



Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic

E-Learning and Digital Support of
Mentors for Adolescent Girl
Programming in Guatemala

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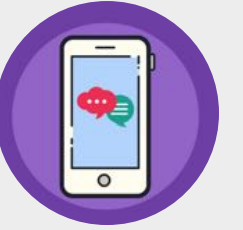
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Problem

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered the way community-based program activities, such as women's groups and safe spaces, are carried out in rural communities in Guatemala. The Population Council designed a broadcast radio program to reach the girls in the most isolated communities, but new and returning mentors also needed to learn about the program design and rationale, their role as mentors, curricula topics, and develop their technical capacity in facilitating curriculum sessions.



Solution

Survey results reveal that young indigenous women who provide mentorship to girl groups have access to free and low-bandwidth digital applications WhatsApp and Facebook. These findings helped the Council design an innovative E-learning program to deliver training to young indigenous mentors, with strategies that made it more accessible to learners with limited connectivity.



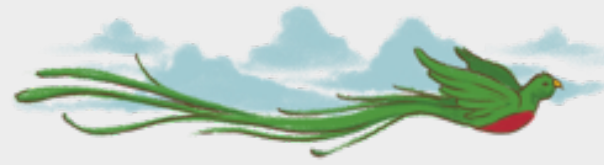


E-Learning and Digital Support

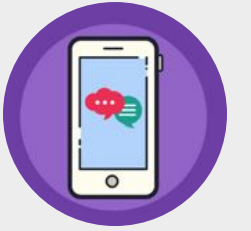
The Population Council developed an innovative e-learning program to deliver training to girl mentors who were not able to receive hands-on professional training experience in the critical life and leadership skills included in the Abriendo Oportunidades® curriculum.

Mentoras Digitales 2020 seeks to facilitate access to information, stimulate participation and empower young indigenous mentors to better impart these materials to young girls in rural communities in Guatemala during the COVID-19 pandemic.





OBJECTIVES



To create **digital safe spaces for mentors** on low-bandwidth apps that offer ongoing support, coaching and opportunities for continuous learning.

To train

adolescent girl mentors in curricula, program material, teaching and facilitation techniques as well as increasing their capacities in technology and media literacy.

To magnify

adolescent girl mentor presence and impact on social media, disseminate evidence-based COVID-prevention strategies and develop mentor capacities in communications and advocacy.

To strengthen

learning collaboratives on effective learning strategies created by the Population Council and apply proven strategies that strengthen individual skills, knowledge, aptitudes and performance in flexible, cooperative digital communities.



Expected outcomes:

Young indigenous mentors are integrated into a **safe and protected digital learning community** where they can ask questions, gain support, and practice new skills.

Members of the digital community are provided with the necessary **awareness, knowledge and skills to implement safe space activities and deliver health, life skills, and financial-education curricula.**



Also:

Evidence and up-to-date knowledge on COVID-19 prevention, thoughtful discussions and evidence-based resources are accessible through **low bandwidth knowledge-sharing applications**.

Presence of young indigenous mentors is increased in social media, **local awareness** of empowerment and education is increased in mentor communities.

A **sustainable learning community** is created, mentor capacities are developed, relationships are strengthened and sustainable digital communities are constituted to impart the curriculum.



Theory of Change

The theory of change underlying the Mentorás Digitales 2020 program is that if young indigenous girls' capacities are strengthened in the Abriendo Oportunidades curriculum through e-learning alternatives, then this will lead to better engagement among girls and families in rural communities with Council materials and radio program.

IF

- Young indigenous mentors are integrated into a safe digital learning space.
- They are provided with the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver the curricula to girls.

AND

- Evidence based resources and discussions are shared
- Mentor presence increases and awareness is raised in communities.
- A sustainable learning community is created to develop capacities and strengthen relationships.

THEN

- Girls will be better engaged with and empowered by radio program and curriculum.
- Widespread demand for adolescent girls programming is created.



WhatsApp Learning Sessions

Online learning environments can lead to a short attention span, so WhatsApp sessions are divided into one two-hour session, a 15-minute break, a 45-minute videoconference and a one-hour wrap up and closure.

Content facilitated encourages sharing personal experiences and reflecting on knowledge gained, with the curricula converted into images for later viewing and reviewing.

Lesson design is kept simple with clear instructions and learning outcomes.



resiliencia

capacidad que tiene una persona o comunidad para superar circunstancias traumáticas



Actividad 1

Saludamos y nos presentamos, por escrito o por nota de voz.

Podemos enviar una fotografía tomada en el momento, para compartir con las



Técnica de facilitación digital

Si tienes dificultad para que se presenten voluntariamente en una sesión virtual, puedes jugar la "papa caliente" para ver quién será la siguiente en pasar.

Reflexión:

¿Cómo aplican los Derechos Humanos en nuestro hogar, comunidad o país en estos momentos en que estamos viviendo la pandemia por COVID-19?




Derechos de la niñez

Algunos derechos de la niñez son: derecho a tener un nombre, una familia, un hogar, cuidado especial, recreación, vivienda,

¡Logros de hoy!

- Conocimos qué son los derechos humanos.
- Reconocimos que todas las personas tienen que exigir, respetar y cumplir los derechos humanos propios y de los demás.
- Conocimos que existen derechos específicos para los niños y las niñas.
- Pensamos 3 conceptos específicos de la cual para





Micro learning

Courses are written conversationally to be more interactive and engaging, with a series of learning activities that require mentors to engage in and think critically.

Big ideas are broken down into smaller chunks to support comprehension and retention of information (micro learning), as well as sparking conversations.





Sounds and Collaborative Learning

Following each image, facilitators include a short narration or explanation using the voice recording feature in the application.

Audio files, which are a fraction of the size of video files, are an engaging way to learn or review later while carrying out daily tasks. Participants are also encouraged to share voice notes in their indigenous languages.

Collaborative group work, icebreaker activities and reflections are used to get students engaged in solving specific tasks or problems assigned by instructors.



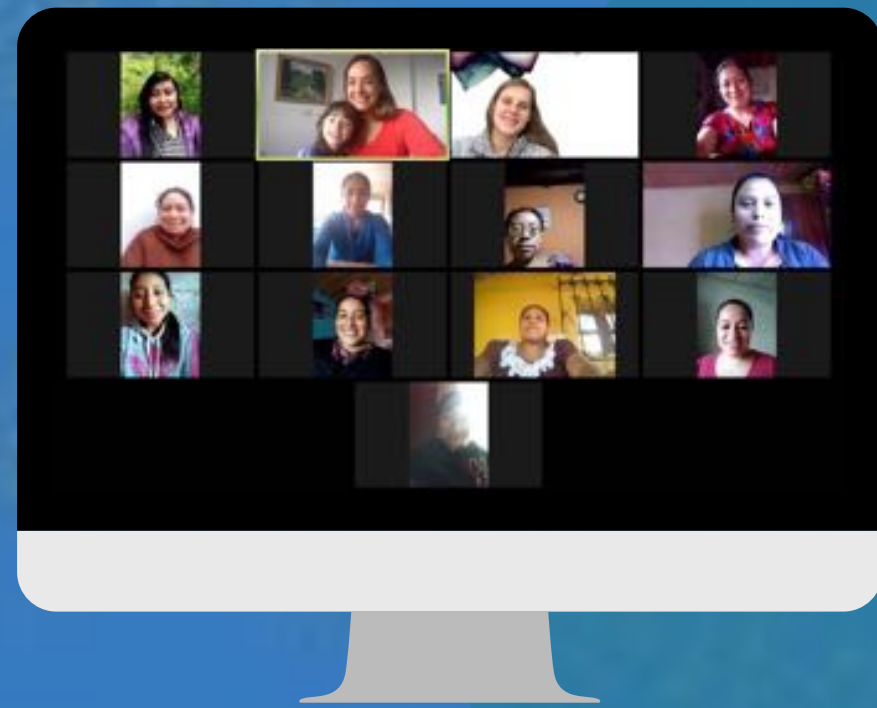


Videos and Videoconferences

Video content is broken down into one-minute videos that can be shared via WhatsApp.

The videos were also outsourced to Youtube and Facebook for later viewing, to balance quality and bandwidth.

During videoconference meetings, participants share and discuss challenges and positive experiences in facilitating curricula in safe spaces, played games and strengthened personal relationships.





Social Learning Groups

A Facebook Social Learning group is also formed with posts organized into units, so that group members can let admins know when they've interacted with each unit, complete evaluations and read more on each subject.





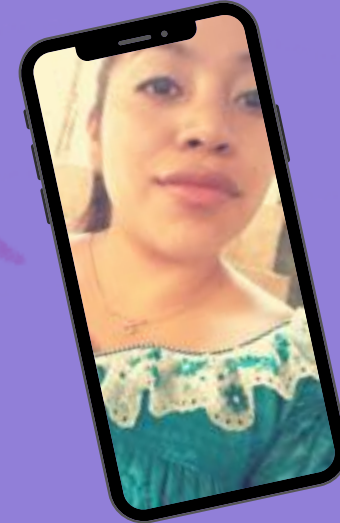
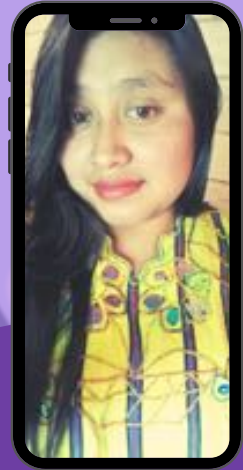
Preliminary results: facilitators

Facilitators worked hard on creating a **safe learning environment**.

They gave **feedback** to participants, **praised** them for their efforts, and thought of ways of making the topic **useful** to all participants present.

Facilitating mentors **encouraged** all participants to share their thoughts without fear of judgement, and **boosted group involvement** by using activities that promote respect and team building.





Preliminary results: participants

The online course appealed to different learning styles: some participants reported a preference for using **images, pictures and videos**, others for using **sound and voicenotes**, and others for using words in **reading and writing texts**.

Mentors reported having fun, learning concepts relevant to their lives, feeling in an emotionally safe space, building better relationships with peers, being encouraged to interact and actively participate, and gaining a deeper comprehension of the material.





Mentors as communicators



Participants recorded short voice notes that can be disseminated on social media or broadcast on community radio to raise awareness and change attitudes about COVID-19.



They also photographed themselves complying with COVID-19 prevention methods to model best practices with friends and family, create impact on social media, disseminate evidence-based prevention strategies and develop their capacities in communications and advocacy.



Next steps

The E-Learning and Digital Support method *Mentoras Digitales 2020* will continue to be used with adolescent girl mentors during the COVID-19 pandemic, incorporating feedback and adapting to girl and community needs to help build mentors' capacity to facilitate the implementation of safe spaces, effectively deliver health, life-skills and financial education to the girls in the program, and learn from home through free and low-bandwidth digital platforms available to all participants.





Thank you!

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