



LIFE SKILLS
AND SPORTS
FOR STRONG
GIRLS AND SAFE
COMMUNITIES

Boxgirls Manual

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Strong
girls.
Safe
communities



About Boxgirls International

Boxgirls International works to create a world in which women and girls lead dignified lives in safe communities, where they are valued as equals and have control over their sexuality and economic development. We are working towards a world with socially resilient and economically independent girls and young women. Boxgirls uses the passion and self-creation of sport in combination with academic programmes to drive individual and community transformation.

We believe that the key to community development and social change is the empowerment of women and that well designed and delivered sport and leadership programmes change girls' lives. Boxgirls International works with innovative partner projects in the field to deliver excellent coaching and life skills modules through club and school programmes. We also outreach activities to business, government and media decisionmakers to improve women's sport and social participation in general.

We recognise that gender-based violence and violence in schools are major barriers to education for many girls around the world. The programmes that we deliver support girls and young women in developing life skills, learning self-defence and de-escalation strategies, and becoming leaders in their schools and communities.

Boxgirls International supported the emergence of the awardwinning organisations Boxgirls Kenya and Boxgirls South Africa. Both have been operating since 2009 and serve girls most in need in povertystricken urban areas. Boxgirls coaches are drawn from the communities they serve. The training programmes are based on a comprehensive curriculum that combines sports exercises with life skills training. We empower the girls' through building their self-confidence, awareness, communication, and violence negotiation skills. This approach increases both their ability to defend themselves against gender-based violence and their safety at school while improving their motivation, academic performance, and social capital.



What is gender-based violence?

Gender-based violence (GBV) is defined as: “Violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering against someone based on gender discrimination, gender role expectations and/or gender stereotypes, or based on the differential power status linked to gender.”

(UNESCO & UN Women, 2016)¹

G^{BV} is often used interchangeably with violence against women, as GBV affects mostly (but not only) women and is mostly perpetrated by men.

Gender is used to describe social attributes and opportunities in society related to being defined as a man or a woman. The social attributes and opportunities associated with men and women are created through society and socialisation processes.

The term gender is mostly used as distinct from the term sex, which describes all biological differences between males and females.

¹ UNESCO & UN Women (2016): Global guidance on addressing school-related gender-based violence.



Why we need to empower girls

The realities of girls and women around the world are diverse and differ in educational opportunities, engagement within communities, and possibilities of sport and development.

The aim is to create a world where boys and girls, men and women, are of equal value and enjoy equal rights regardless of sex or gender.

Gender equality is one of 17 global Sustainable Development Goals set up by the United Nations in 2015. It describes a future where girls have the same chance as boys of participating within communities and society and the same chance of an education and protection from violence.

Girls should respect their own bodies and selves, be aware of their abilities, and be able to develop them to achieve their goals and dreams.

They shall have the ability to make their own choices, stand up for themselves, express their opinions and thoughts, be aware of their mental and physical



integrity and engage in healthy relationships. Girls shall be empowered by overcoming challenges within their lives and develop their own understanding of what being a girl means to them.

The methods in this manual are focused on girls-only groups, which does not mean boys are excluded from the aim of achieving gender equity nor that empowerment of girls is in opposition to the empowerment of boys and men. Gender equity means giving the same value and the same chances for participation and development to all individuals regardless of gender. The methods presented in this manual give girls the chance to learn from other girls and women within their communities, discovering differences, similarities, and thereby getting to know themselves. It represents one piece of the puzzle towards the aim of gender equity.

Why girl empowerment through sport?

Boxgirls is a Sport for Development (SfD) programme. SfD concentrates mainly on sport activities that offer health benefits, fun, and sense of belonging, adventure, expression, or suspense. Performance, competition, and elite sports are not fully excluded, but they are not the focus. Sport for Development does not mean the development of sport, but rather the development through sport. SfD focuses on socio-economically disadvantaged individuals and communities and includes life skills training in combination with sport activities, building skills that can be transferred into “real life” (Gould & Carson 2008). For example, the fair-play concept is linked with sports, which trains skills such as tolerance or respect.



Benefits of sport in the empowerment of girls

1. Sport is directly linked to physicality and body functions. This allows for SfD programmes to address sensitive issues and convey gender-based information on human rights, health, nutrition, diseases and hygiene. This knowledge enables especially girls and women to obtain more control over their lives and bodies, in particular regarding pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, sexual harassment or prostitution. In appropriate ways boys should also be part of these learning processes, for example in terms of learning to respect their own and other, female, bodies. Boys can also be brought into a greater discussion about their sexuality and masculinity. Increased self-esteem through SfD programmes may also strengthen disease and unwanted pregnancy prevention by empowering girls and boys to, for example, refuse unprotected sex. Reducing teenage pregnancies increases the percentage of girls who finish school.
2. On a collective level SfD can provide leadership opportunities for girls and boys in sport organisations, and ultimately wider society (UN 2007). Teamwork and communication skills can also be acquired through SfD activities and transferred into real-life settings.
3. Femininity and sport are often considered incompatible on a societal level. Thus, promoting girls' and women's sport in public spaces provides a challenge to traditional gender norms. Boys and men taking part in sports and activities read as feminine also challenges these norms. Claiming safe spaces for physically active females is highly symbolic and may — from a long-term perspective — challenge gender stereotypes and change restrictive attitudes. Boys and men are included as allies in this process of making girls and women visible as actors in public spaces.

Sport promotes women empowerment through:

- ★ Access to public spaces.
- ★ Opening opportunities to develop new skills.
- ★ Gaining support from others.
- ★ Freedom of expression & movement.
- ★ Fostering negotiation skills.
- ★ Promoting education, communication, leadership & teamwork.
- ★ Giving them a sense of ownership over their bodies & their life choices.
- ★ Opening a channel for informing girls on reproductive health or other topics.
- ★ Building new support networks.

Possible barriers to sport for girls:

Certain sports may be associated with masculinity.	No safe spaces — for example, changing rooms.	A need to work at home (house chores duties).	Not allowed in public spaces, or a lack of safe spaces unhindered by male domination and authority.
Different attitudes towards sport and physical activity.	A lack of female role models.	Girls having fewer opportunities than boys for interaction outside the home, beyond family structures.	The idea that women's physical strength is inferior.

And why boxing?

To know elements of boxing techniques, how to position your feet and your hands are important for knowing your body. It is learning about yourself, setting boundaries and respecting the boundaries of others. Boxing gives self-confidence. It helps girls to concentrate on their goals and have trust in themselves to reach them. Boxing is also considered as a traditionally masculine discipline and thus helps to overcome the stereotypes of gender roles in society. Strong girls become strong women. And we know that strong women transform their communities.

It's simple:

*Strong girls.
Safe communities*



The aim of the manual

This manual gives a first insight into Boxgirls methodologies developed and revised in the practical implementation of our award-winning programmes internationally. It is directed at practitioners interested in including girls' empowerment sessions within existing SfD offerings, or for those who want to establish a new initiative to empower girls within their communities. The sessions are designed to foster the self-confidence, stress relief, violence negotiation skills and healthy relationships of girls from nine to thirteen, but can also be adapted for other age groups.

Good reasons for a girl empowerment project week:

Presentation skills, self-confidence and stress relief will have a positive effect on the girls' private and academic life.	Gender-based violence prevention, by strengthening girls.
The variety of sport activities and life-skill training is motivating and engaging.	The basic boxing learned supports self-confidence and perseverance, and establishes the competence of setting and compiling borders.

Before getting started:

You are probably excited about beginning your new girl's empowerment project and would like to start right away. Nevertheless, good preparation is essential. It allows for you to cater to the needs of the girls in your programme and make a successful project.

Know your participants:

Before you begin the programme think about the girls who will participate. Even if you already know the group, take some time to reflect. What are the backgrounds of your participants? What needs do they have? Do they already know one another? (If yes, what group dynamics did you observe?) Do any of the girls need special assistance because of physical or mental particularities? Do I know of any challenges they have in their daily life?

Activities you are offering to the girls shall fit their needs, feel good to them and be to the girls' benefit. Try to look at it from their perspective and be open to their ideas. The girls are the centre of your programme.

Know your aims:

Reflecting on what drives you to realise this girls' project as well as about what specific aims you have for the group you would like to work with can help you 1) communicate your idea to others and 2) decide if you are able to reach your aims through the activities you planned.

Creating a safe space:

Development and learning can only take place within a safe space, where girls feel comfortable and free to express themselves — where they are accepted in their unique way and respected. Creating a safe space for the girls is a crucial part of providing the basis of learning. A safe space comes into being by having a physical safe surrounding and through an atmosphere of comfort and safety —meaning not only the room, but your attitude as coach is vital. The girls should feel that the space is their own, where they can express themselves and grow.

Before you start your session have a look at the room or space you would like to use, so that you know the specifics of the place and can plan how to perform the different parts of the session. You need to consider if the room is big enough for certain activities involving movement, if you may be loud or might disturb somebody else, and if you and the girls will be safe at the space.

Because you might be sharing the programme space with other people, keep in mind that creating an all-female environment for both the sport activities and life skill sessions (where sensitive subjects might be discussed) is very important. If possible try to reserve the space for your programme and do not allow males to practise, watch or hang around.



Do not forget cultural considerations. For example, acknowledging that for some cultures and religions it would not be appropriate for males to be watching.

Challenging traditional gender norms may have severe consequences for girls and women involving defamation, ridicule, detention or even violence. You may have to adjust the location of your programme or some of the modules to avoid any potential harm to participants and yourself.

Involving the community, partners, parents:

For your girl empowerment project to be a success do not forget to involve the community, partners and team members around you. Members and organisations from the community around you can be a great resource, supporting your programme with venues, materials, and gaining trust from parents or schools.

Before you start your programme, you will need the consent of the parents. Remember, the participants are under age and it is their parents who decide if they will allow their girls to be part of your programme or not. It is advisable to have written consent from parents when possible. This way you can also collect emergency contact numbers and information on physical disabilities or diseases that might affect participation in your programme. This is an opportunity to get to know the parents and introduce yourself and your programme. This can allow you to adjust your session planning to include girls who might be physically restricted.



Facilitation tips

Materials needed:

The sessions are designed to require a limited amount of materials. Be creative and find alternatives if you do not have all materials available or ask for smaller donations, for example for papers or pens, within your community.

- Paper
- Pens
- Optional: masking tape and flipchart paper to paste, for example, rules on the wall
- Declaration of consent for parents to sign (if you do not already have written consent)

Before each session begins make sure you have all the materials needed. Always be at the programme location ahead of time, before your participants arrive, so you can prepare the session and the girls enter a positive atmosphere.



Different types of activities:

This is to cater for the differing needs of groups. A group for a single coach should not exceed 20 participants, to enable the coach to cater for the needs of each individual as well as being able to ensure their safety.

Warm-ups and closing activities:

Before or during each session, you may want to lead participants in an icebreaker to help them relax, have fun and reconnect with one another. Participants themselves often have great ideas for warm-ups and icebreakers. You can ask one or two participants each session to be responsible for a short warm-up activity and to keep the group motivated throughout the sessions. Energisers and closing activities play also an important role as a ritual which will allow the programme to run smoothly. It is important to give the brain and body time to relax.

Discussion:

Group discussions bring out responses from participants on a particular topic, and provide opportunities for you to increase participant knowledge or correct misinformation. The effectiveness of a group discussion often depends on a facilitator's ability to use open-ended questions, which are questions asked by the facilitator that need more than a simple "yes" or "no" answer. These questions help to bring out feelings or thoughts about a topic or an activity.

1. "What did you learn from this activity?" is an open-ended question. "Tell me how this activity affected you?" is another example of an open-ended question. Open-ended questions often start with What, When, Why or How.
2. "Did you learn anything?" is not an open-ended question, because the participant can simply reply "yes" or "no".

Boxing component:

The boxing techniques taught in this model are usually introductory and basic self-defence skills. It is a way for the children to relax, have fun, understand basic boxing techniques and body awareness and how these skills can relate to their lives. They are not intended to be used or to prepare for fighting others. Before you start the boxing exercises make sure you point out the rules. If you do not feel comfortable with these exercises you can replace them with one of the other warm-up games or sport activities.



Brainstorming:

A brainstorm is an exploration of ideas and is a great way to open a topic for discussion. During brainstorming, no one should judge or place a value on an answer someone gives. Each answer is simply recorded on newsprint or a chalkboard or whatever is available for the entire group to see. This activity encourages participants to expand their thinking about an idea and look at a topic from different angles and perspectives.

Session format:

Every session is 1 hour 30 minutes.

Coach makes sure the space is clean and prepared



Coach welcomes participants



Girls sign in on attendance list



Warm-up



Theme of the day



Closing activity

General procedure:

What one needs to be a mindful girl empowerment coach:

Starting and ending sessions:

Make sure you all start and end each session together. Begin sessions by checking in with the girls: ask them about any issues they had in the past week or few days. This can be done during the first warm ups and is a good way for girls to get things, whether funny or frustrating, off their chests.

When ending a session, coaches might want to ask what the girls thought of the session, what they learned, and what they liked and didn't like. This is a good opportunity for immediate feedback from the girls and a way to see if the session reached its objective.

Value everyone equally:

Being a coach also means being a role model to the girls. As a role model, you can enhance the girls' learning motivation and encourage them to aim for higher educational goals.

It is crucial for the girls' success in school to be competent in speaking and writing. Create opportunities for all the girls to learn and to become confident about writing and speaking. This needs an atmosphere of trust and appreciation where girls feel comfortable about trying things. Mistakes are rated as important part of learning. Make sure everyone is listened to and nobody is made fun of.

Confidentiality:

At the beginning of every session, it is important to re-state and be clear on the ground rules regarding confidentiality. Many issues around sex, sexuality, and gender can be very personal and intimate. Always ensure participants feel that their voices can be heard and respected.

A group contract can be made under which participants commit themselves to keeping discussion, information and personal disclosures within the group. However, there is no guarantee that this will happen in practice, and participants need to feel comfortable about disclosing personal matters within this context.

As a facilitator you need to keep to yourself all information you are told in confidence. However, there will be times when you want to share the information with your supervisor to work out how best to respond to the information

(for example: someone discloses that they are being sexually abused). In that case tell the young girl that you need to discuss the information with a trusted colleague in order to support them.

Whenever you feel that you cannot deal with the information being shared with you, encourage the girl to seek counselling from a more experienced counsellor or trusted adult, and assist in paving the way for them to do it.

Group cohesion:

Group cohesion among the girls is an important aspect of making the sessions successful and creating an atmosphere of friendship, support, and respect. Let girls chat while warming up or while they gather and wait for everyone to arrive.

As a coach make sure that everyone switches partners and has a chance to partner with everyone else. If you see two girls always partnering with each other, switch them. Further team-building activities are crucial to build trust within the group of girls, which must be the basis for creating a safe space.

Addressing bullying and disrespect:

Before your programme with the group begins, we recommend setting group rules with all participants. You will find an example on how to lead this session in the subsequent modules. You can always come back to these group rules if conflicts arise among the participants.

Bullying can occur in all-girl sessions just as easily as in mixed-gender sessions. Watch for abusive behaviour and abusive language and quickly pull aside the bullying participant and have a discussion with her about the impact of what they are doing. Encourage the group to discourage bullying by breaking up cliques, and switch partners and groups.

Remember to be flexible:

Be creative. Don't be scared to make changes to the material. You can shorten, lengthen, combine, or adapt the activities. Use your own knowledge, skills, and experiences to strengthen your work. Most importantly, make the material right for the group. Be attentive to the group dynamics and if dialogue is going well, continue with the discussions. If learners are inactive, be prepared to shift the energy to get the group back on track.



Respect my boundaries:

A part of our modules covers training the girls to respect their own borders as well as the borders of others. This is an important rule for you as facilitator as well. You should always ask for permission before touching in order to assist with sport modules. Respect the space of the children. Children who have experienced trauma may be especially sensitive to touching.

It is your task as facilitator to make sure everyone is comfortable. Some discussions may also be sensitive to some girls, depending on their background and experiences. Make sure no one is forced to answer a question or is laughed at.

Time:

Always plan your workshop structure based on the suggested time allocations per activity, but do not try to do too much; rather do one activity well. Try to strike a balance between keeping to your time and respecting the group's natural pace. Your group's learning and participation is more important than sticking rigidly to a plan. Make sure there is enough time for the theme of the day. This is the centre of the session and should be the focus of your attention.

Ask questions:

Try not to just give answers. The training is not a lecture; it aims to work actively and creatively with the girls. Encourage participants to explore options and choices, to learn to problem-solve, and to come up with their own solutions. Encourage participants to debate, discuss, and share ideas. Summarise key ideas, learnings, or messages at the end. If you do not know the answer to a

question, be honest. Never give information of which you are not sure. Rather, empower the participant to find the correct information with your support.

Girls' self-esteem:

As a coach, you play an important role in building girls' self-esteem. It is your role, responsibility, and opportunity to give girls the feeling of being successful in completing their tasks and becoming confident while speaking in front of others. Remember to formulate your comments to participants in a positive way; give girls positive feedback, value their work, and thank them for participating in the activities. Also, make sure nobody is excluded or made fun of. Creating a supportive atmosphere among girls will be crucial in developing their self-esteem.



Quiet Signal – attention getter:

Developing your Quiet Signal with the children can be very helpful in keeping discipline in the group, getting the attention of girls, or bringing the group back together. Tell girls that it is important to have a Quiet Signal so that everyone in the room will know when it is time to stop what they are doing and listen for the next instruction. Give girls three options and let them vote on the Quiet Signal they like the best.

Sample Quiet Signals:

- **Peace and Quiet:** raise your hand or two fingers in a “peace sign” and wait for silence.
- **Silent Hand & “Shh”:** raise your hand above your head and cover your mouth with one finger. Girls do the same.

- **Rhythmic Clap:** clap rhythmically and have students repeat the clap.
- **Call & Response:** call out a designated word or phrase and have your students respond – for example: “Strong” ... “Girls”.
- **Freeze “Boxing Stance”:** Have the girls adopt the boxing stance so that they are quiet enough for you to start working with them.

Being gender sensitive:

Being gender sensitive means being aware of (your own) gender stereotypes/norms. What do you think are gender norms in your community? What behaviour is expected from girls and boys in your society? Does this limit life chances?

Gender roles are part of our identity and affect the experiences we have in society as well as our behaviour or how we evaluate a situation. Gender is not just female or male there is a range of gender identities individuals can hold. Girls should be encouraged in their wide range of talents and interests, even when these do not fit gender norms. If you offer a wide range of opportunities to develop different skills you will best foster each girl’s individual skills and interests. What your girls are interested in may not be what is considered by society as an interest or talent for girls. Interests and skills that may not fit the gender norms should be encouraged.

Being gender sensitive in a programme does not necessarily involve talking about gender directly. It is mainly about your attitude and behaviour as facilitator. Make sure everyone feels welcome and can participate, regardless of their skills. If the girls display their gender norms, by, for example, saying: “I don’t do this: that is for boys!” you can take this as point of discussion. What makes you think that this is for boys? Why could it not be for girls?

Presentation skills:

Integrating presentation skills into the programme helps girls learn how to speak confidently about themselves in front of groups of strangers and their peers. This is also an important skill for school and employment. There are several ways that you could integrate presentation skills into your programme. Have girls introduce themselves to the group, or introduce their partner. When the girls lead the warm-up or games, encourage them to speak loudly, clearly, and exactly. Encourage different girls to explain different exercises in front of the group. Start out each session with participants talking about an experience they had the week before, or something they heard that was interesting. Encourage girls to talk about what they are feeling that week.

Create a culture where girls clap or snap once someone speaks eloquently.

Explain to participants the basics of presentation, which include:

- **Posture:** keep your back straight, arms uncrossed and shoulders open to the audience.
- **Eye contact:** Pick one person in the audience and focus on them while speaking, or pick several people and focus back and forth from one to the other. Do not look at the ground or up in the air which creates disconnection with the people you are speaking to.
- **Tone of voice:** People know when you are unsure of what you are saying by the tone of voice. Do not whisper or talk quietly, which might signal to people you don't know what you are talking about. Use a loud strong voice and pronounce words clearly and strongly.

End of the programme graduation:

You can organise a small graduation after your one-week programme and invite parents or community members. The girls can show the skills they learned with posters, stories, or boxing performances. This gives the girls an opportunity to practice their leadership and presentation skills and advocate for girls' rights within their communities. Give each participant a role during the event, or form groups in charge of aspects of planning an event. Different groups could create the programme, make and distribute invitations, create banner decorations, and organise younger participants. Make sure to involve everyone.

Be cautious. Make sure that what is shown by the participants is culturally acceptable in the community as not to put girls in danger.

If you are planning for a longer-term offer to girls you could think of different opportunities for community outreach. For example:

- **Community parades:** Parades are a wonderful way to involve participants, parents and supporters in sending a message to the neighbourhood. Choose a theme such as child rights, make banners and posters and create informational slogans to shout while parading. Pick a day on which people are not at work and most likely outside enjoying the day. March in a group through the streets with banners and signs, shouting appropriate slogans. The more people you can get to help participate the better. Place a couple people in charge of answering questions from curious onlookers who want to know more about what you do or what the parade is about.

TIP: Be careful and make sure that there are enough adults to ensure the safety of the participants during parades. Be smart with the types of themes you pick and the slogans you use so as not to place those participating in the parade in any immediate danger in case of high levels of controversy.

- **Mother/female caregiver and daughter days:** Designate a day for participants to bring their mothers. This could involve the girls teaching their mothers what they have learned during the sessions or discussing community issues together that focus on relationships or conflict resolution. This is a good way for mothers to learn what their daughters are excited about and for participants to show off their skills, the programme and improve their relationship with their parents. You could also have a father/male caregiver and daughter day.
- **Women's sports days:** Reach out to the mothers and female caregivers of participants and create a women's sport day in which they participate in introductions to various sports. Include other themes if you wish. This will help increase the number of sports-minded women and promote the importance of a healthy lifestyle and could be a great influence on the rest of their families. Get them to invite friends in order to reach as many women as possible.

Code of Conduct and Child Protection:

The Girls Programme is a safe and inclusive place where girls are treated with respect, tolerance, dignity, given equal rights and are free from all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse.

Child maltreatment, according to the definition of the World Health Organisation, includes all forms of physical and emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, development or dignity.²

² www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/child/en

I will at any time obey the following **Code of Conduct**:

1. Everyone is equal no matter what gender, age, skin colour, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, beliefs, religious or political affiliation they may have.
2. All girls have the same right for protection.
3. I will treat all girls equally and show everyone equal appreciation.
4. All girls have the right to have their voices heard and to be listened to.
5. My behaviour will be respectful at any time.
6. I will use respectful and nonviolent language, which is in no way physically or sexually provocative.
7. If the child is capable of doing something personal on their own there is no reason for me to act for the child.
8. I will not take any images (meaning photos and videos) without the agreement of the girls and make sure that if photos are taken they do not undermine the dignity of the girls or are in any way harmful to them.
9. I will not meet or be with a child alone without other members of the staff or her parents knowing in advance and it being necessary for the organisation of the programme.
10. I will not behave sexually towards a child or touch them in a sexual way.
11. I will not ignore a child or refuse to allow them access to basic necessities.
12. If there is anger and disagreement between children I will try to resolve the issues calmly.
13. I will not try to punish a child by mocking, teasing or laughing at them or trying to embarrass them in front of others, as well as I will not hit or strike a child at any time.
14. I will do everything I can do to make sure the girls are safe and protected at any time.
15. If I see or suspect any disregard of the Code of Conduct or child maltreatment, an allegation of child maltreatment is made, a child discloses child maltreatment, I will act according to the guidelines of the Child Protection in my country.
16. I will make sure I know where to get help in case of any injuries or any case of child maltreatment.

Make sure you always have the most important emergency numbers with you or save them in your phone, so that you are able to call for help if needed at any time.



6

Five Boxgirls modules

Session 1:

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONG



OBJECTIVES

Social Capital

Introduction to the programme, team building and getting to know one another.

Preparation



MATERIALS

- Big piece of paper (for poster), tape or pins to put the poster on the wall, flipchart, markers.
- Pair game: A list of partner questions.

**THEME
OF THE
DAY**

Introduction [5 min]

Introduce the Girls' Clubs programme to the girls and briefly present the plan and goals.

Remind girls to:

- Bring a consent form from their parents if they have not already done so.



SHAKE OUT *Energiser [2 min]*

Activity description:

Ask participants to stand at arm's length from the other members of the group.

1. Participants raise their right arms in the air and count down from eight, shaking their right hands with each number. Then, they will put their right arms back down by their sides.
2. Participants will repeat the countdown from eight with their left arms, then lift and shake right legs and finally their left legs.
3. Participants will repeat the process (right arms, left arms, right legs, left legs), but start the countdown from seven, then from six, then from five, and all the way down to one.

After participants have reached “one” on their left legs, they will stand still, take a deep breath, and then sit down.

Reflection after activity:

- How is your energy level now compared to when you arrived?



I AM HOW I MOVE *Energiser [10 min]*

Target:

Getting to know names and moving together.

Activity description:

All the participants stand in a circle. One participant starts by saying her name and making a movement — the girls can be totally creative here, any movement is possible (for example, turning in a circle, lifting arms/feet, forming heart with hands). The only rule is that the movement should be clear and quite short. The next person standing on the right of the first girl repeats the first girl's name and movement, followed by her own name and movement. The third person in the row repeats name and movement of the first girl and the second girl before adding her own name and movement... and so the game continues.

Variation:

If the participants find it too difficult to remember all the names and movements,

or if the group is too big, you can make it simpler: after one of the girls has said her name and shown her movement, the whole group together repeats the name and the movement. Then you continue with the next person.



Pair Game [15 min]

Aim of activity:

Encouraging listening skills and building the foundation of trust and team alignment.

Activity description:

Invite everyone to stand up and begin moving around, exploring the room. After a while, tell them that they must freeze when you clap once and walk when you clap twice. Spend time practising. Then add that the participants must change their direction when you clap three times.

After some time of freeze, walk and turn, have the pairs share with one another:

1. Their name and any meanings or stories related to their names.
2. Where they are from.

Invite the pairs to then link arms and walk slowly through the room together in silence.

Repeat the clapping exercise — the idea is to encourage the pairs to work as a team, focusing on the instruction. After some time freeze again, and ask each pair to join another pair, creating a team of four. Then ask participants to introduce each other's partner, and then as a group share:

3. What are their strengths?
4. What are they looking forward to in the programme?

Bring the group back together and have each person open up to plenary and share one of their strengths.



Intention Setting & Code of Conduct [10 min]

Aim of activity:

Establish a set of ground rules for the team.

Activity description:

Bring the girls together in a semi-circle. Explain to them that they have a chance to create their own code of conduct that they will write on big piece of paper, creating a poster with rules for their Girls' Club.

You can ask them:

- Why do you think it is important to establish rules in the group?
- What rules would you wish to have in your group?

Brainstorm a list of rules which they are all willing to follow in order to help to maintain a respectful and safe learning environment.

Consider the following points:

- Be non-judgmental.
- No laughing about someone.
- Punctuality.
- Be positive.
- What is said in this space is not repeated anywhere else.
- No putting someone else down for their feelings, opinions, or experiences.
- Be respectful.
- Listen and do not interrupt.

Write the rules on a poster in simple terms. You can also use pictures to accommodate all literacy levels.

List between **8 and 10 rules** that the group agrees to follow during the next week. Allow everyone to sign the poster to agree to the rules.

Spider Cup Game [25 min]

Aim of activity:

Encourage teamwork.

Activity description:

Depending on the size of the group, you may want to divide the group in two. Give each group a cup with strings tied to it so that each team member can hold on to a string. They will all need to work together to balance the cup. As a team, they will need to hold the cup and fill it with water. Place another empty cup five metres from the group.



Task:

They need to carry the cup as a team. Don't spill any water and try to get to the empty cup and fill it with the water from the cup they carried.

Reflection after activity:

- What do you think is important for successful teamwork?
- Think of situations where you worked together as a team: what was helpful and what wasn't?

Examples:

Be honest; be tolerant and respectful; help; listen; be patient and understanding; discuss and make agreements; take responsibility; trust; change roles within the group; concentrate; communicate; have empathy for others; good structure/organisation; and value the ideas of others.



FACILITATOR'S NOTE

Look for examples of co-operation, conflict, good communication, and creative strategizing.

If the girls don't come up with a lot of ideas, you can add ideas or give contrasting aspects, highlighting behaviour that may be disturbing their teamwork. Remind them of the group rules, and ask: What do you think about ...xyz? Is that needed for good teamwork?

Teamwork – Get Up! [20 min]

Activity description:

Everyone should be told to break off into pairs. They should sit with their backs touching each other, but they may not link their arms.

Task:

Each pair's goal is to stand up together at the same time so that their backs keep touching each other, and the two girls lift their bodies together.

- If that works, two pairs form a group of four and try to solve the same task.
- If that works as well, one can make the groups bigger and bigger (maximum 10 people in one group).

Reflection after activity

- How did it feel to do the exercise?
- How did you experience the teamwork during this game? Was it different or the same as the other exercises you have done?

OR...

Teamwork – Human Knot [20 min]

Activity description:

The entire group stands in a circle. Everyone stretches both arms out in front of them. At a sign from the moderator, everyone tries to take the hands of two different people and hold on to them. No one is allowed to let go of the hands throughout the game. Next, the group tries to unravel the knot in order to stand in a circle, holding hands in the end.

FEEDBACK CIRCLE

Closing activity [5 min]

Everyone sits in a circle and is asked to sum up how the session was, in two words. One girl begins and the next in the circle continues, until everyone had a chance to give a short feedback.

Session 2

THIS IS MY SPACE!



OBJECTIVES

- Build self confidence and setting personal boundaries.
- Learn to stand with confidence.

Preparation



MATERIALS

No materials needed.



MOLECULES

Energiser [5 min]

Activity description:

Everyone runs around the room. One player is the catcher. She has to scream a number, for example, three. Everyone then has to try to go together in groups of three as fast as possible. The catcher can only catch players not in a group. The player caught is the next catcher.



BOXING STANCE

Energiser [15 min]

Goal:

The participants receive a brief introduction to the basics of boxing. The correct position of the feet and hands as well as the weight displacement of the body are crucial for body perception and the correct implementation of all boxing exercises. These activities are designed to teach the children self-confidence and make it clear that they can set their own physical boundaries and limits.

Before starting with the boxing exercises, set rules with the girls. It should

be clear that we are not training to fight or to become professional boxers. We are only boxing against shadows here, not against other girls. The most important rules are listed below.

Boxing rules:

- We are not hitting/pushing or causing hurt to each other, even for fun
- The learned boxing techniques are not used outside the gym/club.
- No one is forced to take part in boxing drills.
- If you do not comply with these rules, you are not allowed to participate.
- The exercises we do are only shadow boxing.

First ask whether the girls know how boxers stand when in the boxing ring.

Boxers have a stable stance — called boxing stance — which makes it possible for them to stand firm but also move quickly.

Activity description:

The most basic skills that boxers should learn have to do with the correct boxing stance, hand and eye co-ordination, developing spatial awareness with feet and fists, and learning how to stay balanced. The participants will need to avoid becoming imbalanced and toppling over when pushed. These skills are necessary to develop before boxers can learn to make the various punches.

The correct stance:

Feet: Teach participants how to identify whether their stance is orthodox (left foot in front, left fist in front) or southpaw (right foot in front, right fist in front). This usually depends on what hand is dominant for them. If they are right-handed, then they will most likely have an orthodox stance, in which their left hand is used for short jabs, and their more powerful right hand is reserved for the straight punch. Their feet should be shoulder width apart, and either the right or left foot in front, roughly half a step forward.

TIP: *Participants should get used to their centre of gravity, where they feel the most secure and stable.*

Hands/arms: Next, show participants where to hold their fists/gloves and arms. The front fist should be protecting one side of their face, near the cheekbone, while the back fist should be doing the same on the other side.

The chin should be down towards the chest. The arms (bent elbows) should be brought to the sides of their bodies to protect their chest/rib cage.

Exercise to see if participants have found the correct stance:

- Participants line up in two rows facing each other and adopt stances that they think will make it the most difficult for someone else to knock them off balance.
- The trainers gently push the participants to test the stability of their stances. If necessary, the trainers will correct their “guard” (their hands).

Important! Ask for permission before touching the participants.

TIP: *There are video instructions available on our website*
– www.boxgirls.org



STOP! – Game [20 min]

Aim of activity:

Get more clarity about your own boundaries, find the confidence to set your own boundaries.

Activity description:

- Participants line up in two opposing rows and adopt boxing stances (each participant should have a partner across from them).
- A participant is selected to help with the demonstration. The participant stands in the middle in the boxing stance, and the trainer begins to move towards the participant. When the trainer comes too close, the participant stretches out their hand and shouts: “Stop!”
- The trainer then explains boxing distance as well as “personal space,” which for each person will be different. The trainer explains that everyone has the right to decide what distance they need for their own personal space and comfort. The length your arm reaches defines your own space, and no one should be allowed to enter this space without permission.
- All participants now join in. Each participant must stretch out their hands

and shout “Stop!” when their partner is too close. It is important for participants to be clear with their partners: stand straight and stable while holding the boxing stance, shout loudly and clearly, and do not laugh.

Once the first round is completed, the opposing row adopts the same stance and shouts “Stop!” as above when their partner is too close. The pairs continue to take turns. After a first stage, there should be a little evaluation about how the girls feel. They could express their insecurity searching for the right distance, or maybe the partners have quite different opinions about what the right distance is.

Reflection after activity:

- How did this activity make you feel?
- Was it more intense when the “Stop!” got louder?
- How did you feel when your partner did not listen to you?
- What was the impact of eye contact with your partner?
- When was the shouted “Stop!” from your partner most convincing?
- Could you imagine situations like this in everyday life?

TIP: *Make a second round where the goal is to shout loudly and firmly: “Stop!” Encourage girls who might be shy to be loud and stand tall. Repeat the exercise until everyone has shouted “stop” loudly and firmly at least once.*

You can make a third round where you ask the girls not to say STOP but instead show it with their body. They can give a sign with their hands or make a step backwards. In a third round you can also ask them to express the STOP only using their eyes.



BOXING PUNCHES

Energiser [15 min]

The jab:

1. A jab is a quick, straight punch thrown with the lead hand (the left hand for right handed girls) from the guard position.
2. The jab is accompanied by a small, clockwise rotation of the torso and hips, while the fist rotates 90 degrees, becoming horizontal upon impact.
3. As the punch reaches full extension, the lead shoulder is brought up to guard the chin.
4. The rear hand remains next to the face to guard the jaw.
5. After making contact with the target, the lead hand is retracted quickly to resume a guard position in front of the face.

The cross punch:

1. A powerful straight punch is thrown with the rear hand (the right hand for right handed girls).
2. From the guard position, the rear hand is thrown from the chin, crossing the body and travelling towards the target in a straight line.
3. The rear shoulder is thrust forward and finishes just touching the outside of the chin.
4. At the same time, the lead hand is retracted and tucked against the face to protect the inside of the chin.
5. For additional power, the torso and hips are rotated counter-clockwise as the cross is thrown.
6. Weight is also transferred from the rear foot to the lead foot, resulting in the rear heel turning outwards as it acts as a fulcrum for the transfer of weight.

Body rotation and the sudden weight transfer is what gives the cross its power. Like the jab, a half-step forward may be added. After the cross is thrown, the hand is retracted quickly and the guard position resumed. It can be used to counterpunch a jab, aiming for the opponent's head (or a counter to a cross aimed at the body) or to set up a hook. The cross can also follow a jab, creating the classic "one-two combo". The cross is also called a "straight" or "right". The cross has been widely regarded as one of the most powerful, if not the single most powerful, punch in the boxer's arsenal.

"Jab out" exercise:

1. Split the children into two groups and form a circle, one group forming one half of the circle and the other group forming the other half.

2. Explain to group one that they will be doing the **jab**. When they hear their group called, they must throw a jab while shouting “jab out”. The coach/facilitator can pick which phrase to use, such as “jab out gender inequality”. This can also be done in multiple rounds with multiple phrases shouted in each round.
3. Explain to group two that when they hear their names called, they will shout “one-two,” throw a one-two combination punch, and shout another phrase, such as “out with stereotypes”.
4. The idea is that each group is able to do their specific action in unison. The group that performs best in unison is the winner.

TIP: *Make sure that the participants yell their phrase loudly and with confidence. If someone yells a phrase quietly and in a shy way, encourage them do it again until they are loud and can be heard by the others.*

SOUND CIRCLE

Closing Activity [10 min]

Activity description:

The group forms a circle. Everybody thinks of a sound that expresses how they are feeling at the moment. After a few seconds, everybody closes their eyes, and each participant waits for the facilitator to tap their shoulder for them to make their individual sound. One by one, the sounds of the girls come together in one joint melody.

Close the session by thanking the girls for their participation.

Session 3

SETTING BOUNDARIES



OBJECTIVES

- Build violence negotiation skills through self efficacy & social capital.
- Learn relevant safety strategies.
- Exchange about violent situations in the group.
- Foster confidence, and build communication skills.

Preparation



MATERIALS

Paper and pens.



PEOPLE TO PEOPLE

Energiser [10 min]

Aim of activity:

Help break down physical and other barriers between participants.

Activity description:

Explain that the objective of the game is to interact with as many different players as possible.

Divide the group into pairs. If there is an odd number, have one group of three.

Explain that you will be calling out directions for ways partners should be joined. If the direction “elbow to elbow” is called, the partners will touch their elbows together.

Tell players that after three or four directions, you will call out “people to

people,” and everyone will need to find a new partner and wait for another direction to be called.

Begin the game. Call out directions such as: “finger to finger”, “shoulder to shoulder”, “toe to toe”, and “knee to knee”.

The game ends when players have had at least five different partners.

TIP: *Add an extra challenge by giving players a time limit to find a new partner or mix body pairings, such as “knee to foot”.*



Get everyone to sit together in a group. Start a group discussion using the following questions:

- When does someone disrespect my boundaries?

Let the girls collect ideas in pairs first. Then collect the ideas as large group, and write the participants' responses down.

Go through the example situations the girls brainstormed:

- How can you react in these situations? What can you do?
- What are the difficulties?

Try out one example situation where one person does not respect the boundaries of another person in a short role play. Participants should volunteer to be in the role play; do not assign participants' to roles.



FACILITATOR'S NOTE

Role-play provides the participants an opportunity to experience a real-life situation, without having to take real-life risks.

The rules of role-play are

1. Discuss the situation as a group.
2. Agree on a storyline.
3. Agree on who does what, involving everyone.
4. Rehearse.
5. Act out for the group.

Make sure that every girl has a chance, but nobody is forced to participate. Also make sure girls treat other participants in a fair and respectful way.

Have a time limit: for example, five minutes discussing and five minutes of role play.

Make sure the roles are clear: What people are in this scene? How many girls do we need to act it out? Who would like to try acting out the scene in the middle? Who is playing what role?

Volunteers from the group try to act out the situation and its solution.

Discussion in the group:

- Towards actors: How did you feel? Was it difficult to play the role?
- Towards the group: What are strengths and weaknesses of the solution? What did they say? How did they behave? What makes it a good/difficult solution?
- What could be an alternative solution?

If someone has an idea for an alternative solution to the same scenario she can be the main character in the role play to demonstrate the solution.

Try to act out solution two.

Towards the group: What are strengths and weaknesses of this new solution? What did they say? How did they behave?

What was the most helpful solution? Why? What is still difficult?



FACILITATOR'S NOTE

Make sure the whole group is involved in the process and not just the actors. Point out that while the volunteers act out the situations, the others have the important task of observing and thinking about the strengths and weaknesses of each solution.

To close the activity, go through the list of situations the girls collected together where boundaries are crossed, for example, someone is saying I am stupid, someone is touching me without my permission, someone is pulling me, and so on.

All girls are standing in a circle in boxing stance. The trainer calls out a situation, for example, someone is pulling me. The girls put their arms in front and say loud and confidently: "I say stop! This is my space."



FLAMINGOS AND PENGUINS

Energiser [10 min]

Aim of activity:

Get girls active and concentrating.

Activity description:

Divide the group in two groups of the same size. The members of one group are the flamingos; the members of the other group are the penguins.

1. Penguins can move with small steps, holding their arms to the side (imitating penguins).
2. Flamingos always need to lift their leg as high as possible when they move and move their arms up and down like wings.

Now, flamingos try to catch penguins. If you are caught by a flamingo, you also become a flamingo until everyone is a flamingo. Or the other way around (penguins catching flamingos).

THUMB CIRCLE

Closing Activity [10 min]

Aim of activity:

Reflect on what each individual brings to the group.

Activity description:

Bring girls in a circle standing close together, shoulders touching.

You go first to demonstrate. Put your right thumb vertical into the circle and say one skill or quality you bring to the group. Then turn your thumb sideways so it's horizontal.

The person on your left does the same and, after announcing their skill or quality, turns their thumb horizontally and holds your thumb in their hand.

Continue round the circle so you build a circle of thumbs. When everyone has spoken and you have a complete thumb circle, invite everyone to reflect on the wealth of skills and talents in the group.

Lower the thumb circle, then whoosh it up into the air, letting go and giving all the gifts to the world.

Session 4

I AM GREAT!



OBJECTIVES

- Build self-confidence.
- Build leadership skills.
- Improve presentation skills of participants.

Preparation



MATERIALS

Paper and pens.



EVERYONE, WHO...

Energiser [10 min]

Activity description:

All girls sit in a circle. One girl stands in the middle and says “Everyone who likes...” (for example: “Everyone who likes to swim”). All the girls sitting in the circle who like what the person in the middle asked for must stand up and try to find another place to sit. The girl who was standing in the middle also tries to get to a chair. As there is not enough chairs for all girls to sit, another girl will be standing in the middle at the end of each round, and she continues the game.



THEME OF THE DAY

We are leaders [20 min]

Everyone sits in a circle.

Brainstorm with the girls:

What does it mean to be a leader?

Examples:

- Being brave, trying out new things, challenging yourself, learning, helping others, knowing your strengths and using them for good.

After the brainstorming, divide the girls into pairs, and ask them to tell each other a story about when they showed leadership.

While one girl is telling their story, the other girl should listen respectfully. She can ask questions after the story is finished. After three minutes, you can give the girls a sign to switch roles. Give them one more minute to answer questions and exchange ideas about the story they have just told/heard. Then the second girl starts telling her story for three minutes.

If time allows they could also write the stories or draw them.



THEME OF THE DAY

Presentation Rules [10 min]

Bring the girls back into the circle. How was it to hear the stories of the others?

Ask the girls to brainstorm important guidelines for giving a presentation. Collect their ideas on a poster.

Make sure you note:

- Speak loudly and clearly.
- Be open and confident (do not touch your hair, put your hands in front of your mouth, cross your legs).

- Keep eye-contact with your audience.
- Don't talk too fast.

Remind the girls about feedback rules:

- Feedback must be clear and helpful.
- Always include something positive.
- Don't let your feedback be a judgment or offensive.

For the person receiving feedback:

- Listen first, don't immediately defend yourself.
- Feedback is not about who is right, but about someone sharing her personal impression of what you do. You decide yourself if and what you want to change.



Train Presentations [15 min]

Divide the group into groups of four girls each. Girls give their prepared presentations on the topic: "I am a leader/I am great because..." to the others. (They must stand in front of the group).

After the presentation, the others provide feedback according to the presentation rules collected previously.



FACILITATOR'S NOTE

Go from group to group watching the group process. When necessary, remind groups about the feedback rules and the presentation rules.

When everyone in the group has given their presentation, reform the circle.

Ask them about their experiences in the group:

- What was difficult?
- What was easy?

Everyone gives their feedback in one sentence.

Ask if one of the girls want to give her presentation in front of everyone, if there is still time.

Give feedback, and thank them for their courage.




Activity description:

Place two A4 sheets of paper on the floor, which will be safe islands.

Explain that there are three commands. “Fire:” where the girls all run to a corner, “flood:” where you have to have one foot on a piece of paper, and “storm:” where three people hold their hands above their heads together to make a house. Explain that if you are among the last to complete the task, you will need to jump in the air five times.

Start the game.






AFFIRMATION CIRCLE

Closing activity [10 min]

Activity description:

Turn to the girl on your right, say her name and what you have appreciated about her today. Offer her a gift (a quality, a hope for them, and so on). Your neighbour thanks you, turns to the neighbour on her right and repeats. Continue round the circle until it comes back to you. You might want to close by all holding hands.



Session 5

ME AND MY COMMUNITY



OBJECTIVES

- Build self-confidence and self-efficacy.
- Brainstorm community assets that can serve as resources for participants.

Preparation



MATERIALS

Paper and pens, pamphlets or information sheets from youth organisations and resource points (for girls) in your community (such as the police station, clinic, youth centre, sports club).



BODYGUARD

Energiser [10 min]

Activity description:

The group is divided into small groups of four girls. Three hold hands and look to the inside of their little circle. One of the three is the **star**, a famous person, who has to be protected by the two other girls, the **bodyguards**. The fourth person is the **fan** and stands beside this circle.

When the game starts, the fan tries to touch the back of the star (to get close to the star), but the star tries to avoid this and the two bodyguards help the star to escape, while holding hands. The fan is not allowed to come into the circle or to blend into the circle.

When the fan reaches to touch the back of the star, the four girls change the roles until everybody has been the **star**, the **fan** and a **bodyguard**.

COMMUNITY NET [25 min]

Bring all the girls together, sitting in a semicircle. Talk about a time when you were walking around the community and watching all the people on the street carefully. You asked yourself the question: “Does everybody see and feel the same thing as I do right now?” Tell everybody that this question has been in your mind the whole day and that in this session, you want to find out more about the girls’ view of their community.

Activity description:

The coach has a ball of wool in her hand. She explains the rules: To hold the ball of wool means that you are the person with speaking authority. The person with speaking authority is required to complete the following sentence:

“I feel safe/good in my community when...”

- After the statement, the person holds a strand of the ball of wool, calls out the name of another person and throws the ball to her (but holds the strand).
- Every girls tells of a place or situation where she feels safe. In the end, a web of wool will connect everyone in the circle.

The coach starts the exercise with an exemplary statement herself.

After everybody has made a statement, the coach gets the ball of wool again and starts the second round with the statement: **“I feel unsafe/bad in my community when...”**

The process of the first round is repeated.

- After every girl has said where she feels unsafe, encourage everybody to stand up and present the created woollen network as a symbol of the community and the different perspectives of it.

DRAW A COMMUNITY MAP [20 min]

Give girls pens and A4 paper and have them draw the community, including their home and their school. They should indicate **areas they don't like to spend time in** and **areas they like to spend time in**.

When they have finished, or time is running out, share the drawings. Ask the girls to show and explain their maps to their neighbours.

Hang up the maps or put them on the ground and let the girls spend time looking at other's maps.

Make a short feedback round asking questions such as:

- What was the most interesting thing about drawing the map and sharing it with the others?
- What did you learn?

Place pamphlets and information sheets from organisations in your community in the middle of the circle. You can ask the girls if they know these organisations and if they know what help they offer. Make sure to discuss how girls (and their families) can use these organisations' services.

Make a CHANGE [20 min]

Ask the girls: If you could make a change in your community, what would you change?

Each girl receives a sheet of paper and writes down or draws at least two ideas about how she would make her community safer and/or more livable (with friends, with family, with the school, or as mayor). The girls present their results in a circle, and, where applicable, receive feedback from the group.

- What can I change together with my family, my friends, and the school?

- Can you change something as a child? If yes, how? Who's support may you need?

You can plan an Action Day with the girls and implement some of the ideas with the support of the community. Or, you could organise an exhibition with the drawings by the girls, showing their perspective on how the community could make a positive change.



FACILITATOR'S NOTE

Keep the drawings for a later presentation.



VOLCANO WOOSH

Energiser [20 min]

Aim of activity:

leave the group feeling empowered, positive and energised.

Activity description:

Form a circle and place your hands in front of you on the floor. Make a low rumbling sound and flutter your hands. Build the sound up slowly and all together gradually raise hands. Keep building the sound and raising hands until you are ready to erupt the volcano by saying, for example, "Strong Girls" or "Girl Power" very loudly and throwing your hands in the air.

Steps to a sustainable project

planning – implementation – evaluation.

So, you want to implement a longer term girls' empowerment programme and are about to start your own programme full of enthusiasm and good intentions? Great!

To make a project sustainable over time, it needs good planning, high quality implementation, and regular monitoring and evaluation.

All partners and stakeholders, and possibly also representatives from the target groups, should be systematically involved in all phases of the cycle: needs assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation. This way, you will not implement activities **for** the target group, but **with** the target group. This will increase your program's sustainability and ownership from the community right from the start.

1. Define the problem/challenge and/or need you want to address.
2. Define the impact you want to have
3. Define the goals you want to achieve to reach the desired impact.
4. Define your target group.
5. Define project activities and methods:
What methods will you use?
What activities will you do?
What is the project schedule?
6. Define your partners and important stakeholders.
7. Define your innovation/strengths:
What is the strength of your project?
What makes you unique compared to others?



7

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