



Quantitative Endline Evaluation Report

Life Skills for Equality Project, Cambodia

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December 2024

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Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank Tonin Soeun and Boralin Boray from Room to Read Cambodia, for leading the data collection, field coordination, monitoring and evaluation process related to the evaluation of the Life Skills for Equality Program. The authors would also like to thank Kayla Nachtsheim for her support with visualization of the results, and Avicia Rodgers for her support with copy-editing. Last, the authors would like to thank Vantha Chea, Nead Bunna, Thuy Nguyen and everyone at Room to Read who worked tirelessly to support this program.

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Abbreviations

ALSA.....	Adolescent Life Skills Assessment
FF.....	Field Facilitators
FGC.....	Focus Group Discussion
GEP.....	Girls' Education and Gender Equality Program
GO.....	Room to Read's Global Office
IDI.....	In-Depth Interview
KAP.....	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Survey
KH.....	Cambodia
KHCO.....	Room to Read's Cambodia Country Office
KH-RME.....	Room to Read Cambodia's Research, Monitoring and Evaluation
LS.....	Life Skills
LSEP.....	Life Skills for Equality Project
M.....	Mean
PoE.....	Provincial Office of Education
RME.....	Research, Monitoring and Evaluation
RtR.....	Room to Read
SD.....	Standard Deviation
SM.....	Social Mobilizer

Executive Summary

Room to Read's Girls' Education and Gender Equality Program has been supporting girls across Cambodia for over 20 years with a mix of life skills education, individual mentorship, community engagement and material support. In recent years, Room to Read has begun expanding the scope of this gender equality work to include programming designed for boys. As part of this initiative, the Life Skills for Equality Project (LSEP) was launched in Cambodia in 2022 as a pilot program. This two-year initiative aims to equip boys with the life skills needed for success in school and beyond, while also challenging harmful gender norms.

The LSEP program is poised for continued implementation in Cambodia, as well as expansion into other Room to Read program countries. While designing the pilot program, Room to Read generated a learning agenda to inform future scale-up and expansion, which was paired with a research, monitoring and evaluation plan to measure successes, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement. The quantitative evaluation focused on three primary areas: 1) Observable changes in gender attitudes or knowledge among participating boys; 2) Observable changes in gender attitudes or knowledge among girls, students, and parents; and 3) Curriculum content identified by boys as most enjoyable, relevant and useful. This study presents the quantitative analysis of the results from the learning agenda evaluation.

All boys and girls enrolled in grade eight in the four pilot program schools were asked to complete surveys designed to answer these research questions. Results from this endline survey were compared to those collected at baseline and midline, providing specifics on changes within this group over time. The surveys, designed by Room to Read's Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation team to address the learning agenda, included additional questions at endline to explore themes such as learning, curriculum relevance, and challenges. Topics covered in the surveys included career, educational, and marriage aspirations, gender knowledge and attitudes, and life skills.

Results from these surveys provided evidence that the LSEP program had overall improved students' gender knowledge and attitudes, led to significant changes in both intended age of marriage and educational and occupational aspirations for students, and led to gains in life skills. Notably, gender differences were seen in educational and occupational aspirations, as well as in gains in life skills. Gender differences were also present in students' reported appreciation for gender-related content.

The present study provides strong evidence that Room to Read's LSEP has yielded highly promising results. Participants of all genders experienced significant gains in gender knowledge, awareness and life skills. They have also expressed support for the program's content, considering it both relevant and impactful. Coupled with the qualitative endline report done in parallel with this qualitative study, these findings offer valuable insights that allow Room to Read to move forward in confidence in scaling the program, and to accomplish the LSEP learning agenda in full.

Introduction

Life Skills for Equality Project (LSEP)

Room to Read (RtR), under its Girl's Education and Gender Equality Program (GEP), piloted a two-year program called Life Skills for Equality Project (LSEP). This pilot program offered life skills sessions to boys, to contribute towards improving gender equality in education. The LSEP aimed to empower boys so that they could become agents of change in their own communities. The LSEP was designed with the support of Equimundo and since 2022, was implemented in the Banteay Meanchey province in Cambodia. The two-year program was implemented in grades 7 and 8 and included some co-educational sessions. The program included 34 life skills sessions over two years, a voluntary Life Skills Club for students, parental engagement and engagement activities with Provincial Education Directors and other relevant Departments.

Program Implementation

The LSEP program was piloted in two districts: Mongkol Borey and Preah Net Preah, both in the Banteay Meanchey Province of Cambodia (see Table 1 for more details). The pilot took place in 4 government schools, all of which were part of RtR's standard GEP program (which only involves girls as participants). At each school, teachers collaborated with RtR's field facilitators to deliver sessions and implement program activities for the LSEP program. The program supported approximately 400 boys.

Table 1: Program scope

School Name	District Name	# of RtR facilitators	# of teachers
1. Chub Vary High school	Mongkol	1	2
2. Preah Net Preah lower secondary school	Borey	1	2
3. O Snguot Lower Secondary School	Preah Net	1	2
4. Raung Kor High school	Preah	2	2
Total		5	8

The LSEP includes four mixed-gender sessions in year one and ten mixed-gender sessions in year two, delivered together to boys and GEP girls.

Program Evaluation

In 2022, RtR developed a learning agenda to generate lessons from the LSEP pilot program that could inform future design improvements and/or scale-ups of the initiative within Cambodia or in other countries. The learning agenda was organized around 17 learning questions that focused on different aspects of the program such as program design, implementation fidelity, outputs and outcomes of the program, and conditions for scale-up (see Table 2).

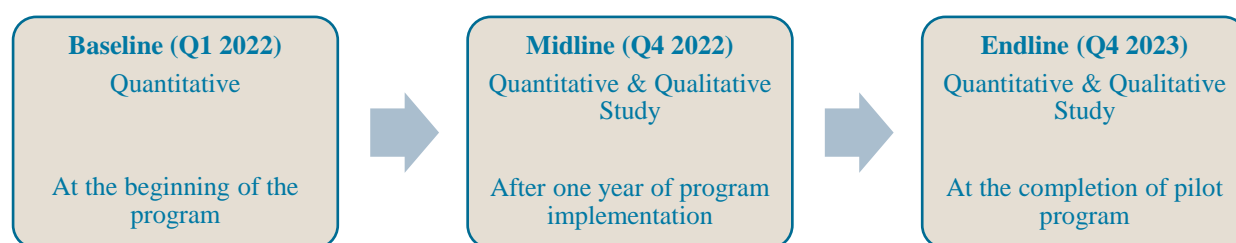
Table 2: LSEP's Learning Agenda

Topic Area	No.	Question
Pilot Implementation	1	What program inputs were implemented for each pilot school and participant group, and on what timeline?
Pilot Implementation	2	How do these program inputs compare to the intended model?
Pilot Implementation	3	What was the quality of session facilitation / delivery of content? How well-equipped are facilitators to deliver the sessions with quality?
Curriculum/Design	4	Were facilitators able to deliver all planned content in the available time?
Curriculum/Design	5	What level of demand for this content is there among boys in these schools at outset?
Curriculum/Design	6	What curriculum content did boys find most enjoyable/relevant/useful?
Curriculum/Design	7	How do boys/girls experience the sessions they have together? The sessions they have apart? What advantages and disadvantages do they see in each mode? Was it difficult to discuss certain topics with the opposite gender present?
Curriculum/Design	8	Do boys report any preference for a male vs female facilitator? What advantages or disadvantages do they see for each?
Outcomes	9	What changes in attitude or knowledge do we see among boys participating in the pilot?
Outcomes	10	What changes if any have occurred in boys' relationship to and behavior toward girls, and vice versa?
Outcomes	11	What changes in attitude or knowledge do we see among facilitators/teachers participating in the pilot?
Scaling	12	How scalable do we expect the program to be as currently designed? What changes may be needed to improve scalability?
Scaling	13	How well aligned were the actual costs of implementation with the budget?
Pilot Implementation	14	How effective was the staffing approach? Was the staffing structure appropriate? What were the characteristics (gender, age, experience, etc.) of the people filling key roles? Was the level of capacity in the various roles sufficient?
Curriculum/Design	15	What changes in attitude or knowledge do we see among girls in the schools? Among parents?
Outcomes	16	What changes in school attendance/academic performance do we see among boys participating in the pilot?
Scaling	17	How sustainable do we expect the program to be as currently designed?

In response, RtR's Global Office GEP Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RME) team, developed a research, monitoring and evaluation plan to respond to these questions. The evaluation portion of the plan comprised three cycles (baseline, midline and endline) that

focused on understanding stakeholders' experiences with the program, measuring outcomes (e.g., life skills), and the connections between experiences, outcomes and the program. The evaluation used mixed methods, with three quantitative rounds of data collection, and two qualitative rounds of data collection (at midline and endline). Figure 1 below depicts the timing and frequency of both types of studies.

Figure 1: Frequency and interval of evaluative studies, by cycle



All quantitative studies were led by RtR. The midline qualitative study was led by an external evaluation agency, and involved focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs) with students, facilitators, teachers, parents, and the program team, who were responsible for the program design. The detailed findings of the qualitative study are presented separately². The endline qualitative study was also led by RtR.

This report details the design and findings of the quantitative study for the endline data collection. A final report, synthesizing learnings across the different evaluation rounds and methodologies, will be shared in early 2025.

Quantitative Endline Study Design

The LSEP endline study was designed to measure changes in life skills and gender knowledge and attitudes for the cohort of students currently participating in the LSEP pilot program. The study aimed to answer the following learning question: *What changes in attitude or knowledge do we see among boys participating in the pilot? (Learning Question 9, Table 2)*. Given that girls are also program participants³, this study also measured the changes among girls, responding to the following question: *What changes in attitude or knowledge do we see among girls in the schools? Among parents? (Learning Question 15, Table 2)*. Last, at endline data collection, the team measured how relevant and difficult the LSEP curriculum felt, and how much participants felt they had learned about each theme. Therefore, the quantitative endline evaluation was able to partly respond to the question: *What curriculum content did boys find most enjoyable/relevant/useful? (Learning Question 6, Table 2)*.

² For more information, see IdInsight (2023). Final Report. Qualitative Study for Room to Read's Life Skills for Equality (LSEP) Pilot Initiative in Cambodia.

³ Traditional 7-year GEP program

Study Participants

Data for the quantitative endline was gathered from all boys and girls enrolled in grade 8 in the four program schools who were present at school during data collection. Endline data would be compared against midline and baseline levels. At baseline, RtR collected data from 333 boys and 462 girls. At midline, RtR collected data from 298 boys and 387 girls. At endline, RtR collected data from 218 boys and 286 girls (see Table 3 for more details). Reasons behind student dropout are explained due to both absenteeism during data collection and/or drop out from the program and/or school.

Table 3: Number of students participating in the study

Total Students	Baseline		Midline		Endline	
School	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Raung Ko high school	114	125	98	110	80	80
Preah Net Preah secondary school	78	104	65	82	45	67
Chob Vary high school	89	116	74	100	46	68
Aur Snugat Secondary Schools	52	117	61	95	47	71
Total	333	462	298	387	218	286

Tool

In 2022, RtR's GEP RME team developed a tool to measure life skills and gender knowledge and attitudes, in consultation with the program design and operations' team. The resulting tool was used throughout all evaluation rounds. The tool focused on three domains using 51 questions:

1. Job, education, and marriage aspirations
 - a. 5 multiple choice questions
2. Gender knowledge and attitudes
 - a. 25 close-ended questions exploring 5 themes:
 - i. Gender-based roles
 - ii. Gender norms
 - iii. Perception of masculinity
 - iv. Gender-based violence
 - v. Puberty, sexuality and health
3. Life skills
 - a. 21 Likert scale items focusing on three life skills

The life skills items were adapted from RtR's Adolescent Life Skills Assessment (ALSA) tool.⁴ The questionnaire for the gender norms and attitudes was informed by Equimundo's Gender-Equitable Men (GEM)⁵ scale, the literature, and the LSEP curriculum. The tool was a paper-

⁴ <https://www.roomtoread.org/media/kacgbhx2/how-to-adapt-and-implement-the-alsa-mar-2022.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.equimundo.org/resources/measuring-gender-attitude-using-gender-equitable-men-scale-gems-in-various-socio-cultural-settings/>

based self-administered written survey. At endline, the team added questions on self-reported learning, relevance and challenges with the content delivered as part of the LSEP.

Data Collection

Data collection for baseline, midline and endline was coordinated and managed by Cambodia's Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation (KH-RME) team. Before the start of each data collection effort, the KH-RME team briefed teachers and field facilitators (FFs) on data collection protocols developed by the global office RME (GO-RME) team. Teachers and field facilitators distributed the paper-based tools to students and collected the surveys after students responded to the different questions. Surveys were shared with KH-RME, who hired an external operator to enter the data manually in the excel file for the analysis.

Analysis

Data from three waves were cleaned, coded, and analyzed using Stata. During the cleaning process, duplicates and redundant observations were removed. All of the negatively framed items were reverse-coded. Composite scores were calculated by averaging items as per the pre-defined criteria. For gender knowledge and attitudes items, the composite score could range from 0 to 1. For life skills constructs the composite score could range from 1 to 4. To evaluate changes after one year of programming, positive and statistically significant differences in means between endline and midline, and between midline and baseline, indicated improvement. To evaluate changes after two years of programming, statistically significant differences in means between endline and baseline, indicated improvement.

Findings

Participants showed significant changes in their intended age of marriage.

Three questions asked participants about ideal ages of marriage, either for themselves or for family members of different genders. Tables 4 and 5 show the responses to these questions, as expressed by girls and boys. As shown, between baseline and endline, girls showed significant changes in their intended age of marriage for all three categories (self, male family members, female family members), with all ages being higher by endline; during this period, boys showed a significant increment in the intended are of marriage for self yet not for other measures. By endline, girls aspired to marry at age 25.57, and boys aspired to marry at age 26.05.

Endline results reveal that there was a significant difference in the intended age of marriage for self, between boys and girls ($D=0.13$, $p\text{-value} < 0.001$). For all other measures and timepoints, differences between boys and girls remained non-significant.

Table 4: Marriage aspirations - boys

Average Age	Baseline	Midline	Endline
Self***	24.71 (SD 3.28)	25.63 (SD 3.71)	26.05 (SD: 3.71)
Brother/Cousin/Male Family Members	25.36	25.1	25.62

	(SD 5.71)	(SD 3.97)	(SD: 3.97)
Sister/Cousin/Female Family Members	24.95 (SD 6.61)	24.25 (SD 3.65)	24.92 (SD: 3.44)

Note: Legend of the significance of the difference between baseline and endline: * <.05 ** <.01 *** <.001.

Table 5: Marriage aspirations - girls

Average Age	Baseline	Midline	Endline
Self***	24.58 (SD 4.13)	25.46 (SD 3.41)	25.57 (SD 2.89)
Brother/Cousin/Male Family Members **	24.67 (SD 3.72)	25.15 (SD 4.18)	25.43 (SD 2.81)
Sister/Cousin/Female Family Members***	23.76 (SD 3.46)	24.75 (SD 3.50)	24.74 (SD 3.54)

Note: Legend of the significance of the difference between baseline and endline: * <.05 ** <.01 *** <.001.

Participants showed significant changes to educational and occupational aspirations after two years of programming.

Students were asked about their intended educational aspirations (see Table 6). At endline, most girls (73.78%) and boys (61.01%) wanted to go to university. However, boys and girls showed different patterns in their educational aspirations throughout the two years. By endline, boys showed significantly higher interest in university degrees (61.01%) and in vocational education (14.68%) when compared to baseline (53.64% and 11.82% respectively). By endline, they also showed significantly lower interest in upper secondary degrees (12.84%), when compared to baseline (23.94%). By endline, girls also showed a significantly higher interest in vocational education (17.13%) than at baseline (3.92%), yet they expressed slightly lower interest in university degrees between both time points (73.78% at endline, and 76.47% at baseline); importantly, by endline, approximately nine percent of girls aspired to complete either lower or upper secondary education, less than half the proportion of girls who aspired to do so at baseline (18.3%). Chi-square tests revealed that girls' educational aspirations changed more and faster when compared to boys, whose aspirations took two years to significantly change (see Table 7).

Table 6: Educational aspirations (% of Total)

Response	Baseline		Midline		Endline	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Lower Secondary	10.61	6.97	14.09	5.94	10.09	1.75
Upper Secondary	23.94	11.33	16.44	9.3	12.84	6.99
Vocational education	11.82	3.92	13.42	10.34	14.68	17.13
University	53.64	76.47	56.04	74.16	61.01	73.78
Other	0	1.31	0	0	1.38	0.35

Table 7: Significance levels for chi-square tests of proportion for educational aspirations, between timepoints

	Boys	Girls
Baseline – Midline		**
Midline – Endline		**
Baseline – Endline	**	***

Students were also asked about their intended occupations at age 25 (see Table 8). Intended occupations changed in relevant manners for participants throughout the two years. In the case of boys, intended aspirations significantly changed between baseline and midline, and between midline and endline, but not between baseline and endline (see Table 9). The explanation for this lies in the fact that the changes between yearly time points went in different directions. For example, a higher percentage of boys wanted to become a farmer at midline (14.09%) than at baseline (11.41%) and endline (6.45%).

Changes for girls went in a similar direction between timepoints. Notably, girls showed a higher interest in becoming a businessperson (17.89%) or a medical professional (25.61%) at endline than at baseline or midline (see Table 8). However, as shown in Table 9, significant changes in girls' occupational aspirations mostly occurred between baseline and midline.

Table 8: Occupational aspiration at 25 years of age (% of Total)

	Baseline		Midline		Endline	
Response	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Home maker	3.3	0	6.04	2.33	4.15	1.05
Farmer	11.41	1.08	14.09	2.33	6.45	0.7
Businessperson	26.73	13.64	25.84	15.5	23.04	17.89
Armed Forces	16.82	12.12	18.46	15.25	24.42	11.93
School Teacher	23.12	42.64	17.11	38.24	18.89	35.79
Medical Professional	10.81	22.73	14.77	21.45	11.98	25.61
Other	7.81	7.79	3.69	4.91	11.06	7.02

Table 9: Significance levels of chi-square tests of proportion for occupational aspirations, between timepoints

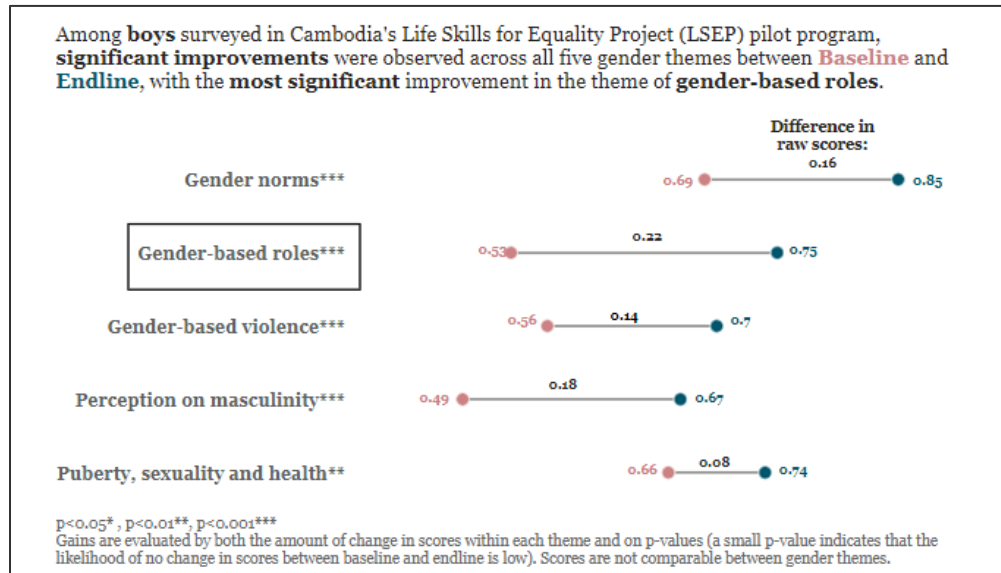
	Boys	Girls
Baseline – Midline	*	**
Midline – Endline	**	
Baseline - Endline		

Boys and girls in the LSEP program consistently improved their gender knowledge and attitudes.

By endline, the average scores for gender knowledge and attitudes increased significantly for both genders. Five domains were measured: *gender norms, gender-based roles, gender-based*

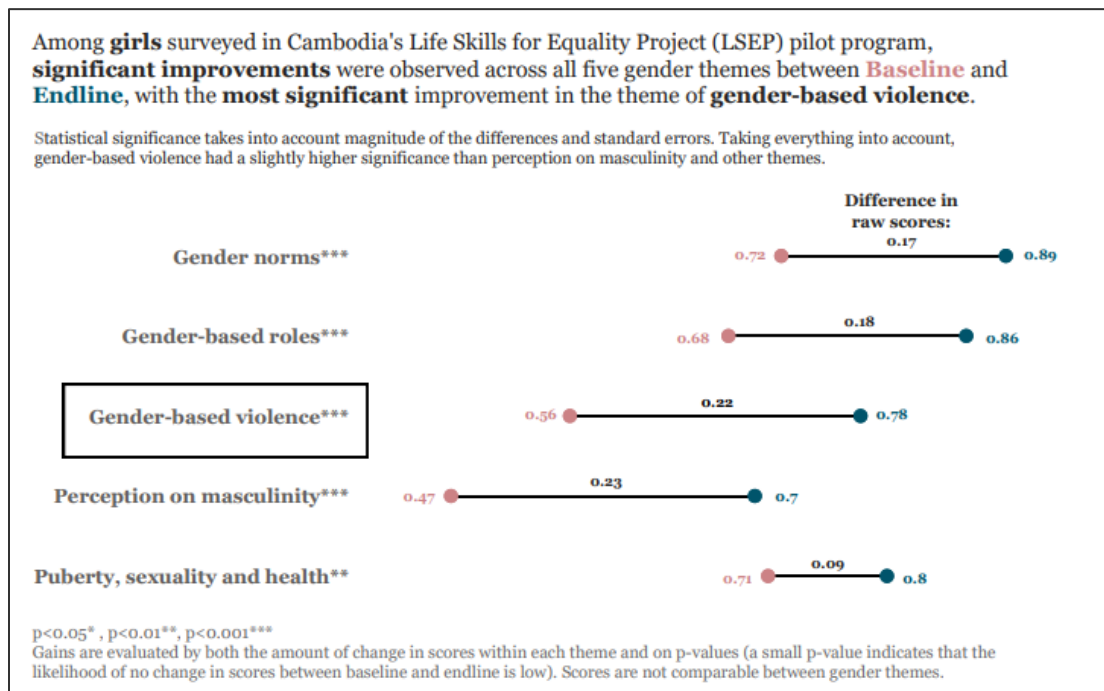
violence, perceptions on masculinity and puberty and sexual health. In the case of boys, scores for all domains improved with statistical significance by endline, with the largest gain observed for gender-based roles (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Average scores for boys by gender themes between baseline and endline



In the case of girls, their scores also improved across all themes; changes were statistically significant for every single measure between baseline and endline (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Average scores for girls by gender themes between baseline and endline



Girls scored significantly higher than boys in multiple domains across timepoints. By endline, the differences between boys and girls were statistically significant for the topics of *gender-based roles* (D=0.11, p-value < 0.001) and *gender-based violence* (D=0.08, p-value < 0.001). The topic of *gender-based roles* was also statistically higher for girls at baseline and midline, yet this was not true for *gender-based violence*.

Boys showed statistically significant gains in life skills after two years, yet their gains followed a different pattern than those for girls.

There were statistically significant improvements in student's life skills under the LSEP program. Boys demonstrated significant growth in 'expressing and managing emotions', raising the average score at baseline from 2.5 to 2.7 at endline (p-value < 0.001). Girls showed enhanced 'empathy' skills. The average score for girls for 'empathy' rose from 2.7 to 2.9 between baseline and endline (p-value < 0.01). Notably, these results differ to what was observed at midline, where there were no significant life skill changes. In the context of the LSEP, it took students two years to significantly improve their life skills' levels.

Table 10: Mean life skills' scores by data collection timepoint

Boys (Means by Timepoint)			
	Baseline	Midline	Endline
Empathy	2.57	2.56	2.63
Expressing and managing emotions***	2.46	2.50	2.65
Relationship building and communication	2.64	2.65	2.73
Girls (Means by Timepoint)			
	Baseline	Midline	Endline
Empathy***	2.73	2.78	2.87
Expressing and managing emotions	2.58	2.54	2.63
Relationship building and communication	2.85	2.85	2.92

Two life skills were statistically higher for girls than boys: *Empathy* and *Relationship Building and Communication*. The difference persisted throughout the entire program, suggesting that the LSEP content did not interact with initial life skills levels (which were higher for girls), and was equally meaningful for all students.

Boys and girls differed in their appreciation for gender content.

At endline, students were asked about their opinions about the difficulty and relevance of different topics within the curriculum: *gender roles and division of household roles; gender norms, masculinity and relationships; puberty, sexuality and health; addressing conflict and harassment in school and my community; succeeding in school and life; mental health and emotional disclosure*. For each of these topics, students rated the difficulty using three categories: not at all difficult, somewhat difficult or very difficult. For each topic, students also rated them as not at all important, somewhat important or very important. As shown in Table 11, most topics were rated as somewhat difficult, across genders. In terms of difficulty, the

biggest difference across genders⁶ was observed for the “puberty, sexuality, and health” areas, where boys found the content significantly easier (p-value < 0.001).

Table 11: Difficulty by topic and gender (highlighted cells: > 50% of responses)

Topic	Boys			Girls		
	Not at all Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Not at all Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult
Gender roles and division of household roles	33.03	63.3	3.67	26.92	70.28	2.80
Gender norms, masculinity, and relationships	35.21	60.56	4.23	14.55	76.36	9.09
Puberty, sexuality, and health***	34.88	55.81	9.30	21.51	56.99	21.51
Addressing conflict and harassment in school and my community	18.98	61.57	19.44	20.49	60.07	19.43
Succeeding in school and life	22.58	48.77	27.65	25.70	43.66	30.63
Mental health and emotional disclosure	21.76	58.80	19.44	19.72	59.15	21.13

Note: Legend of the significance of the difference: * <.05 ** <.01 *** <.001.

As shown in Table 12, there was more variation across responses by categories and topics when thinking about relevance. Chi-square tests revealed statistically significant different response patterns for all categories between boys and girls. The biggest differences between genders appeared for the category of “gender norms, masculinity, and relationships” (p-value < 0.001). Most girls thought the topic was ‘somewhat important’ (76.45%), almost a fifth of them thinking that the topic was ‘very important’ (17.03%) and a few believing that the topic was ‘not at all important’ (6.52%). A higher percentage of boys felt the topic was either ‘very important’ (30.56%) or ‘not at all important’ (11.57%), showing higher variation in the perceived relevance. Notably, more girls (84.56%) than boys (66.82%) felt that the topic of succeeding in school and life was ‘very important’, yet this was the highest rated topic among all six for both genders. While most girls (60%) felt that the topic of ‘puberty, sexuality, and health’ was ‘very important’, less than half of the boys felt that way (47.2%). Last, the topic of “gender roles and division of household roles” was considered ‘not at all important’ by almost one fifth of the boys (17.05%), a significantly higher percentage than girls feeling the same way (6.32%).

Table 12: Relevance by topic and gender (highlighted cells: > 50% of responses)

Topic	Boys			Girls		
	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Gender roles and division of household roles	17.05	47.93	35.02	6.32	54.39	39.30
Gender norms, masculinity, and relationships	11.57	57.87	30.56	6.52	76.45	17.03
Puberty, sexuality, and health	10.28	42.52	47.2	4.29	35.71	60.00

⁶ And the only statistically significant difference.

Addressing conflict and harassment in school and my community	10.70	39.53	49.77	4.61	27.3	68.09
Succeeding in school and life	8.29	24.88	66.82	1.75	13.68	84.56
Mental health and emotional disclosure	12.90	57.6	29.49	4.95	55.12	39.93

Students were also asked how much they learned on each topic. For each topic they had to report whether they had learned ‘nothing’, ‘a little’ or ‘a lot’. Important differences arose in this regard as well. While a majority of girls (61.05%) declared learning ‘a lot’ about “addressing conflict and harassment in school and my community”, most boys declared learning ‘a little’ on that topic (49.3%). In addition, there was a significant difference in the percentage of students learning ‘a lot’ on “succeeding in school and life”, higher for girls (69.72%) than for boys (55.76%). Similarly, more girls (49.12%) declared learning ‘a lot’ on “puberty, sexuality, and health” than boys (37.79%), On the other hand, a much higher percentage of boys (37.2%) declared learning ‘a lot’ on “gender norms, masculinity and relationships” than girls (18.75%); chi-squared tests revealed that this was the only topic for which boys and girls showed significantly different distributions.

Table 13: Self-reported learning by topic and gender (highlighted cells: > 50% of responses)

Topic	Boys			Girls		
	Learned Nothing	Learned a Little	Learned a Lot	Learned Nothing	Learned a Little	Learned a Lot
Gender roles and division of household roles	1.93	54.11	43.96	0.72	49.46	49.82
Gender norms, masculinity, and relationships	3.38	59.42	37.2	7.35	73.9	18.75
Puberty, sexuality, and health	7.83	54.38	37.79	3.51	47.37	49.12
Addressing conflict and harassment in school and my community	10.23	49.3	40.47	2.46	36.49	61.05
Succeeding in school and life	4.61	39.63	55.76	0.35	29.93	69.72
Mental health and emotional disclosure	11.06	57.14	31.8	3.87	60.92	35.21

Discussion

The endline evaluation of the LSEP in Cambodia revealed important changes among students in their aspirations, life skills and gender knowledge and attitudes. In terms of educational aspirations, girls showed significantly higher interest in post-secondary education than compared to baseline levels. Their changes in educational aspirations happened continuously throughout the two-year period. Boys also showed significantly higher interest in post-secondary education by endline, including university degrees. However, their interest in getting a university degree is much lower than the percentage of girls who aspire to achieve that degree. In addition, boys were able to demonstrate significant changes in their educational aspirations after two years.

Occupational aspirations significantly changed for boys and girls, yet in different ways. Boys showed higher variation in terms of intended occupations than girls, and most changes observed in girls took place after the first year of the program. Overall, boys preferred occupations such as being a teacher, being in the armed forces or being a businessperson, with slight variations across time. In the case of girls, there was a clear increase in their intentions to become a businesswoman or a medical professional, yet most of them aspired to become a teacher. The trend was positive, yet did not significantly change between midline and endline. Taken together, changes in aspirations suggest that educational goals are more malleable for girls than for boys, and occupational goals are more malleable for boys.

LSEP participants showed important gains in terms of gender knowledge and attitudes. Five domains were measured across timepoints: gender norms, gender-based roles, gender-based violence, perceptions on masculinity and puberty and sexual health. Participants of all genders showed statistically significant gains across all domains. After two years, boys showed higher gains for gender-based roles, and girls showed higher gains for gender-based violence. Girls showed higher levels than boys in all domains and across all timepoints. Gender differences at endline were statistically significant for gender-based roles and gender-based violence, both favoring girls. Overall, the LSEP showed promising results in the ability to improve gender knowledge and attitudes. Room to Read's GEP has shown great effectiveness in this regard⁷, and witnessing similar patterns for boys is encouraging.

The endline results show statistically significant improvements in life skills for all participants. Boys demonstrated significant growth in 'expressing and managing emotions', whereas girls showed enhanced 'empathy' skills. Importantly, our evaluations show that it took students two years to significantly improve their life skills' levels. This outcome suggests that under the current dosage levels, a two-year program is needed to observe meaningful gains in life skills. Our evaluations also show that girls had higher levels than boys throughout the two years, and that the gains made on life skills were parallel for students of different genders. In other words, the benefits of the program do not interact with initial levels and/or gender.

Students provided their feedback in terms of difficulty, relevance and self-reported learning for the six topics covered by the program. Boys and girls provided similar feedback regarding the difficulty of the topics, except for the topic of 'puberty, sexuality, and health', which was easier for boys. The qualitative endline evaluation will complement these results, to learn whether these differences are connected to the content, classroom setting (e.g. mixed sessions) or simply the changes that students of each gender experience during that time of their lives. In addition, boys and girls held different views regarding the relevance of each of these topics. Overall, boys believed that these topics were 'not at all important' at higher rates than girls. The biggest differences between genders were observed for the topic of 'gender norms, masculinity, and relationships' for which most girls believed it was 'somewhat important'. However, boys and girls felt that the most relevant topic was 'succeeding in school and life', above and beyond any other category.

⁷ As per GEP evaluation reports from Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, and India.

Most students reported learning ‘a little’ or ‘a lot’ on the topics covered by the program. Significant differences were observed for the topic of ‘gender norms, masculinity, and relationships’ for which a higher percentage of boys reported learning ‘a lot’ and for which the majority of girls reported learning ‘a little’. The distribution of students’ self-reported ratings were similar to their opinions on the importance of each topic, suggesting a connection between perceived relevance and self-reported learning. Overall, boys declared ‘learning nothing at all’ at higher rates than girls. More than 10 percent of boys believed that they did not learn anything in the areas of ‘Addressing conflict and harassment in school and my community’ and ‘Mental health and emotional disclosure’. Complementary qualitative work will provide insights as to how to adapt the content for these topics to enhance the learning for boys.

Room to Read’s LSEP shows very promising results. Participants of all genders have increased their gender knowledge and awareness, and life skills, in significant ways. They have also expressed support for the topics covered by the program, and report learning in meaningful ways. The endline qualitative evaluation will provide additional insight into the experiences of facilitators and participants with the different programmatic settings. By completing the qualitative portion of this evaluation, we will be able to provide final advice for scale-up, and to complete the answers to the learning questions that have led the research, monitoring and evaluation of the LSEP since 2022.

Annexes

Annex 1. Theme wise frequency table for students participating in the LSEP program

Percentage of students responding yes to each item

Expected Change	Gender-based Roles	Baseline		Midline		Endline	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
	In the last 7 days have you done cooking/cleaning/washing dishes?	77.68	90.39	73.49	88.89	77.98	93.33
	In your opinion should an adult woman work outside the home?	33.12	51.55	41.41	50.13	49.30	74.13
Reduction	Girls cannot become engineers or scientists because these are and should be only men's jobs.	52.01	34.88	29.53	18.13	13.30	5.94
Reduction	Men are better at running businesses than women.	57.59	45.62	36.82	22.8	21.20	12.28
	It would be a good idea to elect a girl as the class leader/monitor.	71.56	71.87	51.52	56.74	37.04	43.31
	Gender Norms						
	Men and women should be equally responsible for making household decisions.	77.67	82.82	77.18	89.41	79.72	91.26
Reduction	Wives should be less educated than their husbands.	29.62	15.8	16.96	8.83	7.87	3.17
Reduction	Boys should get more opportunities for education than girls.	36.96	19.02	21.81	9.84	9.17	2.81
	Daughters should have a similar right to inherit property as sons.	61.01	67.11	54.21	59.69	50.69	52.63
Reduction	Parents should maintain stricter control over their daughters than their sons.	48	63.38	41.61	46.51	38.71	34.86
Reduction	It is okay for a family to force a girl to marry.	24.84	15.16	15.54	8.53	10.7	3.85
	Gender-based Violence						
Reduction	A woman should tolerate violence to keep her family together.	62.74	61.59	44.97	40.41	34.86	22.81
	If a boy wants to touch a girl, the girl has a right to say no.	63.13	76.5	65.54	84.72	76.04	90.14
	If you are experiencing abuse or violence, you should ask a trusted adult for help.	78.02	86.84	83.16	91.73	87.10	96.84

Reduction	Boys do not experience abuse, only girls do.	51.71	69.91	45.64	54.52	34.10	45.42
Reduction	Some violent behaviour is justified if the anger has to be expressed.	27.19	22.54	25.25	16.54	18.06	6.29
Perception of Masculinity							
Reduction	A man should not show his worry or fears.	60.83	53.96	53.36	38.24	43.58	27.62
Reduction	Bullying or physical fighting among male friends is normal.	26.42	23.06	22.82	14.25	12.84	9.44
Reduction	Sometimes is it acceptable for boys to tease girls in schools.	16.56	14.25	10.07	8.81	3.67	2.11
Reduction	Boys/ men should not cry in front of the others.	66.67	59.33	46.44	42.67	45.37	34.74
Puberty Sexuality and Health							
Reduction	Wet dreams/ ejaculation in the night in boys is a sign of a health problem.	35.87	29.22	34.46	20.31	29.49	15.05
	Menstruation is normal and healthy for girls/ women.	50.32	78.22	49.66	81.09	29.17	81.75
	Once a girl has her first menstruation, it is a sign that she can get pregnant if she has sexual relations.	49.53	44.97	56.04	58.18	40.93	60.92
	Girls should be allowed to discuss sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV etc. with teachers and parents.	49.68	52.58	51.35	61.76	61.93	68.31
	Boys should be allowed to discuss sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV etc. with teachers and parents.	46.62	46.53	53.38	51.68	58.53	60.21

Note: Reduction is highlighted if the reduction is the expected change.

Annex 2. Overview of LSEP curriculum

Facilitators	LSEP Facilitators and teachers conducted the curriculum sessions. In some cases, facilitators and teachers co-facilitated sessions together. The maximum ratio for facilitator/teacher to participants was 1:20 (1 adult facilitator/teacher to 20 students each).
Number of sessions	There were 17 sessions per year, in which four to ten sessions per year were conducted in a mixed gender environment. Facilitators/teachers had the flexibility to conduct additional 4 sessions from the national Local Life Skills Curriculum if desired.
Session frequency	Curriculum sessions were facilitated once per week, during the school schedule. The LSEP curriculum took 6 - 7 months to complete, and was delivered within the 10-month academic school year.
Session duration	45 minutes each session. A few sessions lasted 90 minutes to accommodate setting up/wrapping up the project, or to cover complex topics.
Classroom setup	Between 15-20 boys participated in each session. Approximately 400 boys were benefited across the two years. For the mixed sessions, sessions were split into groups with around 15 – 20 participants (approx. 50% girls & 50% boys) per groups. One facilitator and one teacher led the session for one group simultaneously.

Annex 3. LSEP Evaluation Tool

Life Skill for Equality Project, Evaluation Tool

Room To Read

Kindly prefill the information section below before handing it over to the students.

No.	Prompt	Response
A1	Student ID	
A2	Student Name	
A3	Student's Grade	
A4	Student's Age	
A5	Student's Sex (Boy/Girl)	
A6	School Name	
A7	Province	
A8	Today's Date	
A9	Start Time	
A10	End Time	

Part 1: Aspirations and Attitude

In this part of the survey, we want to understand your general aspirations for yourself and life. Please answer these questions truthfully, there is no right or wrong answer – we just want to know your opinion. Please note that none of your answers will reflect in any of your grades or school performance. Also, we will never share your responses with anyone at your school or in your household/family. Please choose or write your response on the right.

No.	Questions	Responses
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B1	<p>What is the highest level of education you would like to complete if finances and the opportunity of school/post-secondary education are available?</p> <p><i>(On the right tick the Response that suits you the most. Or if you something else that is not given in the right side then write your answer beside “Others”)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Lower Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Upper Secondary- <input type="checkbox"/> post-secondary-Technical/Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> University Others---
B2	<p>What occupation do you expect to have when you are 25 years old?</p> <p><i>(On the right tick the Response that suits you the most. Or if you something else that is not given in the right side then write your answer beside “Others”)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Home Maker <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer/agricultural work <input type="checkbox"/> Self Employed/Businessperson <input type="checkbox"/> Armed-forces/Military <input type="checkbox"/> School Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Professional Others (Specify)-----
B3	At what age would you like to get married?	-----
B4	At what age do you think your sister/female cousin should get married?	-----
B5	At what age do you think your brother/male cousin should get married?	-----

Note: Thank you for answering the questions. Next, you are going to read some statements. Please circle the response which you think best describes your agreement/preference/understanding. You can only circle the one response.

No.	Statements	Response (Circle your preference)		
C1	In the last 7 days have you done cooking/cleaning/washing dishes?	Yes	No	Not Sure
C2	In your opinion should an adult woman work outside the home?	Yes	No	Not Sure
C3	Girls cannot become engineers or scientists because these are and should be only men's jobs.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C4	Men are better at running businesses than women.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C5	It would be a good idea to elect a girl as the class leader/monitor.	Yes	No	Not Sure

C6	Men and women should be equally responsible for making household decisions.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C7	Wives should be less educated than their husbands.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C8	Boys should get more opportunities for education than girls.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C9	A man should not show his worry or fears.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C10	Daughters should have a similar right to inherit property as sons.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C11	Bullying or physical fighting among male friends is normal.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C12	A woman should tolerate violence to keep her family together.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C13	Parents should maintain stricter control over their daughters than their sons.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C14	Sometimes is it acceptable for boys to tease girls in schools.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C15	Boys/ men should not cry in front of the others.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C16	If a boy wants to touch a girl, the girl has a right to say no.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C17	If you are experiencing abuse or violence, you should ask a trusted adult for help.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C18	Boys do not experience abuse, only girls do.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C19	It is okay for a family to force a girl to marry.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C20	Some violent behaviour is justified if the anger has to be expressed.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C21	Wet dreams/ ejaculation in the night in boys is a sign of a health problem.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C22	Menstruation is normal and healthy for girls/ women.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C23	Once a girl has her first menstruation, it is a sign that she can get pregnant if she has sexual relations.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C24	Girls should be allowed to discuss sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV etc. with teachers and parents.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C25	Boys should be allowed to discuss sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV etc. with teachers and parents.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C26	When there are not many jobs available, men should have more right to a job than women.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C27	Men and women should get equal pay when they are doing the same jobs.	Yes	No	Not Sure
C28	Men are better qualified to be political leaders than women.	Yes	No	Not Sure

C29	I would be willing to give up some of my rights if that helps improve gender equality.	Yes	No	Not Sure
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Part 2: Life Skills

Instructions

Next, you will read some statements. For each statement, please circle the only one response in the right. Please note that;

- **Not True** means that you feel the statement I read is not true at all for you.
- **Slightly True** means that you feel the statement I read might be true sometimes, or a little bit true, but is mostly not true for you.
- **Mostly True** means that the statement I read is true most of the time, or in most situations, but sometimes it might not be true for you.
- **Completely True** means that the statement is totally true for you, in all situations all the time.

No.	Statements	Response (Circle your preference)			
D1	I feel bad when one of my friends is insulted or teased.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D2	I can understand other people's situations.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D3	Even if I feel down, when I see other people feel excited, I start to feel excited too.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D4	I know how to make other people feel happier.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D5	When I see someone being picked on, I feel sorry for him or her.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D6	I get a strong urge to help when I see someone who is upset.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D7	It makes me sad when I see someone who is alone	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D8	I can control my anger even if someone is not nice to me.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D9	I feel ashamed to express my emotions in-front of others.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True

No.	Statements	Response (Circle your preference)			
D10	When I feel nervous or scared, I don't know how to calm or relax myself.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D11	When I am upset, I cannot manage my feelings before I take any action.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D12	I am aware of how my feelings change my behavior.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D13	I share my feelings with members of my family	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D14	I would stand up for my friends if another person was causing them trouble.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D15	I feel confident enough to talk in front of a group	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D16	I ask my teachers for help when I need it.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D17	If I get angry with a friend, I can talk to them and make things better.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D18	I can freely talk to my parents if I have any personal problem	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D19	I can collaborate well with others.	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D20	I ask questions when I do not understand what someone is telling me	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D21	I am comfortable telling my friend to stop, if my friend is harassing someone	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D22	I feel comfortable discussing topics like menstruation and sexual health with peers of the opposite sex	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True
D23	I often start conversations with family members about the importance of gender equality	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True

No.	Statements	Response (Circle your preference)			
D24	I prefer to discuss topics about gender with a teacher of my same sex	Not True	Slightly True	Mostly True	Completely True

Part 3: Feedback about the program

Instructions

Next, we will present you with each of the topics that have been covered in the Life Skills for Equality Program. You will be asked to rate each topic in terms of different characteristics such as their relevance or their difficulty.

E. Difficulty

Please rate each topic in terms of how difficult they were for you. Please select one option for each topic.

No.	Topic	Not at all Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult
E1	Gender roles and division of household roles	Not at all Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult
E2	Gender norms, masculinity, and relationships	Not at all Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult
E3	Puberty, sexuality, and health	Not at all Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult
E4	Addressing conflict and harassment in school and my community	Not at all Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult
E5	Succeeding in school and life	Not at all Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult
E6	Mental health and emotional disclosure	Not at all Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult

F. Importance

Please rate each topic in terms of how important they are to you. Please select one option for each topic.

No.	Topic	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
F1	Gender roles and division of household roles	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
F2	Gender norms, masculinity, and relationships	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
F3	Puberty, sexuality, and health	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
F4	Addressing conflict and harassment in school and my community	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
F5	Succeeding in school and life	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
F6	Mental health and emotional disclosure	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important

G. Learning

Please rate each topic in terms of how much you have learned from each topic throughout the program. Please select one option for each topic.

No.	Topic	Learned Nothing	Learned a Little	Learned a Lot
G1	Gender roles and division of household roles	Learned Nothing	Learned a Little	Learned a Lot
G2	Gender norms, masculinity, and relationships	Learned Nothing	Learned a Little	Learned a Lot
G3	Puberty, sexuality, and health	Learned Nothing	Learned a Little	Learned a Lot
G4	Addressing conflict and harassment in school and my community	Learned Nothing	Learned a Little	Learned a Lot
G5	Succeeding in school and life	Learned Nothing	Learned a Little	Learned a Lot
G6	Mental health and emotional disclosure	Learned Nothing	Learned a Little	Learned a Lot

Thank you for participating in the survey