



Behind the Scenes: Mali Rising's Girls Project Jan-Feb '17

OUR GIRLS ARE NOW HALFWAY THROUGH THEIR FIRST YEAR WITH MALI RISING'S NEW GIRLS PROJECT. IT HAS BEEN AMAZING TO WATCH THEM COME OUT OF THEIR SHELLS AND GROW. OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS, THEY TACKLED TOUGH TOPICS WITH VERVE. READ ON FOR MORE

Led by our intrepid Girls Project Coordinator Hindaty, the Girls Project is now in full stride. Work over the last several months focused on two tough topics at our monthly Girls Group meetings, as well as the beginning of gearing up to reach out to 6th grade girls to recruit them for 7th grade next school year.

Becoming Leaders

January's Girls Group meeting topic was "The Power of Leadership: A Leadership Model for Young Girls." Girls discussed the skills a good leader must have, including self-esteem, perseverance in the face of failure, a sense of responsibility, confidence to ask questions, and more. The girls discussed each skill and challenges they face in applying those skills. A group exercise then allowed the girls to practice their skills and public speaking in front of a supportive and open group of peers. This discussion prepared them well for February's more challenging topic of gender violence.

Protection From Gender Violence

February's Girls Group topic was the toughest yet most important yet: "Succeed in School: Violence Between Girls and Boys, Teacher Harassment, and Education Techniques." In this session girls learned the definition of gender-based violence and discussed its forms in the school environment. A lively discussion about the effect of this kind of violence at school lead to many ideas about how girls can protect themselves and learn without fear. A wrap up exercise focused on encouraging girls to reach to succeed while supporting each other as a team.



Girls in Beneko are eager to discuss gender violence and how to protect oneself at school.

Girls Group Attendance

At the half-way mark in the year we were curious to check in on Girls Group attendance. Over the two months, Girls Group attendance averaged 88%, ranging from a low of 78% to a high of 103%. 103% you ask? In one village girls are actually adding themselves to the discussions!



Hindaty leads girls in Kolimba in a discussion of gender violence and girls' rights.

Next steps

Work over the next several months will focus on recruiting 6th grade girls to encourage them to continue into our 7th grade classrooms . This work will include bringing members of our current Girls Groups to 6th grade classrooms to discuss the power of girls' education. It will also involve meetings with girls and their families. Keep up to date on our blog at www.malirisingfdn.org/blog.



A game encourages girls to reach for their goals.