

# What Have We Learned?

## Write to Be Program Evaluation Summary



### What is Fi Ki Fò?



Write to Be works with Pwoje Espwa to fund and facilitate the Fi Ki Fò (“strong girl” in Creole) program. The program provides participants with an additional 6-10 hours of skills training each week throughout the school year. Classes include sewing, cooking, art, computer literacy, French, and English, and are taught by Haitian women in the community, who also serve as mentors and role models. Girls are each paired with a young professional woman in the U.S. and correspond throughout the year on topics such as goal setting, role models, and self-identity. Each year, Write to Be participants in the U.S. and Haiti come together at Pwoje Espwa for a culminating seven-day workshop full of Fi Ki Fò activities on empowerment, leadership, self-esteem, and fun!



Cheering on the Espwa soccer team in downtown Les Cayes, Haiti

*“When we were not yet in the Fi Ki Fò program, all we knew was go to school, we slept, studied and we never thought we could have the same. . . we did not even think that we could do the same as the young men. Now that we’ve been in the Fi Ki Fò program we think, we can talk the same, we can do the same with the men.”*

**Fi Ki Fò participant**

### Who are the “Fi Ki Fò”?

The Fi Ki Fò girls are ages 14-18 and range from 3rd grade to 9th grade in school. During the 2016-2017 school year, all 17 eligible girls at Pwoje Espwa were enrolled in the program. The average Fi Ki Fò girl has 5-6 siblings. About one third of the girls have one or two siblings who also live at Pwoje Espwa. And exactly half of the girls say they see their families often: which could involve returning home on weekends, family visitation to Pwoje Espwa, or girls traveling home for summer vacation.



Madame Sagine teaches Nancy how to take measurements for a skirt.

### What’s going well?

- Girls feel they improved in all skills areas of the program
- Girls feel an increased sense of valor, equal to men
- Teachers feel empowered by the program
- Girls developed writing skills and felt connected with their pen pals

Celebrating strong women across the world on International Women’s Day



### Where can we improve?

- Girls saved money through the program, but did not necessarily form savings habits
- Girls feel prepared for life after Espwa but worry about finishing school and finding work
- Girls in the program did not have significant, universal self-esteem improvement

### Additional Highlights

- 100% of Fi Ki Fò girls agreed that being a part of the Pen Pal program increased their confidence
- Girls in the first cohort of the program earned \$20 USD on average for their savings accounts
- Teachers said the program also made them feel more confident as women in Haiti

## How did we evaluate the program?

The program evaluation was conducted by MSW/MID candidate Rachel Vinciguerra. Preliminary data review began in the early months of 2017 and on-the-ground data collection was conducted from May to July 2017, overlapping with the seven-day Fi Ki Fò workshop. The evaluation findings to answer these questions come from diverse sources including:

- Program data
- Surveys of program participants
- Surveys of pen pals
- Focus groups with program participants and teachers
- Participant school grades
- Teacher observations
- Student questionnaires of teacher performance



[From left to right] Madame Gina (French), Madame Sagine (sewing), Madame Love Jah (translation), and Madame Vierge (embroidery) after our annual celebratory dinner.

*"I think girls are becoming more confident in their minds because they know that society puts girls in a secondary position, they say girls can't do this, girls can't do that. There are other special things for girls... We are showing them, they have knowledge, you can walk forward, you can do anything."*

**Fi Ki Fò teacher**

## What were the main evaluation questions?

- To what degree have Fi Ki Fò program outcomes been achieved in the following areas: proficiency in skills, meaningful relationships with mentors, financial preparedness, increased self-esteem of participants, benefits to administrators and teachers?
- What are the strengths and challenges of individual program activities and outputs in the following areas: classes and workshops, week-long workshop and letter writing, sales opportunities and informal savings, employing Haitian women as administrators and teachers?
- Are skills learned in the Fi Ki Fò program well matched to employment opportunities in Les Cayes?

## How will we use what we have learned to improve the program for the girls?

- The Fi Ki Fò program will include a new "Independent Living Skills Class" for girls ages 17+ that will cover a more in-depth financial literacy programming in addition to other topics such as navigating getting around town, learning about different careers, etc.
- The Fi Ki Fò program coordinator will work with each participant to set personal goals for the year and provide ongoing practical career guidance to prepare for their transition out of Espwa.
- Write to Be will incorporate letter prompts that encourage opportunities for participants in Haiti to offer advice and empower their pen pals in the United States.
- Through the Fi Ki Fò program, participants will be required to practice budgeting by recording funds going in and out of their personal accounts at Espwa.



Medgine and Suzanna practice cooking skills together during Fi Ki Fò week.

*If you have further questions or comments regarding the 2017 Fi Ki Fò Program Evaluation or would like to request the Creole language report, you may reach out directly to the lead program evaluator Rachel Vinciguerra at [rachel@writetobe.org](mailto:rachel@writetobe.org). The full program evaluation is available on [www.writetobe.org](http://www.writetobe.org).*