

ANNUAL IMPACT

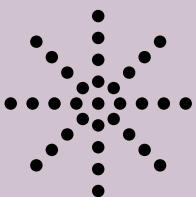


REPORT

2023 IN SUMMARY

While the year brought many unique challenges, Girls Tech Ventures successfully rolled out several programs to **vulnerable girls** from Rural Rwanda.

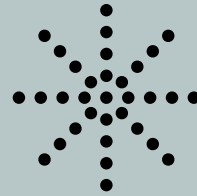
Projects	#of Girls Reached	Outcome
EDUCATION	1,340	empowered to pursue STEM studies
HEALTH	2,545	equipped with SRHR Information & Knowledge
ENTREPRENEURSHIP	2,875	trained on Entrepreneurship & Vocational Skills



"Empowering girls is not just about providing opportunities; it's about igniting a flame within them, so they become architects of their own success, breaking barriers, and shaping a future where their dreams know no bounds." --**Founder**



A Letter from Founder & Executive Director



Dear Friends!

As we embark on a new year at Girls Tech Ventures, I would like to express my gratitude and share with you my excitement for the milestones we've achieved as an organization. As we work to close the gender gap in technology, we have seen tremendous changes in the lives of girls as well as in our partner schools, communities, and our teams of Girls Tech volunteers.

This year has been transformative for our beneficiaries and their communities. Our commitment to empowering girls and women in digital competencies through education, health, and entrepreneurship has been stronger than ever. We have made strides in education by equipping 1,340 girls in public schools with mentorship to pursue studies in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

In health, we addressed the unique challenges related to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) faced by the 2,545 adolescent girls we served; where we have availed SRH information to these vulnerable girls to ensure that they to make informed choices about their reproductive well-being. In addition to these pillars, we've made Entrepreneurship skills accessible to 2,875 teen mothers as a powerful pathway to economic sovereignty, where we provided access to saving coaching and mentorship, as well as advocacy for agriculture support.

The impact of our efforts is evident through the increasing number of girls attending digital trainings and the quality of the services on digital solutions at the disposal of our communities. None of these achievements would be possible without the tireless efforts of our team, volunteers, and the unwavering support of generous contribution from our partners. Our focus this year is to remain committed to our vision where gender does not determine access to opportunities including the digital landscape. We will continue to expand our programs, forge new partnerships, and inspire girls and women to realize their full potential. The road ahead is wider, and we are confident we can overcome them with your continuous support.

Thank you for standing with us on our journey. Together, we are changing lives and breaking barriers. We look forward to a year of progress, collaboration and impact.

With gratitude,

Mrs. Dativah M. Bideri

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dativah'.

Founder and Executive Director, Girls Tech Ventures

WHY WE EXIST!

Vision.

Empowering girls through technology with an ecosystem approach.

Mission.

Our mission is to bridge the gender digital divide through Education, Health, and Entrepreneurship in Rural Rwanda.

Girls Empowered to Live in Safety, Dignity, and Freedom



Develop

Girls develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to imagine and pursue their goals and dreams.



Invest

Girls access capital to launch individual and group enterprises that meet community needs



Propel

A business innovation lab provides linkages to market, further training, mentoring, and capital to nurture a thriving ecosystem of enterprises

HIGHLIGHTS

Girls Tech Ventures is a non-government and non-profit organization that aims to bridge the gender digital gap. This report synthesizes the outcomes by bridging the gender digital divide in education, entrepreneurship and innovations, and health. We also share key findings of our assessment of the digital divide among rural women entrepreneurs and the sustainability of the results.

We are proud of our volunteers who work tirelessly to meet the expectations of the girls and young women in targeted communities of Eastern Province with a population of 2,600,812, at median age of 19 years. Our volunteers are empowered in information and communication technology competencies. They have acquired leadership values including teamwork, time management, networking, and leadership skills. We celebrate our teams for the passion and values conveyed in the programs. They serve extra hours motivated by the results they see in communities.

We have observed access to the registration certificate from RGB/government. We have access to a big and decent training center at Kitazigurwa community in partnership with Rwamagana District and the youth council.

Our operations coverage ranges from services offered at the center, especially for dropout youths and holidays programs. Girls have acquired tech competencies at the center, income generated innovatively through the digital Alumni shops. In addition to the above we have contributed to school outreach programs in mentorship on Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) and STEM. Girls have gained competencies through digital training and leadership. All the above opportunities could not have been possible without collaboration with and participation of girls and women with a potential to higher life outcomes.



OUR PROGRAMS



we believe.

we advocate.



we deliver.

1. GIRLS SHINE PROGRAM

Bridging the Gender Digital Divide in Education

1.1 School outreach program.

We have equipped 1,340 girls with the basic ICT skills and knowledge in STEM needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving digital landscape in public schools. Girls have managed to utilize school labs for ICT and digital skills development. In the school outreach program, girls were mentored on Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) and leadership. Girls were facilitated and engaged in the utilization of the existing computer lab opportunities in public schools. In some public schools, computers were provided by the government, and the laboratories were equipped, but they lacked ICT teachers. Girls Tech ventures, jointly with Rwamagana and Kayonza Districts bridged the gap by offering ICT teachers. The purpose is to break cultural norms and beliefs that discourage girls from entering the STEM field.

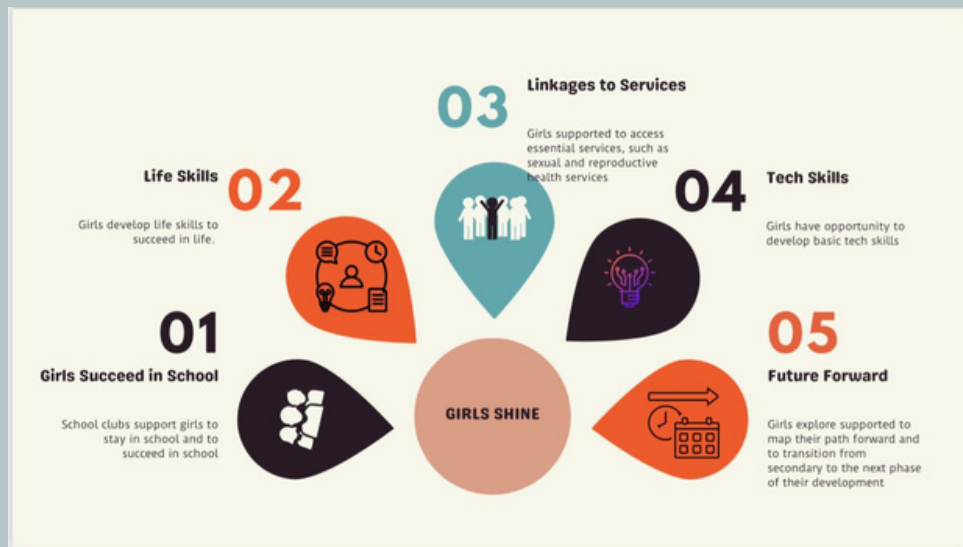
1.2 Digital competencies acquired at the Center.

Five digital competencies were acquired for 370 girls including graphic design, filmmaking, photography, decoration, and beads Tech Innovation. All those acquired competencies serve the communities through Alumni shops. In Alumni shops, communities access various online services such as legal documents, marriage certificates, and more.

Our Alumni have become breadwinners for their families and support their siblings in addition to supporting their peer girls and women to access online opportunities including finances and markets for the above-mentioned services. They offer services to community ceremonies, such as coverages of film, photographs, access to quality beads, decorations, and graphic design for businesses, churches, and other community services, in collaboration with Rwamagana District and youth council. Girls Tech Ventures has leveraged the effective use of local resources to transform the lives of girls and women in their communities. Enrollment of girls acquiring functional digital competencies at the center has increased from 50 girls to 370 girls within a period of every six months of the year after accessing the Kitazigurwa community center.

1.3 ICT basic skills.

Girls who join our program first benefit from basic IT skills, which enable them to enroll in digital functional competencies. We are creating jobs for 370 girls every quarter of the year. The majority of our beneficiaries are both ordinary-level and high-school dropouts. The training intends to empower teens with basic IT knowledge that enables girls to pursue the entrepreneurial digital skills of their choice.



1.4 Digital business established.

Technology is removing the barriers between women and men and urban and rural in Girls Tech Ventures supported by Alumni community shops. Our Alumni have saved more time and money for their community members who used to travel to town centers seeking various services such as banking, legal documents, paying bills, and more. Moreover, high school dropouts who were burdens to their families and communities leading to early pregnancies have turned into assets and agents of change in their communities. Girls are considered equal values, or even far better than their brothers after bridging digital competencies. Alumni girls with digital competencies have enriched and explored potential in their communities. Access to information about online digital jobs has linked them with various opportunities including access to finance and networking with partners, locally and globally. The impact of our efforts is observed in the growing number and impact of alumni shops through return from services offered to their communities through digital solutions.

2. GIRLS DIGNIFIED PROGRAM

Bridging the Gender Digital Gap among Entrepreneurs.

2.1 Fashion and Decoration Competence.

As the Rwandan market grows in industry and tourism, Girls Tech Ventures has thought it meaningful to connect the online market to 70 percent of women and girls living in rural areas. As urban cities grow in industry and tourism, girls in rural areas struggle to follow the same path due to limited access to technology. 9,066 girls are teenage mothers, the equivalent to 1% of the entire Rwandan girls aged between 12-17 years.

Girls Tech Ventures has taken steps to respond to the above gender disparities by empowering 79 girls with competencies in fashion design. They have several colorful fashions, including shirts, bags, and many other fashions that are present in online marketing.

For diverse job opportunities, 68 girls have gained competencies in decorations and events management, and 23 of our Alumni have diversified their assets to rearing domestic animals including goats and chickens and growing crops. The Alumni can pay school materials and fees for their babies and themselves.

Building on entrepreneurship competencies gained by our Alumni, their shops serve better clients than their competitors. The demand for girl Tech Alumni shops is increasing, and the current strategy is to raise more investment to meet the growing market in fashion and decorations.



2.2 Beads Tech and Innovation.

Beads tech is a product of bracelets and necklaces. The Alumni have networked with a training center and manufactured beads targeting local and online markets. After completing the six-month training, girls join Alumni shops at community selling sites. 38 girls have gained competencies to manufacture beads tech innovatively.

2.3 Empowering Agrarian and Producer Groups

Two Alumni groups with 98 members of teen mothers were engaged in corn production. Last season, one group harvested 500kgs of maize or corn from their farm and linked to the Ministry of Agriculture's funding opportunities. The group was empowered with proposal writing and applied for funding and the two parties are still in the negotiations process.

3. Bridging the gender digital divide in Health (Cross-cutting)

The major challenge for young girls is teenage pregnancy at an early age. Girls Tech Ventures has responded to this critical issue through sexual and reproductive health training in school outreach programs and at the center.

The SRH decision was taken to respond to the increasing teenage pregnancies at a quick pace, where one percent of all Rwandan girls between 12 and 17 years are represented by teen mothers.

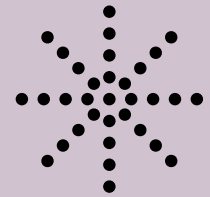
More than 20.2% of Rwandan children - equivalent to 1.1 million - are raised by single mothers. It was from this background that sexual reproductive health became our priority.

Girls in our program have gained skills in communication for joint planning, marketing products, and networking. Having gained access to online information has been an eye-opener in their lives. Girls have improved the quality of the products that they make as a result of comparing with other products from online competitors. They have also understood that the online market is big for their products.

Girls have acquired confidence in the management of their bodies, including understanding the changes in their bodies like the menstrual period and its management. Girls have gained knowledge of marriage and its purpose plus the risks of early marriages and teenage pregnancies.



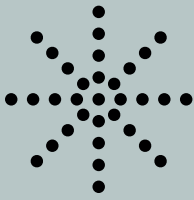
CLOSING THE YEAR U.P.L.I.F.T.E.D.



Graduation Ceremony

We celebrate 99 girls who graduated in 6 months' program after acquiring competencies to thrive in their respective fields. They are happy to contribute to wining bread in their families and siblings plus offering digital services to their communities via Alumni shops. Including basic computer skills, graphic design, photograph, film making, fashion design and decorations and events management. It was a great honor to have the vice mayor in charge of economic affairs from Rwamagana District handing the certificates to the graduates.





IMPACT STORY



My name is Diane Uwera, 20years. I am a young graduate from Girls Tech Ventures technology program. I joined their trainings shortly after losing my mother to COVID-19.

Girls Tech became a second family and offered me the friendship I needed. They supported me in a way I didn't feel alone during my grief period. I learned a lot from their team, worked with others, created networks with my peers.

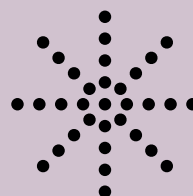
When I enrolled, I was a senior six graduate in [HEG] History, Economic and Geography and I learned photography, film-making skills, and graphic design. I also acquired life skills that allow me to navigate the day-to-day life.

I got a paid job at Ismarthouse Kigali as a photographer, where I take professional pictures and make videos for social events such as parties, birthday celebrations wedding ceremonies,...

These tech trainings exposed to more access to information and opportunities, and I am planning to start my university studies in 2024.

Although I am not yet working at an expert level, I am grateful that the current skills I gained have set me up for success and I will continue to upgrade them thanks to Girls Tech Ventures who thought about including rural girls like me in their vision for a better Rwanda.

WE'D LIKE TO THANK ALL OUR DONORS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We could not have achieved the above milestones without the contribution of the Government of Rwanda, local and international partners, donors, board members, and the entire Girls Tech Ventures Team.

Special thanks to:

- Project ABLE
- How Women Lead
- Issroff Family Foundation
- Urgent Action Fund
- Government of Rwanda (Rwamagana District)
- Global Citizen, LLC



Girls Tech Ventures Team during the 2023 Cohort Graduation Ceremony.

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