

Girls Corner Digital Mentoring Platform

*Connecting, Mentoring and
Empowering Girls Beyond the
Classroom*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE

The **Girls Corner Digital Mentoring Platform** is Grassroot People and Gender Development Center's (GRADE) innovative virtual mentoring programme designed to provide adolescent girls and young women with continuous access to mentorship, life skills education, leadership development, and psychosocial support through digital technology.

Established during the COVID-19 pandemic, when schools were closed and many girls were isolated from learning and support systems, Girls Corner was created to ensure that girls continued receiving guidance, encouragement, and accurate information despite the challenges of lockdowns and social distancing. What began as an emergency response has evolved into one of GRADE's flagship programmes, connecting girls across different communities through a safe and interactive online learning space.

Today, the platform serves as a vibrant digital community where girls learn, ask questions, share experiences, receive mentorship, and develop the confidence to navigate adolescence and prepare for responsible adulthood.



Background

Adolescent girls face numerous challenges that can hinder their education, health, safety, and future opportunities. These include gender inequality, peer pressure, gender-based violence, harmful social norms, limited access to mentors, misinformation about sexual and reproductive health, and a lack of safe spaces to discuss personal concerns.

The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed these challenges, as prolonged school closures increased the risk of isolation, learning loss, early pregnancy, child marriage, online exploitation, and mental health concerns among girls.

Recognizing the need for continuous engagement beyond physical classrooms, GRADE launched **Girls Corner**, using digital technology to create a safe, supportive, and accessible mentoring platform where girls could continue learning, growing, and supporting one another.

Goal

To empower adolescent girls and young women through continuous digital mentorship, life skills education, leadership development, and psychosocial support, enabling them to become confident, informed, and resilient leaders.

Objectives

The platform aims to:

- Provide continuous mentorship for adolescent girls.
 - Promote leadership and personal development.
 - Improve girls' confidence and self-esteem.
 - Increase access to accurate information on health, safety, and life skills.
 - Create a safe digital space where girls can ask questions without fear or stigma.
 - Strengthen peer support and positive social networks.
 - Encourage girls to become advocates and leaders within their communities.
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Programme Components

Digital Mentorship

Experienced mentors provide regular guidance, encouragement, and practical advice to girls on navigating adolescence, education, leadership, and personal development.

Mentoring helps participants:

- Build confidence.
 - Set personal goals.
 - Make informed decisions.
 - Develop resilience.
 - Strengthen leadership potential.
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Life Skills Education

Girls participate in structured learning sessions covering essential life skills, including:

- Self-awareness.
- Decision-making.
- Goal setting.
- Communication.
- Critical thinking.
- Time management.
- Emotional intelligence.
- Problem-solving.

These skills prepare participants for lifelong success in school, work, and community life.

Leadership Development

The platform nurtures young female leaders through discussions and practical activities focused on:

- Leadership principles.
- Public speaking.
- Volunteerism.
- Community engagement.
- Civic responsibility.
- Advocacy skills.

Girls are encouraged to see themselves as changemakers capable of influencing positive change.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Education

Participants receive age-appropriate information on:

- Puberty.
- Menstrual health.
- Healthy relationships.
- Consent.
- Personal safety.
- Sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The programme promotes informed decision-making while dispelling myths and misconceptions.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Girls are educated on:

- Understanding abuse.
- Online safety.
- Recognizing grooming and exploitation.
- Reporting concerns to trusted adults.
- Personal boundaries.
- Child rights.

This component strengthens girls' ability to protect themselves and support their peers.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

The platform encourages open discussions on:

- Self-esteem.
- Stress management.
- Emotional resilience.
- Coping with peer pressure.
- Healthy friendships.
- Building a positive self-image.

Girls are reassured that seeking help is a sign of strength and that they are not alone in facing life's challenges.

Inspirational Conversations

Regular sessions feature women leaders, professionals, entrepreneurs, health experts, and development practitioners who share their personal journeys, career experiences, and lessons learned.

These conversations expose participants to positive role models and broaden their aspirations.

Target Beneficiaries

The programme primarily serves:

- Adolescent girls (10–19 years).
 - Secondary school students.
 - Young women.
 - Girls transitioning into higher education or employment.
 - Girls from underserved communities.
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Implementation Approach

The platform uses accessible digital tools to ensure that girls can participate regardless of their location.

Activities include:

- WhatsApp mentoring groups.
- Weekly learning sessions.
- Interactive discussions.
- Digital resource sharing.
- Question-and-answer sessions.
- Peer learning.
- Guest speaker sessions.
- Individual mentorship where required.

The online format allows continuous engagement while fostering a supportive learning community.

Achievements

Since its launch, Girls Corner has:

- Grown into an active WhatsApp mentoring community serving **more than 250 girls**.
 - Provided continuous mentorship during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Delivered regular life skills, leadership, health, and child protection education.
 - Connected girls with experienced mentors and inspiring female role models.
 - Created a trusted space where participants can seek guidance, ask questions, and support one another.
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Impact

The Girls Corner Digital Mentoring Platform has contributed to:

- Increased confidence and self-esteem among participants.
- Improved leadership and communication skills.
- Better understanding of sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Increased awareness of child protection and online safety.
- Stronger peer support networks that reduce isolation.
- Greater motivation among girls to pursue education, leadership, and community service.

Many participants have gone on to mentor their peers, participate in community initiatives, and demonstrate increased confidence in school and everyday life.

Partnerships

GRADE welcomes partnerships with:

- Schools.
- Youth organizations.
- Women's organizations.
- Technology partners.
- Telecommunications companies.
- Development agencies.
- Individual mentors and volunteers.

Partnerships help expand access to digital learning opportunities and ensure that more girls can benefit from quality mentorship.

Sustainability

GRADE is committed to strengthening the platform by:

- Expanding membership to reach more girls across Nigeria.
 - Recruiting and training additional volunteer mentors.
 - Developing structured digital learning modules.
 - Creating leadership pathways for outstanding participants to become peer mentors.
 - Integrating online and in-person activities to strengthen engagement.
 - Building partnerships that improve digital access for girls in underserved communities.
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Looking Ahead

GRADE envisions Girls Corner becoming one of Nigeria's leading digital mentoring platforms for adolescent girls. Future plans include launching a dedicated mobile learning platform, establishing regional mentoring hubs, offering career guidance and scholarship information, providing digital literacy and entrepreneurship training, and creating an alumni network of young women who will mentor the next generation of girls.

At GRADE, we believe that every girl deserves a trusted mentor, a safe space to learn, and the opportunity to discover her potential. Through the **Girls Corner Digital Mentoring Platform**, we are breaking barriers of distance and circumstance, ensuring that girls are connected, inspired, and empowered to become confident leaders and changemakers in their communities.





