VISIONARIA PERU

Outcomes Evaluation Report: 2015-2016

Finalized: December, 2016

A Rotary Global Grant Project of Boulder Rotary Club

Rotary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE VISIONARIA PERU PROGRAM

It is commonly understood that women's unique perspectives are critical to solving daunting social and environmental problems. Only recently, however, have we begun to understand how important the voices and aspirations of young women are to this process. Visionaria Peru's (VP) mission is to encourage this next generation of change-makers by nurturing their personal and professional development, by increasing their understanding of social and environmental issues, and by providing them with meaningful opportunities to practice envisioning and enacting change in their own lives and in their local communities.

2015-2016 EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

During 2015 and 2016, members of Visionaria's evaluation team traveled to Cuzco, Peru to conduct ongoing* evaluation research of the Visionaria Peru program, (Feb-March 2015, September 2015, Feb-March 2016, and June 2016). We used a variety of qualitative research methods to conduct both broad-based and in-depth evaluations in order to measure tightly-focused program outcomes.

OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

Our mixed-methods research results provide strong evidence that Visionaria Peru's empowerment and leadership model is working well. In short, the program has helped Visionarias to more fully and more effectively participate in creating desirable, sustainable change in their own lives and in their local communities.

More specifically, our research findings show that the large majority of Visionaria Peru participants are learning to treat themselves with respect and kindness. They are also becoming more effective communicators, more knowledgeable community members, and more confident change-agents. These changes, in turn, correspond with participants developing a deeper, more complex understanding about leadership as well as more thoughtful and effective leadership practices.

*To learn more about Visionaria Peru's larger research program, please request a copy of VP's *Master Evaluation Report*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Visionaria Peru program would not have been possible without the generous support and cooperation of many organizations and individuals.

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And finally, we acknowledge the parents and other caregivers who have trusted us to stand alongside them with the goal of encouraging and supporting each Visionaria in her brave leadership journey.

The format of this report is based on ICRW's PACE Evaluation Report.

Globally girls and women tend to suffer from unequal access to education, unequal pay, time burdens from their double roles as producers and caretakers, and lack of access to resources. They also suffer the brunt of environmental degradation as the household managers of energy.

However, despite this disproportionate suffering, women are key change agents whose knowledge and ideas must be engaged.

VISIONARIA:

Those who have dreams for the future and plan for success with creativity and confidence.

VISION + ACTION = CHANGE

EARLY VISIONS

We know that change begins with bright ideas—ideas created by people who use their imagination and wisdom to envision a better future. The Visionaria Peru Program was borne out of such ideas, initially disparate visions of several key stakeholders: 1) two young Rotarians passionate about clean energy who envisioned young women effectively engaging in community change, and 2) a family who envisioned stablilty, support and improved opportunities for talented young women from disadvantaged backgrounds. With the help of a seasoned Rotarian and, later, many dedicated volunteers, these visions were combined to create a powerful program for change.

VISIONARIA PERU PROGRAM

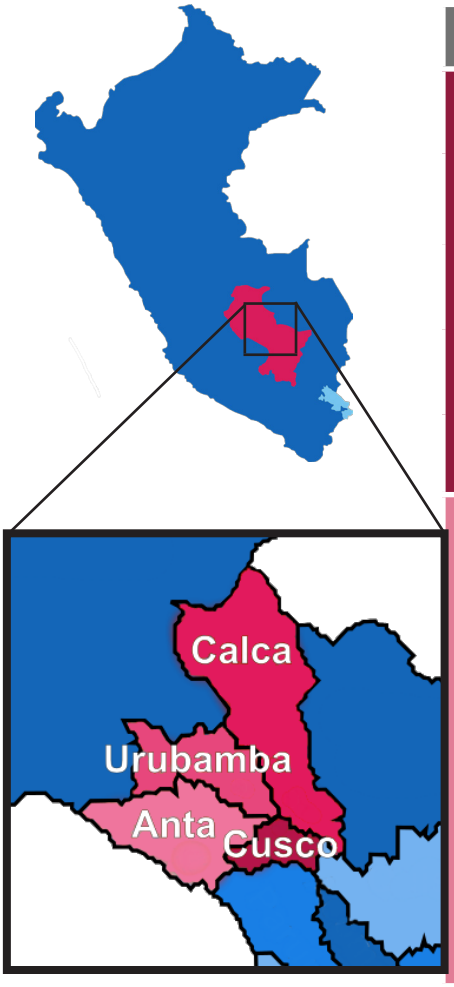
Collaborating with local partners, Visionaria Peru is an empowerment and leadership program that provides the opportunities, support, and inspiration necessary for disadvantaged young women, in and around Cusco, Peru, to begin their journey as Visionarias.

Each year, program participants (or Visionarias) partake in over 55 hours of classroom-based learning where they engage in activities designed to foster personal development, interaction skills, and technical knowledge. Their learning about leadership is largely experiential: after their classroom learning, they team up with mentors, other participants, and community members and head out into "the field" for six-weeks. There, they collectively envision, design, and implement community development projects.

LOCAL VISIONS + SKILLED ACTION

A key impact of Visionaria Peru is the spark it provides for participants' visions of change. The impact of ***their*** visions, combined with their emerging collaboration and leadership skills, is impressive, as illustrated on the following page.

17 PROJECTS, 15 COMMUNITIES, 1,600+ BENEFICIARIES



PROJECT KEY

- Improved Cookstoves
- Water Filters
- Leadership Workshops
- Solar Lanterns
- Other Youth Support and Edu. Projects

PROVINCE	TYPE	YEAR	LOCATION
Cusco	Leadership Workshops	2013	Colegio Fe y Alegria, San Jeronimo Disrtrict
	Water Filters	2014	Pucro, Cusco District
	Water Filters	2015	Fortaleza Sacsayhuaman, Cusco District
	Leadership Workshops	2015	Colegio Divino Maestro, Cusco District
	Other Youth Support and Edu. Projects	2016	Salome Ferro and Casa Agocida Youth Shelters, Santiago District
Anta	Water Filters	2013	Ocra, Chinchaypujio District
	Improved Cookstoves	2013	Anta, Anta District
	Solar Lanterns	2014	Anansaya, Anta District
	Leadership Workshops	2014	Colegio Santa Rosa de Anta & Colegio Divino Amor, Anta District
	Leadership Workshops	2016	Colegio Santa Rosa de Anta, Anta District
	Other Youth Support and Edu. Projects	2016	Nutritional Workshops for Mothers, Zurite District
Calca	Improved Cookstoves	2014	Paullo Chico, Coya District
	Solar Lanterns	2015	Cancha Cancha, Coya District
Urubamba	Improved Cookstoves	2014	Pilcobamba, Ollantaytambo District
	Leadership Workshops	2014	Colegio de Huilloc, Ollantaytambo District
	Improved Cookstoves	2015	Taucca, Chinchero District
	Other Youth Support and Edu. Projects	2016	Youth Cultural Center Research, Ollantaytambo District
	Solar Lanterns	2016	Huilloc & Patacancha, Ollantaytambo District

COMMUNITY PROJECTS, PERSONAL MOTIVATIONS

LUZMILA* grew up in a rural village in the Sacred Valley. Like all the other homes nearby, hers was heated by an open fire, over which her mother cooked the family's meals. When it came time to select a focus for her community development project for Visionaria Peru, Luzmilla chose a project focused on clean cookstoves. In collaboration with her Visionaria teammates and mentor, (as well several women from the community her team had identified), she installed 12 clean cookstoves. The stove pictured here is one that she built on her own. Thanks to her efforts, the risk of asthma, lung cancer, and other cardiovascular problem that the three children in the photo face (as well as their mother and father), will be reduced.

**Not her real name.*

"They were very friendly towards us and grateful for the support we provided them... Each visit, they gave us breakfast and lunch. And they gave us the opportunity to grow as leaders."

WIN-WIN PARTNERSHIPS

PERUVIAN HEARTS is a Colorado-based, non-profit organization that works to end poverty and gender inequality by educating young women and by nurturing their leadership potential. Their Cusco-based program enables select, motivated students to reach their full potential by providing them with:

- Enhanced educational opportunities
- A high-quality living environment while they pursue these opportunities away from their families
- Opportunities to develop their leadership potential through regular training and community-service projects,
- The daily support, programming, and services they need to be successful in their endeavors.

When Visionaria Peru's founders first met with the Directors of the Peruvian Promise program in 2012 to discuss their shared interests in women's empowerment and in community improvement, a rich partnership was established. This partnership not only formed the initial foundation of the Visionaria Peru program but has greatly enriched both programs as each has grown and evolved over time.

> "Peruvian Hearts provides girls with the tools and resources they need to lift themselves out of poverty, transform their lives, and reach their full potential. Most importantly, the program instills hope and confidence in participants and encourages them to dream."

SUPPORTING LOCAL INITIATIVES

With few “Cusqueños” (Cusco natives) currently volunteering their time with her projects, Milagro hopes more young women will bring their perspectives and talents to her field of work.

Milagro Paz is the Peru Country Director of **PROWORLD**, a community service organization promoting social and economic development projects in Cusco. She leads a team that produces stoves and filters in Cusco for villages in the nearby Sacred Valley. She also coordinates the organization’s international exchange program in which student volunteers come to Peru to work on community education and installation projects.

When she met with a small team of Visionarias to schedule their project materials, she was impressed by their plan to bring support to a community outside of her organization’s reach. As program director, Milagros saw great value in the Visionarias’ determination and their ability to effectively connect with households in remote villages where Quechua (one of the major indigenous Andean languages) is widely spoken.

BENEFICIARIES

GIRLS

Adolescent girls often times find themselves without voice, sense of legitimacy, or respect that they deserve to be among decision makers in Peruvian society. The Girls' Homes with whom we partner are helping to change that, offering the day-to-day support and the empowering environments that participants need to succeed during their school year. Our program builds on this foundation, providing an intensive leadership Institute during the summer for these young women as well as opportunities to hone their leadership skills through real-world community development projects. Participants tell us that this multi-faceted, year-round support has made a profound difference in their lives.

COMMUNITIES OF PARTICIPANTS

Communities surrounding Cusco and the Sacred Valley have received attention and support from countless charitable programs. However, the differences and inconsistency of aid from village to village has in many instances created unsustainable expectations, weakened the market for essential goods and technologies, and skipped neighboring villages entirely. The communities in which the Visionarias conduct their projects, are chosen by the Visionarias based on their knowledge of the region and need. Visionarias' projects meet a standard of necessity and require "sweat equity" or appropriate monetary contribution from each household to ensure the solutions are sustainable.

FRIENDS & FAMILIES OF PARTICIPANTS

The local communities described above and the immediate families and friends of Visionaria Peru participants are what might be understood as indirect beneficiaries of the program. Targeted research about them was fairly limited, due to resource constraints. But stories abound about how they are growing and changing alongside participants. Indeed, qualitative interviews evidence that program participants are regularly influencing myriad members of the diverse communities in their lives: family, school, work, neighborhood, and beyond.

WIDESPREAD IMPACT:
INSIDE PARTICIPANTS' COMMUNITIES

FLOR* is the oldest of 3 siblings and the first in her family to finish high school. She attends a prestigious university in Cusco, on a full scholarship. During the school week, she lives with her house-mother, Jeanette, and 7 other young women who share her academic promise as well as her economic disadvantage. Flor, has participated in the Visionaria Peru program for three years. In the beginning, she recounts that she was terrified of the participation requirements of the program, due to her shyness and lack of confidence. Over the years, however, Flor has evolved into a highly-regarded member of the Visionaria community whose quiet leadership style seems to inspire all who know her well. But her influence does not stop there. Each weekend she returns to the small village where she grew up. Her brother and sister are keen to learn about her newfound sense of power and her growing strength as a leader. Flor's growth has also inspired her mother, who was once a victim of domestic violence but now refuses to tolerate abuse.

**Not her real name*

"I want to tell, you Flor, that you are an example for me. To be around them [Visionarias] and feel their energy, you feel like you also have to improve yourself, to be strong. Flor is a powerful example."
- Flor's Visionaria Mentor

VP EVALUATION APPROACH

CLEAR OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

During the first two years of the program (2013-2014), Visionaria Peru's M&E efforts focused on needs assessment and program evaluation. The third year of the Visionaria Peru program (2015) marked the official start of more focused outcomes evaluation.

To initiate this process, the evaluation team, (in collaboration with project stakeholders), revisited and tightened both the overarching goals as well as the nuts and bolts outcomes of the program. In tandem, we also developed a more explicit theory of change and program logic. For more detail about these frameworks, copies of *Visionaria Peru's 2015-16 Research Frameworks* are available on request.

FOCUSED RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary focus of Visionaria Peru's 2015-2016 evaluation efforts was to measure the impact the program had on the young women we have targeted. Our research aimed to answer two evaluation questions:

1) To what degree does the Visionaria Peru program help its participants to build the foundation necessary for increased agency and leadership?

2) To what degree does Visionaria Peru help its participants to act as agents and leaders of desired, sustainable change—both in their individual lives as well as in the communities in which they live.

BOTH BROAD AND DEEP VIEWS

One of the goals of Visionaria Peru's 2015-2016 M&E efforts was to efficiently measure and describe a broad range of outcomes for all participants in the program over the course of the 2015-2016 programs.

Because of the highly social and context-dependent nature of our evaluation questions, we also sought to provide a deeper and richer understanding about some key outcomes we targeted. With this aim in mind, we explored the following research questions:

1) How do participants' conceptions of leadership change over time?

2) How do participants' individual experiences--both in and outside the program--influence their understanding about leadership?

TWO-AIMS, MIXED METHODS

BROAD-BASED RESEARCH: Measuring "What"

To measure and specifically describe "what" impacts the program was having, we conducted qualitative surveys and structured mentor observations with all participants.

As part of the 2015-2016 program, we conducted both scaled and short-answer surveys with all program participants at the beginning, middle, and end of program activities. Both types of surveys allowed us to compare base-line and end-line data. Our mentors also conducted and recorded brief observations of all participants throughout their work with participants during their community development projects, following a broad set of structured, outcomes-related prompts.

IN-DEPTH RESEARCH: Investigating "Why" and "How"

To explore and more deeply understand "how" and "why" participants' empowerment and leadership development occurred, we used a case-study approach along with other qualitative methods.

Using a case-study approach, we conducted direct and participatory observations (both in and outside of program activities) as well as in-depth interviews with a small but diverse group participants and their families. We also conducted focus groups with small groups of participants. And finally, we used critically informed, grounded-theory methods to investigate changes in participants' conceptions of empowerment and leadership over time.

BROAD-BASED RESEARCH RESULTS

At the beginning of our 2015 program, we developed a set of short-term, individual-level outcomes—16 outcomes in total, organized into 5 different categories. These outcomes, and the indicators associated with them, were the foundation of our descriptive research efforts. The following page shows how these outcomes fit within our larger program logic.

Reporting on all of 16 of the outcomes that we measured is beyond the scope of this report. Hence, we have chosen to highlight one key outcome from each general category (please see below). The following seven pages provide a brief summary of this small but representative set of findings from our descriptive research effort. These findings confirm that, on the whole, Visionaria Peru participants made significant gains in each of the areas listed below.

SHORT-TERM INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL OUTCOMES

OUTCOMES CATEGORY	SELECT OUTCOMES	INDICATORS
Personal Awareness & Affection	She increases her **self-esteem**	■ Articulation of positive personal attributes and strengths ■ Kind and respectful treatment of herself.
Connection & Relation to Others	She improves her **inter-personal skills**	■ Comfort working with diverse groups of people ■ Effective communication with and listening to others ■ Taking responsibility for her reactions to others
Professional Skills	She builds a basic set of **professional skills**	■ Knowledge and practice of public presentation skills ■ Knowledge and practice of basic business skills ■ Knowledge and practice of basic digital literacy skills ■ Knowledge of sustainable development issues and technologies
Personal agency	She increases her **self-confidence**	■ Effective management of self-limiting fears ■ Assertion of individual opinions & independence ■ Improvement in status at home and in her communities
Leadership capacity	Her **understanding about leadership** evolves	■ Exploration and cultivation of personal leadership style ■ Solidification of unique leadership identity ■ Expanded and enriched understanding about leadership practice

VISIONARIA PERU
PROGRAM LOGIC FRAMEWORK

Inputs	Outputs	Short-term individual outcomes	Medium-term individual outcomes	Long-term impacts
Rotary-grant funding Contributions from local partners Rotary-funded team members Volunteer team members Program equipment, materials and supplies	Development of partner network Creation of Leadership Institute Execution of Institute-based learning activities Execution of practical learning activities	Visionarias will increase their self-awareness and self-reflection. Visionarias will improve their interpersonal and interaction skills. Visionarias will gain useful professional skills. Visionarias' sense of agency/personal power will begin to grow. Visionarias will expand and deepen their understanding about leadership.	Visionarias will get to know and like themselves better. Visionarias will improve their ability to connect, relate to, and work with others. Visionarias will hone and advance their professional skills. Visionarias will increase their capacity to act with agency. Visionarias will increase their capacity to act as leaders.	Visionarias will participate more fully and effectively in creating desired, sustainable change in their own lives. Visionarias will participate more fully and effectively in creating desired, sustainable change in their local communities. The social, environmental, and economic well-being of Visionarias, (as well as the local communities they serve), will be improved.

It should be noted that we adopted the commonly used linear project logic model for its simplicity; however, we recognize that it belies the more recursive nature of our program logic in practice.

For more information about the other frameworks that guided our evaluation work (theory of change, and individual outcomes and indicators), copies of *Visionaria Peru's 2015-16 Research Frameworks* and Visionaria Peru's 2015-16 Outcomes and Indicators are available on request.

SELF-ESTEEM
I TREAT MYSELF WITH RESPECT & KINDNESS.

Visionarias, and others who know them, report significant gains in self-esteem.

The Visionaria Peru program assumes that a key to helping participants improve their self-esteem is increasing their self-awareness and their self-reflection. Visionaria Peru provides program participants with ample opportunities to build greater awareness about: their cultural and gender identities, their bodies and their health, their personal strengths and values, as well as potentially limiting beliefs and feelings. These opportunities have led to significant increases in self-esteem.

At the end of the program in 2015, participants were asked to what degree their self-esteem had improved: "None, A Small Amount, A Medium Amount, A Large Amount, An Extremely Large Amount". The table below illustrates their responses.

Self Esteem Degree of Improvement	
13%	Medium
60%	Large
27%	Extremely Large

"Before, I never really thought much about how I treated myself. I always used to tell myself, 'you can't' and 'you're so stupid because you messed up'. But not now. Now I know I should treat myself better. And I know that I can, and that when I fail, it's just a chance to learn how to do something better the next time around."

In 2016, Visionarias who had participated in the program for 2 or more years reported significant improvement in the way they treated themselves--a factor that closely relates to self-esteem:

BEFORE *participating in the Visionaria program, I treated myself with kindness and respect.*				
17% Strongly Disagree	33% Disagree	50% Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AFTER *participating in the Visionaria program, I treat myself with kindness and respect:*				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	8% Agree	92% Strongly Agree

(Statistics from these and all other surveys are rounded to the nearest whole number.)

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

I CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO MY RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS.

Visionarias demonstrate significant gains in their interaction skills.

The Visionaria Peru model provides participants with regular opportunities to 1) learn about basic communication skills and issues, 2) to engage with many different kinds of people, and 3) to reflect about their interactions with others. Participants tell us that this learn+engage+reflect process has been very effective in helping them improve their social interactions.

Participating in the Visionary Leadership Institute ***improved my ability to communicate effectively with others.***

2015	**50%** Agree	**50%** Strongly Agree

Participating in the Visionary Leadership Institute ***helped me to appreciate working on a team.***

2015	**20%** Agree	**80%** Strongly Agree

"Before, I never talked with anyone and I didn't have many friends. I practically lived in my own world. But not anymore."

"I learned a lot in the practical projects. You get a little something different from each thing we experience and you say to yourself, 'this will serve me for life' and you take it with you. For me, one of the most important things I took away was how to be more sociable."

In 2016, Visionarias who had participated in the program for 2 or more years reported significant gains in their communication skills.

BEFORE *participating in the Visionaria program, my communication skills were:*

42% Below Basic	**42% Basic**	**17% Intermediate**		

AFTER *participating in the Visionaria program, my communication skills are:*

			33% Advanced	**67% Highly Advanced**

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE
I KNOW THINGS THAT ARE PROFESSIONALLY VALUABLE.

Visionarias successfully apply new-found learning.

During the Leadership Institute, Visionaria Peru participants have the opportunity to develop a broad-range of marketable professional knowledge. They learn about sustainable development issues and technologies, they become familiar with the basics of business and marketing, they gain fundamental project design and management skills, and they are exposed to a variety of digital technologies. But their learning does not end there. As they apply these new-found sets of knowledge in their community development projects, their learning is substantially deepened.

"[The institute's business lessons] helped me a lot, made me be able to specify my financial goals to open a business, and motivated me more to move forward."

"[Learning about project planning] is extremely important in order to be successful in beginning a change and analyzing, step by step, how to develop a project."

"Participating in the Leadership Institute helped me to feel much more confident about preparing for interviews and job applications."

In 2016, Visionarias who participated in the program for 2 or more years reported significant gains in a wide array of salable skills. Two such gains are presented here:

BEFORE *participating in the Visionaria program, my public presentation skills were:*

42% Below Basic	**50% Basic**	**8% Intermediate**		

AFTER *participating in the Visionaria program, my public presentations skills are:*

			17% Advanced	**83% Highly Advanced**

BEFORE *participating in the Visionaria program, my basic business skills were:*

42% Below Basic	**8% Basic**	**50% Intermediate**		

AFTER *participating in the Visionaria program, my basic business skills are:*

		17% Intermediate	**42% Advanced**	**42% Highly Advanced**

CONFIDENCE
I BELIEVE IN MYSELF.

Visionarias grew more confident in voicing their needs and in pursuing their goals.

The concepts of self-esteem and self-confidence are closely related but fundamentally different. If you have good self-esteem, you believe that you are a valuable human being. If you are self-confident, on the other hand, you believe in the power of your actions; you believe that your actions will have an impact.

On both our evaluation surveys as well as in qualitative interviews and focus groups, Visionaria Peru participants reported significant gains in their sense of self-confidence. As a result, they became more willing to share their ideas, to speak in front of groups, and to pursue their goals. These actions, in turn, impacted how people from their families and in their communities viewed and valued them.

At the end of the program in 2015, participants were asked to what degree their confidence had improved:

Confidence Degree of Improvement	
6%	Medium
67%	Large
17%	Extremely Large

"Before I was invited to Visionarias, I used to have the attitude that, "I can't, I can't do it, I can't achieve my goals." I've come a long way from there. I changed the way I talked to myself, the way I am. I changed a lot. Now I can talk, I can say the things that I think."

"I feel more capable through the experiences I have had. In the first year of the leadership institute, I was really nervous. Later, it got a little better. And this year even more so. We were all so nervous. But now, we have much more confidence."

In 2016, Visionarias who had participated in the program for 2 or more years reported improvement in their status, both in their communities and in their homes:

Participating in the Visionaria program helped me to improve the status/ position that I have **in my community.**			
2016	**20%** Neutral	**75%** Agree	**5%** Strongly Agree

Participating in the Visionaria program helped me to improve the status/ position that I have **in my family**.			
2016	**10%** Neutral	**45%** Agree	**55%** Strongly Agree

PERSONAL AGENCY
I PARTICIPATE IN SHAPING MY FUTURE

Visionarias recognize their capacity to influence change.

A significant focus of the program is to encourage participants to think more about their futures, both individual and collective. We support them as they envision a wide range of possibilities and hone tangible, attainable goals: personal goals, professional goals, goals for their families and their local communities.

Participants tell us that the opportunities they have to envision and enact personal and community-based change are empowering. For many, it is the first time they've been invited to and supported in exercising their agency. Our observation is that once they've experienced themselves as capable change-makers, their visions and plans for impacting future change abound (as demonstrated by the quotes below).

Participating in the Visionaria program helped me to envision and enact changes in my life.

2016	**0%** Neutral	**15%** Agree	**85%** Strongly Agree

Participating in the Visionaria program helped me to envision and carry out changes that improved the lives of others.

2016	**0%** Neutral	**23%** Agree	**78%** Strongly Agree

"In the school where I studied there were quiet people that accepted everything that the rest of the group would say even though they knew it may have been bad. They did not share their opinions. My vision: The world can be better if everyone contributes their ideas and thoughts. I want to motivate those people to fight for their ideals."

"I see that my dad smokes quite a bit and I would like to combat smoking, not just with him but with others, because not only he is in danger but also those around him could be harmed by having a smoker next to them. What I want to be is a psychologist so that I can provide psychological help to these types of cases."

"I saw in my school a lot of physical and psychological maltreatment, making fun of the weakest person. My vision: try to prevent bullying in school and in my neighborhood by giving talks and providing support. We all have the right to live in peace and not be mistreated due to a defect that you have and we need to feel loved."

"I used to think I would finish at the university and then work. But now I have dreams of being able to go to another country, perhaps, to be able to continue my studies, to help children who are in need and to help my family. Now I have bigger dreams."

“I feel empowered because now I don’t feel insecure, now I feel more capable of achieving all that I am outlining for myself.”

LEADERSHIP CONCEPT
MY VIEW OF LEADERSHIP HAS EVOLVED.

Visionarias conceptions of leadership become more rich and complex over time.

The Visionaria Peru program was built on the assumption that classroom learning about leadership is one of several necessary steps in leadership development. In addition, the community development projects that teams of Visionarias planned, developed and implemented play a crucial role in how participants conceptions of leadership grow and evolve. Through these projects, participants reported significant gains in each of the interrelated, leadership-capacity outcomes that we developed and measured:

- They improved their project assessment and planning skills;
- They improved their problem solving skills;
- They increased their impact in their communities;
- Their conceptions of leadership expanded and deepened

Measuring and understanding changes in how participants understand leadership is challenging. The results from our 2016 surveys helped to highlight that, indeed, participants indicated changes in their conceptions leadership:

Participating in the Visionaria program has helped me to have **a richer understanding about what it means to be an effective leader.**

2015	**72%** Agree	**20%** Strongly Agree
2016	**50%** Agree	**50%** Strongly Agree

"The concept of leadership for me changed since the beginning of the program, in that being a leader is not just that one person carries all the responsibility and that they are the one that makes all the decisions for others, but that it is working on a team. Having unity makes it possible to achieve change."

But these broad-based results (and others like them) take us only so far. To better understand just HOW participants understandings about leadership had changed required a more in-depth focus as well as a different set of research methods (as described previously in this report). The remainder of this report summarizes some key findings from this in-depth research effort.

IN-DEPTH RESEARCH RESULTS

One of the questions that Visionaria Peru's evaluation team examined closely was: ***How do participants' conceptions of leadership change over time?*** To examine this question, we conducted analysis of all participants' short-answer survey responses about leadership from all three survey years of the program which helped us to identify common themes throughout. We then conducted in-depth analysis of case-study participants' leadership-related, short-answer, interview, and focus group data. On the next several pages, we describe our analytical framework and its application to a specific case-study example.

Recognizing that the Visionaria Peru program was but one influence in Visionarias' lives, our second research asked: ***How do participants' individual experiences, (both in and outside the program), influence their understanding about leadership?*** To explore this question, our case-study research director conducted in-depth case-studies with six participants over the course of the 2015-2016 programs, using a combination of methods. At the end of our 2016 program, she worked in tandem with case-study participants to create "thick descriptions" of their leadership journeys. She also supported a handful of participants in creating "My Leadership Journey" stories, as digital videos. Examples of each to follow.

MEASURING CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP CONCEPT

DEVELOPING AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

In pre, mid, and post surveys, all participants responded to a variety of short-answer questions designed to elicit their evolving understanding about leadership. (Some of these questions appear in the list below.) The first step in analyzing how participants' responses changed over time was to develop a suitable analytical framework. Using modified grounded theory methods, our case-study director reviewed responses from all participants to all short-answer, leadership-oriented survey questions and identified the common themes and sub-themes listed below. To improve consistency, several team members provided feedback about the initial coding framework and two researchers participated in the preliminary coding of responses.

Underlying Conception of Leadership:

- Individual
- Social
- Mixed
- Open-Ended/Unspecified

Leadership Actions, 10 Most Common Actions:

- Acting with confidence/ strength
- Guiding
- Voicing ideas/opinions
- Envisioning/achieving goals
- Working with/as a team
- Leading
- Listening
- Communicating clearly
- Organizing/planning
- Mentoring/teaching

What do you know about leadership?

What does being a leader mean to you?

How does one become a leader?

How were you a leader in your group?

What did you learn from your teammates and/or from your mentor about leadership?

How has your concept of leadership changed since the beginning of the program?

Nature of Leadership Control:

- One person leads, from the top down
- Leaders guide, within/ alongside group
- Leaders lead together
- Open-Ended/Unspecified

Leadership Values, 10 Most Common Values:

- Inclusive/values others' opinions
- Concerned about larger, social good
- Respectful
- Principled
- Responsible
- Positive/enthusiastic
- Concerned about well-being of group
- Persistent/persevering
- Reflective/self-aware
- Culturally sensitive

The responses from each of the case studies to short-answer, leadership-oriented questions were then sorted by survey year. Individual interviews and focus groups that were conducted with case studies between 2015-2016 were also mined for leadership-related responses. The data was then analyzed and coded to the themes and sub-themes listed above. Partial results of the analysis of one of the case-study's changes in leadership understanding are presented on the following pages. (For more information about this ongoing research project, please contact Visionaria Peru's Case-Study Research Director, Lucie Sommer.)

LEADERSHIP CONCEPT

HER VIEW OF LEADERSHIP HAS EVOLVED.

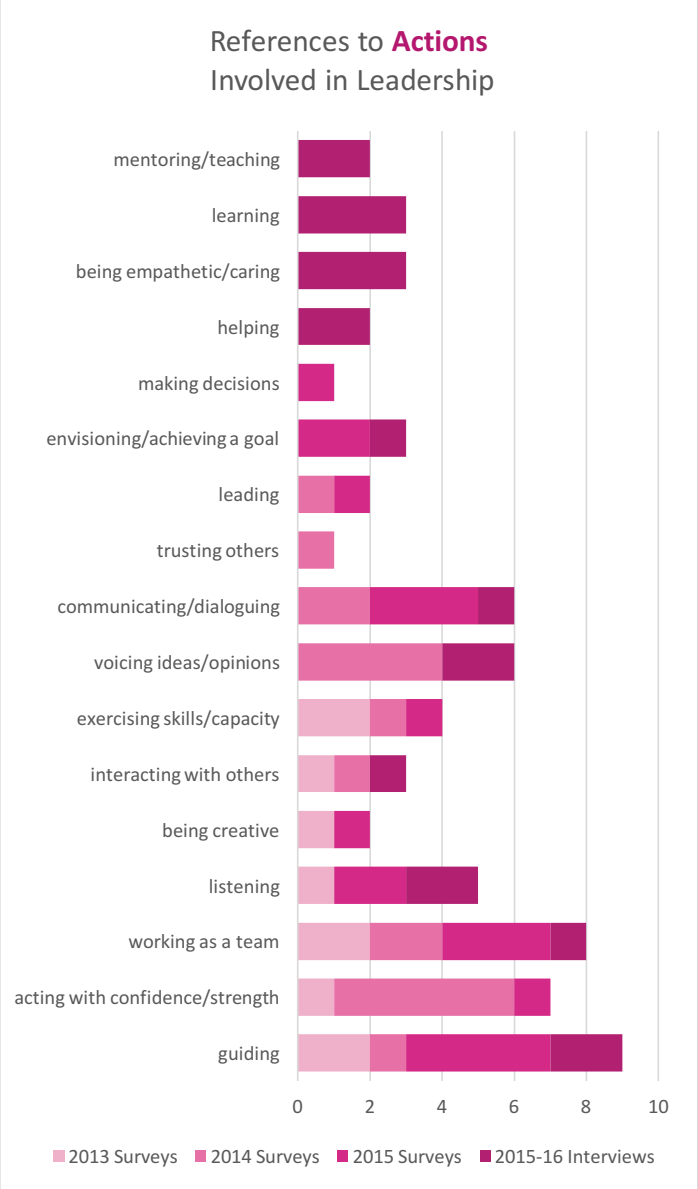
Her conception of leadership has become more rich and complex over time.

In her first year, many of Eli's responses to questions about leadership evidenced her view of leadership as a process where leaders gently guide alongside/within a group. In the first pre-test she took, she defined leadership in this way:

"It means to guide a group of people to something good and be able to triumph."

During the second year she participated in the program, Eli--once painfully shy--came out of her shell. She found her voice, shared it with others, and significantly increased her self-confidence. This growth was clearly reflected in her leadership understanding, as this sample definition (as well as the 2014 responses in the chart below) demonstrate:

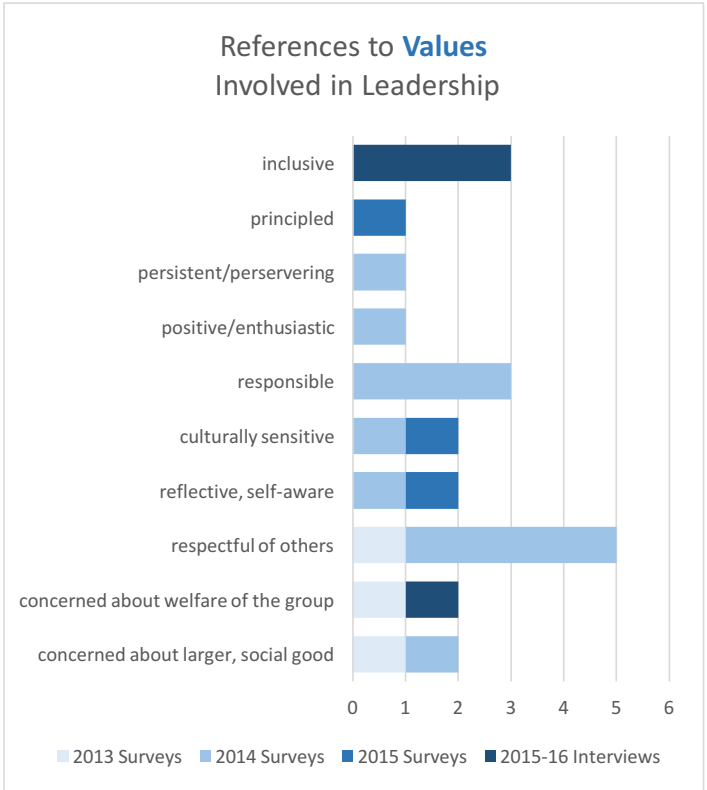
"Being very confident, respecting others' opinions and your own, listening to others."



By her third year, Eli's definition demonstrated the growing complexity of her understanding about leadership:

"It is the collection of skills that a person has to be able to influence a group of people who want to achieve a goal."

On the following page are excerpts from individual and group interviews in which Eli participated. They also evidence the richness and complexity of her understanding.



"I believe that for me a leader is not only someone who guides a group of people but someone who guides themselves, and their life as well." (Feb 2015)

"I believe that to become a leader, you have to be open to learning... You meet different people and you learn a little something...You learn from your everyday experiences, what happens in each moment, and you say to yourself, 'this is useful for my life' and you take it with you." (Feb 2015)

"I think its important that both women and men learn about leadership, not just that women become empowered. If they learn more about our experiences and how they are different and similar to theirs, then we can walk hand in hand and it will help us to create a better future. " (September 2015)

"I believe that every woman has the capacity to be a leader. You just need to create a group that brings out the best in everyone. When I lead, I make sure that everyone talks. I like hearing their different ideas and I try to help them improve them. It's also important to put myself in their shoes." (June 2016)

For the majority of her time as a Visionaria, Eli's responses to survey questions and interviews evidenced her understanding of leadership as an individual phenomenon--in other words she seemed to envision one leader leading a group (e.g. "A leader is someone who guides a group to do good."). Towards the end of her time in the program, a slight shift seems to occur in her conception. She begins to describe a more social conception of leadership, suggesting that there can be many leaders in one group (see final quote above).

Throughout her time in the program, her responses also suggest that she understands a leader to be someone who gently guides alongside (and later, within) a group. This matched the quiet, knowledgeable, empathic leadership style that she honed during her time in the Visionaria Program as well as her deeply humble nature.

Like many of her peers, Eli's vision about her future evolved alongside her changing concept of leadership. She had this to say about the changes:

"I wasn't sure, in the beginning, what I wanted to do. I just knew I wanted to work. And when I thought about my education and my career, I thought about what I would get out of it for myself. Now, I believe its important to do something socially helpful. After I finish at the university, I would like to be able to have my own clinic for physical therapy and rehabilitation."

LEADERSHIP CONCEPT
MY VIEW OF LEADERSHIP

Visionarias conceptions of leadership are broadly informed.

During the second month of our 2015 program, we invited six Visionarias to participate as case-studies, (and later, as co-researchers), in our evaluation process. We strived for a representative sample: our group varied in age, they came from rural, small city, and urban environments, some came from large families, others from small ones, they were pursuing a variety of different careers, and they came from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

The purpose for adding a case-study approach to our evaluation efforts was:

1) To highlight the larger contexts of case-study participants' learning, and
2) To honor the uniqueness of each case-study's leadership development journey

Through a series of in-depth interviews and in-situ observations, we collected a rich set of data about the people and the experiences that influenced each of the participant's leadership development. More specifically, they told us about:

- The myriad mentors from within the their families, neighborhoods, schools, and communities
- The empowering girls'-home environments where they receive daily support and programming
- Other lived experiences in/outside of the program that fostered their growth and development.

PARTICIPATION IN STORY-TELLING
VISIONARIAS UP-CLOSE

Given the differences in cultural background as well as the biases that any researcher brings to the task of attempting to represent the experience of another, we recognized that the data we had collected and planned to share would, at best, be a partial representation of our case-study participants' experiences. With this in mind, we enlisted them to help us to tell their leadership development stories. Out of this process, two different kinds of stories emerged.

The first are leadership profile stories where participants chronicle various aspects of their leadership development. The form for these profiles was conceived of and designed by one of the more senior case-study participants. Participants then both wrote and selected story content: a mix of excerpts from stories told during in-depth interviews, snatches of in-situ observations, and participants' post-program insights.

In addition, several case-studies chose to participate in a final synthesis opportunity where they explored and developed stories that described a key personal insight in their leadership journey. They wrote their initial drafts by responding to a series of shared prompts; they participated in several individual editing sessions to revise and enhance their stories; they chose photographs to help bring their stories to life (most of which were taken by the program's photographer and qualitative research consultant, Christopher Carruth), and finally; our case-study director produced them in digital format.

IMPROVING CREDIBILITY AND RELIABILITY

In quantitative research, people talk about the issues of validity and reliability. The alternative terms that many qualitative researchers prefer to use in describing these concepts are credibility (also referred to as trustworthiness) and dependability. Visionaria Peru's research and evaluation team employed the following strategies in order to improve the credibility and dependability of our research results.

Scrutinize research design--Our evaluation team invested a significant about of time and energy in creating robust theory of change and program logic models and in specifying SMART outcomes and indicators. We did so, in large part, to improve the validity and dependability of our results.

Triangulate research data--We collected and analyzed data using a wide array of methods: surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations, etc. e also targeted multiple sources: participants, mentors, peers, family members, and program staff. Both strategies served to triangualte our research data, increasing the credibility of our research results.

Engage participants in research and evaluation process--Throughout the program, both participants and stakeholders reviewed and provided feedback on all different kinds of research and evaluation results. And, as described previously, case-studies became co-researchers in the telling of their stories. In addition to these strategies, we also attempted to address the following kinds of bias:

Respondent bias--A significant part of our research data was obtained through survey methods. Recognizing the real possibility that participants might respond in order to please (versus responding with complete honesty), we told participants before surveys that the purpose of the surveys was to help us improve the program and, hence, that we were genuinely interested in their honest responses.

Observer bias--As second hand observers, what we see, hear, and record is unavoidably biased. This is particularly true when observing a culture different from our own. To address this issue, we made sure that different people playing different roles in the program to conduct observations. We also regularly invited participants to review and revise observations.

Representative sample--As mentioned earlier, the participants we invited to participate as case-studies were diverse in many different dimensions: age, cultural background, family size, community type, and study interests.

Clearly, we took many steps to increase the validity and reliability of our findings. At the same time, we fully acknowledge that any attempt to measure social change can never be entirely bias-free and that the stories that any researcher presents are but a small sample of possible stories that might be told. We ask that readers keep this in mind as they interpret the findings and the stories presented in this report.

VISIONARIA PERU EVALUATION TEAM

Abigale Stangl, M.S., Director of Monitoring and Evaluation

Abigale established the initial monitoring and evaluation plan for the program and supported the development and implementation of VP program, and it's associated theory of change and phased monitoring plan. From 2013-2015 Abigale was the co-president of the Boulder New Generations Rotary Club. She is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of Colorado, ATLAS Program in Human Centered Computing. She has a Masters of Science degree in Information Communication Technology for Development from CU Boulder with a focus on interaction design and international development. Abigale has cultivated these interests through work as an AmeriCorps volunteer, artist, educator, and landscape designer and hopes to strengthen the health and livelihood of communities at home and abroad. http://www.abigalestangl.com/

Dr. Lucie Sommer, Director of Outcomes Evaluation and Case-Study Research

Lucie, (the primary author of this report), joined the evaluation team just before its 3rd year—the start of more focused outcomes evaluation. In addition to revisiting and bolstering the overall M&E plan, she heads the newly established case-study research dimension of this plan. She has worked as a teacher, instructional designer, and researcher in myriad educational settings (traditional, experiential, and virtual) with diverse student populations (from kindergarteners to graduate students). Her current research focuses on the connection between learning environments, communication technologies, and social change. She balances these interests with a rich family life that she gratefully enjoys in Boulder, Colorado. http://www.reluciesommer.com/

Chris Carruth, M.S., Qualitative Data Consultant

Chis has been an essential part of qualitative data gathering activities, focusing on visually capturing participants' activities both in and outside the program. Chris currently lectures at the University of Colorado, Boulder in the ATLAS Institute where he also works as research assistant with the National Center for Women and Information Technology (NCWIT). Additionally, Chris is growing a monitoring and evaluation consultancy which focuses on self-reporting and empowerment through the utilization of convention and visual methods. He occasionally commits acts of photography and his work can be found in both the editorial and fine art space. The majority of photos in this Interim Evaluation Report were taken by Chris. http://www.chriscarruth.com/

Paul Spurzem, Program Developer

Paul has taken the lead on collecting evaluation data from the partners of Visionaria Peru and reporting about larger community impacts. He has also provided valuable feedback and assistance on the second iteration of the program's monitoring and evaluation activities. He assists in program development through managing partner relations, stakeholders, program logistics, Online presence, and more. Paul is a licensed CPA and holds bachelors degrees in Accounting and German from the University of Colorado at Boulder. He also pursues informal studies of life sciences, cultural relations, and internationalism.

OTHER VISIONARIA PERU TEAM MEMBERS:

Genevieve Smith, Program Director
Marika Meertens, Development Director
Cindy Cordova, Program Manager
Robyn Hazlitt, On-Site Program Coordinator

Clint Talbott, Editor & Publicist
Kali Basman, Environmental Coordinator & Black Carbon Specialist
Melinda Marquiz, Scientist

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