, specifically with regard to restriction of mobility of adolescent girls, which in turn limits their access to livelihood and experiential learning (Amin et al. 2002).

Another persistent problem in rural areas in Bangladesh is the lack of sufficient and/or well-paying employment opportunities for girls (Amin et al. 2002). This lack of opportunity coincides with the cultural tradition of confining young girls/women within the home and teaching them to play passive roles in decision-making, both inside and outside the family context. This also marks the end of many girls' formal education, as they are expected to devote their full time to domestic chores in their husband's household (Ambrus and Field 2008). Besides, girls' families are under social pressure for daughters to marry early, before the adolescent's sexual maturity may be seen to invite assault, harassment or abuse, which would tarnish the family honour (Sood 2011).

The BYWLTS programme being undertaken by BRAC's Adolescent Development Programme aims to empower young women through the sport of football, cricket and other sports activities. This is particularly important in the context of countries like Bangladesh, where women face gross marginalisation. Given the significance of this project therefore, it became important to measure its impact through a proper evaluation. In this case this involved an evaluation of the programme's community impact. Involving the community in the empowerment of adolescent girls and young women was crucial to ensure that the objectives of the sports and life skills programmes were relevant and successful. That was why Women Win (the programme sponsors) had designed tools that effectively engaged community members, including an interview guide for parents and caregivers.

In order to measure community impact, parents of the girls who had completed the programme were identified as key informants that would provide comprehensive insights into the impact of sports and life skills programmes on their daughters. Parents were ideally positioned since they often spent substantial time with their daughters, they could observe them in a range of different community

settings and they knew first-hand about their daughter's role in the family. Furthermore, ADP and Women Win believed that there was a link between how a girl was viewed within her own family and throughout the broader community.

The interviews with parents and caregivers provided evidence on about why this project is important, and how it was positively impacting the communities it operates in. This will be useful in future decisions on supporting the programme.

## 1.2 Nature of the programme and its objectives

The BLYWTS programme promotes changes at three levels: the individual, the community, and the organisation.

- (i) Individual level Outcome: Increased life skills and leadership among Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW)

Each project partner organisation implements sports activities for adolescent girls (the actual sport varies by site based on regional preferences) and simultaneously leads girls in group education sessions based on WW's Goal Curriculum or the project partner's own, "Goal or better" curriculum. Participation in this two-pronged intervention, based on programme theory expressed in detail in the above sections, produces the output of girls provided with the means to develop life skills and leadership. Continued participation in this two-pronged project, combined with additional opportunities for certain girls to take on new leadership positions within the sports team, over time, produces the outcome of increased life skills and leadership among adolescent girls.

- (ii) Community level outcome: Improved community perceptions about girls as athletes and leaders

In addition to the ongoing sports and education activities, project partners organise (with significant involvement by participating girls) community events. These events take many forms and vary by location, but may include at least: public sports tournaments, radio or media campaigns, community dialogues, poster campaigns, and many more community mobilization strategies. These strategies, relying heavily on girl participants' leadership, produce the immediate outcome of adolescent girls who organise and lead community outreach events. The cumulative effect of ongoing community outreach events, then, is the outcome of improved community perceptions about girls as athletes and leaders.

- (iii) Organizational level outcome: Increased capacity among WW partner organisations

Simultaneous to the sports activities, education sessions, and community outreach events described above, WW staff lead partner organisations themselves in capacity building workshops and training sessions. These sessions seek to promote improvement among partner organisations in seven capabilities, collectively referred to as "the 7 C's". The 7 C's are:

- The capability to adapt and self-renew;
- The capability to act and commit;
- The capability to deliver on development objectives;
- The capability to relate to external stakeholders;
- The capability to achieve coherence.
- The capability to effective M&E and Impact Assessment
- The capability to deliver high quality and safe sports programmes (agree and act upon policies, standards, codes of conducts etc.)

Having participated in these sessions, partner organisations will themselves represent the output of “WW partner organisations provided with the means to develop organisational capacity.” Having been given these means, as well as ongoing support from WW, and the opportunity to practice new organisational capabilities throughout the BLYWTS project, partner organisations will ultimately realise the outcome of increased capacity.

## **1.2 Purpose of the evaluation**

The purpose of conducting these interviews is to capture whether parents perceive any changes in their daughter’s knowledge, attitude and behaviour following her involvement in sports and life skills programmes. It also aims to identify if there have been any changes to the girl’s condition or status, both within the family and the broader community.

## **CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Methodology**

The evaluation utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through a questionnaire administered to a random sample of 46 caregivers. Qualitative data was gathered through key informant interviews (KII). A total of 46 Key informant interviews were conducted and the information was synthesized appropriately to help validate the quantitative data.

### **2.2 Sampling**

The evaluation employed mainly a random method of sampling of parents whose girls had been involved in the program for the last one year.

The ADP staff mobilized the respondents and informed them about the evaluation through letters one week earlier before the evaluation was conducted.

### **2.3 Data collection, Tabulation and Analysis**

Data collection was done with assistance from the BRAC Research and Evaluation Division (RED) by the ADP staff in handling the logistics of getting the respondents to the interview venue. The various elements in the consent form were explained to the parent in Bengali, and interviews were only started after the respondent gave consent. Consent was also sought from the parent on the use of the voice recorder (Dictaphone) during the interview.

Quantitative data was later entered and analyzed by ADP staff using Sales Force software while analysis of qualitative data was done by RED. The analyzed quantitative data and the analyzed qualitative data was used in preparing this report.

### **2.4 Sources of Information**

The findings discussed in this report were derived from the following sources:

Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data derived from caregivers from Bogra, Khulna and Sylhet

A total of 46 Key informant interviews with parents were held. The KIIs were almost done with 46 parents each in Bogra, Khulna and Sylhet. The data from the aforementioned source was analyzed and forms part of the discussions in this report.

### **2.5 Ethical Issues**

Informed consent was taken from the respondents (parents or guardians of programme participants) after explanation of the various aspects covered in the consent form, before the commencement of the interviews. The names of girls participating in the programme have been changed, but parents' guardians' real names have been used in this report, with their verbal informed consent.

# CHAPTER THREE: EVALUATION FINDINGS

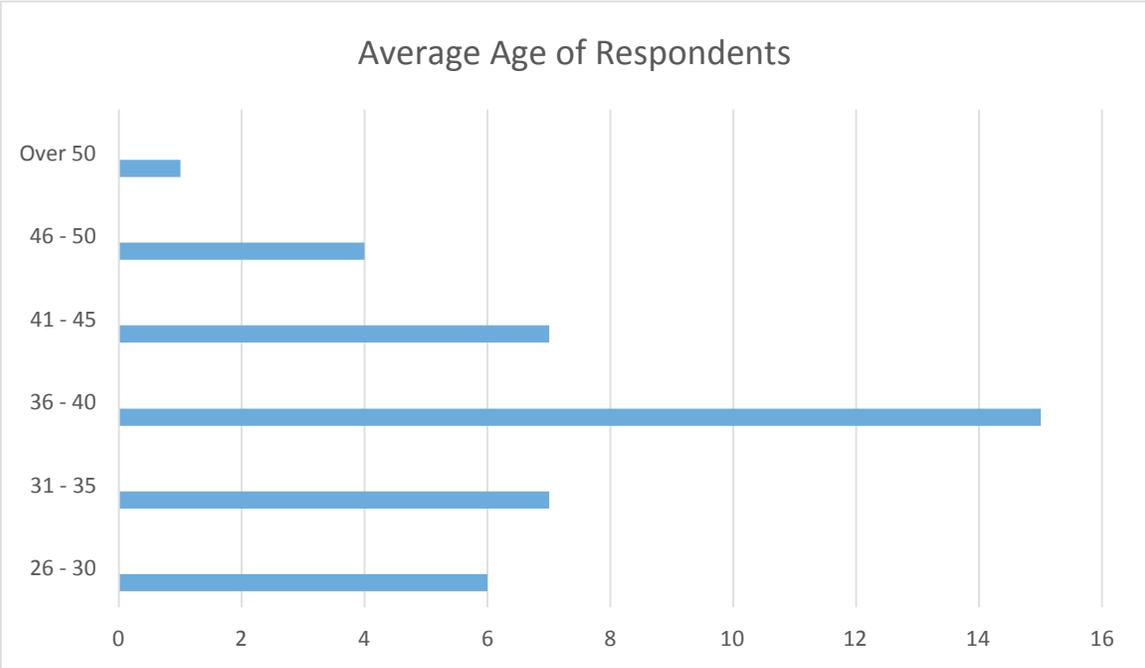
## 3.1 Background Information

The survey began by trying to establish the background information of caregivers (relationship and family size) and the findings were as shown in table 1 below;

*Table 1: Relationship with programme participant*

Relationship	Overall
Father	11%
Mother	85%
Other male guardian	4%

As shown in Table 1, 85% of the respondents were mothers of the girls participating in the GOAL programme. This was followed by fathers at 11% and other male guardian reported at 4%. The average age range of the respondents was found to be in the 36-40 range.

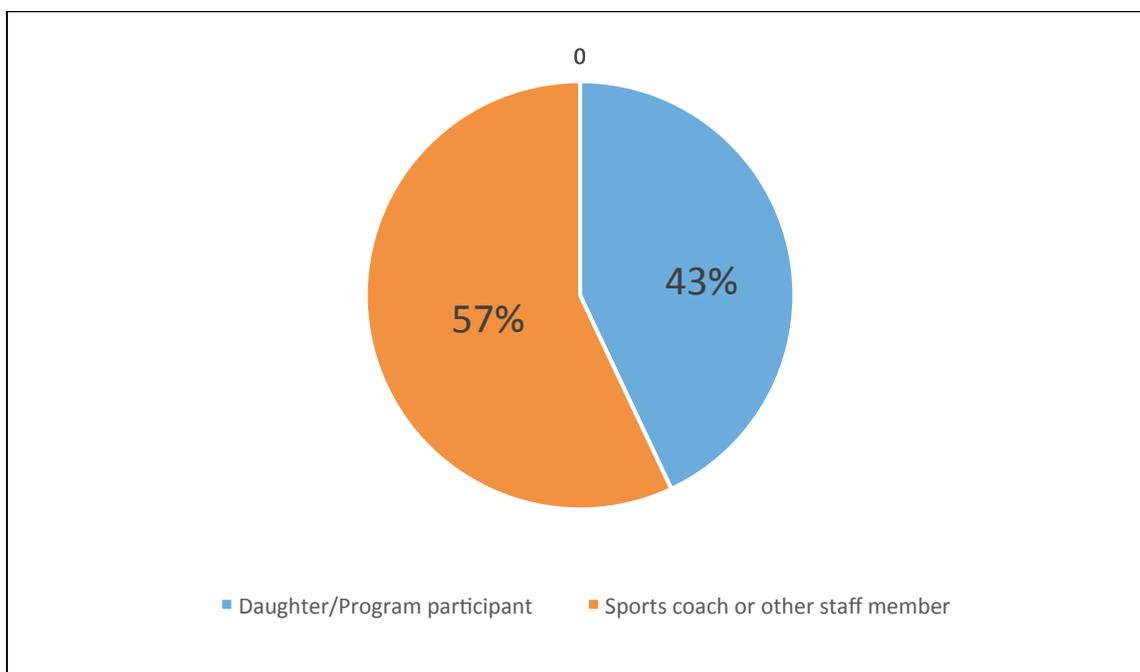


**Figure 1: Average Age Range of Respondents**

The ADP staff invited both fathers and mothers to participate in the survey. However, the highest number of respondents was reported to be mothers.

### 3.2 Girls and sport

The evaluation sought to establish from whom the caregivers first heard about the programme. It found that 43% of the caregivers had heard about the programme from their daughter/programme participant. 57% of respondents reported to having heard of the programme from the sports coach or other staff members of the school being attended by the daughter/programme participant. This is illustrated in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2: Where did you first hear about the Programme?**

The survey sought to establish the feeling of caregivers concerning the idea of their daughters being involved in the programme. It was found that parents and caregivers perceived the programme very positively. However, many admitted that they initially had reservations about letting their daughter join.

*“When my daughter, Akhi told me about this programme where she will play sports, I didn’t take it positively. I rebuked her. I told her she could not play; women will stay at home, like me, and my mother. Moreover our society will not take it positively” - KII with Anowara Begum, Sylhet*

Even parents who allowed their daughters to join the programme, faced doubts, after hearing criticism in the local community.

*“After letting my daughter Munnii join the programme, I faced a lot of harsh criticism from our community. When, Munnii was regularly playing in the club one day I prohibited her to go to the club because the people of our community don’t take it positively, they commented roughly about my daughter.” - KII with Najma Khatun, Bogura*

Despite this type of setback, parents did keep their daughters in the programme. This was mostly due to the positive messages and encouragement given by the BRAC ADP staff.

*“I had doubts about keeping my daughter in the programme after hearing a lot of negative comments from people. Later on BRAC’s apa and bhai were able to make me understand that playing sports is good for both health and mind, it is not something to be ashamed of. After this, I decided to keep my daughter in the club. If people in society say something now I try to motivate them positively. The truth is that previously I didn’t support it but now I know how helpful sports are.”* KII with Amena Khatun, Sylhet

The negative perceptions surrounding girls and sports might be a characteristic of the patriarchal mindset that persists in Bangladeshi society. Changing this negative attitude has been a key challenge for the programme and its participants. However, positive responses, like the one highlighted above, show that there is potential for change.

Despite the negative perceptions from society, many parents and guardians were glad to have their daughter enrolled in the programme. They viewed sports as a good discipline that can have long term effect on the development of their daughters.

*“If my daughter engages with sports, she can develop both her body and mind. It will make her a better student. Initially, my daughter wanted to leave the program because a lot of people in our locality were not happy with the idea of girls playing sports. In that time BRAC’s apa, bhai and I explained the situation to her positively, and she agreed not to quit.”* KII with Tulsi Boury, Khulna

It is important to note that parents and guardians are recognizing the positive effects of sports in the lives of girls. This is why despite the challenges and criticisms faced, they are keeping their daughters in the programme. This is very encouraging, and might be an indication of changing attitudes regarding gender roles.

Decision making is an important factor in this programme. The survey therefore sought to establish the person who was responsible in the decision making of the girls who were in the BYWLTS program. The findings are shown below.

**Table 2: Decision making**

<b>Who decided to allow girl to join the GOAL programme?</b>			
<b>Decision Makers</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>Decision Makers</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Me, individually	26%	The family decided together	41%
My spouse individually	26%	Other	5%
Another member of the family, individually	2%		

As indicated in the table above, 26% of the respondents claimed to have taken the decision on their own. Similarly 26% said the decision had been taken by their spouse. A majority of the respondents; 41% to be exact, said that the decision was taken as a family. This large proportion might be an indicator of a supportive home and family environment. This type of setting is can be crucial for encouraging the young programme participants in building their confidence and creating an environment where they feel they can succeed.

### 3.3 Girls and leadership

The parents/caregivers interviewed all reflected on the positive changes they noticed in the girls after taking part in the programme. Respondents noted how the girls have started displaying increased confidence and leadership skills in their everyday lives. They are also better informed on issues pertaining to health, violence and rights and financial management. This is reflected in their changed attitudes and practices. For the programme participants, this has been a positive process of transforming knowledge into meaningful action.

*“My daughter has become more confident after joining the program. She is no longer shy about talking to people and mixing with others. She has even started helping me with household work, and helps take care of her younger siblings instead of always quarrelling with them. It makes me proud to see her so mature and responsible” – KII with Ananna Das, Khulna*

In all the interviews, the one common observation from the respondents was the substantial change in confidence they had observed in the girls. Of the 47 parents/caregivers surveyed, all responded with a ‘yes’ when asked if participating in the programme had had a positive effect in the confidence exhibited by the girls in their everyday life.

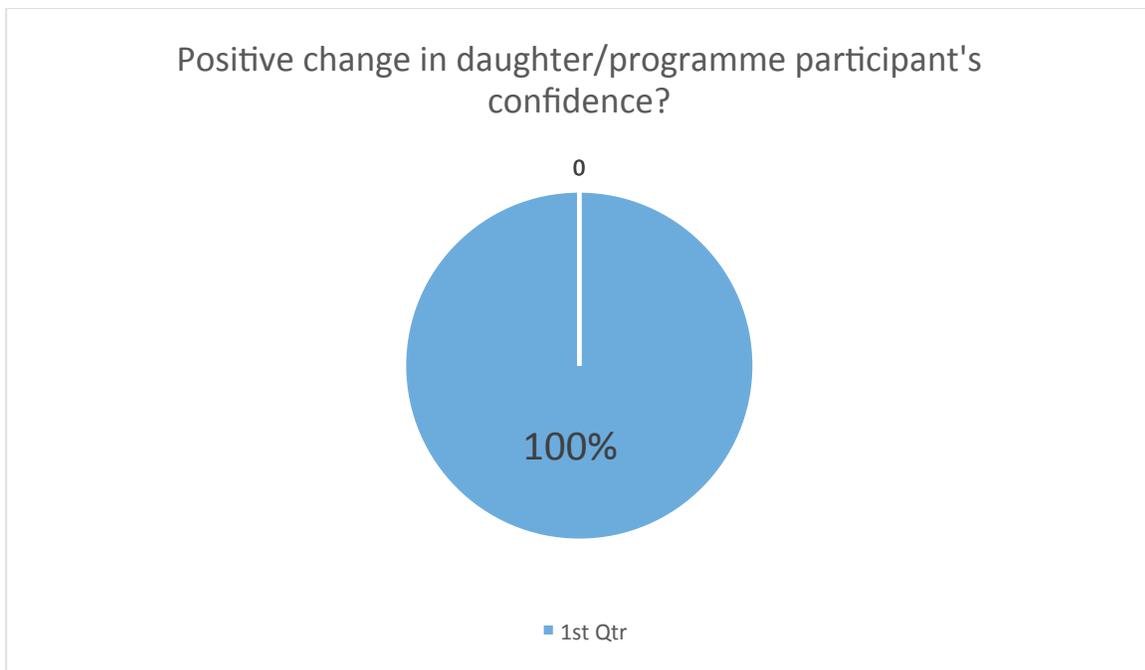


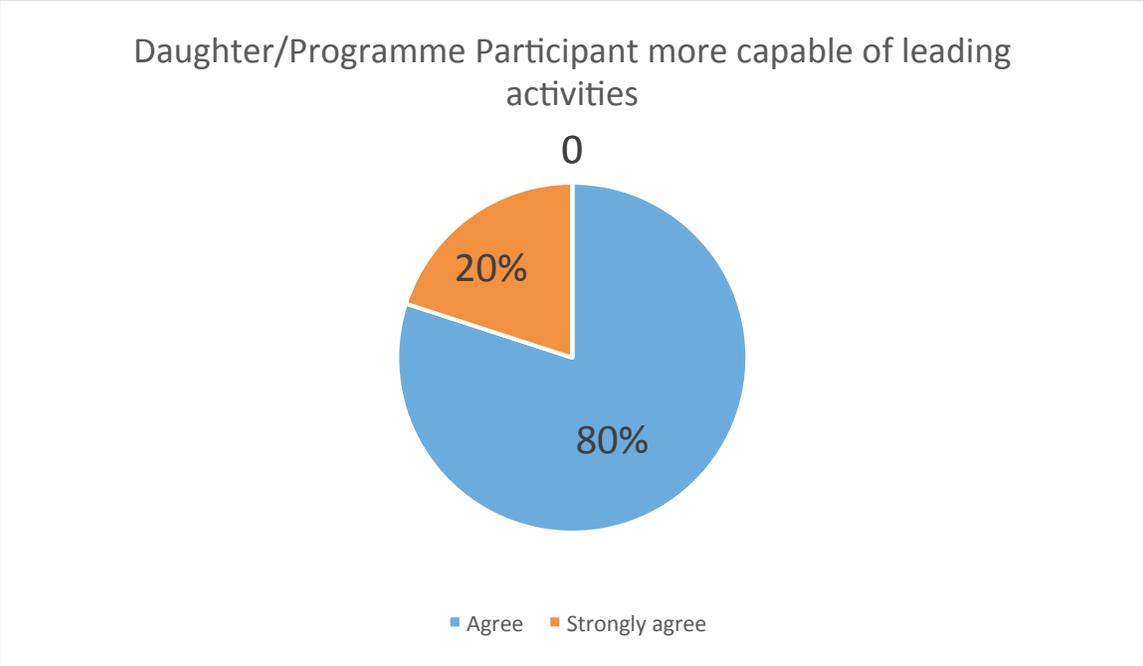
Figure 3: Change in confidence

During the interviews, a common view from the respondents that participating in the programme has instilled a sense of discipline and purpose in the girls. They focus more on their studies, play a larger role in the family and have started thinking about their future careers

*“Nowadays whenever we have to make an important decision as a family, my daughter expresses her opinion, and we listen. She has really changed and grown over the past year. There have been many early marriages in our family, but my daughter has said no to this. She knows better now. She is determined to finish her studies and have a career for herself.” – KII with Ronjit Munda, Khulna*

*“My eldest daughter Alima participated in the programme. I have two more daughters, and they studied in a school that was far distant from home, even though more money is needed. Alima informed us that there is a school in our area that is better for them, and asked, why we don’t just send her siblings there? We listened to her and found out the school in our area is much better. We admitted our two daughters there, and they are doing very well. Alima is now helping make the important decisions that affect us as a family.” – KII with Lippy Begum, Bogra*

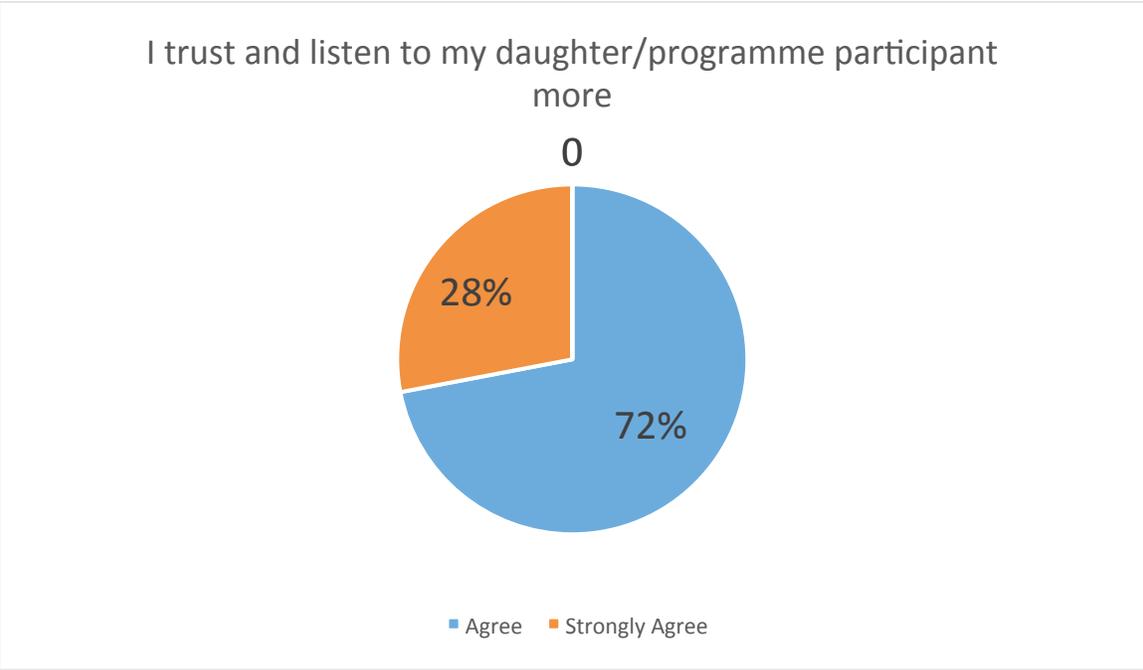
Leadership creation is a major objective of the BYWLTS programme, and as indicated by the responses above, this is something with which the initiative has experienced success. We explored this issue by asking respondents if they felt their daughters/the programme participants were now more capable of leading activities. The results are indicated below.



**Figure 4: Leadership Capabilities**

As indicated in Figure 3, all respondents gave a positive answer to this question, with 80% agreeing and 20% agreeing strongly. The positive perceptions from the parents/caregivers is a common theme observed in all the evaluation areas. The respondents really believe that participating in the programme has helped the young girls develop themselves as leaders.

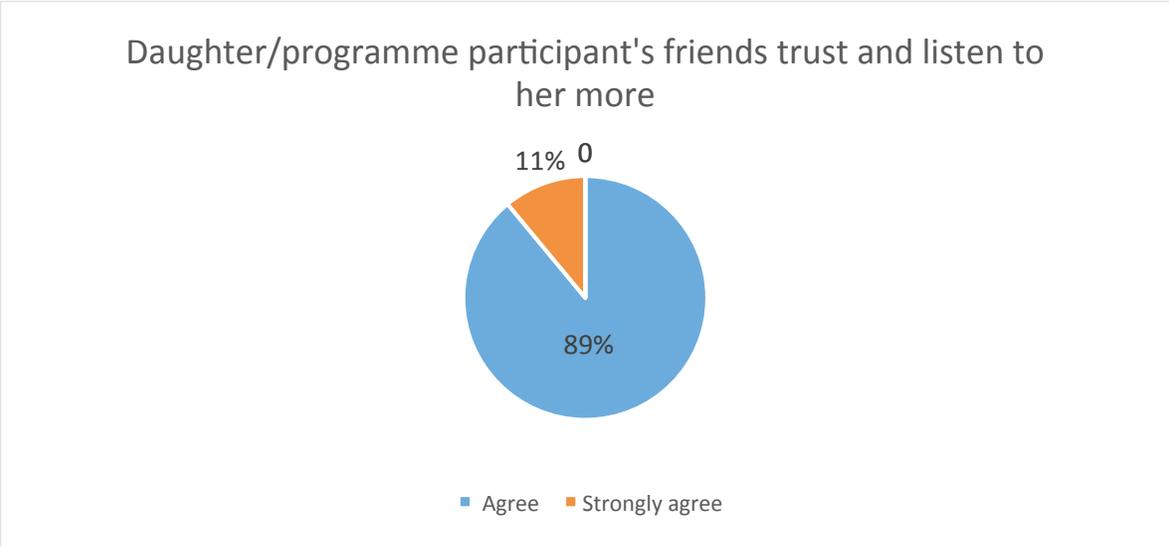
Trust is another theme that was evaluated in the study. It has been observed that the programme had a substantial effect in leadership creation. However, this leadership is not meaningful with trust from family, peers and the community. Respondents were asked questions on these and the results are outlined below



**Figure 5: Trust from the family**

When asked if they themselves trusted their daughter/the programme participant more, all respondents gave positive answers, with 72% agreeing and 28% expressing strong agreement. This is consistent with the accounts received during the KIIs with parents and caregivers noted before. A respondent also shared an example of how the actions of her daughter increased her trust and confidence in her.

*“A few months ago I was suddenly taken ill, and had to get some medicine. My husband was away, and I did not have any money with me. My daughter saw this and got the medicine for me. She used her own money that she had been saving up, after attending the programme. This incident has shown me my daughter has really grown, and is someone I can trust with important decisions” – KII with K. Fathema, Khulna*



**Figure 6: Trust among peers**

The respondents also noted that after taking part in the programme, the girls had also begun to be trusted more by their peers. 89% agreed to this, and the remaining 11% strongly agreed. Respect from peers is important in building self confidence in young girls, and therefore this is a very encouraging result for the programme.

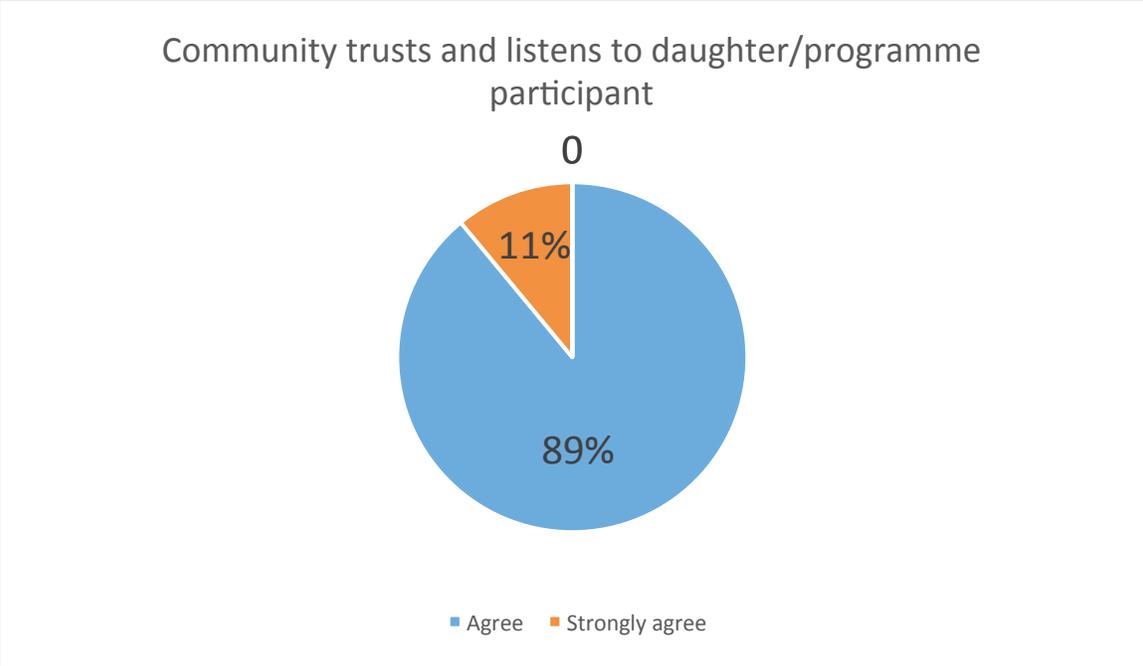


Figure 7: Trust from the community

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the evaluation sought to explore how the girls were perceived by the community, after participating in the programme. Here also, the responses were all positive, with 89% of the respondents agreeing and 11% strongly agreeing, that the community’s trust and confidence in the girls had increased after the programme. This is particularly important to note, since negative community perceptions surrounding girls and sports, was one of the biggest challenges facing the BYWLTS programme. However, one year on, it appears this perception has changed. This was also confirmed by some of the accounts received from our respondents:

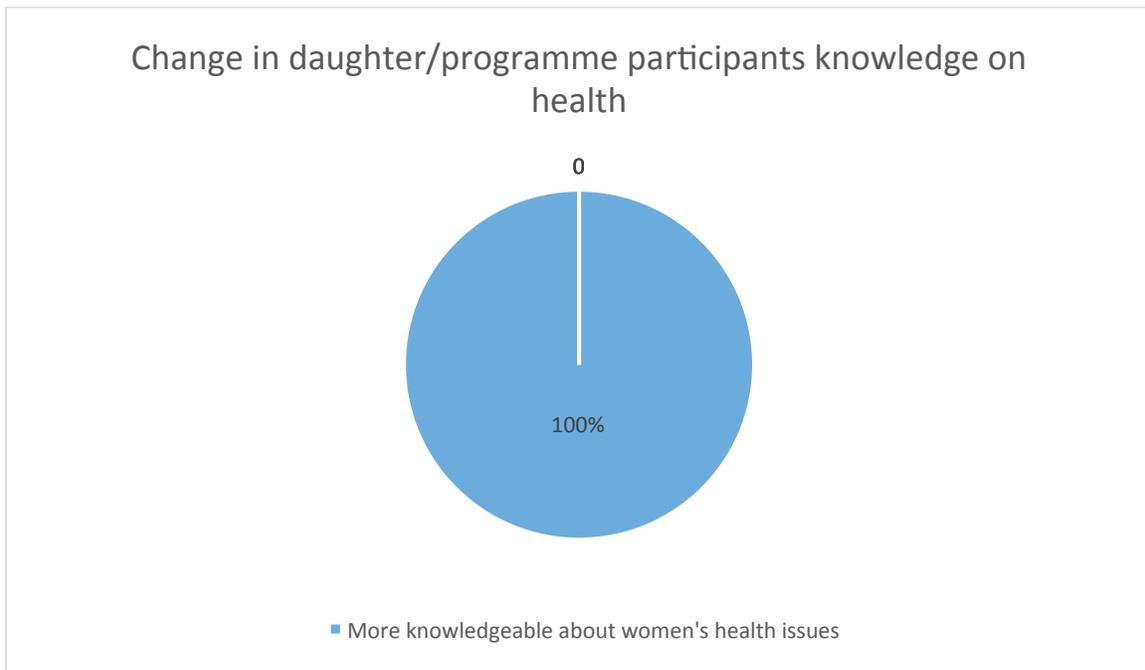
*“I am glad I kept my daughter in the programme. When she joined I heard a lot of negative comments from people in our village. Now these same people praise her. She has become an active member of the community, and is trying to make a difference in the lives of others, especially young girls. People here used to say girls should not play sports, but now they have changed their mind after seeing all the good work my daughter and her friends are doing for the community” - KII with Najma Khatun, Bogura*

These responses from the parents and caregivers of the programme participants are a strong testament to the positive difference the BYWLTS initiative is making on the lives of its participants. The programme has faced its fair share of challenges as noted previously. This has mainly been from the negative perceptions surrounding gender roles in Bangladesh. However, the programme has successfully challenged these perceptions and shown the beneficial transformations it can bring in the life of young women. These young women in turn have used their time in the programme to become better future leaders of their own communities.

### 3.4 Other topics in girls' lives

In addition to increasing confidence and building leadership skills, the BYWLTS programme also sought to increase awareness among the young girls on many issues pertinent to them, including health, violence and financial management. The programme, also aimed to encourage girls to start thinking about their futures, and what type of careers they might want to pursue.

Respondents were questioned on the changes they observed their daughter/programme participant regarding the aforementioned topics. These themes were also explored through the KIIs. The responses received were all overwhelmingly positive, which is a very encouraging sign for the programme.



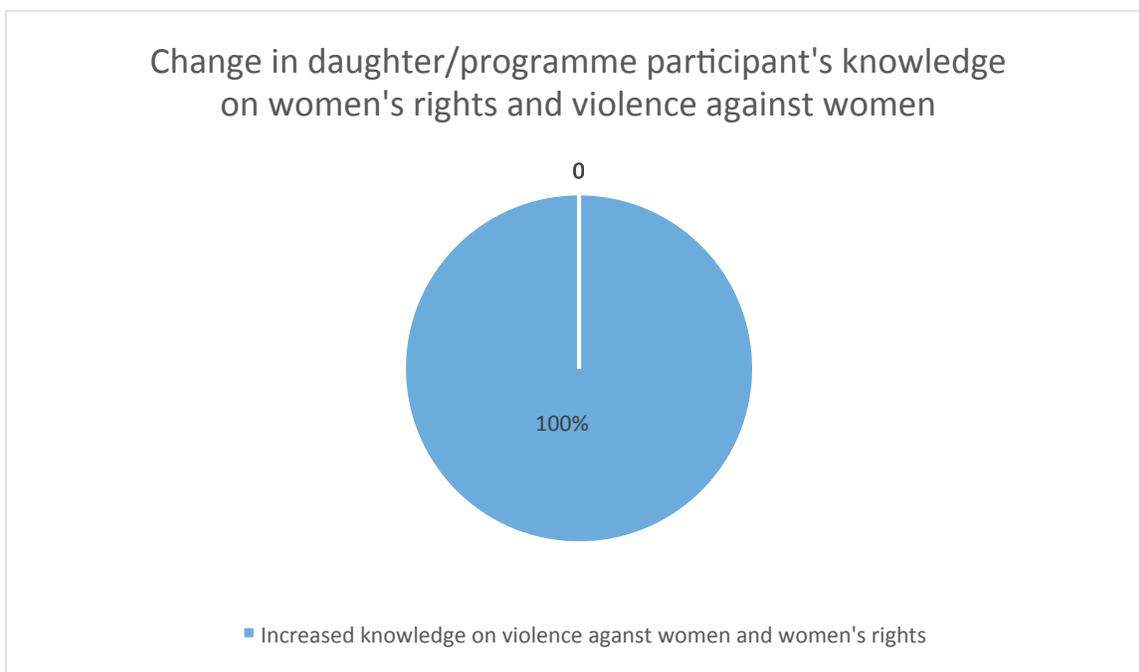
**Figure 8: Change in knowledge about women's health issues**

All the respondents noted how their daughters/programme participant had become more aware of the different health issues pertaining to them. This was also observed in the KIIs.

*“After joining the program my daughter’s knowledge about health has increased; now she is more neat and clean. She even advises pregnant woman about their health care.” – KII with Ronjit Munda, Khulna*

*“My daughter, Raisa is now quite knowledgeable about health issues including periods and reproduction. I even got to know about HIV from her” – KII with Bristy Akter, Bogra*

Women’s rights is another important issue that girls need to be aware of, especially in light of violence against women all over the world. This is sometimes an uncomfortable subject, but one that must be discussed. The respondents all noted happily, that the programme had addressed this issue, and sufficiently taught the girls all they need to know.



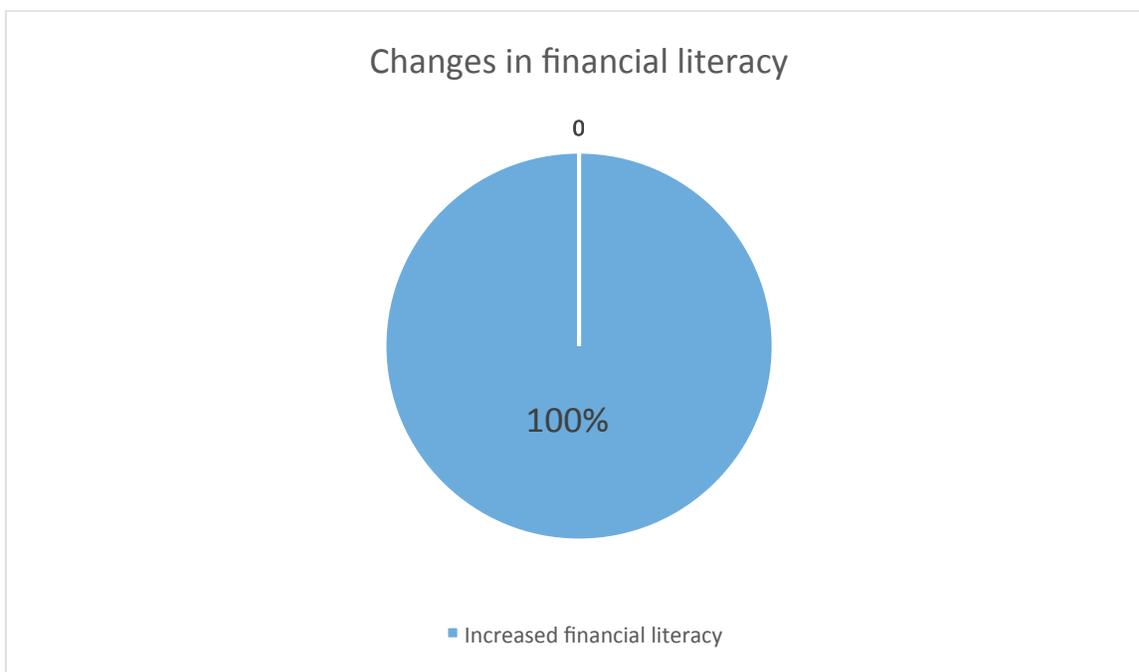
**Figure 9: Change in knowledge on women's rights and violence against women**

This is an important area to note, as violence against women is an alarmingly common occurrence on a global scale. Young girls need to be aware of this, and at the same time must be aware of the tools they have to fight back. During the KII, interviewees noted that this was a sensitive area, and expressed gratitude at the programme for raising awareness among the participants on these issues

*“Whenever you open the paper, you read about some act of violence against women and young girls. It is a frightening world, and our daughters should be aware of this. This is a sensitive topic in our society, but thanks to the programme, my daughter is knowledgeable about this. She discusses it freely with us, and I am relieved she is aware of her rights in cases like this” - KII with Tulsi Boury, Khulna*

*“Violence against women is something no one wants to talk about. Our girls do not learn anything about it from their schools. Thanks to the programme, my daughter and her friends are at least aware of this topic. They now go around education other girls and women in the community about their rights”*

Financial literacy and management is another important area that the BYWLTS programme sought to address. Teaching young girls how to manage their finances, is instrumental in getting them to save for their future, and in instilling long term fiscal responsibility into their lives. According to respondents, this is also an area, where they have observed only positive changes.



**Figure 10: Changes in financial literacy**

Financial literacy is particularly important to teach to impressionable young minds, as it can help in ensuring their fiscal responsibility in the future. By teaching participants the importance of good financial management, the programme can create a significant impact on their futures. The positive change in financial literacy has also been corroborated through the KII of the select parents/caregivers.

*“One year ago all my daughter did was spend money. Now she advises everyone to save. A year ago if we gave her 10 taka for tiffin she spent all money but now she tries to save a portion. She now has a bank account where she saves 500 taka per month. She wants to buy a cow from her savings.” – KII with Anowara begum, Sylhet*

*“Nowadays my daughter is always thinking of ways to increase her saving. If we give her 20 taka for tiffin she spends 5 taka and the rest of the money she saves. She fulfills her small needs from her savings. She also gives advice to save money to her friends.” - KII with Najma Khatun, Bogura*

*“After joining the programme, my daughter has started a bKash account where she saves money. She hopes to be able to manage her study costs with this money. This year when we were short on money before Dura Puja, my daughter used her savings to help us. She has really learned how to handle money well.” – KII with Ronjit Munda, Khulna*

As indicated by the data and the KIIs, participation in the GOAL program appears to have had substantial positive effects on the young girls in terms of their knowledge on the key issues affecting their lives. It appears the programme has been able to make a positive difference through its work. These results are very encouraging, and present a strong case for the continued support of the initiative.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION**

### **4.1 Girls' knowledge, attitude or behaviour**

The programme appears to have had a major transformative effect in the lives of its participants. Before participating in the programme, a vast majority of the girls were shy and hesitant in expressing their opinions and in mixing with others. They lacked the self-confidence for doing this. This all changed after participation in the programme. The parents and caregivers interviewed spoke proudly of how vibrant, outspoken and confident their daughters/programme participants had become. They had also become more disciplined and focused. They started exhibiting more concern for their future and their employment prospects. The parents and caregivers strongly believed that participating in sports kept the girls away from other distraction and pasttimes that added no value to their lives. Instead they were now creating something positive not just for themselves and their families but for the community as a whole. The girls had also become more respected in their own communities. While there was a lot of initial disagreement from the community regarding girls and sports, the transformation shown by the girls is successfully challenging this attitude.

The parents and caregivers also noted that the sports programmes had made the girls more focused and attentive at school. It was important to note that according to World Health Organization (WHO), one of the benefits of sports and physical activities was educational and intellectual development. This could have been among the reasons that made the girls to start performing better in school.

Overall, the programme appears to have had a commendable impact in transforming the attitude, practices and mindsets of the girls for the better.

### **4.2 Parents' attitude towards girls/ their daughters**

It was seen that many parents and caregivers were initially hesitant about the programme, due to negative comments from the community. However they have also expressed relief at having supported the programme, as they have seen the tremendous effect it has had. As mentioned before, girls participating in the programme started doing better in school. They also became responsible members of their own families. Several parents and caregivers noted how their daughters/programme participants helped out more with the household chores, and also contributed in a mature manner to important family decisions.

There has been a very positive shift in perceptions and attitudes of the parents and caregivers towards the young girls in their household. They have observed a newer mature side of these young girls, and this has made them very hopeful for the future.

### **4.3 Girls' status or condition related to sports and leadership**

After participating in the programme, the young girls are now applying their knowledge for their own betterment, as well as the betterment of their community. They have started exhibiting good leadership skills. They are using their new found knowledge on health and women's rights to educate other girls and women in their community. They are using their new financial literacy to better manage their own money and to save for their future.

#### **4.4 Concluding observations**

It should finally be noted, that the programme has been quite successful in fulfilling what it set out to achieve. This initiative is all about empowering young girls through sport, and this is an area where it has displayed remarkable results. The young girls who have participated in this programme have undergone considerable transformations that have seen them become responsible members of their communities. They are now trying to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of those around them.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of this programme has been to successfully challenge the negative stereotypes and perceptions surrounding girls and women. It is common knowledge that women and young girls are at a disadvantage in Bangladesh both economically and socially. A lot of this stems from antiquated patriarchal beliefs. This has been something the programme has worked very hard to address. It has been mentioned numerous times, that this programme initially faced a lot of opposition from the communities it was running in. People could not accept the idea of girls playing sports. It defied society's pre-conceived gender expectations and created a sort of imbalance in the minds of many. However, this programme and its participants have successfully challenged these attitudes. They have shown the potential of young girls as change makers in the community. The programme has created confident leaders out of once shy and reserved young women. It has started these young girls on the path to empowerment, and given them the tools to ensure their own destiny. This is perhaps the most important impact created by the programme, and a very strong argument for its continued future support.

## References

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