

COLORS OF CONNECTION



COURAGE IN CONGO

Goma, North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo

FINAL REPORT

REPORT DATE: August 2016

About Colors of Connection

Established in 2010, Colors of Connection is an organization working with youth and public arts that enables connections between people and communities through creative expression. Colors of Connection envisions a world where the arts are universally accessible and celebrated. Our mission is to nurture hope, cultivate well-being, and promote development in disadvantaged youth and societies worldwide through community-based art.

Over the past five years Colors of Connection has successfully executed seven projects: two in Malian refugee camps, one in an Ivorian refugee camp, one at a remote Liberian university, two in a post war town in Liberia and one in Goma, capital of a province in conflict affected Eastern Congo. So far our programs have directly benefited 205 young people, and reached about 100,000 residents in five different communities through public paintings.

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Cover photo: Participant Riziki using primer for the first time, February 2016



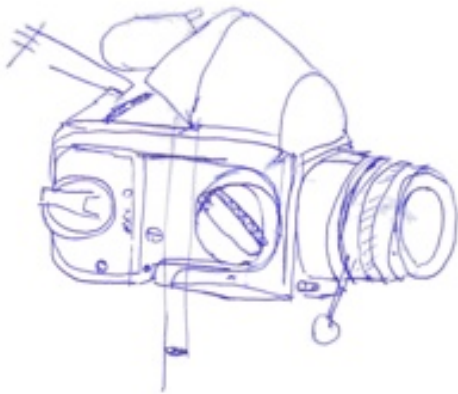
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About This Report

This final report was written by Monitoring & Evaluation Lead/Community Engagement & Psychosocial Lead Nadia Fazal (NF), with contributions from Colors of Connection Co-Founder and Project Director Christina Mallie (CM). Photography by videography and photography project assistant Pamela Tulizo Kamale.

Colors of Connection obtained consent from all participants and their parents/guardians to include their photographs in this evaluation report, and in any other reports related to this project and/or research related to this project. This project was reviewed by the Research Ethics Board at the Université Libre de Pays des Grands Lacs (ULPGL) based locally in Goma, Eastern Congo. All monitoring and evaluation activities for this project have received ethical approval from the Ethics Review Board at ULPGL.

Data collection tools may be available upon request with permission from Colors of Connection.



**This project is documented in
3 short videos available to
view here:**

www.colorsofconnection.org/projects/courage-in-congo

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I. Synopsis



Self-portraits created by sixteen of the participants in the first week of class sessions, December 2016

I-A: Mission

Courage in Congo, a Colors of Connection (CC) community-based art project of located in Goma, North Kivu Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), began on November 11, 2015 and was completed on April 15, 2016. The mission of this project under the direction of Christina Mallie (an arts educator) and Nadia Fazal (a specialist in social and behavioural health sciences) was to engage adolescent girls in Goma in a psychosocial arts based program; specifically, this project aimed to work with adolescent girls who were out-of school and those who were at a great risk of – or who were survivors of – sexual and

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gender-based violence (SGBV). **The ultimate goals of this project were to improve the community's perceptions of girls and their role in society, and for community leaders and participants to engage in assets-focused thinking about women and girls.** CC worked for the duration of the project in partnership with a local organization Centre d'Appui en Faveur des Mineurs Marginalisés et Exploités (CAMME), and with a logistical implementing partner, the International Rescue Committee (IRC).

I-B: Project Values/Assumptions, Context and Participants

This project was grounded in the understanding of the therapeutic and transformative power of art for individuals and communities in distress (Lander & Graham-Pole, 2008; MacNaughton, White & Stacy, 2005), and in the ability of community arts projects to shift perceptions and inspire further positive actions by the community (Barone, 1995; Wheeler, 2012). The project was rooted in an assets-focused and value-based framework (Babalola, Neetu & Dana, 2011; Douma & Hilhorst, 2012) and the program model developed by CC took a community-formulated approach to programming. Many aspects of the structure of the program and curriculum were informed by the Population Council's girl-centered programming.

CC focused on a group of out-of-school girls aged 15-24¹ in a neighborhood called North Mabanga that is located just outside of Goma proper and consequently isolated from many resources and services. CC was interested in working specifically with adolescent girls due to the potential benefits of working with this sub-group of the population. This group may be one of the most adversely affected by contextual instability, and cultural and gender norms which contribute to the existence of SGBV, and yet simultaneously are at an age at which introducing preventative measures can be effective in promoting their well-being. Research on this age group in Eastern DRC showed that their potential vulnerabilities could be high and their opportunities limited. In particular the research showed that out-of-school adolescent girls in this context have limited opportunities for education, protection, and support around issues of SGBV, and few resources available to facilitate their transition into adulthood (Population Council & UNFPA, 2009).

Once CC arrived to implement the project we were able to better understand how women and girls are visually represented in public imagery particularly in relationship to SGBV prevention in Goma, DRC. The vast majority of imagery casts women and girls as victims, powerless and without agency to address the issues that affect them (Freeman, 2016). This

¹ When recruited, each of the participants self-identified as being within the 15-19 age bracket, (original target age bracket) and this was further verified by their respective parents/guardians. However, during project implementation we became aware that some participants fell outside of this 15-19 year-old age bracket.

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information about the context affirmed the validity of our efforts to work with a community-formulated approach and to directly engage women and girls in the creation and public dissemination of positive imagery relating to issues of SGBV. Existing SGBV narratives also helped to shape the development of the project in terms of community engagement and curriculum, and ultimately led to adjustments and additions to the results framework.

I-C: Project Implementation

Recruitment processes of project staff and participants drew on contextually adapted resources from the Population Council's girl-centered programming. These resources helped CC to recruit, and effectively engage with our target population. To avoid an elite capture of participants, we drew on a recruitment process adapted from the Girl Roster that helped us to select vulnerable individuals typically more isolated from resources as opposed to



An orange vendor observes a section of the completed Women in the Workforce mural, which in this section depicts a policewoman, the Congolese flag, and the phrase "Everyone for the protection of civilians."

participants who are easier to find in the community. Another significant component was the recruitment of local project assistants who were females aged between 20-24 (just one

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age bracket above the young women participants). **In addition to serving their roles as assistants, these individuals were able to act as positive young role models for the participants, providing perspective into plausible next life steps for the young women participants.**

The selected girls (35 total who completed the project) participated in a fourteen-week psychosocial arts-based program that included therapeutic arts activities, art activities that built artistic skills, and activities that built assets to shield against the risks associated with SGBV and expand their opportunities to build economic, social and personal resources in their lives (as defined by the participants themselves).

During the program community leaders were brought together in the form of a Community Arts Council (CAC) to guide and advise the project and principally to provide two themes for two murals that the participants would create. The objective of these murals was to transform public spaces into positive visualizations of a community-formulated approach to promoting girls' rights, preventing SGBV and supporting survivors. CAC members were meant to represent the local diversity of leadership in the community with respect to the main focus areas of the project. The work of these leaders focused on the following areas: local governance, visual arts, visual ethics; or, whose work is with: the local intellectual community, religious community, youth, and/or women/girls. This combination of leaders never had been brought together for discussions on SGBV and representation of women and girls. CAC meetings and discussions led to the decision to promote positive qualities of women and girls through solution-driven and assets-focused imagery, and the themes for two murals became: "women in the workforce" and "the development and promotion of women leadership."

The program culminated in the participants' design and painting of two murals on two prominent walls in two neighborhoods in Goma and an unveiling ceremony in which 35 participants received certificates of completion. One of the participants' reflections on the impact that the murals could have for other girls in the community:

"We wrote 'mwanamke shujaa' meaning 'women leaders' on our mural painting. There are girls that discredit themselves, thinking that they can't paint or draw. But if they pass by this painting, even though they may neglect their own talents now they can start to think differently and they can think that if they wanted, they could do this too." (Participant Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

I-D: Project Monitoring and Evaluation Methods, Findings and Discussion:

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools for the project were developed by a consultant from Social Impact and by CC's Research Liaison, Nadia Fazal, who led the project M&E activities.

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The M&E methodology used quantitative and qualitative approaches to assess both process and impact of the project. Evaluation research tools included: semi structured interviews with various (community members, participants, parents of participants, community leaders) a participant observation rating tool, and a participant interactive oral survey. Overall the evaluation findings supported the results framework of the Courage in Congo Project and the ultimate goals of the project: to improve a select community in Goma's perceptions of women and girls in society, and for community leaders and participants to engage in assets-focused thinking about women and girls.

I-E: Project Results:

As this report will detail further, Courage in Congo provided a rare opportunity for out-of-school adolescent girls and community leaders to come together on the issue of girls' and women's rights, SGBV prevention, and support for survivors.

The following results of the project are notable:

A therapeutic and transformational change was observable in the participants and community members who participated in the project affirming the positive impact of community arts projects for communities in distress. These observations are captured in the final evaluation findings and discussion.

The tools and methods developed for the project contribute to the emerging field of community arts-based interventions in conflict-affected communities and will help to guide CC's future projects.

A valuable outcome of the CAC meetings was that they provided a forum for community leaders to look critically at visual representation of women and girls in Goma and the region of Eastern Congo, and to identify types of visual representation of women and girls that they wished to see publically expressed. The result was a fresh approach to the campaigns for SGBV prevention and support of women and girls.

The project achieved sustainability and appreciation on a local level. Appreciation was evident in the overwhelmingly positive reception of the project by community members, family of the participants and the participants themselves as evidenced in post-project qualitative interviews. Several post-project initiatives that function independently of CC and continue to support the participants and attest to the positive reception and relevancy of CC's approach, values and ideas for this community. Included in these activities are: a volunteer run arts class, a psychosocial support currently offered free of charge to the participants, and funding and supervision for twenty-nine of the participants to re-enroll in primary and secondary education. We are extremely pleased that these post-project initiatives will continue to support the participants on their path forward in more opportunity and development.

II: Problem Analysis

II-A: Context

Congo's state of violence and instability spans over a hundred years, with the latest phase beginning in 1996 and continuing up to the present day (Friends of the Congo). Various groups continue to fight to control the country's vast wealth of mineral resources. The recent phase of the conflict is called by some observers "Africa's World War", due to the numerous regional actors involved - at certain points as many as fourteen foreign armies (Autesserre, 2009). A dominant and unique aspect of this conflict has been the use of rape and other types of SGBV as a weapon of war employed by the numerous armed groups to systematically intimidate, humiliate, instill fear, forcibly relocate and dominate communities (Mukenge & Mwandu, 2010). **Intertwined with conflict-related sexual violence, and increasingly representative of SGBV in Eastern Congo, is sexual violence perpetrated by civilians. This component of sexual violence is in part the product of gender dynamics and socio-cultural practices that predate conflict in Eastern Congo, although as social dynamics and practices have evolved over the decades of conflict, the distinction between conflict related SGBV and non-conflict related SGBV is not clear cut in civilian cases** (Douma & Hilhorst, 2011). Data-based estimates of sexual violence against women in DR Congo are unknown, and reports from the international non governmental organizations, and peer reviewed publications have only been able to provide a rough guess. The estimations according to multiple sources such as Human Rights Watch and the US Department of State is that tens of thousands of women and girls have been raped in Eastern Congo with evidence to suggest that these figures may be in reality be much higher (Bredenkamp, Palermo, & Peterman, 2011).

Sexual violence detrimentally affects communities, families and survivors as it takes an enormous toll on the community as a whole. In cases of rape in which the victim is a woman or girl, some men - as husbands, fathers and leaders of their communities - have expressed feelings that relate to failing in their role to protect; some reported that the dignity of their families and communities are destroyed through these type of incidences. It is known that in cases of rape, regardless of the gender of the victim, the families of the survivors also experience the stigma of sexual violence. Survivors of sexual violence experience both psychological and social effects such as fear, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety, as well as stigma, which can lead to abandonment and rejection (Bass, Annan, Murray, Kaysen, Griffiths, Cetinoglu, Wachter, Murray, & Bolton, 2013).

II-B: Profile of Target Population

Being a teenage girl in this context is particularly challenging. The ongoing conflict has weakened traditional societal structures that can support and protect girls and women from SGBV. The *Courage in Congo* project took place in the North Kivu Province of Eastern Congo, where 63.7 percent of girls have had sex by age 18, 43.6 percent of girls aged 15-24 have experienced forced sex in their marriage at some point by their spouse, and 45.6 percent of girls aged 15-24 who are not married have experienced forced sex in their first time having sex (Population Council & UNFPA, 2009).



Esperance, right follows the lead of Adelle, left in a therapeutic arts exercise called “Chase the Scribble” in which partner follows the lines and rhythm of drawing of the other, December 2015.

Existing gender norms socially isolate girls once they enter puberty, unfortunately at a time when they become more vulnerable. This social isolation restricts their access to support systems and safe spaces such as educational programs, extra-curricular activities for youth, and services that can educate, protect and support them around issues of SGBV and help them in their transition into adulthood (Population Council & UNFPA, 2009).

An “off-track” and significant sub-group of girls in the North Kivu Province are out-of-school girls aged 15-19. The 2007 Democratic Republic of Congo Demographic and Health Surveys

(DHS) shows that in this age group's school drop-out rates are greatly increase; between the ages of 10-14 the percentage of out-of-school girls in North Kivu is at 39.3%, and between the ages of 15-19 this number rises to 68.5% (Population Council & UNFPA, 2009). This poses a concern for the well-being and protection of these girls as once they leave school, they are rarely reached by youth policies, and do not receive the benefits of the development of cognitive, social, and physical skills from school to help with the transition into adulthood, nor the chance of receiving sex and HIV prevention education sometimes offered in schools. Although there are many risks for girls in school, girls who are out-of-school are at great risk for exposure to HIV/STIs, child marriage, pre-marital sex, and reproductive health issues (Population Council & UNFPA, 2009). While it is clear that this sub-group faces many risks of sexual violence in their lives, their access to opportunities to build economic, social and personal resources in their lives are few. In addition, the existing culture and norms do little to promote girls' rights, protect girls from SGBV or support survivors of SGBV.

II-C: Project Considerations

CC was interested in working specifically with adolescent girls due to the potential benefits of working with this sub-group of the population. It is a group may be one of the most adversely affected by contextual instability, and cultural and gender norms which contribute to the existence of SGBV, and yet simultaneously are at an age at which introducing preventative measures can be effective in promoting their well-being. CC also concluded, based on previous project experience working with mixed gender groups in Liberia and Burkina Faso, as well as the recommendations from the Population Council's Girl Centered Program Design that working with a single gender would help to facilitate a safe, comfortable space for participants to express themselves and engage in activities and discussions (Austrian & Ghati, 2010). The Population Council and our previous work with mixed gender groups confirmed that girls and especially the younger girls in a group would often remain silent during discussions, and that boys and men would dominate the space and conversations, reinforcing the existing gender dynamics. As the topics brought up during the Courage in Congo Project were potentially of a personal and sensitive nature, we guessed that the chance for participant engagement would increase if the group was all female. The topic of SGBV is also a complex one with many layers. By focusing on this specific subgroup of the population we anticipated that the discussions would have a greater likelihood of reaching greater depth and productivity. In addition, narrowing down the age group of participants, as in this project, to the age range of 15-19, was a decision based on recommendations from the Population Council's Girl Centered Program Design which shows that each age group of girls in adolescence have different set of issues specifically relevant to them (Austrian & Ghati, 2010). A narrower age range within the group would enable us to introduce relevant and pointed content.

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While the scale of the Courage in Congo Project and its objectives led CC to focus on adolescent girls, the issue of SGBV is larger than this sub-group and we recognize that survivors in DR Congo also include men and boys (Storr, 2011). Therefore, project director Mallie and community engagement and psychosocial lead Fazal, included men and boys in the definition of survivors in discussions held with participants and community leaders. We believe that this is important in order to facilitate discussions, which can examine the true nature and causes of SGBV. When men and boys are counted among survivors and women among perpetrators, this challenges the societal myth that rape is a part of the male biology and that men therefore cannot control themselves when they commit rape, or are merely fulfilling a part of a male evolutionary purpose (California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, 1999). Recognizing that some men and boys are survivors and some women are perpetrators will help turn the attention of participants and community leaders towards issues that exist elsewhere, in the realms of society, culture and politics as possible points of origin for SGBV. We also understood that it is important to include boys and men as part of the definition of survivors in order to prevent further stigmatization of and trauma to male survivors. Male survivors experience additional shame and self-blame, as rape contradicts multiple definitions of manhood (California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, 1999). In countries including DR Congo, in which laws on sexual violence excludes men and boys as possible victims, this further compounds the survivors struggle to come to terms with their experience (Douma & Hilhorst, 2012). During discussions with community and with the participants there were opportunities for Fazal and Mallie to include men and boys as part of the conversations about SGBV in the community.

III: Project Goals



From left to right: Odette, Ruth and Charline priming the wall in preparation for the mural: the Development and Promotion of Women Leadership, February 2016.

Overall, Courage in Congo aimed to improve a select community's perceptions of girls and their role in society. More specifically, this project aimed to enable out-of-school adolescent girls (aged 15-19) in Goma to: (1) Heal through engagement with art; (2) Positively engage in their community; (3) Improve their peer support networks; and (4) Increase awareness and knowledge surrounding SGBV. Courage in Congo also aimed to work with select communities in Goma to: (5) Increase awareness and knowledge surrounding SGBV among community leaders; and (6) Reduce stigma around SGBV.

As discussed further below (see Section V: 'Project Implementation and Contextual Adaptation'), specific narratives around gender and SGBV in Goma have shaped the development and evolution of this project. As such, two additional goals have emerged over the course of the project's implementation. These goals relate to both the young women participants as well as the community, aiming to: 7) Increase assets-focused thinking that promotes the leadership of women/girls in society; and 8) Reduce the victim-based mentality that surrounds women/girls and their ability to work toward positive change. These goals relate to the idea of awareness/knowledge and stigma about gender dynamics and SGBV, and are also relevant outside of the topic area of SGBV. These additional goals have now been integrated into a contextually adapted results framework (see Appendix A - changes from the original results framework are highlighted in pink).

IV. Selection of Project Participants, Assistants, and Project Site

IV-A: Selection of Project Site

In the process of identifying a specific community and location in Goma to implement the project, we prioritized selecting a site that was outside of 'Goma proper' known as the Commune of Goma, as one of the main goals of the project is to work with girls who are isolated from resources and services. Typically, this type of isolation increases outside of the central urban region. We also prioritized selecting an area with mixed representation of tribes with the goal of promoting inter-tribal relationship-building and support networks.

After facing many challenges in obtaining accurate information on population demographics by neighborhood (highlighted in the blog post referenced at the end of this sub-section), we selected CAMME (Centre d'Appui en Faveur des Mineurs Marginalisés et Exploités) as the project site. CAMME is a local NGO located in North Mabanga (just outside of the Commune of Goma); our participant recruitment was limited to the catchment area surrounding CAMME which includes a total of five surrounding neighborhoods. The space CAMME

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offered to us to hold our class sessions included two large private rooms and a small office space for storing materials and holding any private discussions/interviews/meetings. Our project is in line with CAMME's arts and culture programs, which aim to help children and youth process any trauma they have endured through creative expression outlets.



Participants in the midst of an arts activity in the classroom of our local partner CAMME. Decorating the walls of the classroom are works of art from CAMME's ongoing arts programming, December 2015.

Selecting the space at CAMME for our project activities was a very conscious decision; we knew that this local NGO would continue to provide other programs and services for young people living in the surrounding neighborhoods far beyond the end date of our short-term project. **By integrating our activities into the broader activities at CAMME, we were able to be part of a more continuous and sustainable stream of local programming. These factors played a large role in solidifying our decision to work in this space.**

To read more about some of the challenges we faced in relation to selecting a project site, please see the field notes from in our blog (<http://blog.colorsofconnection.org/>). Related blog post includes: 'Our Search to Locate an Ideal Project Site' by Christina Mallie (<http://blog.colorsofconnection.org/post/134805424129/our-search-to-locate-an-ideal-project-site>.)

IV-B: Participant Recruitment



Self-portrait by Odette. This self-portrait exercise designed for the apprehensive student is created from a black and white photo of each individual and transformed with colored pencils, sequins, markers and paint, December 2015.

This project aimed to work with 36 adolescent girl participants aged 15-19. **Our recruitment strategy was grounded in an approach suggested by the Population Council Girls' Roster and aimed to avoid an "elite capture" process** (Smiles & Blake, 2015). In lay terms, this means that if the recruitment goal is to select vulnerable individuals who are typically more isolated from resources, selecting easier-to-find participants in the community (who come to community meetings, participate in community activities, etc.) would not be an effective strategy. Thus, the recruitment process for participants was extensive (door-to-door) and sophisticated (multi-step, various actors). The specific steps of our recruitment process are outlined below.

Step 1: We worked with project partners (CAMME, IRC and others) to define the catchment area of our project (a walkable distance within one hour of the project site CAMME). We

recruited and trained a team of four recruiters including: the Operations Director at CAMME; a female representative from CBCA (Baptist Community in Central Africa, Mabanga North Chapter). a female representative from the local community development committee (subsequently hired as our community engagement assistant), and a female representative from IRC's "rattrapage scolaire" program. We purposefully included a diverse range of recruiters to reduce recruiter bias.

Step 2: Recruiters were trained to go door-to-door within the specific catchment area to recruit potential participants for the project. Upon meeting a potential participant, recruiters conducted an oral survey that was developed based on essential inclusion/exclusion criteria for project participants. Essential inclusion/exclusion criteria for participants included being: 1) female; 2) between the ages of 15-19; 3) currently

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not attending school; 4) interested in visual arts, specifically painting and drawing; 5) capable and motivated to walk from their home to the project site CAMME; 6) available to participate in three hour training sessions, two to three times per week. This oral survey also collected additional information about the vulnerabilities and other characteristics of the potential participants that would serve to facilitate participant selection at a later step. Questions from the Population Council's recruitment tool the Girl Roster were used as a base and adapted to the local context.

Step 3: A statistician analyzed the oral surveys and summarized the results.

CM and NF then reviewed these results and selected 55 potential participants, prioritizing vulnerabilities and characteristics of interest; including (in this order): 1) having a low education level; 2) having basic training in the arts and/or in drawing/painting specifically; 3) being from a tribe that is frequently discriminated against in the community; 4) being an orphan; 5) having a strong interest in drawing/painting or the project overall; 6) having children; 7) being married and without any formal education; and 8) not having a telephone (thus more isolated). In order to be transparent about our participant recruitment methods, after this step CM and NF held a meeting with a recruitment committee that was composed of the Operating Director of CAMME and the Village Chief of North Mabanga to clearly explain the ways in which recruitment had been completed and the steps that would remain.

Step 4: CM and NF held interviews at CAMME with 47 of the 55 potential participants who were selected in Step 3. In these interviews, potential participants were asked to draw a picture of their choice and to then explain their drawing to CM/NF. The potential participants were also asked why they were interested in participating in the program. **These short drawing interviews were meant to gauge the participants' interest in the project and also served to mask the idea of selecting 'vulnerable' girls in the community to prevent their stigmatization once selected.**

Step 5: CM and NF selected a total of 42 participants, as partner IRC advised that the drop-out rate of participants would range between 10-15%. Selected participants were contacted by telephone or visited in person, and were invited to an orientation with their parent/guardian to confirm their participation in the project. CM and NF held two different meetings with parents/guardians to review the project structure, the time commitment needed from the participants and parents/guardians, and the assumed advantages of the project for the participants and the community.

In total, 35 adolescent girl participants completed the full length of the project (14 weeks, with a two-week vacation break between week two and three). When recruited, each of the participants self-identified as being within the 15-19 age bracket, this was further verified by their respective parents/guardians. However, since project implementation we became aware that some participants fell outside of this 15-19 year-old age bracket; we had two

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participants who were 20 (one of whom was 19 at the start of the project), three who were 21, one who was 22, and one who was 24. Since the project had already begun when this information was revealed, these participants remained in the project until the end. Many of our participants also had children of their own, so early on in the project we hired a childcare assistant and offered childcare services at CAMME during class hours.

IV-C: Assistant Recruitment



Above: Photographer/videographer assistant Pamela Tulizo Kamale (center) shows the participants some basic camera techniques, February 2016.

In total, we recruited five local assistants for the implementation of this project in Goma: two artistic assistants, one photographer/videographer assistant, one psychosocial assistant and one community engagement assistant. All of the assistants were females aged between 20-24 (just one age bracket above the young women participants). **In addition to serving their roles as assistants, these individuals were able to act as positive young role models for the participants, providing perspective into plausible**

next life steps for the young women participants. CM recruited and hired the two artistic assistants who both had experience and skills in realistic drawing, painting and comic-strip style drawing. NF recruited and hired the psychosocial assistant who had experience in participatory theatre, and the community engagement assistant who was part of local community development committee in North Mabanga. CM and NF worked together to recruit and hire the photographer/videographer assistant who had experience with a local television network and was eager to learn and improve her skills.

V. Project Implementation & Contextual Adaptations

The implementation of *Courage in Congo* can be described with respect to three key components, all of which were adapted to the local context throughout the implementation of the project. Described below are each of the three components and the key ways in which each were implemented and adapted to the local context of Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo throughout the project.

V-A: Public art component



Participants work together to create a section of the mural: The Development and Promotion of Women Leadership, March 2016.

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Through collaborative and individual arts-based activities, the adolescent girl participants (36, working in two groups of 18) learned skills in painting and drawing on their own and in groups. Near the final stages of the project, each of the two groups created a mural painting in their community (one mural painting per group). The themes of the murals were developed in the local context of Goma, based on insight from the adolescent girl participants and the Community Arts Council (CAC); this is further described in sub-section III-C: Community engagement component.

Before starting the project, the mural themes had been broadly conceptualized as being focused on community-based approaches to the promotion of women's and girls' rights, prevention of future incidences of SGBV, and support of survivors of SGBV. **As the project evolved to the point of discussing particular themes for the murals, it became apparent – from our personal observations (NF and CM) and through discussions with various partners (further described in sub-section III-C: Community engagement component) – that there is a current trend of SGBV related imagery in Goma and the broader region of Eastern Congo that has problematic effects on the community and women and girls.**



A hand-painted billboard produced by the non-governmental organization Diakonie is an example of the manner in which anti-SGBV messaging is visually communicated in Eastern Congo. This image among eight others was shared with the Community Arts Council (CAC) in their second meeting and each member was given the opportunity to express their views on it. Their responses included the following statements: “humiliation,” “violence committed against women,” and “women are always victims of sexual violence.”

Overall, the imagery surrounding SGBV and the protection of women/girls in this context is typically focused on the *prevention* of SGBV as opposed to the *promotion* of safety, health or equality of women and girls. This means that this imagery tends to neglect solutions and community-based assets, highlighting what *should not* happen as opposed to what *should*. This preventative SGBV

imagery is often violent, depicting women as powerless victims – sometimes in the very act of being raped by men – on billboards advertisements, NGO signage, and public art. While this type of imagery seeks to criminalize rape and solicit support for survivors (Cech, 2013), it also goes directly against ideas of promoting positive, assets-focused and solution-driven imagery, which are core values

that shape the work of CC.

The CC approach seeks to create and display imagery that represents what the community desires to promote in society, as opposed to what they desire

to prevent. This approach is also supported in the related literature; as noted by Graham (2016b), images are powerful – they can engage emotion and motivate action. Images can actually ‘prime’ viewers to prepare them for a context in which to insert associated ideas and from which to base decisions (2016a). Taken together, repeated imagery can construct clichés, and through these clichés (easily recognizable forms) this imagery can act to simplify the world according to a particular value-base and worldview in a way in which text alone cannot do, over and over again (2014). The ‘indexicality’ of the image – the representation of a thing that is no longer as such but once was – draws on the feeling attached to the image (its connotation). As the image cliché is reproduced the image-based data and its connotation are repeated, fundamentally shaping ideas around people, places, and actions over time (2014).

A large part of the work of CC is to begin to change these clichés in a way that promotes local strength, resilience, leadership, and assets-focused thinking. Given the existing imagery of women and girls in the Goma context and the prevalence of these negative images, we (NF and CM) became concerned that the current imagery reinforces the idea that women and girls are powerless victims; this imagery could potentially normalize SGBV and even re-traumatize survivors (Freedman, 2016; The Lantern Project, 2016). With time, we began to acknowledge that the re-framing of these visual clichés was an essential first step in orienting the themes of the murals in our efforts to promote women’s and girls’ rights, prevent future incidences of SGBV, and support survivors of SGBV. Our local partners tended to agree. Thus, the mural themes of Courage in Congo were designed to explicitly contradict the negative clichés surrounding SGBV, instead aiming to show Congolese women as powerful leaders and agents of change. With these values and considerations at the forefront, we worked with the adolescent girls and our CAC (described in sub-section III-C: Community engagement component) to develop the themes for the two murals for the project. After much dialogue and collaborative reflection, the two mural themes were finalized.

Mural I: The first mural focused on women in the workforce, depicting women in roles that are typically taken by men in working society in Goma.

These images sought to show the capacity of women and girls beyond their traditional roles in the domestic domain as wives, caretakers of children and responsible for household duties. This theme connects to several important aspects of the promotion of women’s/girls’ rights, including: gender equality, equity, gender parity, and more broadly the shifting of gender norms. For the young women participants and our CAC members, the three workforce-related positions that they were most interested in showing in their mural painting (determined through participatory discussion and voting) were: a woman motorcycle taxi driver, a woman artist/painter, and a woman police officer. Some factors that drove this selection were complete absence (or very small percentage) of women in Goma represented in these job positions (as noted by the adolescent girl participants and our CAC members), and the personal desires of the adolescent girl participants to have these particular jobs one day. The participants were eager to represent themselves (i.e.

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their own faces) in the mural to show that they themselves could actually take on these roles – thus, three participants were randomly selected from the group to be represented in the mural.



Clockwise from top: Drawing by participant Louange depicts herself as a taxi moto driver in a homework exercise in which each participant in the group drew themselves in a job position that they would like have in the future. February 2016. Louange poses as a taxi moto driver to help create a realistic representation for the mural “Women in the workforce,” February 2016. Louange in front the completed portrait of the taxi moto driver for the mural “Women in the workforce,” that she helped to create, March 2016



A panoramic view of the completed Woman in the Workforce mural, April 2016

Mural 2: The second mural theme focuses on the development and promotion of women leadership.

As in the first mural, these images sought to draw attention to the capacity of women and girls beyond their traditional role in the domestic domain as wives, caretakers of children and responsible for household duties. This traditional role has historically up to today limited Congolese women from meaningful participation in and political life (Douma & Hilhorst, 2012). This mural has two sides; on the first side, we showed an image of a strong female who believes in herself and her own capacity to create change in society. On the other side of the wall, we showed a female political candidate being supported and encouraged (by both men and women) to move forward and create change in her society. Through our discussions with CAC members, it was highlighted that although there are some female political candidates in this context, it is rare that women support them in this pursuit; instead, the followers of these candidates are typically male. The CAC members posited that Congolese women themselves doubt their own capacity and/or the capacity of other women to make decisions and take charge. In our discussions with the adolescent girls about women leaders, they confirmed this belief; for example, many expressed their doubts that a woman could become president and preferred that a woman take on a secondary post such as vice-president. Thus, these mural images sought to shift this widely held perception by women, girls and the community that women are not fit to be leaders.

Once the project was completed, both murals were unveiled to the broader community via organized site visits that were integrated into the organized activities of the project's final closing ceremony.

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Completed mural themed on the Development and Promotion of Women Leadership, April 2016.

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As part of the process of creating the image for the mural, participant Winnie, among other young women in her group, strikes a pose to represent a woman who believes in herself and her own capacity as a leader, March 2016.



To see these murals being created through a video time-lapse and to hear the personal stories of the participants who created them please visit:

<http://www.colorsofconnection.org/projects/courage-in-congo>

To read more about our thoughts about the imagery that we have been seeing in Goma and our suggested steps toward change, please see the field notes from our blog (<http://blog.colorsofconnection.org/>) Related blog posts include: 'Visual Representation of Women and Girls in Eastern Congo' by Christina Mallie (<http://blog.colorsofconnection.org/post/138229194484/visual-representation-of-women-and-girls-in>) and 'Developing Critical Visual Analysis Skills: First Steps Towards Changing a Victim-based Mentality' by Nadia Fazal (<http://blog.colorsofconnection.org/post/139349491424/developing-critical-visual-analysis-skills-first>).

V-B: Psychosocial component

The adolescent girl participants engaged in therapeutic arts activities, reflective psychosocial activities, resource mapping, and group discussions, in order to address particular themes relevant to this population group and context.



One project activity that helps to build interpersonal relationships while also helping to regulate stress and emotions is this collaborative doodle exercise courtesy of the inspirational art therapist Dr. Cathy Malchiodi. January, 2016.

Reflective psychosocial activities and group discussions: The reflective psychosocial activities and group discussions of the psychosocial curriculum were developed based on the Population Council's Assets Building Toolkit (Population Council, 2015). This toolkit focuses on the assets of girls, and includes 100 asset cards organized into four categories: (1) cognitive assets; (2) social assets; (3) human/health assets; (4) economic assets. The toolkit also includes ten blank cards to encourage users to create their own contextually specific asset cards in reference to their particular project environment. CM and NF went

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through each of these asset cards with the Courage in Congo project assistants, engaging in dialogue and asking questions about the contextual relevance of each card (a participatory process recommended by the Population Council). When appropriate, adaptations were made to the assets cards and new asset cards were created. Economic assets were excluded as they fall outside of the scope of the Courage in Congo project. The project assistants were asked to rank each of the prioritized cards in the three remaining asset categories (human/health; social; and cognitive) on a scale of 1-5 in terms of relevance to the lives of girls/women living in Goma. Based on this insight and the values/goals of the Courage in Congo project, several assets were selected to guide the development of the psychosocial curriculum. These assets are noted below in reference to each of the overarching toolkit categories.

Cognitive assets: (a) Confidence introducing herself to a public audience and speaking (created based on Goma context); (b) ability to identify woman leadership in her community and society (created based on Goma context); (c) knowledge that violence isn't just stranger violence—it often occurs in families; (d) awareness of safety issues encountered in her daily lives by hour of the day, activity, opportunity, and place; (e) knowledge of safe times/routes to water sources and places to gather firewood, including during emergencies; (f) capacity to be critical of and discern harmful imagery of women and girls in Eastern Congo (created based on Goma context); and (g) knowledge of basic self-defense and ways to attract help.

Social assets: (a) Ability to identify positive relationships and qualities of positive relationships in her life (created based on Goma context); (b) has female non-family friends, know whom to ask/where to ask for help if she or someone she knows is a victim of violence; (c) knowledge of where the nearest police station is and the kind of help the police can provide; (d) knowledge of the location of a community center, the activities offered there, and how to participate.

Human/health assets: (a) Knowledge of what to say and what not to say to someone who has been a victim of a violent crime; (b) knowledge of how STIs, including HIV, can be prevented and their consequences (including infertility); (d) knowledge that many diseases are sexually transmissible (from both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals) and some remain so even after recovery.

These prioritized assets served as a framework through which specific psychosocial activities were developed, the majority of which were selected and/or adapted from the Population Council's "It's All One Curriculum". This curriculum is designed for adolescents worldwide with guidelines for adaptation to specific regions; educational key themes focus on sexuality, gender, HIV & human rights.

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Left: Drawing by participant Riziki for the psychosocial activity “My Relationships” in which the participants were asked to think about – and visualize – the different types of relationships that they have in their lives (familial, friendships, professional, etc.), and the qualities that they value in these relationships. Right: Louange (right) presents to the class and Nadia Fazal (left) her “My Relationships Drawing.” This exercise helps participants to build the social asset: Able to identify positive relationships and qualities of positive relationships in her life, March 2016.

Therapeutic art activities: The psychosocial curriculum included therapeutic art activities specifically designed for contexts in which participants have experienced multiple traumas, have low literacy levels, and/or face challenges related to poverty and/or conflict/war. In particular, these arts activities aimed to strengthen interpersonal skills, encourage self-expression, and promote self-regulation, self-efficacy and confidence in the participants. These therapeutic art activities were informed by: First Aid Arts¹, Trauma Informed Practices & Expressive Art Therapy Institute², and the African Centre for Peace and Security Training³. Those that focus at the individual level specifically seek to engage different parts of the brain including the kinaesthetic sensory level of the brain, which influences self-regulation and focus (Malchiodi, 2015). Activities that focus at the group level (requiring collaboration) seek to promote solidarity with others and the development of interpersonal skills (First Aid Arts, 2015).

¹ First Aid Arts (www.firstaidarts.org)

² Trauma Informed Practices & Expressive Art Therapy Institute (<http://www.trauma-informedpractice.com>)

³ African Centre for Peace and Security Training (<https://www.issafrica.org>)

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In this activity created by artist Joan Snyder, the participants express different characteristics and emotions through line and form. Above participants create paintings of an “old woman walking.” Below some examples the participants created of a young girl dancing. The objective of this exercise is to build confidence in art making, diminish fear, and learn to express through line and form December 2015.

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Above: Winnie designing and decorating a canvass bag that will be a place she can store her art supplies and art journal. Left: her completed bag created with “payne” fabric, paint and markers. The objective of this exercise is to enhance a sense of security and relieve distress, December 2015.

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Resource Mapping: The psychosocial curriculum included a resource mapping exercise designed to connect each participant to the resources, facilities and services within her community. This exercise was adapted from the Population Council's resource mapping exercise (Austrian & Ghata, 2010). The premise of the exercise is that girls have limited access to public spaces and the resources in these spaces (decreasing once they reach puberty) and are in need of these resources to help them build protective assets – protective, health, social, economic and cognitive (Smiles & Blake, 2015). The resources we included for the maps covered the following categories: local government office, local police station, trade schools, savings and loans associations, small business associations, youth centers/groups, health centers, health centers that provided free health care and/or free treatment for victims of rape, and services specifically for young mothers and economically disadvantaged young women. As the participants of the program came from six different neighborhoods, each participant received a resource map specifically for her neighborhood. Resources, facilities and services were indicated on the maps and contact details and descriptions of the services offered were further detailed on an attached page. An informational session led by our community engagement assistant was held in which she explained each resource indicated its location on the map. She presented information by neighborhood to the specific participants within that neighborhood. Each participant, with the help of our community engagement assistant, was able to locate her house in on her neighborhood map and to understand where she lived in relationship to the resources on the map.

Throughout its implementation, the psychosocial curriculum was continually adapted and re-modeled according to the local context. For example, through our partnership with the



Community Engagement and Psychosocial Lead Nadia Fazal guides a discussion with participants on existing imagery of women and girls in Eastern Congo to develop the cognitive asset: have critical capacity to discern harmful imagery of women and girls in Eastern Congo, January 2016.

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International Rescue Committee (IRC) we were able to gain insight into psychosocial approaches and resources relevant for adolescent girls in our project. In addition, through our interactions with CAC members, other community members, and the girl participants, we found that a dominant local narrative is that women are victims, lacking the power and ability to create change in their own environment; this narrative is in line with the previous discussion about the type of SGBV and women-based imagery that exists in Goma. Changing this victim-based mentality is not an easy task, as it has been engrained through a number of historical events, political narratives, and social realities that shape the region. Psychosocial activities that promote critical assets-focused thinking about victimization, reflection about gender dynamics, and practical action-focused leadership skill development thus emerged in the adapted psychosocial curriculum.

Over time, a safe space was created for the girls to engage in dialogue and share personal stories. As such, some sensitive stories in which the girls self-identified as survivors of SGBV were shared in the classroom setting and in private with the project leads. Many of the participants highlighted that they had never shared their story with anyone else before. One participant noted that she shared her story with her classmate the day before sharing it with NF, a testimony to the trust, confidence and relationships that developed in the classroom. Issues of trauma, stigma, mental health, insecurity in the household, and lack of familial support have been expressed by the adolescent girl participants. Throughout the project we worked to link each of the young women who shared their stories to an appropriate and accessible psychosocial resource in the community (i.e. counseling, psychotherapy) that could continue past the end date of the Courage in Congo project. For those who did not share a particular story, we still saw it as an utmost priority to ensure that they were aware of the psychosocial and psychotherapy resources available for them, should they choose to access them during or after the Courage in Congo project. For more about the ways in which this aspect of the project was followed-up with post-project, refer to Section VII: Moving Forward.

To read more about our thoughts regarding the promotion of an assets-based psychosocial approach and narrative, please see the field notes included from our blog (<http://blog.colorsofconnection.org/>). Related blog post includes: 'Visualizing Positive Relationships' by Nadia Fazal (<http://blog.colorsofconnection.org/post/138044030914/visualizing-positive-relationships>).

V-C: Community engagement component

A Community Arts Council (CAC) of local leaders was created to guide project development. CAC members were meant to represent the local diversity of leadership in the community with respect to the main focus areas of the project. In addition to providing their perspective about the project goals and implementation, CAC members were largely engaged in developing the themes of the murals. The final mural themes were decided based on a combination of the CAC's community/societal level perspective and the individual level perspective of the girl participants; the CAC identified the broad themes for the murals and these themes were then further unpacked/articulated (orally and visually) by the participants.

The CAC for the Courage in Congo Project was composed of 14 leaders in Goma, whose work is focused on: local governance, visual arts, visual ethics; or, whose work is with: the local intellectual community, religious community, youth, and/or women/girls. The titles and affiliations of the participating members were as follows: (1) Village Chief of North Mabanga, Goma; (2) the Director of the Division of Culture and the Arts, North Kivu; (3) Representative of the Division of Gender, Women, Family and Child; (4) President of the Civil Society; (5) Representative from the Division of Youth; (6) Representative from the National Partnership of Children and Youth in Peacebuilding; (7) Project Coordinator of UJADP (Union des Jeunes Artistes Dessinateurs et Peintres); (8) Representative from UJADP (Union des Jeunes Artistes Dessinateurs et Peintres); (9) Coordinator of Yole!Africa; (10) Female representative from Yole!Africa; (11) Ethics Committee Director at ULPGL (Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs); (12) Director of the Cultural Centre; (13) Operations Director of CAMME (Centre d'Appui en Faveur des Mineurs Marginalisés et Exploités); (14) Representative from CBCA (Baptist Community in Central Africa, Mabanga North Chapter).

In total, we held four meetings with the CAC members. The first meeting focused on introductions to the project and discussion of potential locations for the mural sites. In this meeting we also had an in-depth discussion about the sustainability of the project, a subject that was returned to at the final CAC meeting. At the second meeting, the CAC members engaged in a visual critique of existing imagery of women and girls in Goma. It became apparent that all members were on the same page about these images needing to show more positive qualities of women and girls and more solutions as opposed to problems. At the third meeting, the CAC members confirmed the final mural site locations and engaged in dialogue about the development of the specific themes for each of the murals. In the fourth and final meeting, the project team shared photos of the progression of the murals and the CAC members collectively decided on any text messages (phrases, key words, poems) that could be integrated into the imagery. The text that was chosen by the CAC was all in Swahili to ensure that the broader community would understand. The English translations of the phrases chosen for mural I were: "Women are also are involved", "Me, I am doing this work, and you?" and "Everyone for civil protection." The English translations of the phrases chosen for mural II were: "Women, we are behind you", "Together we can", and "Me too, I am

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able”. Each of these phrases were integrated into the mural designs by the adolescent girl participants in the final stages of the mural paintings.

Over time, our partnerships with particular members of the CAC developed. In particular, the Village Chief of North Mabanga was exceptional in his support for the project, and took the lead on gaining permission for the two mural sites from the relevant authorities and property managers. Also, our working relationship with representatives of the local art structures of UJADP and Yole!Africa helped to provide some critical insight about imagery in the region.



Community members and participants visit the finished murals during the mural unveiling and closing ceremony, April, 2016.

Once the project was completed, the CAC members also played a large role in identifying and facilitating next life steps for the girls (see more details in Section IX: Moving Forward). At the end of the project, all of the CAC members were invited to attend our project closing ceremony and mural unveiling, together with the girl participants, their parents, local and international media representatives, local and international NGO workers, local political leaders, and general community members. In total 200 people attend the event. The main objective of this closing ceremony and mural unveiling was to engage with the community in a way that allowed the girl participants to present the skills and knowledge they acquired and their artwork with pride, and in a way that framed their successful completion of this project as a stepping-stone for future broader personal life goals.



From left: Participant Adelle holds her certificate of participation and is congratulated by Project Assistant Feza Balanga Project Director Christina Mallie, CAMME Operations Director Jacques Chimanuka, and Project Assistant Benite Bikulo Buhuru, April 2016.

As part of the closing ceremony activities, each of the girl participants received certificates of successful course completion. **As these certificates were awarded (one by one), the ‘next personal life steps’ that each of the girls had committed to take (to us, the project staff) were read aloud to the broader community for reinforcement** (the girls had each approved for these to be read aloud beforehand). Along with their certificates, the girls also received project t-shirts with “mwanamke shujaa” written in Swahili on the front, meaning “woman leader” in English. CAC members were also awarded certificates of participation and project t-shirts. At the end of the ceremony there was time for interaction between the girl participants and all of the attendees, again with an overall goal of community engagement and knowledge sharing about the project.

To read more about community engagement activities and partnerships, please see the field notes from in our blog (<http://blog.colorsofconnection.org/>).

VI. Follow-up from the Mid-Project Progress Evaluation Findings

In our mid-project progress evaluation report, we were able to assess how the project was going and make some suggestions to be considered for the final stages of the project. Here, we will review the ways in which these suggestions were taken into account throughout the later stages of the project.

Discussion with participants about transitioning from class to the ‘real world’:

Given the theme that emerged from the qualitative interviews of ‘application/lack of application of skills to the community’, it was important to clearly discuss the potential opportunities that the participants may (and may not) have to apply their skills in their respective communities. Our psychosocial assistant met with each of the girl participants one by one to discuss some practical and realistic ideas for ‘personal next life steps’, while providing resources and ideas for them if they would like to develop their artistic career further (i.e. through our partners located in Goma such as UJADP, Yole!Africa, and Foyer Culturel). Also, the coordinator of UJADP presented to each of the two groups of girls about his career development as an artist in Goma and some of the benefits and challenges he had faced along the way.

Engagement with parents/guardians: The mid-project findings showed mixed results (both positive and negative) about the level and type of support that the girls receive from their parents/guardians in relation to their arts training. With the goal of increasing encouragement/support from the participants’ parents/guardians, we held a “bring your parent/guardian to the mural day” for each group, encouraging family members to come, see and support the work that their child was engaging in. Unfortunately, only one parent from each group attended these open sessions. At the end of the project, parents/guardians and other family members were invited to attend the closing ceremony and mural unveiling that was organized for the project; invitees were proposed by each of the girls themselves and then approved by the project staff. The majority of the girl participants had at least one family member at the final ceremony who was seemingly in support of their successful completion of the project.

Inter-group relationship building: The mid-project findings showed that the participants were building relationships within their specific groups, however were not building relationships across groups. Given that all of the participants live close to one another and face similar life challenges, we decided that it was also important to provide

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them with opportunities to get to know the girls in the other group. In the later stages of the project, we created more space for this to happen by allowing girls from one group to join the other group during ‘extra painting sessions’, held on Saturdays for group I and on Mondays for group II, and by inviting both groups to attend community-based activities for women in Goma (e.g. international women’s day ceremonies/activities organized by Yole!Africa). Classroom presentations were still divided by group, as it was difficult for the girls to attend class on a day that wasn’t already agreed upon by their parents as they typically have many responsibilities in the household to fulfill.



On March 8th 2016 for International Women’s Day, both groups of participants had the chance to present their work and engage with the public at the cultural center Yolé!Africa.

Differentiation between ‘school’ and ‘art training’: In some of the mid-project interviews, the young women participants referred to their arts-based training as ‘school’. Since we are working specifically with out-of-school girls, there is a tendency for these young women to want to see educational opportunities such as this program as a formal education. Although we believe that training in the arts is extremely valuable in this context, it does not replace formal education. This differentiation was thus re-explained and made clear to the girl participants through classroom discussions (led by the psychosocial lead

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and assistant) and presentations (with the coordinator of UJADEP) to reduce the level of unrealistic career-related expectations following the arts training.

Sharing our project locally and internationally: In contrast to the earlier stages of the project, in the later stages we were able to focus more explicitly on sharing our work more publicly with local media outlets (e.g. RTNC) and international media outlets (e.g. BBC). At the closing ceremony and mural unveiling, our work, project goals and overarching value system were shared with others involved in the arts community in Goma, local and international non-governmental organizations, local politicians, community members and leaders, the parents of the participants, and the participants themselves.



Participant Ruth is interviewed by a correspondent from the BBC about her experience in the program at the mural site. A short segment about the program aired on BBC radio, March 2016.

Psychosocial follow-up: It is important that each of the participants (those who have and have not expressed personal experiences of SGBV and other mental health-related issues throughout the project) are aware of the psychosocial resources that they can access in the community. For those who shared personal stories, our goal was to link them with relevant psychosocial resources before the end of the project and to ensure that they had the necessary continued support after project completion. Please refer to ‘Section VII:

Moving Forward' at the end of this report for an overview of the psychosocial resources and follow-up in place post-project.

Encouragement of group artistic expression: The mid-project findings showed that personal hopes for the future, personal stories, and personal desires were being expressed through the artwork of the participants; however, we had not yet observed group expression or reflection. In the later stages of the project during the mural brainstorming and painting sessions, we actively encouraged many of the girls to also express themselves artistically as a group and to share a group message. In the end, a strong group identity emerged as 'mwanamke shujaa' or 'women leaders', and the girls began to express messages based on this group identity as well as their individual identity.

VII: Project Monitoring & Evaluation Methods and Tools

VII-A: Overall Evaluation Methods

All of the monitoring and evaluation activities for this project have received ethical approval from the Ethics Review Board at the Université Libre de Pays des Grands Lacs (ULPGL) based locally in Goma, Eastern Congo. Oral and/or written consent was obtained from all interviewees, according to the ethical standards enforced by the ULPGL.

VII-B: Mid-Project Evaluation Tools and Methods

Participant Observation Ratings Tool: This tool was used by our psychosocial assistant four times over the course of the project (quarterly measurements). This tool asks the user/observer to use a likert scale (1-5) to assess (based on their observations) measure indicators of the participants levels of: (1) Self-efficacy; (2) Interpersonal skills; (3) Emotional regulation; (4) Levels of confidence; (5) Willingness to talk about SGBV within the project environment; and (6) Active engagement with artwork.

Participant Interactive Oral Survey: This oral survey was conducted with the adolescent girl participants once at the start of the project and once at the end. The tool is conducted within the classroom group setting, and asks each of the participants to rate their level of agreement/disagreement with particular statements using a scale of 1 (total disagreement) to 5 (total agreement). Five questions were asked each time this tool was implemented. Unfortunately, there was an overall misunderstanding/misinterpretation from

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respondents about the oral survey statements/questions posed, and a lack of clarity about how to represent their personal agreement/disagreement of each statement using a scale of 1 to 5. Thus, although this evaluation tool was implemented at the beginning and end of the project, all of the data collected using this tool has been excluded from the final evaluation report findings as it was considered to be an inaccurate representation of the perspectives of respondents.

Program Participants Qualitative In-Depth Interviews: Four participants were purposively selected from each of the two groups of young women participants; thus, a total of eight participants were interviewed. Interviews were conducted with these same participants at two time points: mid-project (session 12-15) and post-project (two weeks post). The mid-project interviews were conducted in a private office space at CAMME, and the post-project interviews were conducted either in the house of the participant or the same private office space at CAMME (the participant decided on which was preferred). NF conducted all of the interviews in French and the psychosocial assistant served as an interpreter from Swahili to French. Written consent was obtained from the participants' parent/guardian and oral consent was obtained from the participant prior to conducting the interview. NF took notes throughout the interview and also audio recorded the interviews in order to complete her notes post-interview completion.

Program Assistants Qualitative Semi-Structured Interviews: Two project assistants – one artistic assistant and the psychosocial assistant – were purposively selected; thus, a total of two assistants were interviewed. Interviews were conducted with these same participants at two time points: mid-project (session 12) and post-project (two weeks). NF conducted the interviews in a space agreed upon by the interviewee; all interviews were conducted in French. Written consent was obtained from the assistants prior to conducting the interview. NF took notes throughout the interview and also audio recorded the interviews in order to complete her notes post-interview completion.

Program Director Qualitative Semi-Structured Interview: The program director was interviewed two weeks after project completion, in order to understand her perceptions about how the project went, what worked well, and what could be done better next time. Questions in this interview also focused on unpacking a potential mechanism of impact/change that was observed throughout this project as well as in others implemented in other contexts previously. This interview was held in a private space selected by the interviewee, and written consent was obtained from the interviewee prior to conducting the interview.

Community Arts Council Members (including decision-makers) Qualitative Semi-Structured Interviews: Six Community Arts Council (CAC) members were purposively selected; thus a total of six CAC members were interviewed (two female, 4 male). Interviews were conducted post project (two weeks) in a private and comfortable space selected by the interviewee; all interviews were conducted in French. Written consent

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was obtained from the CAC members prior to conducting the interview. NF took notes throughout the interview and also audio recorded the interviews in order to complete her notes post-interview completion.

Parents/Guardians Qualitative Semi-Structured Interviews: Eight

parents/guardians (4 female, 4 male) were purposively selected. Interviews were conducted post-project (two weeks) within the private homes of each of the interviewees. NF conducted all of the interviews in French and the psychosocial assistant served as an interpreter from Swahili to French. Written consent was obtained from each interviewee prior to conducting the interview. NF took notes throughout the interview and also audio recorded the interviews in order to complete her notes post-interview completion.

Community Member Oral Survey: Ten community members (five female, five male) were randomly selected within walking distance from each of the two mural sites. Interviews were conducted post-project (three weeks) in either a public or a private space, as per the request of the interviewee. NF conducted all of the interviews in French and the psychosocial assistant served as an interpreter from Swahili to French. Oral consent was obtained from each interviewee prior to conducting the interview. NF took notes throughout the interview and also audio recorded the interviews in order to complete her notes post-interview completion.

VIII: Final Evaluation Findings & Discussion

The evaluation findings are reported here with respect to each of the aforementioned objectives of the project.

VIII-A: Goal I: Participants Heal Through Engagement with Art

In this section, both quantitative and qualitative findings related to participants healing through engagement with art are summarized.

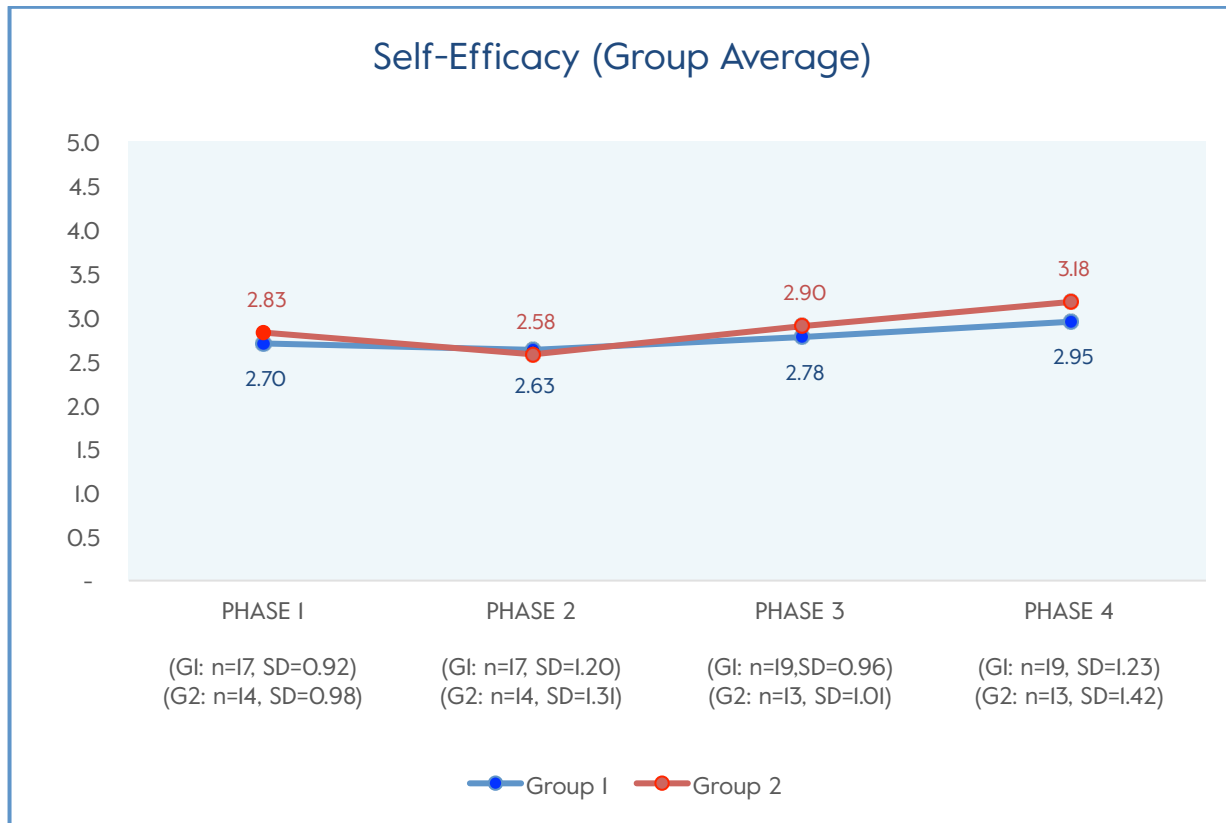
Quantitative Findings: Participant Observation Ratings Tool

Five key indicators of healing through art were measured quantitatively using the Participant Observation Ratings tool. These include: (1) Self-efficacy; (2) Interpersonal skills; (3) Emotional regulation; (4) Levels of confidence; and (5) Active engagement with artwork.

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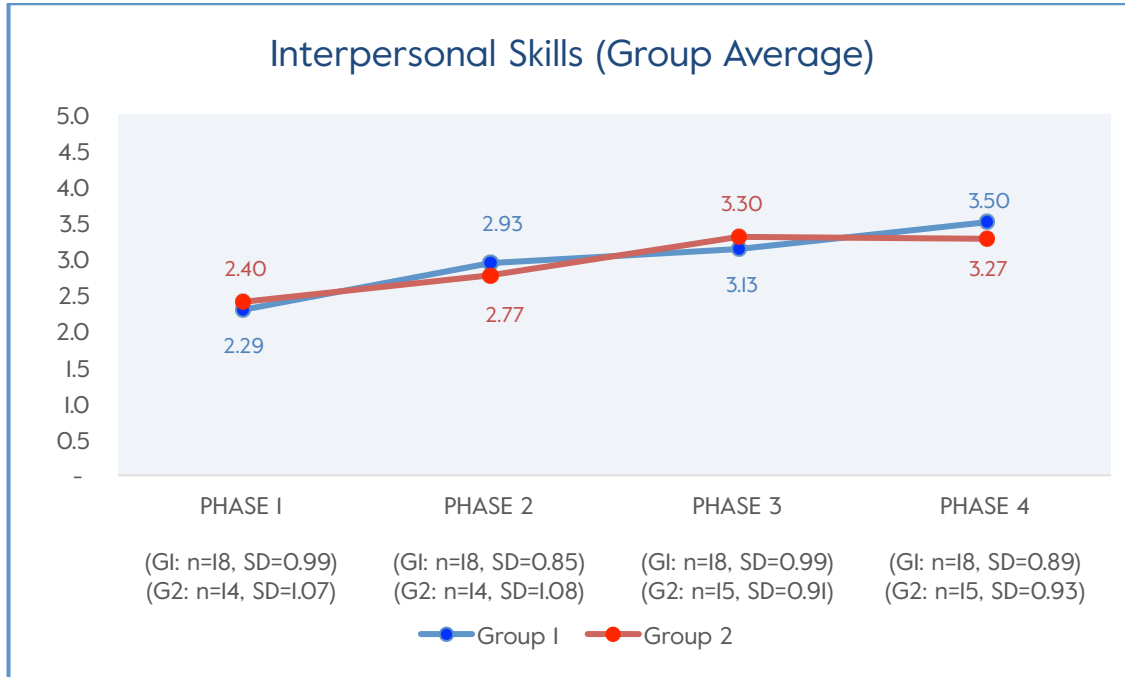
Below, each of the findings related to these indicators are represented in graph format with a brief explanation.

(1) Self efficacy



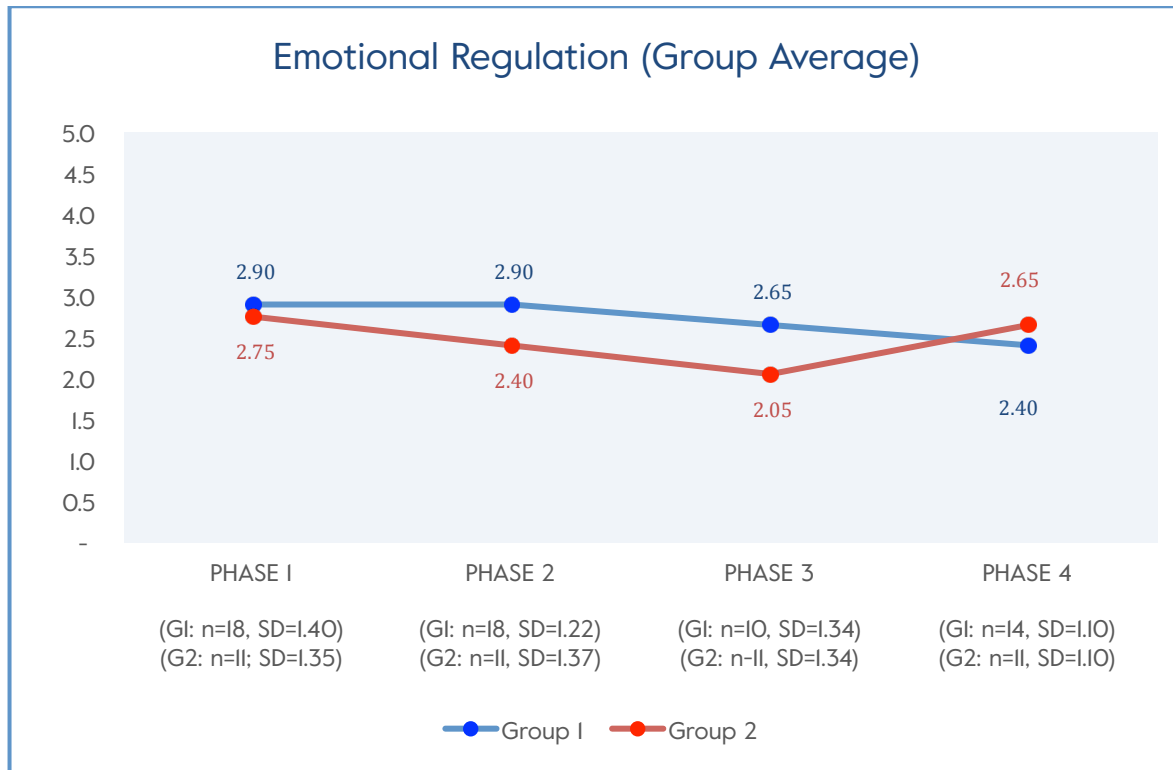
The findings from the Participant Observation Ratings Tool show a slight increase in the group average of self-efficacy ratings for both groups over the course of the project. At phase two there is a slight decrease in ratings for both groups, perhaps reflecting an adjustment period for the participants to a new setting and learning environment. No significant change was observed for a repeated measures test at $p < 0.05$ for either group; given the small sample size and the short time period of this evaluation study, a statistically significant change was unlikely to be observed in this repeated measures test.

(2) Interpersonal skills



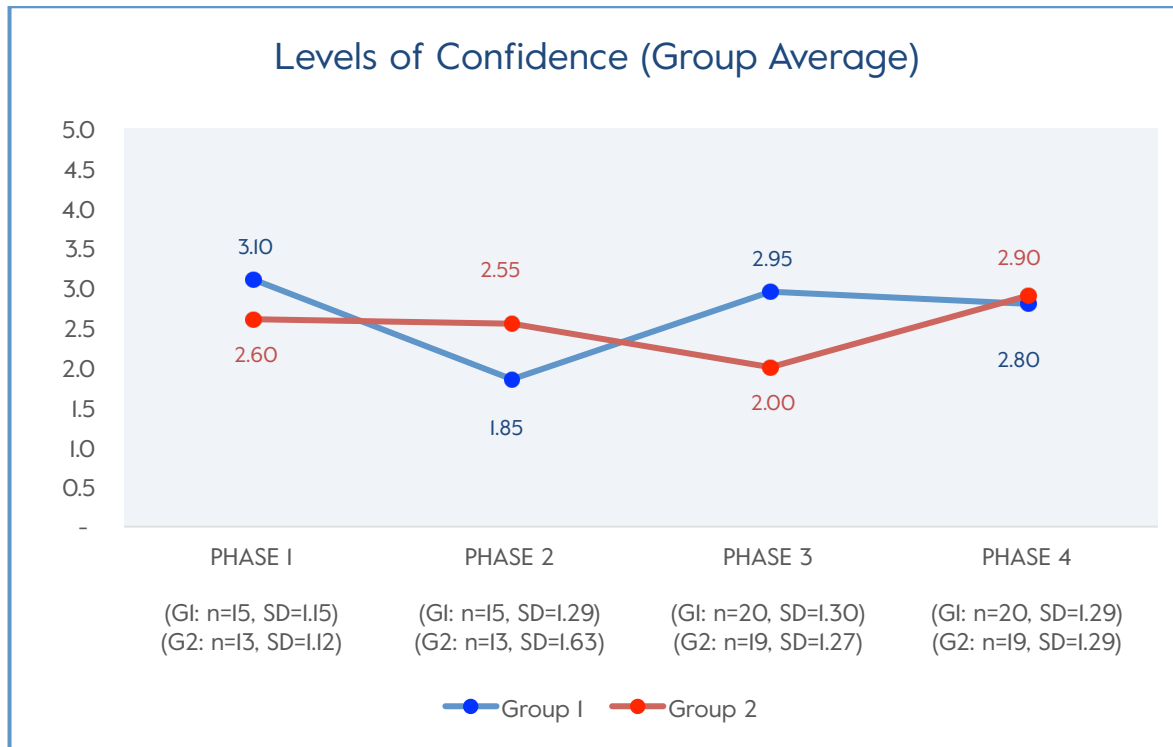
The findings from the Participant Observation Ratings Tool show an increase in the group average of interpersonal skills ratings for both groups over the course of the project; a steady increase is seen at each of the observation time-points. No significant change was observed for a repeated measures test at $p < 0.05$ for either group; given the small sample size and the short time period of this evaluation study, a statistically significant change was unlikely to be observed in this repeated measures test.

(3) Emotional regulation



The findings from the Participant Observation Ratings Tool show a slight decrease in the group average of emotional regulation ratings for both groups over the course of the project. Interestingly, group 2 shows an increase for the final quarterly measure that is only slightly lower than the original first measure for this same group. One hypothesis to explain this is that by expressing themselves through their artwork, the girls actually began to experience emotions that they hadn't previously allowed themselves to experience (supressed emotions), and thus were challenged in adapting to this increased emotional regulation. It is possible that group 2 (older group) were beginning to regulate these newly surfaced emotions closer to the end of the project, whereas the younger group hadn't quite made it to this turning point yet. No significant change was observed for a repeated measures test at $p < 0.05$ for either group; given the small sample size and the short time period of this evaluation study, a statistically significant change was unlikely to be observed in this repeated measures test.

(4) Levels of confidence



The findings from the Participant Observation Ratings Tool show an overall decrease in the group average of levels of confidence skills ratings for group 1 (younger group) and an overall increase for group 2 (older group); these changes did not occur in incremental steps in one particular direction for either group. One hypothesis for the overall effect observed is that the observed negative change in emotional regulation for the younger group could also be influencing the confidence levels of the younger group, as they are perhaps less able to cope with these emotional changes than the older group; more investigation about this interaction is still needed. For group 2 (older group), a positive significant change was observed for a repeated measures test ($p=0.004$); no significant change was observed for a repeated measures test at $p<0.05$ for group 1 (younger group). Given the small sample size and the short time period of this evaluation study, a statistically significant change was unlikely to be observed in this repeated measures test.

(5) Active engagement with artwork

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The findings from the Participant Observation Ratings Tool are not included in the report as there seemed to be a misunderstanding of the observers' interpretation of the indicator, and also because the time-point measures and the variation in project activities was not seen to be an accurate measure about the overall progression of engagement over time.

Qualitative Findings: Interviews and Oral Surveys

Some additional themes related to healing through engagement with the arts emerged from the qualitative data; key quotes are highlighted below to give insight into each thematic category.

General perceptions about healing through the arts

“Goma is a population that is still traumatized with everything that has happened with war over and over again, rape, violence, they way that people have been killed – I think that the population is traumatized. But, art - it can heal. It gives joy, actually. When you see a drawing or a positive image, we become happy. I think this can be a way to detraumatize.” (CAC member, Post-Project Evaluation)

Personal expression

Hopes for the future:

“What I want to show to people is the future, what I will have and what I will be. Everything that I draw relates to that.” (Participant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)

Personal stories:

“I want to draw to tell my story. I want people to ask me about my drawing and then I can them about it and I can express my story.” (Participant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)

“Some of the girls are starting to express their own personal stories through their artwork.” (Project Assistant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)

“In the drawings, the girls talk a lot about their life in Goma. For example, this includes the war, the volcano, insecurity, and lack of access to water. I think that they are expressing these messages because they are limited in their perspective and they haven't yet had the chance to experience things outside of this reality.” (Project Assistant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)

Personal desires:

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*"I like to draw things that I want, like a nice house that is well-constructed."
(Participant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)*

Group expression

"We wrote 'mwanamke shujaa' meaning 'women leaders' on our mural painting. There are girls that discredit themselves, thinking that they can't paint or draw. But if they pass by this painting, even though they may neglect their own talents now they can start to think differently and they can think that if they wanted, they could do this too." (Participant Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

"In the 3 drawings that we did on the wall, we showed that girls too can do something." (Participant Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

"When we paint at the wall, our drawings are big. When people pass by on the road they see what we have drawn. This is good because everyone can take their own lessons from the drawings – even us." (Participant Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

Findings

Overall, the girl participants were observed to increase in measures of self-efficacy and interpersonal skills, and decrease in measures of emotional regulation. For measures of levels of confidence, participants were observed to decrease over time for group 1 (younger group) and increase over time (significantly) for group 2 (older group). The qualitative findings suggest that the participants were beginning to express their personal ideas, perspectives, stories, and desires. As a group, many become passionate about expressing a collective group message with their community, also relating this message to themselves on a more personal level.

In the related literature, expressions of creativity and personal story-telling processes have been linked to psychological healing processes from trauma (Stuckey & Nobel, 2010). Engagement in the arts more broadly has been shown to have a number of positive effects on holistic health (physical, mental, social, spiritual); specific arts-based processes can directly impact healing through processes such as: visual art therapy⁴, drama therapy⁵, movement therapy⁶, and music therapy⁷; and, indirect healing processes through engagement in the arts can also influence individual, community and societal determinants of health (Lander & Graham-Pole, 2008). During a community arts process, participants are encouraged to enter into a reflexive process - as individuals and also as a group - within which they can actively, visibly, and viscerally, reflect on the social conditions of their lives, agency, root political causes of war and disease, perceived roles in society, and power

⁴ Visual art therapy: "Uses painting and sculpture for healing, catharsis, and other psychotherapeutic purposes" (Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 10).

⁵ Drama therapy: "Uses role-play, improvisation, and performance techniques for healing, catharsis, problem-solving, and other psychotherapeutic purposes" (Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 10).

⁶ Movement therapy: "Connects the mind with the body and uses dance and expressive movement for physical healing, catharsis, and other psychotherapeutic purposes" (Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 10).

⁷ Music therapy: "Music therapy uses sound, music and other music-related strategies for healing, catharsis, and other psychotherapeutic purposes" (Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 10).

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dynamics (Barndt, 2008). In other words, participants can work collaboratively to identify topics of interest through personal and group reflection on their experiences in the world (as they have come to know it). This active reflection may also contribute to healing process for both individuals and groups.

VIII-B: Goal 2: Participants Positively Engage in Their Community

Qualitative Findings: Interviews and Oral Surveys

The key themes related to participants positively engaging in their community are noted below; key quotes are highlighted to give insight into each thematic category.

Application of skills to community:

“I can use these skills in drawing and painting at my church. I can do the décor, I can paint pastors, I can draw on calendars”. (Participant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)

“The girls are learning behavioral skills that are useful in the classroom, the neighborhood, and in the family.” (Project Assistant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)

“When we were at the wall, there were people who came up to us and started to ask us to paint for them as well [...]. I replied to say that yes we are capable, and that we could come as a group of five to do it!” (Participant Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

Having a role or ‘place’ in the community

“When I pass the wall now I think: Me too, I have drawn this! Before I didn’t know how to draw and I didn’t know that I could draw on a wall in my community! But me too, I drew here.” (Participant Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

“These girls who were staying home, who were lonely, who were depressed – now they have opened up to the community. This is already an impact of the art through which you took these young people”. (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

Sense of pride in the community

“Even the way they were displaying what they achieved, and the joy they had doing it – presenting their achievements to the community – they were so confident.” (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

“When we saw the participants so proud of what they had achieved, we were also proud. We found out that it gave them hope for the future. It gave them the sense

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of feeling that they have something already - they can discover - they can do something that is important for the community.” (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

Findings

Overall, these findings suggest that the arts-based skills learned by the girl participants throughout the project were understood to be applicable and relevant in the community, contributing even to the girls’ sense of having a role/place in their community and a sense of pride for both the girls and the community.

In the related literature, community engagement through the arts has been described as an empowering process for participants (Matarasso, 1997); these results would need to be analysed with respect to varying definitions and frameworks of ‘empowerment’ (there are many in the related literature) in order to confirm this hypothesis, however a sense of role/place in the community and a sense of pride can generally be understood as elements of individual and community empowerment.

VIII-C: Goal 3: Participants improve their peer support networks

Qualitative Findings: Interviews and Oral Surveys

The key themes related to participants improving their peer support networks are noted below; key quotes are highlighted to give insight into each thematic category.

Solidarity:

“The girls like to discuss among themselves. They seem to understand each other. They talk about their families and other things, and after they discuss they seem to be on the same page and work well together. They seem to understand each other well.” (Project Assistant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)

“In the classroom I said what I wanted to say, there wasn’t anything that stayed inside of my heart that I didn’t express. I felt understood by the girls in the class.” (Participant Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

Informal social engagement:

“At the beginning the girls were very shy to express themselves or to make each other laugh. But now, we dance at the beginning of the class and during the breaks.

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Those who were resistant to dancing before are opening up and are starting to dance.” (Project Assistant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)

*“If we work together in class, we can get together or call each other after the training because we have learned from each other and taught each other.”
(Participant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)*

Social capital:

“I have more friends now – people who I have met here.” (Participant Interview, Mid-Project Evaluation)

“This kind of project reinforces cohesion, and we definitely observed this among the girls. From what we saw, there were almost no barriers that remained between them by the end.” (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

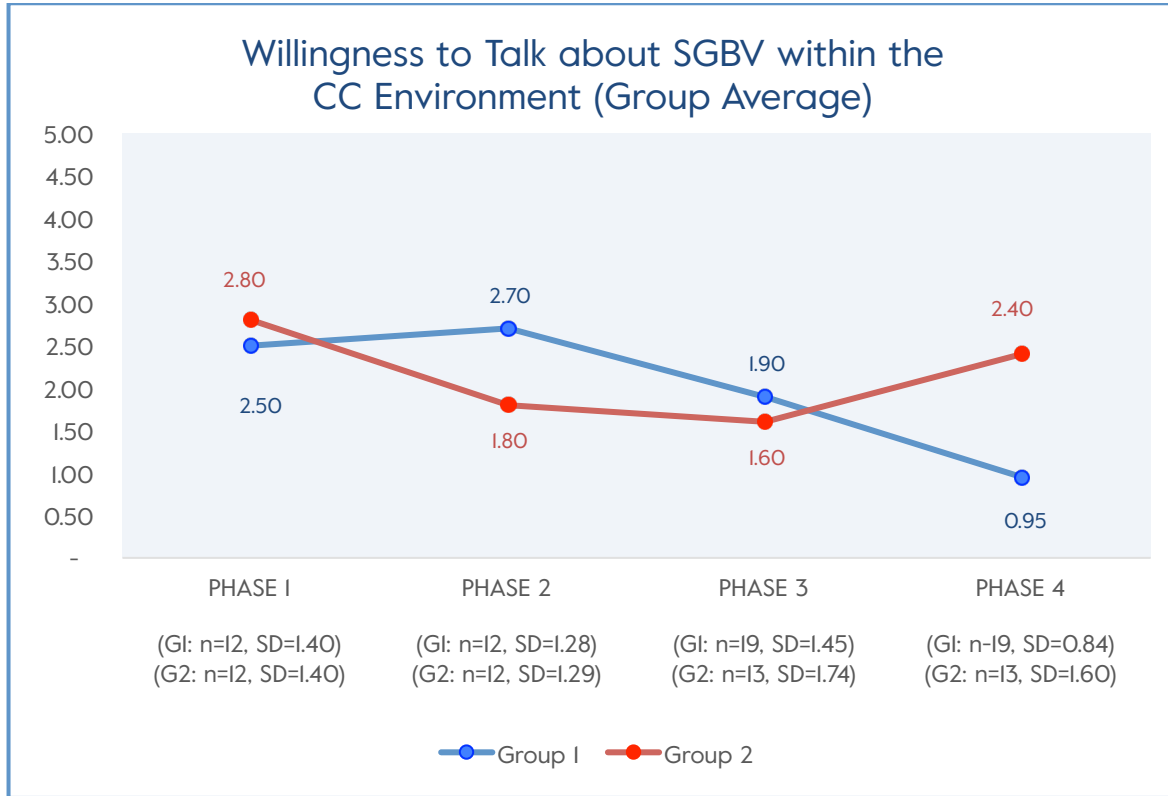
Findings

These findings suggest that peer support networks were developing and building over the course of the project. In line with these findings, Barndt (2008) notes that community arts processes can facilitate the building of social connections and relationships. Specifically, the act of participating in art-making, working collaboratively with a shared focus (Goodwin & Shapiro, 2002), engaging in shared decision-making (Corneil, 2012), and working collaboratively in neutral spaces (Israel et al., 1998) have been shown to positively impact relationship-building.

VIII-D: Goal 4 & 5: Increased awareness and knowledge surrounding SGBV among participants & community leaders

Quantitative Findings: Participant Observation Ratings Tool

The Participant Observation Ratings tool was used to measure the participants' willingness to talk about SGBV within the CC environment; this measure was considered to also reflect levels of awareness and knowledge surrounding SGBV among participants.



The findings from the Participant Observation Ratings Tool show an overall decrease in the group average of willingness to talk about SGBV within the CC environment ratings for both groups over the course of the project (larger decrease observed for group 1). It is hypothesized that since the Participant Observation Rating Tool was used only in particular classroom and mural painting sessions, it was difficult to observe this phenomenon systematically at each of the quarterly measure time points (as some program activities encouraged talking about SGBV, whereas others focused more on different topic areas). Overall the topic of SGBV was not as explicit in the psychosocial curriculum as originally planned, likely influencing/biasing the systematic aspect of measuring of this indicator. No significant change was observed for a repeated measures test at $p < 0.05$ for either group; given the small sample size and the short time period of this evaluation study, a statistically significant change was unlikely to be observed in this repeated measures test.

The project director and community engagement and psychosocial lead observed as facilitators that the girls opened up over time and several (seven) came forward to share their stories with presenters that we invited to speak about the topic, with the class itself and/or with our assistants. Approximately 25 of the girls showed interest in the continued psychosocial support (further described in the Section IX: Moving Forward), indicating an openness and motivation to address personal issues potentially related to sexual violence or other trauma.

Qualitative Interviews and Oral Surveys

In the interviews and oral surveys conducted with participants, parents, community members and community leaders, there were no clear indications given that that awareness about SGBV had changed.

Findings

There were no specific changes observed or measured over time with regards to increased awareness and knowledge surrounding SGBV among participants & community leaders. This is understandable given the change in scope of the visual imagery created and represented during the project. To understand the reasons for this change in scope, refer back to Section V. Project Implementation and Contextual Adaptations, V-A: Public art component.

VIII-E: Goal 6: Reduced stigma around SGBV

Qualitative Interviews and Oral Surveys

Key quotes are highlighted below to give insight into the findings for this goal.

“Other images in Goma stigmatize and victimize women. But, the images that you have created with this project have given value to women. These images show another side of women and women’s issues.” (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

“Sometimes others when they draw they talk about gender-based violence in the community, they just draw a man trying to rape a woman, and sometimes it has ethical problems. But this picture they have drawn, it talks about the same thing without violating the ethical standard.” (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

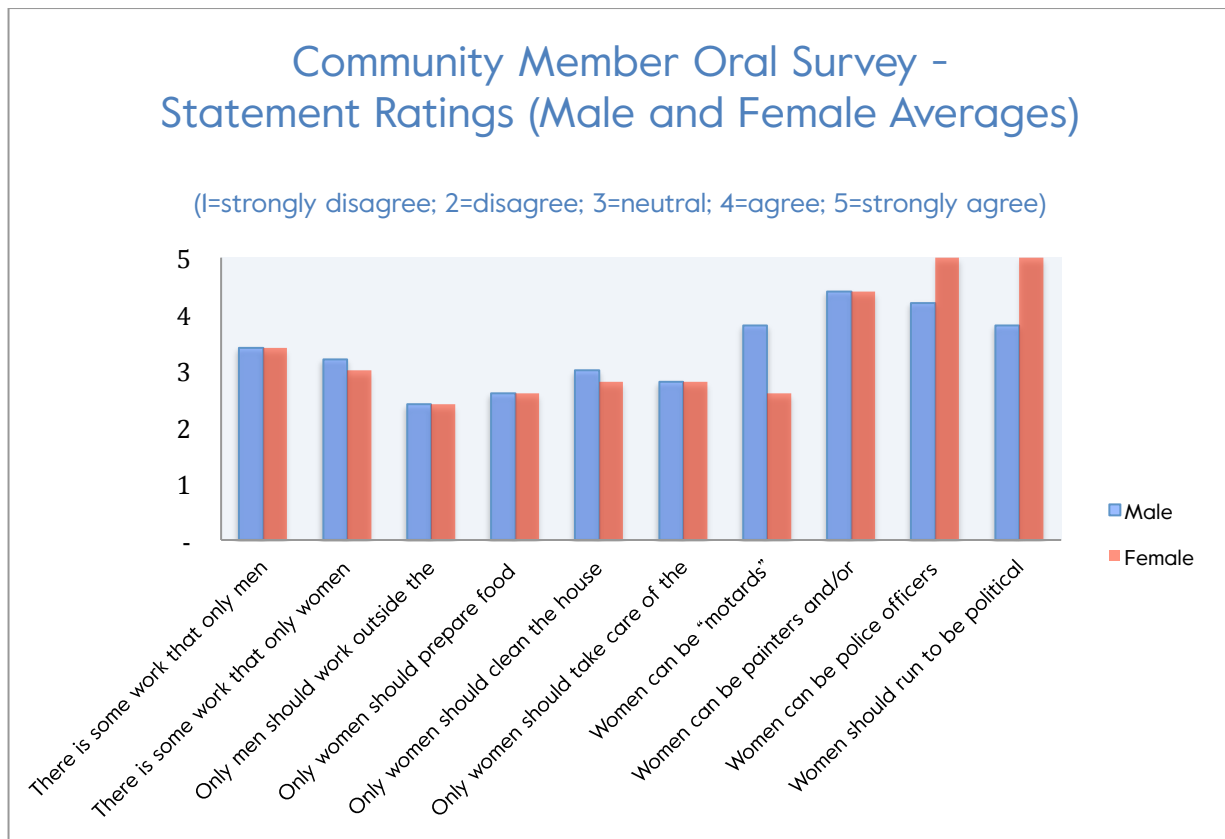
“It gives the message in a positive way. This is how we can fight gender-based violence – showing the positive things, not to repeat the negative, which is really impacting negatively on the victims.” (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

Findings

These findings suggest that the imagery in the murals were appreciated by the community, and stand out as a positive step toward reducing stigma around SGBV and about the roles of women in society.

VIII-F: Goal 7: Increased assets-focused thinking that promotes the leadership of women/girls in society

The Community Member Oral Survey Statement Ratings provide some indication about the general perceptions of the role of women in society two weeks post-project completion (no baseline measure recorded). In total, ten community members were interviewed (female n=5; male n=5) and as part of each interview the oral survey statement ratings were recorded.



These findings suggest that community members are in agreement (or told us that they were in agreement) with women taking on the specific leadership positions that were represented in the murals themselves; these include: women as 'motards' (or motorcycle taxi drivers), women as painters and/or artists, women as police officers, and women running as political leaders. With the exception of the women's acceptance ratings of a woman motorcycle taxi driver (low), all of the other statements that were visually expressed in the murals were seemingly more accepted than other statements relating to women and their role in society.

Qualitative Interviews and Oral Surveys

Key quotes are highlighted below to give insight into the findings for this goal.

“When people look at my drawings, I want them to think that I am a woman leader and I want them to accept it. If I am able to draw myself then they can know that I am a woman leader.” (Participant Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

“These images can allow the community to have a different understanding of women in the community. They can understand that women are capable. This can help a lot with community development and the development of the country.” (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

Findings

These findings suggest that the imagery in the murals show a more positive and strong side of Congolese women to the community, which is something that neither the girls themselves nor the community members are used to seeing. These images seemed to encourage reflection about women leadership and the role of women in society among the girl participants and community members. In particular, these murals have likely stimulated thought about women taking on roles as motorcycle taxi drivers, police officers, artists/painters, and political candidates – as these roles are directly depicted in the murals themselves.

VIII-G: 8) Reduced victim-based mentality that surrounds women/girls

Qualitative Interviews and Oral Surveys

Key quotes are highlighted below to give insight into the findings for this goal.

“In a context like ours in the Democratic Republic of Congo and particularly in Goma, people have cultivated a culture of stigmatization of women - about the war and the rape that has happened to them. Everyone considers them like victims. [...] But I don't think that they need to stay in this role as victims. [...]. Images can also speak and show the positive side and the strong side of women. For example, the images that were created as part of this project show that women are capable. And me I believe – I know – that women are capable. I am sure about the role that they play in society and in development, in peacebuilding, in daily life. Women need to understand the role that they can play so that they involve themselves. And these

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images – made by girls – who have understood their skills, are an ideal way to communicate this message.” (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation).

“This is a project that brings adolescents – and girls who have been victims of the war – to regain self-confidence, and to understand that they are able to do something in their lives and in the community – that is fun but that also helps them to move forward.” (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation).

Findings

These findings suggest that the imagery in the murals show a more positive and strong side of Congolese women to the community, going against the victim-based mentality that surrounds women/girls in this context. These images seemed to encourage reflection about the positive portrayal of women in society, and to put into question the idea of victimizing women as opposed to promoting their strengths.

IX: Moving Forward

By engaging our CAC members throughout the duration of the project, and by openly sharing our work and project-based values with the local and international community based in Goma, we were able to develop some strong partnerships that we are still building upon post-project completion. These partners have understood the need for the work that we were doing and have expressed their desire to continue with it. Following the completion of the Courage in Congo project, there are three main local initiatives that will continue, each of which is described below.

Continued Arts Training in Painting and Drawing at CAMME

Inspired by the Courage in Congo project, UJADP recognized the need to train more female artists within the context of Goma. After 10 years in Goma, UJADP has only trained two females in total; these two females we hired as our two artistic assistants for the project. The coordinator of UJADP has become extremely passionate about the idea of training strong female artists, and CAMME has agreed to continue to offer the space for the girls to meet once a week (Tuesday mornings). One of our artistic assistants will continue to teach at these sessions, and other teachers (including the coordinator of UJADP) will also teach on a rotating system. Our photographer/videographer assistant has become extremely passionate about following up with this as well, and has now taken on the lead as the head coordinator of this movement that they are now calling “M’Shujarts”. The ‘M’ stands for ‘mwanamke’ (women), ‘mwanume’ (men), and also ‘movement’ – indicating that this is a movement for women, but that men are also included and encouraged to engage. ‘Shuj’arts’ is a combination of ‘shujaa’ meaning ‘leader’ (as the girls now often call themselves and/or

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their group) and the 'arts'. The partnership is officially between UJDAP, CAMME and CC; the specific roles of each of the members and the curriculum are still being developed/refined, but each contributing member is working on a volunteer basis. The classes taking place each week as part of this movement combine both of the groups from Courage in Congo; thus far, attendees have ranged from 15-30 participants per class. Significantly M'Shujarts! is the largest group of women artists in Goma and perhaps in the larger region of Eastern Congo.

Ongoing psychosocial support

A trained female psychologist has agreed to volunteer to meet with the girls once a week (every Saturday morning) to lead both individual and group psychosocial activities. This psychologist is aware of some of the more urgent psychosocial issues that emerged with particular individuals over the course of the project, and is working hard to link each of the girls to the particular psychosocial resources in Goma that they need. Our psychosocial assistant is also volunteering to work with this psychologist at these sessions once a week; the exact curriculum is still being developed. This ongoing psychosocial support is being offered to all of the 35 girls who successfully completed the Courage in Congo project.

Funded education through “rattrapage scolaire”:

In the final stages of the project, 31 of the 35 young girl participants who successfully completed the project expressed their increased motivation and desire to return to school. We were able to contact a school nearby CAMME that has a 'rattrapage scolaire' program, meaning that they offer a condensed educational program for individuals who have left school to get their degree within a shorter time period. After the closing ceremony and mural unveiling, an international attendee (UN worker based in Goma) offered to fund this 'rattrapage scolaire' schooling initiative for each of the girls who are interested in attending this program for the upcoming school year. We have since been able to offer the opportunity for the girls, and our psychosocial assistant has been meeting with the parents/guardians to discuss any concerns that they may have. Currently, all 31 girls and their parents/guardians have confirmed that they will be starting with the 'rattrapage scolaire' program in September 2016.

Over the course of the first year of this educational initiative, CAMME (with the support of the Courage in Congo psychosocial and community engagement assistants) has agreed to follow-up with the girls and their parents/guardians about their attendance in the program to provide any relevant support for the girls in this accelerated educational pursuit. For the girls who decide to complete the full year in the 'rattrapage scolaire' program, CC and CAMME will collectively fundraise for those who wish to continue with the program during the upcoming years until they are able to receive their full degrees.

X: Conclusion



Participant Natalie poses in front of the completed Development and Promotion of Women Leadership that she helped to create, April, 2016

In conclusion we are confident to report on the success of the Courage in Congo Project and its value to the community and project participants who were indirect and direct beneficiaries of the project respectively. Thirty-five participants successfully completed the program. This community includes the fourteen community leaders who formed the Community Arts Council (CAC), and the population of approximately 100,000 who live in the two neighborhoods in Goma, DRC where the murals were created.

The program, including recruitment methods, staffing and curriculum content was well developed enabling us to work successfully and productively with the community and hard-to-reach out-of-school adolescent girls on the issue of SGBV. The program's strength came from the various inputs that CC was able to integrate particularly from the Population Council's girl-centered programming, and the contextual adaptations and additions from the CAC composed of local leaders, project staff and the participants themselves that were consistently incorporated throughout the project in accordance with CC's community formulated approach. In addition, our project partners CAMME and IRC provided the

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necessary logistical support and contributed relevant knowledge on the context and population in order for the project implementation to run smoothly. The project finished just one week past the expected completion date on April 15 2016.

Overall Courage in Congo was greatly appreciated by partners, community members, participants, community leaders, and the family members of participants. Significantly, our goals were achieved as evidenced by the final evaluation findings and discussion. The ultimate goal to improve a select community in Goma's perceptions of women and girls in society was reached and while several excerpts from qualitative interviews capture this well, the following one is particularly elucidating:

"These images can allow the community to have a different understanding of women in the community. They can understand that women are capable. This can help a lot with community development and the development of the country." (CAC Member Interview, Post-Project Evaluation)

As mentioned in the synopsis of this report, the following results of the project are notable:

A therapeutic and transformational change was observable in the participants and community members who participated in the project affirming the positive impact of community arts projects for communities in distress. These observations are captured in the final evaluation findings and discussion.

The tools and methods developed for the project contribute to the emerging field of community arts-based interventions in conflict-affected communities and will help to guide CC's future projects.

A valuable outcome of the CAC meetings was that they provided a forum for community leaders to look critically at visual representation of women and girls in Goma and the region of Eastern Congo, and to identify types of visual representation of women and girls that they wished to see publically expressed. The result was a fresh approach to the campaigns for SGBV prevention and support of women and girls.

The project achieved sustainability and appreciation on a local level. Appreciation was evident in the overwhelmingly positive reception of the project by community members, family of the participants and the participants themselves as evidenced in post-project qualitative interviews. Several post-project initiatives that function independently of CC and continue to support the participants and attest to the positive reception and relevancy of CC's approach, values and ideas for this community. Included in this are a volunteer run arts class, psychosocial support currently offered free of charge to the participants and funding and supervision for twenty-nine of the participants to re-enroll in primary and secondary education. We are extremely pleased that these post-project initiatives will continue to support the participants on their path forwards in more opportunity and development.

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COLORS OF CONNECTION

APPENDIX A: Adapted Results Framework

