

*“I was isolated, with no friends hindered by lack of English, but once I joined my life started to change. I was on my journey of empowerment.” -Beneficiary*



## SWALE WOMEN AND GIRLS (SWAG) Project Evaluation Report- Extended Summary

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Self-esteem: Self-confidence  
Critical thinking;  
Knowledge & information; Skills & competences



SUPPORT. DIGNITY. RESPECT.



alth &  
ty of life

LOTTERY FUNDED

## Extended Summary

### Project mandate and scope

The overarching aim of the SWAG project (Supporting Women and Girls) is to support disadvantaged and marginalised women and girls in Swale and Kent, individually and collectively by creating opportunities for them to gain and improve their life skills and competences in areas such as psychological and physical wellbeing, income generation and political and social and individual perception of their empowerment. The project brings together women and girls from different ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds to increase understanding and support aimed at creating a complete cycle of empowerment.

### Investment

The SWAG project received the Big Lottery Fund a grant of £347,105 for three years. The project also counted on the in-kind donation from Swale CVS, Swale Community Centres, Swale Borough Council, FareShare UK, Swallows Leisure Centre, Sparshatt Trucks and Vans, Milton Holy Trinity Church, Kemsley Paper Mills, Avenues of Remembrance Theatres, SFM Radio and the University of Greenwich.

**Table 1.** Key investment

Hours of Volunteer Work	Match Funding	Grant	Total Project Cost
36,085:40	£ 671,914	£ 347,105	£ 1019019

### Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to identify the actual and potential changes the project created in the lives of women and girls living in Swale and Kent. The impact assessment evaluated the gender components of the project at the individual, community, and national levels using the framework of participation and empowerment. Therefore, this report provides the key results of an independent evaluation of SWAG assessing all activities undertaken during the project's life cycle (2016-2020) and the critical interventions in support and prevention of women and girls from disempowering societal challenges that SWAG project has achieved.

### Impact assessment

The outcomes of the SWAG project were assessed against the four basic evaluation criteria use by most international organisations which were 1) the relevance of the project, 2)

efficiency, 3) effectiveness, and 4) social impact. The evaluation of the SWAG project was complemented by the theory of change, stages of innovation, social return on investment and theoretical framework in female empowerment.

**Table 2.** Outcome assessment of SWAG

Domains	Critical assessment
<b>1. Relevance</b>	<p><i>Is the conceptual framework for empowerment adopted by SWAG adequate and relevant to promote the participation of women and girls in the project?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWAG's conceptual framework addressed the needs of their beneficiaries from an intersectional viewpoint</li> <li>• SWAGs interventions combined and synthesised several frameworks to address the needs of their service-users.</li> <li>• It also recognised and engaged with various stakeholders and their networks to build social capital and to ensure that women and girls are a part of and supported by the community</li> </ul>
<b>2. Efficiency</b>	<p><i>Were things done right?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff had obtained professional qualifications and soft skills necessary to deliver the project activities and management.</li> <li>• The team demonstrated a great degree of flexibility and adaptability to respond to internal changes such as recruitment of staff, redesign of services and development of outreach initiatives that have required imagination and innovation</li> <li>• Offered great value for money (See social return on investment)</li> </ul>
<b>3. Effectiveness</b>	<p><i>Were the outputs delivered and main results achieved?</i></p> <p>SWAG has been effective in meeting the needs of their services users by being agile and innovative and exceeding the agreed indicators by a high margin</p> <p>The empowerment frameworks adopted has been effective in addressing the needs of women and girls</p> <p>SWAG has effectively responded to the COVID 19 pandemic and continues to support vulnerable women and girls</p> <p>SWAG project team have had a smooth working relationship with the funder and stakeholders and ensured due diligence on safeguarding and equality</p>
<b>4. Impact</b>	<p><i>Has the potential impact led to any community benefit?</i></p>

SWAG project has provided significant community benefit in terms of social impact, match funding and social return on investment. The conceptual frameworks of empowerment have significantly impacted the lives of women and girls resulting in increased volunteering, engagement with activities and improved mental health and wellbeing

During the 3-year project period 10,826 women and girls' beneficiaries achieved one or more of the outcomes while 824 women and girls achieved all four outcomes and indicators. The project exceeded the a priori targets related outcome indicators agreed with the Funder, which includes

- Improve motivation and confidence of 600 women and girls.
- Better equip 1095 women and girls to gain access to the job market.
- Improve mental and physical wellbeing of 1500 women and girls.
- 1175 women and girls took part in volunteering activities.

Full details about the performance indicators are provided in Table 3 below.

**Table 3.** Performance indicators

Outcome	Indicator	Level
<b>Outcome 1</b> The motivation and confidence of women and girls will improve	1.1 Women and girls using the service will report increase motivation and confidence	(100x3 years) = 300
	1.2 Women and girls will report increase knowledge of local services	(50 150x3) =
	1.3 Women and girls will report accessing more services, more frequently to help them develop	150 (50 x 3)
<b>Outcome 2</b> Women and girls will be better equipped to gain access to the job market	2.1 Women and girls will have increased access to work and educational opportunities	675 (225 x3)
	2.2. Women and girls will have improved their skills	150 (75 x3)
	2.3 Women and girls will use their new skills to apply for new opportunities e.g. the job market, education, and business	270 (90 x3)
<b>Outcome 3</b> The mental and physical wellbeing of women and girls will be improved	3.1 Women and girls have improved feelings of emotional wellbeing	900 (300 x3)
	3.2 Women and girls will have increased levels of physiological wellbeing through the six ways to	300 (100 x3)

	wellbeing – be active, keep learning, give, connect, take notice, care for the planet	
	3.3 Women and girls can make decision about themselves and others	300 (150x2)
<b>Outcome 4</b> <b>More women and girls will take part in volunteering activities</b>	4.1 Women and girls have increased access to volunteering opportunities	900(300x3)
	4.2 Women and girls engaging in volunteering opportunities	150 (50 x3)
	4.3 Women and girls volunteering will feel less lonely and isolated	125

The project also exceeded the number of delivered activities. Table 4 shows some selected activities. The full list is presented in the evaluation report.

**Table 4.** Summary of selected delivered activities

<b>Activities</b>	<b>No of attendees</b>	<b>No of sessions</b>	<b>No of different people</b>	<b>People - hrs</b>	<b>Total length of activity in hrs</b>
<b>Mentoring and 1-to- 1 support</b>	674	139	206	3480:40	322:45
<b>Workshops &amp; Training</b>	1156	136	283	4812:07	395:37
<b>Work Placement</b>	189	37	125	2670:40	191:20
<b>After school and Youth Club</b>	348	42	180	2928:55	188:50
<b>Councelling</b>	243	44	144	2755:16	186:25
<b>LAPCEL (Palliative Care Action Research Group)</b>	203	30	132	2740:35	170:50
<b>Volunteering</b>	703	169	217	3766:46	543:43
<b>Socialise &amp; Network</b>	820	105	303	4510:43	306:04
<b>Food for the Vulnerable</b>	361	67	143	2826:22	207:16
<b>Drop in sessions</b>	386	92	165	2873:31	218:31
<b>Physical health (walking club, cycling &amp; yoga)</b>	1003	105	304	4361:37	306:22

The **social return on investment** for SWAG project is three pounds to every one pound invested (£3: £1) demonstrating a high return on investment of three pounds for every one pound inputted into the project by the funders.

## Recommendation

SWAG and Diversity House as the implementer:

- Should continue with the necessary intensity and innovation to ensure that women and girls are not disadvantaged by COVID 19 pandemic.
- Should seek funds to continue supporting women and girls, this will facilitate its scaling up to strategically function as an exemplar on women and girls and vulnerable women.
- Should streamline its activities to focus on its core objectives and unique selling proposition (USP's) of empowering women and girls by transitioning into a capacity-building organisation for women and girl champions and organisations in the UK. Focus on critical services that manifest SWAGs core competencies and areas where other organisations are unable to deliver due to a lack of capacity will also enhance sustainability and greater impact on beneficiaries'.
- Should exploit opportunities by selling or getting commissioned as a social enterprise to provide a range of training services it delivers in diversity, cultural competency and women and girl empowerment training.
- Needs both change management and strategic management objectives to sustain the project and consolidate on the gains achieved in supporting women and girls that is essential to gender development.
- Should act as a campaigner organisation for women and girls in Swale and Kent ensuring that the respective agencies carry out their responsibilities by holding them to account on behalf of women and girls and public.
- Due to the high demand for services by a segment of women and girls- vulnerable, SWAG requires holistic interventions to address the problem (e.g. providing advocacy, counselling, therapy, and psychotherapy services, etc.).
- SWAG's links with UN Global women compact should be leveraged enabling it to have a wider impact and broader change.