A close-up portrait of a young girl with dark hair, looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. She is wearing a dark top and a necklace. The background is a textured wall.

Girls First

Summary Key Research Findings

Bihar, India
2014-2020

The Following Slides Provide a
Brief Overview of Key Research
Findings of the Girls First
program in Bihar, India
2014-2020

Papers are available at
www.corstone.org/results



Girls First

Randomized Controlled Trial in
Government Schools

2013-14
Bihar, India



Girls First - Bihar: Randomized controlled trial (RCT)

- 3,400 adolescent girls in 76 schools
- 70 community women trained as program facilitators
- Profile: 12-16 years old in rural poverty in Bihar, India

3 intervention arms and 1 control arm:

- Resilience Curriculum only (RC)
- Health Curriculum only (HC)
- Resilience + Health (RC + HC)
- School-as-usual control (SC; no intervention)

- 15-20 girls per group
- Meet 1-2 times per week for 1 hour
- 6-8 month program
- 2 Program Facilitators per group

Assessment Framework

Quantitative

Impact area	Key Outcomes	Assessment tools (Examples)
Mental/emotional wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience • Self-efficacy • Psychological wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale-10 • General Self-Efficacy Scale • KIDSCREEN Psychological Wellbeing subscale • Patient Health Questionnaire-9; GAD-7
Physical wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health knowledge • Health-related behaviors • Health/gender attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey instrument developed in part from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General self-report of health • Indian Adolescent Health Questionnaire • KIDSCREEN Physical Wellbeing subscale
Social wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social skills • Social relationships (peers; family) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Child and Youth Resilience Measure subscales • KIDSCREEN Social Wellbeing subscale
Academic wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School engagement • Perceived safety at school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School records; survey instrument • Child and Youth Resilience Measure Education Subscale

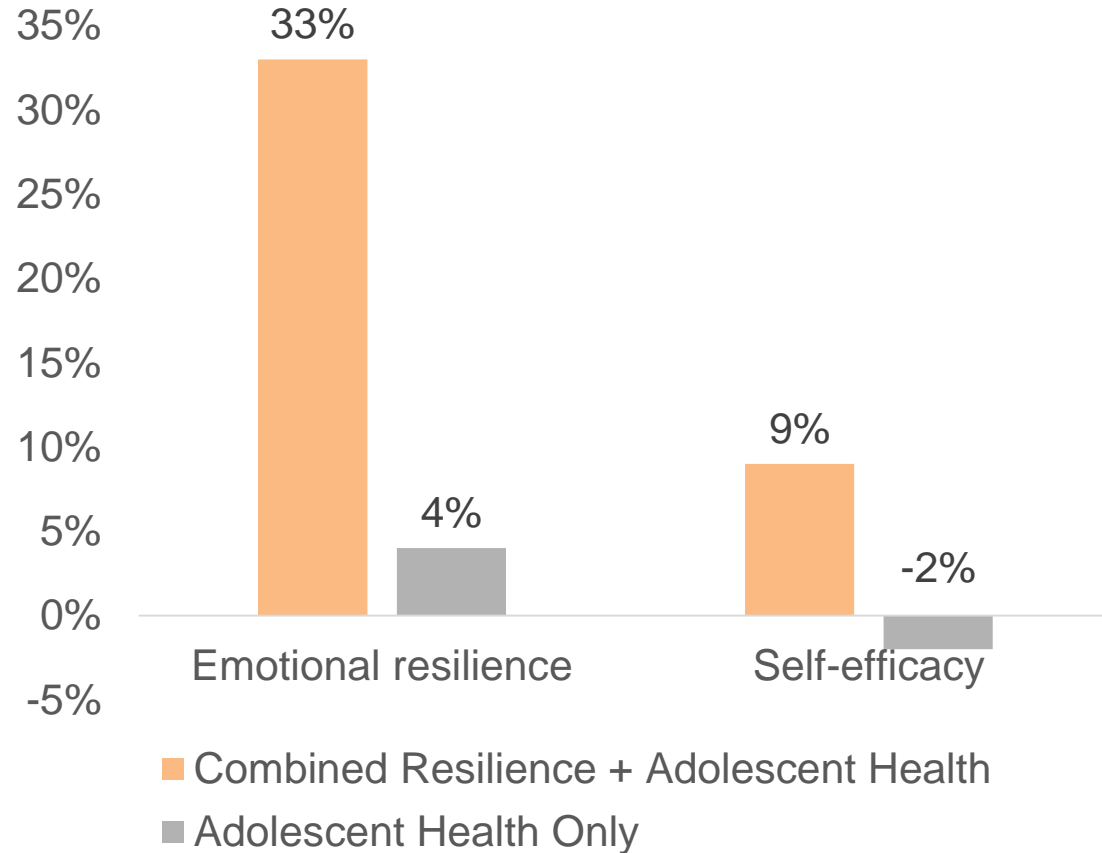
Qualitative

- Semi-structured individual interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs)
- Interview and FGD guides mirrored quantitative assessments; targeted in-depth descriptions of experiences and views

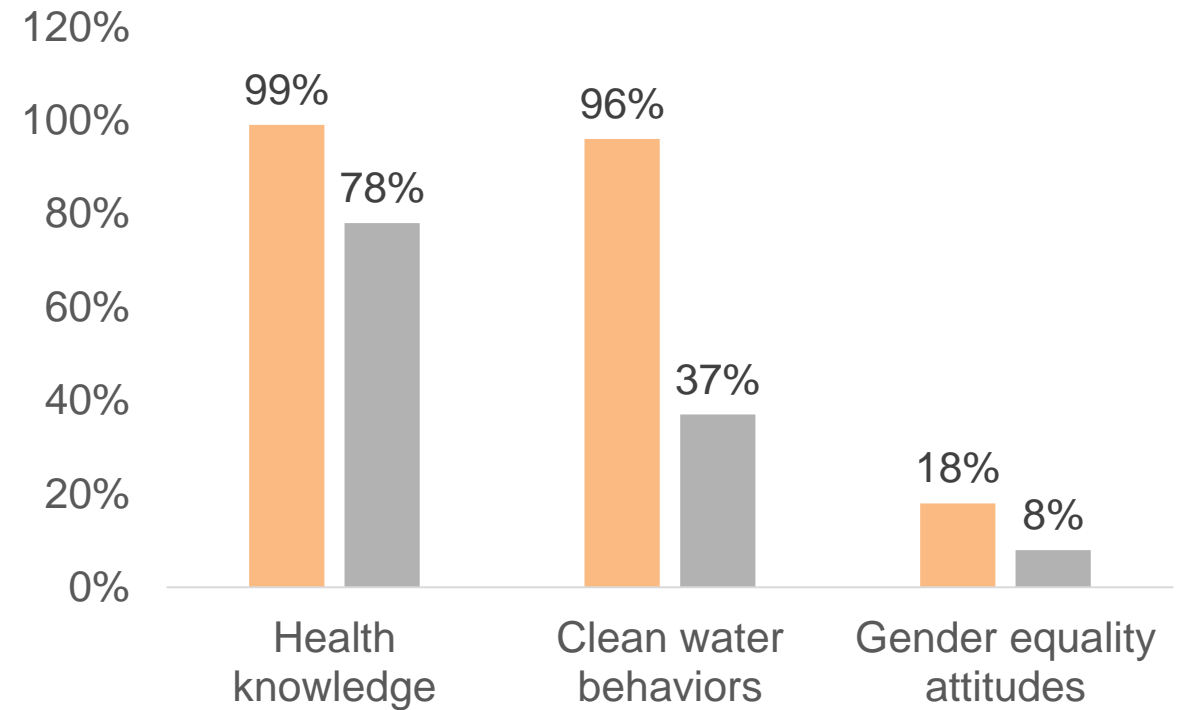
Girls First - Bihar: Effectiveness Trial: RCT

Results, 2013-14

Selected effects: Resilience and self-efficacy
Baseline to endline changes

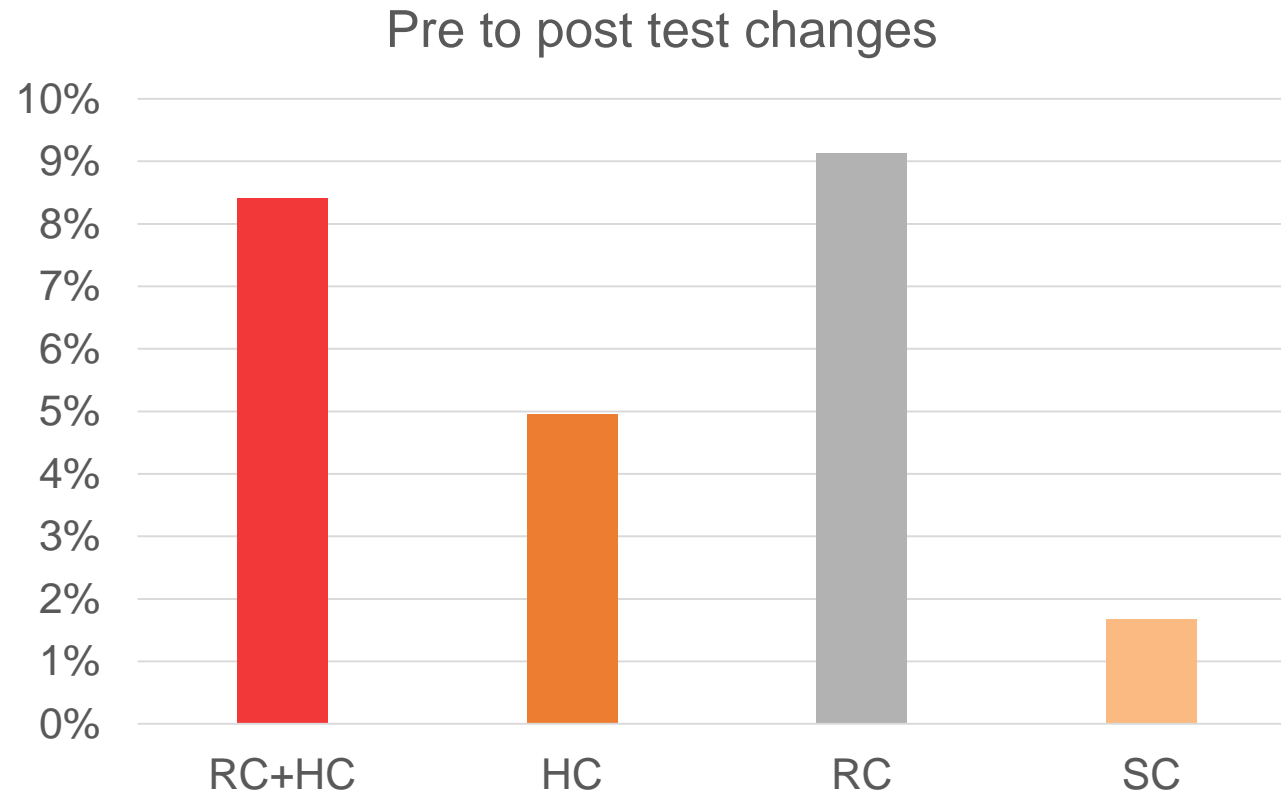


Selected effects: Health and Gender
Baseline to endline changes



Significant effects consistently found between Combined Condition and Adolescent Health Only Condition. Resilience *amplifies* the effects of a health curriculum.

School Engagement



What it measures

- Feeling of safety at school
- Sense of belonging at school
- Belief in importance of education

- RC = Resilience Curriculum
- HC = Health Curriculum
- SC = School-as-usual Control

Note: Asterisks denote significant differences vs. control (SC), through DiD OLS regression analyses including demographic covariates. *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Significant effects consistently found between Combined Condition and Adolescent Health Only Condition. Resilience *amplifies* the effects of a health curriculum.



“One of my sisters was getting married and she was not even 18 years of age. She did not want this. I convinced my papa that he should wait. I said, ‘Let her finish her tenth grade exams and then she can marry.’ He agreed.”

-- Girls First participant
Bihar, India

Ripple effect: Girls First participants encouraged girls to stop early marriage, advocate for their education and health rights, and confront harassment.



Interviewer: *If you are presented with a **marriage proposal** then how will you handle it? What qualities can you use to share your point of view with others?*

Girl: ***Courage, perseverance, and affection.** These are very beneficial qualities. It is obvious that if I don't speak **affectionately** then my mother won't like it. If I don't present my point of view **courageously** and simply agree to what others are saying then I will become weak. If I don't show **perseverance** towards my goal then I will lose sight of it.*

Girls thought specifically about how they will oppose **early marriage**—using the character strengths they learned about in the program.



“When I was sharing in the group I realized that problems become easier when they are shared. That is why I **decided not to get scared when he threatens me**. If he can threaten me just because he is a boy and I am a girl, I can seek help from the people around me because molesting a girl is a legal offense. **I can get help for this.**”

-- Girls First participant
Bihar, India

Girls who received resilience training drew on their strengths and group support to oppose **harassment**.

Girls First - KGBV

Residential Schools for
Marginalized Girls

2016- 2019

Bihar, India

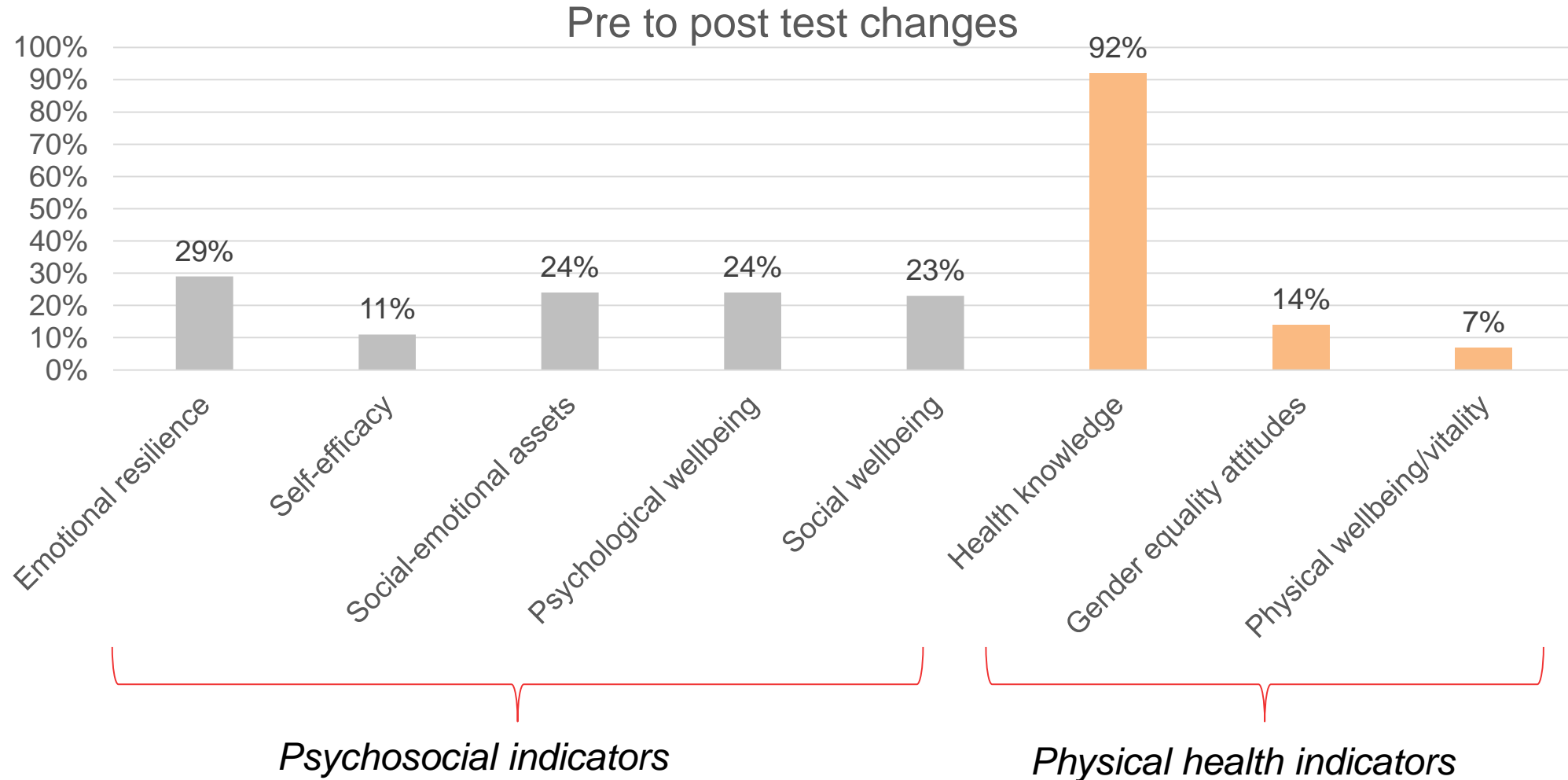


KGBV Schools

- In 2004, the Government of India established the national network of **Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)** schools for girls to help address gender and caste disparities in education.
- KGBV schools serve high-risk girls from 'low' castes, minorities, tribal communities, and/or from families below the poverty line.
 - All KGBV schools are residential.
- Today, there are 3500+ KGBVs serving over 300,000 girls in 27 states across India.

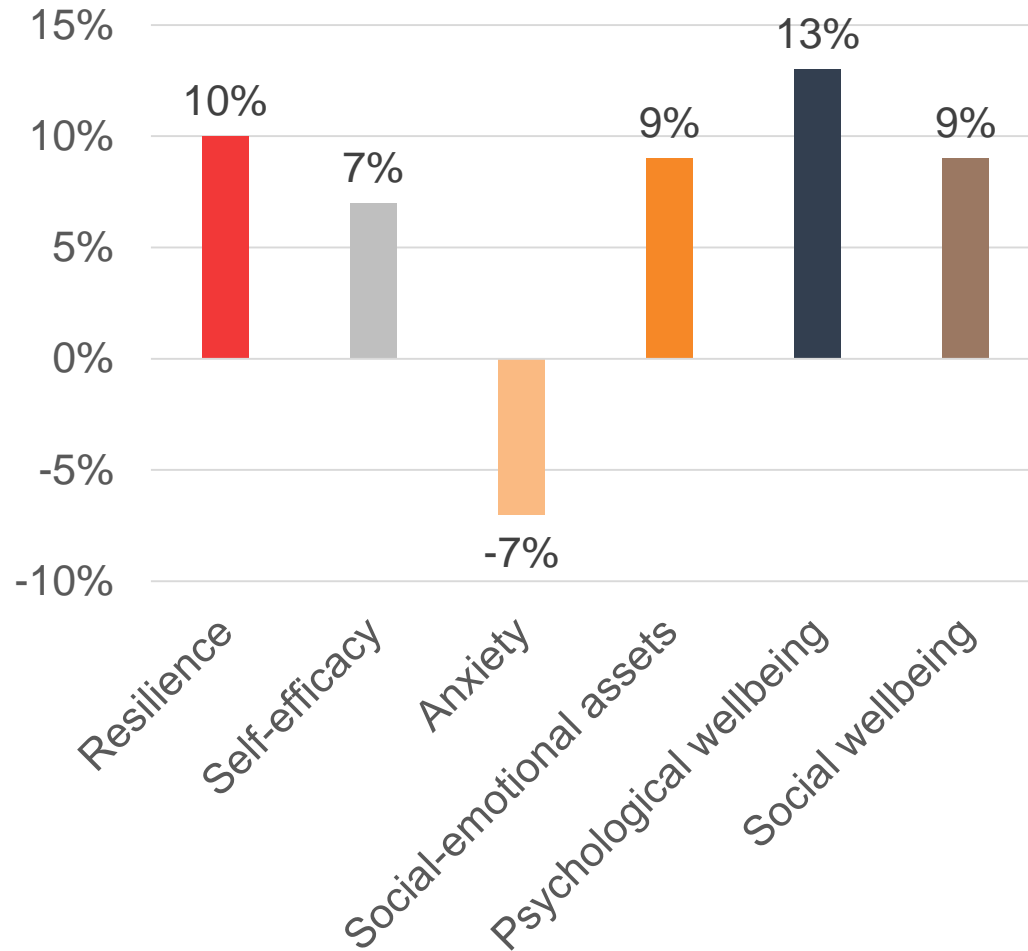


Girls First – KGBV: Select results (2016)



Note: Results based on data from pre and post assessments conducted among 6th, 7th and 8th graders at a random selection of 25 schools. 922 ≤ n ≤ 933 for psychosocial indicators and gender equality attitudes; n = 275 for health knowledge and physical wellbeing/vitality (only measured in schools where health curriculum conducted). All pre to post test differences are statistically significant below p < 0.05, accounting for school clusters.

Girls First – KGBV: Pre- to Post- Test Changes (2017)



8th grade girls improved from pre to post test on a host of psychosocial measures

Differences from pre to post were sizeable and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) for:

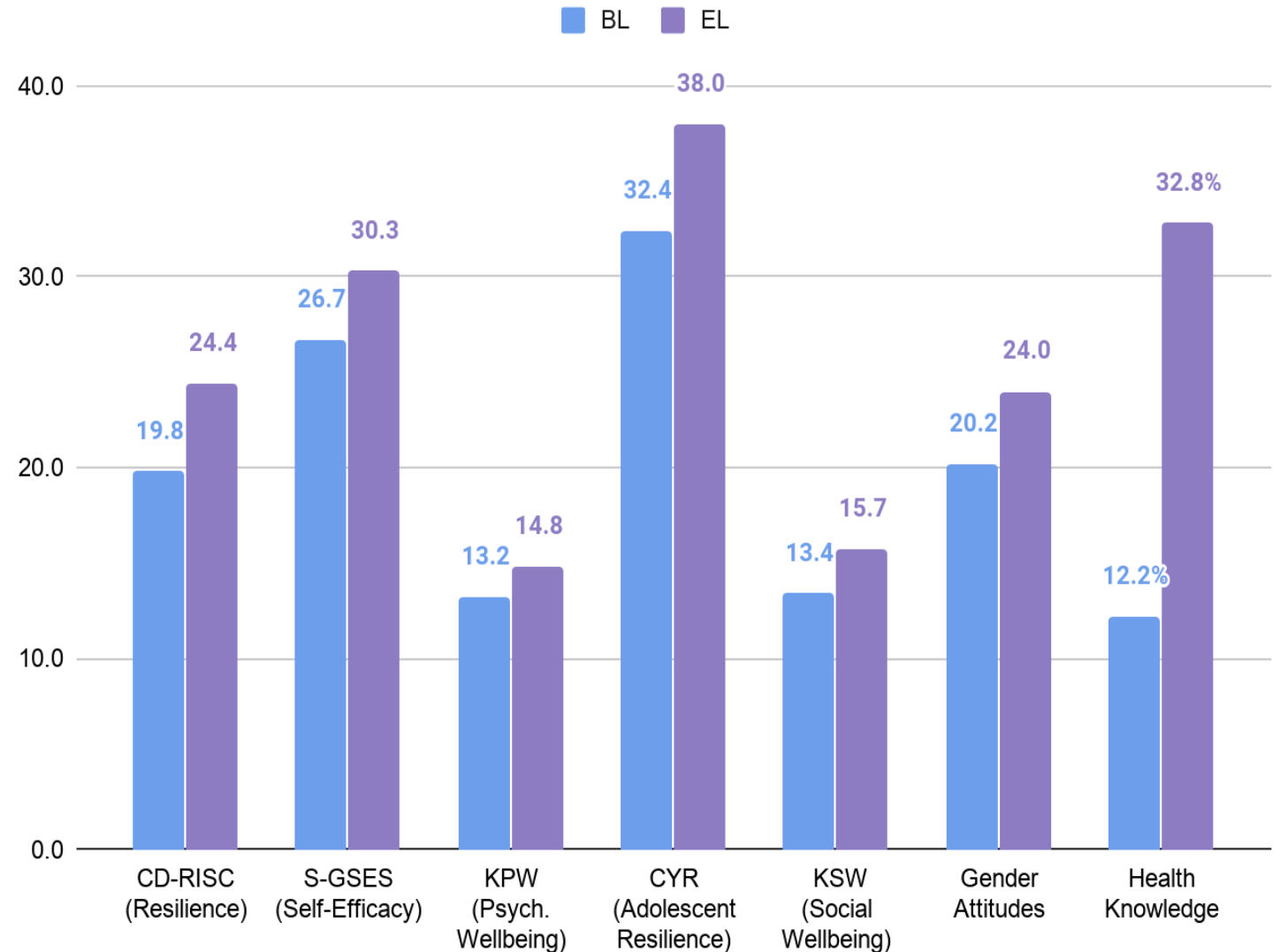
- Resilience
- Self-efficacy
- Social-emotional assets
- Psychological wellbeing
- Social wellbeing

Anxiety showed a sizeable though not statistically significant change ($p = 0.11$)

Analyses controlled for clustering at the school level

Girls First-KGBV 2018-19

- 6th, 7th, and 8th Standard girls (N = 1,048)
- Baseline and endline results compared
- Differences from baseline to endline all statistically significant at $p < 0.001$



Qualitative highlights (2016-17): Changes in Girls

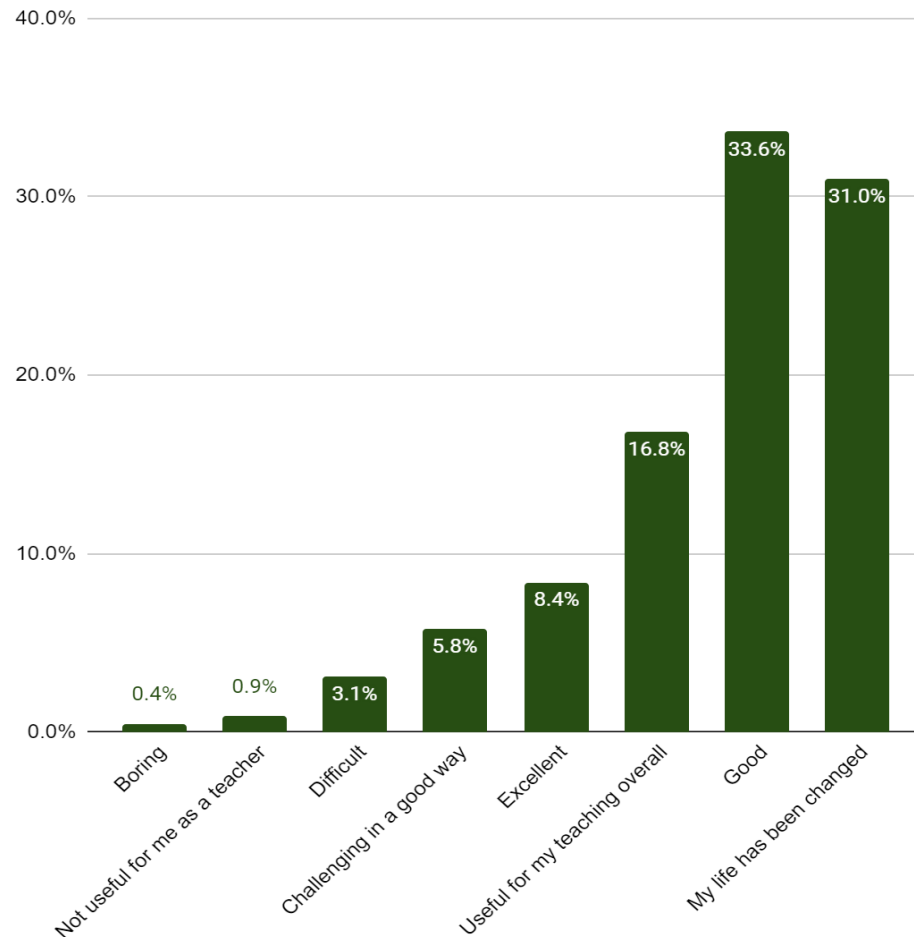
Girls have shown:

- Increased levels of **confidence**
- Improved **goal setting** behavior that helps them to study for exams
- Greater courage to stand up for their classmates and to use **assertive communication** to express themselves
- Improved **student/teacher relationships** (including more open sharing, greater trust and readiness to seek help when needed)
- Ability to **solve problems** between themselves or between others

Qualitative highlights (2016-17): Girls' voices

- “This program taught me that **girls and boys are equal.**”
- “These sessions gave me **strength to be more confident...**and take risks.”
- “I told my mother, brother and sisters also about **listening skills** and now they also use them.”
- “Earlier I used to hesitate in expressing my feelings but when teacher made me understand to express all those feelings which I have inside, then I feel better and relaxed.”
- “Earlier I use to fight but after attending **assertive communication** session by using ‘I statement’ I apologize and ask forgiveness from [my] friend.”
- “When someone used to ask what I want to become then I used to answer anything. I did not know how to achieve my goal. But after associating with these sessions I realized that with hard work, **I can achieve my goal.**”

Teacher effects (2019): Select the best description of your Girls First experience overall



- Five positive, five negative options
- No one selected *Bad* or *A burden*
- Around 4% chose *Boring*, *Difficult*, or *Not useful for me as a teacher*
- Around 6% selected *Challenging in a good way*
- **90% chose *Good*, *Excellent*, *Useful for my teaching overall*, or *My life has been changed***

Teachers' voices (2019): Changes noticed by others

- “In difficult times, I have experienced situations with patience, and people have noted these changes in me.”
- “People have seen many changes in us, like my husband and children said, ‘You are less irritable and angry than before.’ It demonstrates that we are developing the quality of self-control.”
- “My colleague has seen a lot of changes in me, as I have now become a good listener, and take care of difficult situations very easily.”
- “People see a lot of change in me, like I do not panic under any circumstances. I face them strongly and do not get irritable.”
- “I learned to think patiently and think about problems in a peaceful way. People saw the same change in me.”

Teachers' voices (2019): Changes affecting school environment

- “Earlier I used to behave like a teacher. Now I behave like a facilitator.”
- “After training, I have learned to handle difficult emotions well. I can easily understand the feelings of others and also give emotional support when needed.”
- “After CorStone's training, we have gotten into the habit of looking at the faces of others carefully because we want to know by looking at their faces that they do not have any problems. And try to find out their problems; do [find out], and solve it.”
- “Instead of fretting over trivial matters, I am acting in peace and love, through which I have become closer to my co-workers and girls. Now, all of them can feel free to say anything to me.”

Teachers' voices (2020): COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdown commentary

- “Emotional attachment from students has deepened. The living proof of this are phone calls of girls coming [to us] in this COVID pandemic. Also, the relationships with other people have improved a lot.”
- “During the COVID period, I am still positive in my thinking.”
- “Yes, now that we are in this pandemic, education given by CorStone was very helpful for us [...] moving forward in daily life with the whole family with a lot of love and a happy atmosphere, helping to keep any kind of negativity away.”
- “[Others see] my ability to change my temperament, improve communication, solve problems, control emotions, and emerge from challenges, conflicts, and crises like the present-day coronavirus.”
- “I have courage to fight Covid-19!”

Thank You

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