



Program Completion Report



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Emerge Global Program Completion Report

Organization: Emerge Global
Address: PO Box 390897, Cambridge, MA 02139
Grant Amount: \$30,902.40

Program name: Emerge Bead Program
Contact Person: Alia Whitney-Johnson

Program Narrative



I. Goals Recap briefly what outcomes the program was designed to achieve.

Emerge equips Sri Lankan girls who have been removed from their homes due to abuse or high risk of abuse with critical skills and resources for their futures, using a comprehensive curriculum that emphasizes leadership, life skills, and business knowledge, while simultaneously generating personal savings through jewelry design. Through the DFW grant, we aimed to support ~90 survivors of abuse (some of whom are also teenage mothers) from three different shelters in participating in Emerge programs.

II. Findings and Overall Outcomes

- Tell us what the program actually achieved. How does that compare to the proposed outcomes?

All proposed program objectives were achieved. The program was implemented in three homes, one run by Salvation Army and two run by the Sri Lankan government. We exceeded our goal and educated 124 girls through the support of the DFW grant. Through program workshops, girls developed their business acumen and strategic thinking skills, and learned about basic nutrition, reproductive health, crisis management, finding safe work and basic job readiness, financial management, and community development. Participants developed their self-confidence, communication and presentation skills, and practiced working independently and as a group.

With the support of Dining for Women, program participants were able to make \$59,402 of jewelry, generating \$29,701 in savings for their futures (50% of the jewelry selling price goes directly to the creator), while learning the business skills needed to leverage this money.



- What were the challenges encountered while implementing the project? What actions were taken to address them?

The mentorship component of our work, while incredibly important to the girls, has been more difficult to scale than we expected. We have an incredible group of enthusiastic mentors who have come monthly to the Colombo-

based shelter in which we work. However, we found it difficult to find mentors who could travel consistently to homes that were farther away. When mentors are unable to come regularly, program participants take their absence very personally as they are terrified of being abandoned. We therefore needed to change our strategy in order to bring mentorship to the other two homes.



First, we shifted our strategy from doing one-on-one mentoring, which has benefited some participants tremendously and led to multiple let-downs for other participants, to instead host small group mentoring sessions. This way, if a mentor cannot make it, there is still consistency for participants. To expand our program to homes that were farther away, we engaged the staff at the homes as well as our own staff in mentoring the girls. This ensured consistency for the girls and also helped increase the capacity of personnel working in the homes and improved their relationships with program participants.

□ Please describe unexpected events and outcomes, including happy surprises.

The mentors in our program were so inspired by the young women we serve and the incredible needs that they faced that they started their own education program for the girls! Previously, girls in the shelters were unable to continue their formal education while testifying in court. Our volunteer mentors collectively worked together to find funding and teachers to support girls who were preparing for their O-levels (equivalent to a GED or high school degree). The girls will be able to expand their opportunities significantly as a result of this program. With our support, the mentors completed their first pilot program (semester 1) this summer and have now launched semester 2, teaching Math, Science, Sinhala, English, History and Buddhism. Before Emerge, no one wanted to work with these young women and now we have volunteers designing their own programs! We couldn't be happier. Dining For Women's resources have therefore been magnified in ways we never could have expected.

□ Did you change your strategy as a result of obstacles you encountered? How will you address these challenges in the future?

While our expected programming, curriculum and results stayed largely the same, we did encounter a few challenges this year that will affect our strategy moving forward:

1. **We had to change our strategy for the implementation of our mentorship curriculum at all homes,** given constraints around location, reliability of mentors, and security requirements at different homes (see above section about challenges).
2. **We decided that it was important to develop our financial sustainability before scaling our programs further.** This means we are focusing on increasing local fundraising, publicity and growing our board locally. We are also refining our business strategy (both sales and local income generating activities) to decrease our dependency on grants.
3. With a growing economy and tourism industry post-war in Sri Lanka, **we realized that we had an opportunity to increase our local jewelry sales** – thereby lowering costs, increasing local awareness of our cause, opening further opportunities for alumni, and decreasing our carbon footprint. We therefore shifted our focus from international sales to local sales. We are now looking to hire a Business Development Officer to refine



our business strategy and aggressively drive our sales moving forward.

- What was the overall impact, both *direct* and *indirect*, in the lives of the women, children and community at large?

Beneficiary Impact



Through our programs, the girls of Emerge have been able to heal the wounds left by sexual violence and abuse. They have been developed the financial literacy and business skills to empower them to be self-sufficient. They have developed the confidence, courage, and life skills to live independent, healthy lives when they return to their communities. And, they have been equipped with knowledge and leadership skills to continue their fight for equality, safety, and women's rights. Our alumni have utilized their skills and resources developed through Emerge to start businesses, provide for and educate their children, finance future education, and even build homes.

The homes in which these courageous girls live have also benefited from Emerge programs. Emerge has connected homes with a variety of donations, both supplies and resources for the home as well as fun events at the home. In the past year, Emerge has facilitated more than Rs. 270,000 (approximately \$2,700) in donations to the homes in which we work. Additionally, \$0.25 for every product that is made by the girls goes into a community fund, through which they plan their own community projects. This year, the girls chose to use this fund to purchase writing desks, netball equipment and undergarments. In these ways, Emerge and program participants have directly improved the living situation and communities in which these young women live.

Communal Impact

Since we received our DFW funding, we have worked hard to increase awareness of sexual violence in Sri Lanka, and through such awareness also reduce the stigma against our program participants and create opportunities for survivors of abuse. We are pleased to have made a great deal of headway in this area in the past year, including recruiting a celebrity spokesperson, attracting major local press, partnering with local stores for retailing Emerge jewelry, and hosting a variety of major events. Specific successes include:

- A partnership with the 2011-2012 Miss Sri Lanka, Stephanie Siriwardhana
- Partnerships with 6 stores in Sri Lanka to sell Emerge jewelry
- A great deal of major local press in Sri Lanka, including being featured on Good Morning Sri Lanka and as the cover story of the biggest popular culture/society magazine in Sri Lanka! We have had at least 12 major articles in the past year
- Hosted 3 local fundraising events, including an artistic celebration of femininity, and two events at night clubs. Before the end of the year, we plan to have a major wine tasting
- Partnered with a local company to donate beads
- Trained 28 mentors
- Connected with the US Ambassador and was featured in her press release and celebration of International Day of the Girl
- Secured our first local funding in Sri Lanka, through local events, a local grant, and our first corporate social responsibility partnership with a local company (just now being finalized)





All of these successes have greatly increased our public presence and awareness of our cause. Emerge has become a known organization and people are eager to support our cause, an issue that just a few short years ago was considered too taboo to talk about. We are excited to finally see some cultural change!

□ What are the measurements used to monitor success? Please be specific and include measurable results.

Number of girls supported through Emerge programs through Dining for Women support: 124

Amount of savings generated through Dining for Women support: \$29,701

Goals and Outcomes:

- **Heal the wounds left by sexual violence and abuse**
 - 100% of girls report feeling “happy” or “very happy” about their futures after the program
 - When entering the program, 83% of girls felt happy with who they were. After the program, 98% of girls feel happy with who they are.
 - 96% of girls are confident they can accomplish their dreams
- **Educate the next generation of young women in financial literacy and economics so they will have the capacity to become autonomous and self-sufficient**
 - 96% of girls understand core business topics
 - 89% of girls know how to make a budget
 - 81% of girls felt they were good at math by the end of the program. At the beginning of the program, 23% of girls felt they were bad at math. This number dropped to only 4% by the end of the program.
- **Empower survivors of sexual abuse so they will have the courage and resilience to live independent lives once they return to their communities**
 - 100% of girls generated their own savings
 - 97% of girls reported understanding how to start their own business
 - 100% of girls understood basic job readiness skills
 - 100% of girls know how to get help in the event of an emergency
- **Prepare the next generation of girls to be leaders in the fight for equality and women’s rights**
 - 100% of girls are comfortable teaching others
 - 96% of girls are comfortable sharing their ideas at the end of the program
 - 79% of girls feel they can make a difference in their communities

□ If program is ongoing, please provide plans and expected results, including projected timeframe.

Through individual donations, grants, a sponsorship program, and jewelry sales, our programs will continue to run in the homes in which we operate. In 2013, we aim to focus on local board development, local jewelry sales, local fundraising, and increasing our financial sustainability through income-generating opportunities. As Emerge Lanka (our sister entity in Sri Lanka) becomes increasingly locally sustained over the next 1-2 years, we would like to expand our programs to the war-affected North and East, provide increased programming for alumni, and engage other youth in developing their own projects to address sexual violence.

□ Approximately how many lives were touched both directly and indirectly by the program?

In the past year, through our DFW grant, we impacted:

- 124 direct program participants between the ages of 10-18 years old
- 13 children of program participants, who indirectly benefited from our programs
- 6 staff, who were empowered with new skills to deliver our innovative work
- 9 interns and major volunteers
- 28 mentors, who were trained in issues about sexual violence and in working with program participants

III. Budget

The following table outlines how funds were spent (budgeted versus actual). The budget reflects the *updated* budget, which was decreased by ~\$4000 based on the amount of money actually raised by DFW. DFW funds covered 95% of project costs. Because we were able to save money in certain areas, we were able to hire an additional Peer Educator (alumni of the program) to support our work. This greatly enhanced the quality of programs, provided an alumni with job training and income, and supported our commitment to engaging survivors in shaping and driving our programs.

Category	Item	Budget	Actual	Difference
Program Staff	Chief Program Coordinator Salary	\$6,295	\$5,843	\$452
	Programs Development Officer Salary	\$6,053	\$5,618	\$435
	Peer Educators (former participants)	\$1,118	\$2,577	-\$1,459
Sri Lanka Admin	Sri Lanka Office Manager	\$2,118	\$1,834	\$284
Program costs: Self-Sustaining post start-up (recovered through jewelry sales)	Beading Materials	\$9,000	\$8,885	\$115
	Jewelry Bags	\$679	\$857	-\$178
	Jewelry Tags	\$92	\$0	\$92
	Product to Market costs	\$1,000	\$973	\$27
Program Costs: Ongoing	Beads-to-Business start up materials	\$500	\$394	\$106
	Workshop Transport Costs	\$2,097	\$2,247	-\$150
	Exit costs	\$350	\$82	\$268
	Bead containers	\$100	\$102	-\$2
Dining for Women Costs	DVD Production and Shipping Costs	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0
TOTAL		\$30,902	\$30,912	-\$10

IV. Sustainability

- How has the impact of this program provided for long term change for the recipients or community?
This project has made substantial changes for our participants and the Sri Lankan community as a whole. Studies have shown that girls who have experienced violence are more likely than others to experience future abuse and/or allow the cycle of violence to continue with their children. Emerge programs equip girls with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to break the cycle of violence and become change agents in their own communities. As girls exit shelters and transition into society, Emerge is there to support them in finding housing, applying for loans, identifying job opportunities and more. And, as they take their next steps, armed with resources and knowledge, girls are able to start businesses, build homes, and educate themselves and their children.

On a societal level, we have raised awareness of sexual violence through a partnership with Miss Sri Lanka and major publicity through magazines, newspapers and television. We will continue to educate the public and hope that our growing emphasis on local sales will also raise the profile of this very important issue across Sri Lanka.

- Are the results sustainable?
The educational impact we have had on our participants is transformative, providing a critical foundation on which they can launch their adult lives. However, the long-term sustainability of our programs are still dependent on both donations and sales. We are in the process of working to decrease our dependency on grants and

donations and increase our dependency on sales and income-generating opportunities that can be managed and grown locally. This year has been a critical year in laying a foundation for this to be possible – we've increased our visibility and support in Sri Lanka substantially and now have a number of partners with whom we are collaborating for local fundraising events, local sales, and local collaborations. We aim to be financially sustained through our work in Sri Lanka in the next 2 years.

- What long term changes would you expect to see after 3-5 years as a result of this grant?



Within three years, Emerge will have equipped 500+ Sri Lankan girls with business, life skills, and capital and will be hosting annual reunions to keep girls connected, inspired, and informed. Emerge Global's sister entity, Emerge Lanka Foundation, will be financially and operationally self-sufficient with its own Board driving future development. Emerge Global will therefore be in a position to invest resources into expanding into a second country and piloting the program's transferability a new culture and context, with the goal of one day providing an open-source curriculum.

Program alumni will have the skills the need to succeed in living healthy, self-sufficient lives and to make changes in the issues that matter most to them. Within 3-5 years we hope to have at least one alumni on our board, helping govern the overall vision of Emerge. Our alumni will stay connected to one another through reunions and increased programming for alumni, empowering them to collectively make substantial changes across Sri Lanka.

V. Lessons Learned

- Project Lessons Learned: What are the lessons learned? For example: Have you expanded your network i.e. forged a partnership with other groups and/or increased your funds as a result of the project? Have you developed training tools/materials, etc? Please specify.

We've greatly increased our impact through partnerships with: Samutthana (a local organization that trained our staff in new counseling techniques), Stephanie Siriwardena (Miss Sri Lanka), a variety of local stores (that are now selling Emerge jewelry), and mentors (who are now running their own educational programs). We've engaged other likeminded organizations in our own fundraisers in order to develop a strong alliance of local providers and organizations. We've also adapted the International Youth Foundation's Reproductive Health Curriculum (developed through a USAID grant) for the Sri Lankan context and now are distributing it to other interested organizations in both Sinhala and Tamil.

- Organizational lessons learned: What lessons have you learned about the functioning of your own organization? What is working, what might you change?

After spending years honing our programs, we are now turning towards efforts to bolster our financial self-sufficiency. We are currently recruiting a Business Development Officer locally to expand and develop our sales strategy and decrease our dependence on grants.

VI. Organizational Structure

- Dining for Women is focused on the empowerment of women and girls; please describe how your commitment to empowering women is reflected in your organizational structure.

Emerge is committed to the empowerment of women at all levels of our work. We embody this commitment through:

1. **An all-female staff, including program alumni** – Our 6 staff on the ground are all women, 2 of whom are alumni of our programs. We are committed to hiring alumni whenever possible and providing training and empowerment opportunities through working with Emerge.
2. **Our majority female board** – Our board in the US is all female and our board in Sri Lanka is currently all female. We are in the process of growing our local board in Sri Lanka to include senior leaders in business and women's rights, some of whom are male. However, the majority of our board will remain female.
3. **Engaging participants and alumni in decision making** – We actively engage current and past participants in the governance of Emerge. Girls are involved during the program by leading the Emerge Store and Bank simulations and also mentoring other girls. They also plan their own community projects, using the community fund. After leaving our programs, alumni are engaged in providing feedback through follow-up surveys and reunions and are invited to come back as Peer Educators to teach in our programs.



VII. Next Steps

- What are the next steps/future directions?

Our main goal in the upcoming year is to achieve local sustainability. We are increasing our fundraising and sales locally and growing our local board. We want Emerge to be a local movement that can survive long-term in Sri Lanka. After increasing our financial sustainability and local leadership, we aim to grow out programs across Sri Lanka.

VIII. Comments and Recommendations

- Is there anything else you would like our members to know about this program, or your organization?

When considering your holiday gifts this year, we hope you will consider visiting our website and online store and purchasing some of the gorgeous jewelry that you made possible! www.emergeglobal.org

IX. Message to our Membership and Donors

- Would you like us to pass on any message in summary with our members and donors about the impact our grant has had on those served and/or your organization and its mission?
- Do you have a specific impact story or quote you would like us to share with them?

Yes – See Appendices 1 & 2

X. Impact Summary

- Please include a brief summary of the project and its impact that can be used on our website and in other communication such as newsletter.
- Include a 2-3 sentence summary of the impact to be used by DFW for social media (FB, blogging, etc).

Thanks to a grant by Dining For Women, 124 Sri Lankan girls between the ages of 10 and 18, all survivors of sexual abuse, have been equipped with the critical life and business skills needed to live healthy, self-sufficient



lives. Through Emerge Global's work in Sri Lanka, these young women were able to generate \$29,701 of savings through jewelry design, receive training in business development, financial management, reproductive health, community action, job readiness and more, and were connected to inspiring local women to build a network of support. Emerge was able to leverage their grant from DFW to garner further support for their work, including partnering with new retail outlets to sell Emerge jewelry, securing their first major local funding, partnering with Miss Sri Lanka as their celebrity spokesperson, and being selected by the US Ambassador to Sri Lanka as her charity of choice for International Day of the Girl.



Appendix 1: Letter to Dining For Women Membership and Donors

To the wonderful members of Dining For Women,

It is with great pleasure that I write to thank you for your tremendous gift to Emerge Global and the inspiring girls we work with every day. Your support enabled 124 girls in Sri Lanka heal from wounds left by sexual violence and take their first steps in launching healthy, self-sufficient futures. When you dined together last year to raise money for Emerge, you planted seeds that have enabled girls to believe in themselves again, empowered them with the skills needed to live independent lives, and inspired them to work together to collectively change their communities. These young women have faced incredible challenges; but, with your support, they have not only become survivors – they have become advocates, entrepreneurs, teachers, and confident mothers. Thank you.

With Dining For Women's grant, these young women were able to generate \$29,701 of savings through jewelry design, receive training in business development, financial management, reproductive health, community action, job readiness and more, and were connected to inspiring local women to build a network of support. We were also able to leverage our grant from DFW to garner further support for our work, including partnering with new retail outlets to sell Emerge jewelry, securing their first major local funding, partnering with Miss Sri Lanka as our celebrity spokesperson, and being selected by the US Ambassador to Sri Lanka as her charity of choice for International Day of the Girl. None of these outcomes would have been possible without DFW's generous gift last year.

As we move into the holidays, I hope you'll consider continuing your support of these young women through your holiday purchases. You can purchase some of their beautiful and one-of-a-kind jewelry on our online store here: <http://www.artfire.com/ext/shop/studio/emergeglobal>

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any ideas or questions, or would like to get more involved!

With tremendous gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alia Whitney-Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alia Whitney-Johnson
alia@emergeglobal.org
Founder, Emerge Global

Appendix 2: Testimonials

"I think what Emerge does is magical and inspirational. It gives these young girls a second chance, not only to dream, but, to make their dreams a reality through concrete means of empowerment, self-sufficiency, education and support."

-Stephanie Siriwardhana, Miss Sri Lanka 2011-2012

The following testimonials were collected in the past six months. To protect our participants' confidentiality, we have used their initials to identify them below:

"I didn't know how to go back to society and live but I know now because Emerge has taught me. This is so important! I now have the confidence to go back into society. I have learnt the skills to run my own business and I am hoping to have a dress making shop that takes orders for sewing.

I love the mentoring program. We look forward to meeting the mentors and they bring us great joy. The mentors talk to us and ease our burdens and give us sound advice in our day-to-day problems and also for our future." – HARMN, current program participant

"Emerge helped me to face any challenge, [taught me] how to save and how to face an interview, and [how to] have confidence in obtaining a job. This helped me to get the job I am doing now." –SLVRN, recent graduate who works in sales at a car parts shop

"Emerge taught us how run our own business and how to manage the money we have and how to spend it wisely. Lots of things I did not know about my body I was taught, especially about my reproductive organs. If Emerge had not helped me I would have no hope. I believe if Emerge could go into other shelters in SL they could teach more girls like us skills for our future." –SHMDI, recent graduate who hopes to start her own hair dressing salon with her savings

"I run my own catering business now with the help of my aunt. I also attend a business class and a cookery class to improve my skills. I pay for these classes with the money I earned from Emerge.

I learnt valuable lessons from Emerge which I will treasure for the rest of my life, I learnt how to live in a community, how to handle any kind of situation and how to avoid a tricky situation especially when it comes to relationships. I also learnt about contraception and how you take precautions. I learnt details how to commence a business and how to run it. We were also taught how to create our own designs in jewelry and what measures we need to take to run a jewelry business as well. We were also taught Reproductive health which was very useful for our future.

I would never have started my own catering business if not for the monies I generated from Emerge." –BRCHA, recent graduate and catering business owner



Testimonial by Emerge Peer Educator

“An unexpected event changed my life one day. My fate was changed in a way that I never thought it would. It left me at my lowest, heart broken and lonely. At that time, when I was without any help, feeling sad, it was the beading workshop that helped ease my pain and loneliness and helped me make up my mind and console myself. The satisfaction I feel in combining beautiful colors, designing and completing a beautiful necklace or bracelet is hard to describe in words. These workshops have helped me succeed in life and face life as a successful human being to this day. I thank the people who helped me and guided me through this difficult time. Now as my career, I have dedicated myself to teach girls that have faced the same challenges as me. I do it with immense happiness. I believe I can empathize with our girls and be a friend to them. I have had many diverse experiences ever since the beginning of this program. From the savings generated from this program, girls have been able to build their own house and care for their child. I am happy to witness these events. Its good to be part of something that is so helpful to another person. All this is possible because of Emerge. I feel that people who were from Emerge as well as those who partnered with us from the start were able to understand the feelings of the children they work with. I believe they have shown immense dedication towards these children. To this day, three years of my life have been spent with Emerge. I feel it is a great achievement to have been able to work with Emerge for three years.”