Image 1: Graffiti in Khayelitsha of the South African struggle symbol AMANDLA, meaning “power” in Zulu and Xhosa. Image by Digital Storytelling participant, Anele.

SpeakUP!
Young Women Share Powerful Stories From Their Own Lives

Jenn Warren

Malmö University
Communication for Development
One Year Master, 15 credits
Degree Project (KK624C)
Spring 2016
Supervisor: Florencia Enghel
Abstract
How can a Digital Storytelling workshop help educate, inspire and mobilise young women engaged in a non-profit organisation, in order to assist their peers? This exploratory study investigates whether Digital Storytelling can foster digital literacy, self-awareness and reflection amongst workshop participants, and how young women may be able to support each other and their peers through the act of creating and sharing personal digital stories. Conducted using qualitative and participatory methods, with the theoretical underpinnings of Albert Bandura’s Social Learning Theory and Social Cognitive Theory, Paulo Freire’s conscientisation and participatory development, this research is conducted in collaboration with female mentors from the sport-based adolescent health organisation, Grassroot Soccer. First, I analyse the women’s interactions and learnings during the Digital Storytelling workshop, where participants create digital stories in a hands-on setting (using the Story Center model). This is done through participant observation and semi-structured interviews with participants following the workshop. Second, I seek to understand how or if young women can re-present themselves in the context of a facilitated Digital Storytelling workshop and challenge gender stereotypes through their own digital stories. This data is collected through a pre-workshop questionnaire, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and analysis of the digital stories. While this is an exploratory study, I anticipate results in the following areas: (1) cross-pollination of knowledge between workshop participants and facilitators; (2) self-awareness, self-confidence and reflection amongst young women; (3) increase in digital literacy, storytelling and audio/visual skills; and (4) increase in understanding of, or introduction to, digital media and communication, activism and social change.

Keywords
Digital Storytelling, C4D, digital literacy, reflection, participation, conscientisation, Social Learning Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, voice, social change, qualitative

* All DST workshop participant names have been changed for the purpose of this study.
Acknowledgments

Sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to this study. Above all, to the eight women who shared their stories and trusted me with this process. Our work together has been transformational. And to research assistant Millie Timms, for her expert transcription, co-facilitation and documentation of the Digital Storytelling workshop.

Special thanks to: Supervisor Florencia Enghel for her patience, critical guidance and constructive feedback; Karen Greiner for her enthusiasm for Communication for Development and education, and for providing the spark in South Sudan that brought me to C4D and to Malmö; Friederike Bubenzer for sharing her wealth of experience in the fields of post-trauma healing, reconciliation and transformation, and for her sensitivity to living in post-Apartheid South Africa and negotiating our never black-and-white experiences; StoryCenter Silence Speaks facilitator Amy Hill for her incredible ability to hold, witness and facilitate the workshop, her initial guidance on literature and inspiration to look further into the impact on audiences; co-facilitator Thokozile Budaza for her strength, heart and passion to share Digital Storytelling with South African women; social worker Wandisile Gcelu for his professionalism and kindness to the storytellers; communications colleague Debbie Matthee for her enthusiasm, and for sharing the U.S. Consulate’s Digital Classroom with the storytellers; to Eleni, Muhammed, Adriano and Krystle for their friendship; and to Malmö ComDev professors Erliza Lopez Pedersen, Anders Hog Hansen and Tobias Denskus for steering me through the ComDev Masters Programme.

And last but certainly not least, to my parents for their endless support, Nancy Warren for her invaluable perspective and edits; and to my partner in crime, Laurie Meiring, and to George, for their unconditional love and encouragement.

This study was made possible by:
Malmö University, Communication for Development programme
Grassroot Soccer South Africa
StoryCenter and the Silence Speaks initiative
The Ford Foundation
U.S. Consulate and the American Corners in the Cape, South Africa
## Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C4D</td>
<td>Communication for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSC</td>
<td>Communication for Social Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Digital Storytelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-Based Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRS</td>
<td>Grassroot Soccer South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT4D</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technologies for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information, Education and Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPV</td>
<td>Intimate Partner Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OD</td>
<td>Organisational Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAR</td>
<td>Participatory Action Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>Research Methodologies (Malmö)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>Short Message System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRHR</td>
<td>Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Digital Stories, Images, Figures and Tables

DIGITAL STORIES
Women of the Soil, by Mandisa.................................................................15
Being a Girl Amongst the Boys, by Ndikela...........................................19
Silent Tears, by Lindiwe.........................................................................23
Dreams Have No Gender, by Vela............................................................25
The Gift, by Nomsa..................................................................................27
Love and Power, by Noxolo.......................................................................62
Grief Over My Place of Birth, by Anele....................................................63
My Mom My Strength, by Zola.................................................................64

IMAGES
Image 1: Graffiti in Khayelitsha, by Anele.................................................1
Image 2: South African media coverage of Anene Booysen’s death ..........16
Image 3: Political cartoonist Zapiro’s reaction to the Booysen media coverage...17
Image 4: Screenshot from Mandisa’s digital story, “Women of the Soil”.........42
Image 5: Greiner’s Network Mapping design, 2007........................................46
Image 6: Zola’s Resource Map.................................................................47
Image 7: Lindiwe describing her Resource Map..........................................47
Image 8: Lindiwe and Zola sharing during part one of Story Circle on Day 1....52
Image 9: Anele and Mandisa finalising their story scripts on Day 2..............54
Image 10: Amy and Millie help Zola finalise her shot list on Day 3..................55
Image 11: Noxolo and Thoko look at images captured on Day 3.....................55
Image 12: Zola illustrating part of her story on Day 3......................................56
Image 13: Noxolo’s drawing (by Mandisa) of her abusive ex-girlfriend.............56
Image 14: Participants learn video editing software Final Cut on Day 4............56
Image 15: Anele puts final touches on her digital story, on Day 5.....................58
Image 16: Zola and Mandisa recording original songs on Day 5.....................59
Image 17: Mandisa’s self-portrait at the end of Day 3.....................................61
Image 18: Word cloud of mentors’ first impressions of the final digital stories.....66
Image 20: Digital Storytelling workshop facilitators and participants, Day 5......75
Image 21: Digital Storytelling workshop recruitment poster................................81
FIGURES
Figure 1: Study Methodology........................................................................................................31
Figure 2: Arstein’s Ladder of Participation and Communication Practices........33
Figure 3: Visual Representation of Integrated Model of CSC.................................38
Figure 4: Framework of analysis of DP qualitative findings.........................39

TABLES
Table 1: Data collection and recording methods.................................................................36
Table 2: Summary of participants in the GRS Digital Storytelling workshop............43
Table 3: Summary of co-facilitators in the GRS Digital Storytelling workshop........44
Table 4: Summary of mentors’ digital stories and themes.................................60
Table 5: Post-workshop interview responses grouped by Theme: Social Change (intention), and Code..........................................................70
Table 6: Post-workshop interview responses grouped by Theme: Individual Change, and Code..........................................................70
Table 7: Post-workshop interview responses grouped by Theme: Group Dynamic, and Code........................................................................71
Table 8: Post-workshop interview responses grouped by Theme: Technical Skills, and Code........................................................................71
# Table of Contents

A PERSONAL JOURNEY: PHOTOGRAPHY & STORYTELLING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE ...9

1. INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 10
   Research Aim: Young Women SpeakUP! ................................................................. 10
   Background ..................................................................................................................... 11
   Funding the Workshop ................................................................................................. 11
   Subjectivity and Self-Reflexivity ................................................................................. 13

2. CONTEXT AND THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS .............................................. 14
   South Africa’s Relationship with Women ................................................................. 14
   Grassroot Soccer in South Africa ............................................................................... 18
   Digital Storytelling, Defined ................................................................................... 21
   Influences in Popular Education .............................................................................. 24
   Paulo Freire and Conscientisation ........................................................................... 26
   Participatory Development and Digital Storytelling .............................................. 29

3. STUDY DESIGN ............................................................................................................... 31
   ‘Participation’ Within a Structure ............................................................................. 31
   Workshop Recruitment ............................................................................................... 34
   Methodologies: A Qualitative Toolbox ..................................................................... 35
   Dimensions of Change: Analysis and Interpretation of Data ................................... 37
   Notes and Observations ............................................................................................ 39
   Limitations .................................................................................................................. 40
   Ethical Considerations .............................................................................................. 41

4. THE DIGITAL WORKSHOP AND STORIES: DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS ...... 42
   Workshop Participants ............................................................................................... 43
   Co-Facilitators and Project Team ............................................................................. 44
   Workshop Design and Venue ................................................................................... 44
   Resource Mapping: Placing Self in the Middle ....................................................... 45
   Workshop Expectations ............................................................................................ 48
   Creating a Safe Space ............................................................................................... 51
   The Story Circle ......................................................................................................... 51
   Recording the Story .................................................................................................. 53
   Picturing the Story .................................................................................................... 54
Editing the Story ................................................................. 56
Remixing Sound ..................................................................... 59
The Digital Stories .................................................................. 60
Evaluation and Distribution ...................................................... 65
Story Screenings .................................................................... 65
Workshop Interactions ............................................................. 68
Dimensions of Change: A Seed Planted? ................................. 68
Considerations ....................................................................... 72

5. CONCLUSION ...................................................................... 74
Looking Forward ..................................................................... 75

6. REFERENCES ...................................................................... 76

7. ANNEXES .......................................................................... 81
A. Workshop Recruitment Poster ............................................ 81
B. Information Sheet and Consent Form ................................. 82
C. Pre-Workshop Questionnaire ............................................. 83
D. Workshop Agenda ............................................................ 84
E. Workshop Preparatory Documents ..................................... 85
F. Semi-Structured Interviews ................................................. 86
G. Story Release Form ........................................................... 87
H. Secondary Permission Form .............................................. 88
I. List of Data Analysis Codes ................................................ 89
A Personal Journey: Photography & Storytelling for Social Change

From the perspective of a communicator and photographer, I have a personal interest in using imagery and storytelling to promote reflection and healing - particularly in post-trauma and post-conflict settings. Multimedia storytelling is a way to promote active citizenship, creative action and transformational learning, as well as to bear witness, listen deeply, negotiate and hold difference, and become our more authentic selves. This study is as much a personal exploration as my previous projects have been, and it is within this layered and creative context that I aimed to bring my professional experience and interests into my Malmö University Communication for Development Masters Programme and Degree Project.

Early on in my career, Susan Sontag’s *Regarding the Pain of Others* forced me to question my intentions as a photographer when she posed, “What does it mean to protest suffering, as distinct from acknowledging it?” (2003:33). Reflecting on which side of the struggle my images sat, I realised that when I represented ‘others’, it didn’t feel right. I was missing the voices of people I was photographing, and this didn’t align with my passion for justice and social change. People must speak for themselves. I spent the next ten years undertaking collaborative photography and mixed media projects with youth, the disabled, and post-trauma survivors. I incorporated other communication tools into my development work, including design, audio and video, with the hope of connecting my interests in collaboration, multimedia and Communication for Development (C4D).

In November 2014, I began working for the South African non-governmental organisation (NGO), Grassroot Soccer (GRS), and found its approach to be collaborative and dynamic, as compared to other NGOs I have worked with. GRS is a Sport for Development organisation that seeks to empower adolescents to make educated choices about their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), prevent gender-based violence (GBV) and HIV, and support youth to become mentors and agents of change in their communities. While GRS programming is participatory, much of my work has been aligned with traditional development communications – site visits, conferences, graphic design and business development. Where I have been able to collaborate and explore C4D in practice is the creation of edutainment materials for SRHR curricula, community media, and storytelling through photography, video, and first person case studies.
1. Introduction

Research Aim: Young Women SpeakUP!

How can a Digital Storytelling workshop help educate, inspire and mobilise young women engaged in a non-profit organisation, in order to assist their peers? This study is an exploration of whether DST can foster digital literacy, self-awareness and reflection amongst young women, and if they can better support each other and their peers through creating and sharing personal digital stories.

The study was conducted in collaboration with Grassroot Soccer’s female mentors, using qualitative and participatory methods. Theoretical underpinnings include Bandura’s Social Learning Theory and Social Cognitive Theory, Paulo Freire’s conscientisation and participatory development.

I analysed the women’s interactions and learnings during the DST workshop, where participants created digital stories in a hands-on setting using the Story Center model, through participant observation, a pre-workshop questionnaire, semi-structured post-workshop interviews, and my analysis of the digital stories. Through the act of producing digital stories, it is the storyteller - in this case the young woman from Khayelitsha - who decides what she will share about herself, tone of voice she will use, accompanying pictures and video, and timing of the sounds and final edit. This study therefore also seeks to understand how or if young women can re-present themselves in the context of a facilitated DST workshop and challenge gender stereotypes.

The workshop was conducted in collaboration with Grassroot Soccer and StoryCenter, with support from Ford Foundation. Fieldwork took place at the GRS field office in Khayelitsha, South Africa, and at Cape Town Public Library American Corner (U.S. Consulate). Finally, feedback from this study will hopefully serve as a platform for GRS to consider the inclusion of Digital Storytelling in its programming for young adult mentors, as a tool to promote dialogue, reflection, equitable gender norms, and increased digital literacy.

---

1 Formerly the Center for Digital Storytelling in Berkeley, California.
Background
Why storytelling for women? In the YouCitizen participatory research study conducted by Durham University, female mentors trained by GRS acknowledged adequate education around sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), but expressed a need for greater support around the pervasive issues of confronting harmful gender norms and sexual health (2015). I define support, in this case, as a safe space to communicate personal experiences, seek reliable information on women’s services, and have a feeling of control over one’s own life.

This feedback came at the time I was writing my Malmö Research Methodologies (RM) paper and laying the groundwork for the DST workshop and related study. In it, I proposed that GRS programming could be further strengthened, by combining Social Learning Theory with Digital Storytelling. I interviewed one female mentor about the group’s reported need for increased emotional support, dialogue and women’s services, and asked how she thought a DST workshop might help “open the door”. Based on Mandisa’s feedback and my limited understanding of the cultural, organisational and locational context of GRS in Khayelitsha, I drafted the research question as follows: How can a Digital Storytelling workshop support female mentors trained by Grassroot Soccer, to better deliver sexual and reproductive health and rights services to peers? I shared Mandisa’s feedback with StoryCenter, who advised the workshop should focus on female mentors at GRS. This process is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

20 December 2015. “The workshop will benefit some people when they can know it’s a safe space and bring us together. Coaches are hungry for a space they can talk about these things. We can also share the videos with others who aren’t in the workshop, and maybe with our participants.” [Mandisa]

Funding the Workshop
Since the 1950s, Ford Foundation has been a benefactor to the educational television movement (Seattler 2004, McPhail 2009, Behrens 2005), organisational development and the promotion of arts and humanities initiatives. Ford Foundation’s Theory of Social Change has been described using three components to build social movements: political opportunity, organisational infrastructure and engaged individuals (Kim 2014). The alignment and strength of
these core components are key for social change to occur, and Ford Foundation has long-supported mass media, edutainment and participatory initiatives to this aim, including public broadcasting such as Sesame Street, the Centre for Investigative Reporting and Democracy Now!, mass media film and documentary including the Sundance Film Festival, community-led participatory photography projects such as *Shootback*, digital storytelling with teen Latina mothers and more.

Servaes reminds us that while mass media is an important tool to reach communities and spread awareness, “at the stage where decisions are made about whether to adopt or not to adopt, personal communication is far more likely to be influential” (2008a:167). Ford Foundation is no stranger to participatory photography and digital storytelling. *Shootback*, initiated by photographer Lana Wong and funded by Ford Foundation in 1997, “put basic point-and-shoot cameras in the hands of adolescent boys and girls” from the Mathare Youth Sports Association in Nairobi, Kenya (1999). *Hear Our Voices*, a digital storytelling project funded by Ford Foundation and implemented by Professors Gubrium and Krause from University of Massachusetts Amherst in 2013, aimed to “transform assumptions about young parenting Latinas through the use of a participatory visual method, digital storytelling, to recalibrate the conversation on young motherhood and sexuality, health, and rights across generations by putting a human face on policy” (Gubrium 2013).

Ford Foundation has supported GRS’s SRHR programming for adolescent girls in South Africa since 2012. In July 2015, the Foundation invited GRS to apply for a grant focussing on strategic communications, organisational development and support to programming for adolescent girls. Within the context of GRS and Ford Foundation’s shared interest innovative participatory approaches, I proposed a pilot DST workshop for young women in Khayelitsha that was accepted. As both parties are familiar with open-ended process work, they did not bring concrete expectations or outcomes to the workshop. Thus, the pilot – and this study – could be exploratory for facilitators and storytellers.
So began the development of my various roles and responsibilities in the Digital Storytelling workshop and this exploratory study. I am: (1) initiator of the workshop in the eyes of GRS, Ford Foundation, StoryCenter, workshop facilitators and participants; (2) Masters student conducting an exploratory study on the workshop; (3) workshop co-facilitator focusing on audio, photography, video and editing; (4) GRS representative ensuring the workshop runs smoothly; and, (5) mentor to workshop participants. Wearing many hats, I am acutely aware of my subjectivity, choices, personal investment in the workshop and its possible impacts on this study. I discuss this in more detail in Chapter 4.

To address my subjectivity and acknowledge the multiplicity of voices present in the Digital Storytelling process, I have taken a creative and inter-textual presentation to this study. Less-traditional research elements included throughout the core text include field notes, quotes, drawings, emails, SMS, photographs and video screenshots. This deviation from a traditional text is undertaken in an effort to highlight the creative and transformative process that is DST, and to reflect on my growth as a student throughout this exploratory study.

“I am a curious being. But...in order to understand others, I discover that I have to create in myself, a certain virtue...of tolerance. Being tolerant is a duty, an ethical duty, a historical duty, a political duty.” – Paulo Freire (1996)
2. Context and Theoretical Underpinnings

South Africa’s Relationship with Women

This study explores how young women can support each other and their peers through the act of creating and sharing digital stories, in the context of a DST workshop, and in light of how South African society portrays and treats women. To introduce it, I provide background to the specific culture of violence in South Africa directed towards women and girls.

Traditional and cultural norms in South Africa, coupled with the systemic, state-sanctioned violence of Apartheid over generations, has bred a violent society that views women as lesser than men, devalued, and worse, as possessions. South Africa has one of the world’s highest rates of sexual and gender-based violence against adolescent girls (Peterson et al. 2005:1238), with more than a third of girls experiencing sexual violence before the age of 18 (Jewkes et al. 2009:1). Almost a quarter of South African women experience physical intimate partner abuse (Jewkes 1999).

In addition, due to harmful gender norms pervasive in South Africa, the onus of violence prevention is placed on women - while at the same time, failures in the legal system discourage the majority of survivors to report rape or violence. This is particularly true in township communities. A striking example was reported in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission findings - the majority of women who testified told stories about their husbands, sons and relatives during Apartheid, as opposed to stories about their own experiences of violence and rape perpetrated by the state. “The role of reportage fell to women, and arguably gave the impression that women were mere passive bystanders to the horrors of the past” (Leslie 2015).

Today, inequality and gender-based violence continues to play out visibly in South African tradition, popular culture and media. In a digital story created in 2008 with StoryCenter, Dudu shares how traditional expectations around lobola (“bride-price”) still impact women today.

“What is lobola? It’s a symbol. It felt like my family was selling me, his family buying. It was not the celebration of our coming together I had imagined. I screamed, I shouted, my voice was only a whisper. I wonder...is this why men beat up their wives, because she is something that he owns?” – Dudu (2008)
As Dudu suggests, lobola and other traditional practices can severely impact women, their relationships with men, and their self-image. Deep-seeded cultural practices and harmful gender norms in turn impact representations of women and how women’s experiences of violence are portrayed and digested, and when serious matters such as sexual health, violence and abuse are reported in the media, the coverage is sensationalist in nature.

**Women of the Soil, by Mandisa**

These women know no boundaries. These women know no limits. These women are unstoppable. These women are resilient. Rape, abuse, gender oppression - we have been through it all.

I will never be a trusted lawyer, even though I may have more experience than a man. I will never be seen as a good leader, even though I am a good leader. We are seen as powerless creatures. We are treated like men’s possessions.

Tell me, when is our time? We never complain. We are never unavailable. We are never on voicemail.

Those are the strong women. Those who make the impossible, (to be) possible. The comforters. Those who smile even though they are pain. Those who love unconditionally. I am talking about me, I am talking about you. I am talking about our mothers, our aunts, our grandmothers, and our sisters. I am a woman of the soil. I have power, I have ability, I have wisdom. I am a woman with no boundaries. I am the compass of my own future. I will never stop. I will never give up. I will be heard. I will make my mark. That is why I stand tall and say: I am what I am. I am what I am.

I am a woman. Kemosadi. #NoMoreLipService
On 2 February 2013, a horrific crime against 17-year-old Anene Booysen shook the nation, yet the way in which the media represented her was, in itself, a violation. From the poor, Western Cape town of Bredasdorp, Anene was brutally gang-raped, tortured and left for dead just metres from her home. The media published a grim ID photo alongside a report of “the horrific result of her autopsy…with seemingly no discretion” (Mpalirwa 2015:34-35). As the gruesome details of her death emerged, the details her life were ignored. Who was she, who were her friends, what did she do for fun? Instead, victim blaming took hold and the focus was on Anene being out late at a tavern with friends (Image 2).


In reaction to Anene’s death and the subsequent discourse about the media coverage and fleeting public outcry, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, said, “Violence against women is not only a human rights violation, it is also a brutal manifestation of wider discrimination against women, which is to be understood against the background of subordination of women within the patriarchal system that still exists in South Africa” (OHCHR 2013). All too often, violent acts against women and girls in South Africa are portrayed as once-off events – for the public to be shocked by, but not to scrutinize within the context of the country’s deep-rooted violence and overarching patriarchy. There is no effort to acknowledge “the contributing factors to violence against women like
gender inequality and the structural roots of violence against women” (Davis 2013, quoting Watson and Lalu).

In South Africa, the nature of patriarchy is long-standing, profoundly embedded in society and culture, and predicated on the power dynamics and use of violence during the Apartheid regime. The South African Constitution is one of the most progressive in the world, enshrining the right of women to live free from violence - yet women and children are neglected and abused on a daily basis (McEwan 2009:58) with no justice or recourse.

Gender inequality and gender-based violence are, in essence, symptoms of a greater crisis in South Africa. Political cartoonist Zapiro reflected on the public reaction to Anene’s rape and murder on the Mail & Guardian website, 8 February 2013. In his call to action, Anene wears her school uniform, and fades into the background of a brick wall along with words to the South African national anthem (Image 3).

Image 3: South African political cartoonist Zapiro’s reaction to the public depiction of Anene Booysen’s rape and murder.
Women's stories are so often forgotten and untold - and in particular the stories of women living in South Africa’s townships. The cultural norms run so deep that they affect how some women engage the issues and speak about their experiences. What can one woman do when police stations across the country have storerooms full of untested rape kits and stacks of unsolved case files? What can one woman say, when society perpetuates South Africa’s fear narrative and gender, race and class divisions?

South African journalists, thought leaders and contemporaries emphasise the importance of inclusivity, memorialisation and public voices, to address the pervasive inequalities in this country. We need creative interventions across all sectors to deal with the gender-oppressive system, including oral histories, trauma-healing, media sensitisation, and the re-presentation of women. In an effort to challenge widespread stereotypical images of women, which dominate popular culture and media, women should push back against generalisations and tell their own stories. Digital Storytelling is one such creative intervention that seeks self-presentation, critical reflection and voice.

**Grassroot Soccer in South Africa**

Since opening in South Africa in 2006, Grassroot Soccer has trained over 500 mentors, graduated 220,000 youth, tested 35,000 at-risk youth for HIV, and distributed HIV prevention education materials to millions of South Africans through schools and mass media information campaigns (GRS 2015).

GRS works in nine provinces in South Africa, directly and through partnerships, and has managed the Football for Hope Centre in Khayelitsha since 2009. Khayelitsha (Xhosa for *New Home*) is a partially informal township in the Western Cape, South Africa, located on the Cape Flats on the outskirts of Cape Town (GRS 2015a). Khayelitsha is the largest and fastest growing township in South Africa (ibid), and has a recorded population of 391,749 (2011), although the population is estimated at over one million. The township has a very young population with fewer than 7% of residents over the age of 50, and over 40% of residents under the age of 19 (ibid).
Adolescence is a particularly precarious time in a young woman’s life in South Africa, where gender disparities become more evident through educational priorities, demands in the home, and disproportionate risks rooted in gender inequality. Adolescence is, thus, a developmentally critical period in which to introduce programmes that explore normative behaviours around gender and

Being a girl amongst the boys turned me into a bully, to protect what I wanted to be and what I wanted to have. So let me take you back...

When I was 13 years old, there was no girls’ soccer team. So I joined the boys' team. You know what it means, being a girl amongst the boys ... It’s either - you follow, you get beat up, or you lead. So, I was a leader. But a bad one. I would do anything in my power to get them to listen to me. I was a good fighter. All my friends were boys, and I wouldn’t let them beat me up. I always won. This was the only way I could survive.

Then it happened. We didn’t have bibs, so Coach asked half of us to take off our shirts, during practice. That way, we could play as shirts against skins. I ordered, “If you’re on my team, we are not taking off our shirts.” I didn’t want them to see my breasts were starting to grow. But I couldn’t go against our Coach. I was so embarrassed. I couldn’t believe it when no one seemed to notice I was a girl.

Somehow, my teammates didn’t realise it until the day they saw me wearing my school uniform. They were shocked to see me in a skirt, but they didn’t say anything to my face. They were scared of me. I think Coach knew I was a girl, but because I was good, he didn’t say anything either. As I got better, I was asked to play on an older team. My new teammates knew right away. They started ganging up on me. From that time, Coach decided to make a girls’ team.

Finally, I felt safe. It was much easier playing with girls. I didn’t have to protect myself, I didn’t have to hide anything. The other girls even looked up to me as a leader and made me Captain.

Now I coach soccer for girls. I tell my team all the time, “You shouldn’t have to be a bully to do what you love.” I’m helping girls believe in themselves, and be proud of being girls. I am now the mentor I wish I’d had.
power (GRS 2015a, quoting Wolfe et al 1998; Temple et al 2013) that are youth-friendly, approachable and non-threatening.

Using Social Learning Theory (Bandura 1971), GRS works with young adult mentors (Coaches) within communities to incorporate sport into dynamic interpersonal lessons that provide a safe space to engage adolescents, discuss sexuality and relationships, deconstruct harmful gender norms, and encourage participants to seek sexual and reproductive health services. I discuss GRS’s foundation in Social Learning Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, conscientisation and popular education in Chapter 2. Specifically relevant to this study, GRS’s SKILLZ Street intervention trains female mentors to provide adolescent girls with sexual health and gender-based violence prevention curriculum, through the combination of soccer metaphors and interpersonal activities, home visits, the Coaches’ Story, SMSs, and community events. Through a series of interactive activities and discussions, delivered in school, after-school, and via holiday camps, GRS mentors build trust amongst participants, vital to increasing self-efficacy and confidence so that participants can more easily access services. SKILLZ Street was designed, tested and tailored using participatory design methods, and a 2014 study showed that it empowers participants to uptake health services at more than four times the estimated South African national average (Hershow et al 2014:11, in Warren 2016). Girls showed improvements in HIV knowledge, gender equitable norms and communication, and “felt comfortable talking to coaches about challenges they faced in their communities, often related to relationships, alcohol use or sex” (ibid:10).

The Coach’s Story is probably the most impactful technique used by GRS in which mentors orally share their personal stories with participants, at set times built into the SKILLZ curricula. The importance of building self-confidence and agency are central to this process of storytelling, and the technique has proven a powerful tool for mentors to connect with participants and open dialogue on taboo subjects. This exercise also encourages participants to practice active listening, voice their concerns and experiences, and hear firsthand how their Coach overcame similar struggles. The Coach’s Story – and other reflective storytelling techniques such as DST – replicates the concept that “sustainable individual and social change is more likely to take place when audiences know the storyteller, and are in a safe space where they feel comfortable to have meaningful and reflective dialogue” (TSSC 2015).
Digital Storytelling, Defined

“Story is learning, celebrating, healing and remembering...As we are made of water, bone and biochemistry, we are made of stories.” – Joe Lambert (2010:v)

Storytelling is at the core of participatory media organisations such as StoryCenter and StoryCorps, to value identity, voice and reflection, engage in holistic meaning making and promote social change. Storytelling highlights the value of self-discovery, listening, honouring, mentoring, sharing and social learning, and serves as an opportunity for people and communities to reconnect and transform (VOALA, 2014). The practice is a communicative action “centred on the common good and not on self-interest” (Cammaerts, 2007:3, quoting Habermas, 1990: 315).

StoryCenter’s Approach

There are a number of Digital Storytelling models in practice in the development and research fields. This study is based on the approach to Digital Storytelling designed and delivered by the Center for Digital Storytelling, now StoryCenter. I selected their model for this study based on my personal knowledge of the organisation. I first learnt of their early works with multimedia storytelling in 2000, and was intrigued by their method of connecting storytelling, audio and photography with creative therapies. The opportunity to work with them came in July 2015, when Ford Foundation and GRS approved the Digital Storytelling proposal, and I commissioned StoryCenter’s Silence Speaks initiative.

StoryCenter founders Joe Lambert and Dana Atchley combined storytelling with emerging digital technologies as early as 1993, and created a multi-day workshop format to introduce “regular people” to digital technology, with the aim of creating their own first-person stories and a focus on the process itself, over the final product. Digital stories are generally an arrangement of spoken audio, music or ambient sound, photos and videos, combined using multimedia editing software such as Final Cut to create a final product that is between two to five minutes in length. In 1999, Lambert’s colleague Amy Hill founded StoryCenter’s Silence Speaks initiative in an effort to foster “healing for individuals, solidarity building within communities, and training and advocacy for health and human rights promotion” (2016). Silence Speaks has since led participatory media and digital storytelling workshops in over 15 countries (ibid).
Described as a powerful tool and emotive catalyst for community solidarity, public discussion and societal change (TSSC 2015), DST has the unique potential to create meaning, promote voice, dialogue, digital literacy, and increase participation in social change movements. StoryCenter prioritises the agency of storytellers to create and share their own stories, and provide a safe and culturally relevant experience “grounded in the popular education technique of starting from where people are,” while seeking to “bring attention to the structural roots of chronic poverty, ill health and violence, in ways that demand accountability and prompt change at community, institutional and government levels” (2016).

As much of the initiative’s work is focussed on gender-violence, a key part of DST is to ensure transparency of the process and expectations set by the commissioning organisation, respect for shared voices and the ‘participatory’ process, informed consent, and the space for storytellers to stop or change their story at any time. In a Digital Storytelling initiative facilitated by StoryCenter, Hear Our Voices followed StoryCenter’s structure of project development, including the creation of prompts for participants to “write about a time when…,” without forcing the specific topic of sexuality. This allowed storytellers to talk about an experience that was meaningful to them, while supporting those struggling to decide (Gubrium et al 2014:339). The workshop in this study used the same approach to guiding prompts, discussed in Chapter 3. Gubrium expands on the concept of popular education, highlighting the role Freire has on Digital Storytelling to “listen to the themes or collective issues of participants” and transform “these themes and shared understandings into physical forms, such as a digital story” that can be shared publicly for purposes of advocacy and social change (2011:471).

StoryCenter reports the impact of storytelling and act of sharing stories for storytellers can include “a range of potential benefits of participation, including but not limited to increased self-esteem, a willingness to share and connect with others, and a sense of relief and closure related to having talked about experiences of trauma or grief” (Hill 2014). Hill also calls for viewers of digital stories to “gain the capacity to interrogate their own place in the shifting strata of power that perpetuate gender-based violence and human rights abuses, and ultimately, the conviction to act in ways that disrupt them” (ibid:138). As co-
facilitators of this workshop, Hill and I have agreed to explore this theme further following the completion of this study, discussed in Chapter 5.

**Silent Tears, by Lindiwe**

I am a strong woman. I am a resilient woman. I always fight for myself. It's difficult for me to cry.

When I was 13, I made a family tree at school and I asked my mom, “where is my father?” A couple of years later, my sister and I moved to Cape Town to stay with him, but he was remarried. My stepmom treated us so unfairly. We had to obey all her rules. She was tough and we suffered.

I couldn't take it. I moved back to the Eastern Cape. I thought I would find safety, but I did not.

One night, I went to attend *Intonjane*, a Xhosa ritual welcoming young girls into womanhood. Along the way, I met a guy who lived in the same area; he called my name. He asked me to date him. I was polite, but I told him, “I don’t want to be with you.”

He would not accept my NO. He attacked me. Kicked and punched me till I was black and blue. I screamed and cried for help but no one came. I fought back. He threatened me with a knife, but I would not let him rape me. I thought to myself, “No one can force himself on me, that way. I would rather die.”

Somehow I found strength inside myself and continued to fight him. I saw a chance and I just ran. There are no street lights in the rural areas, in the Eastern Cape. I just ran in the dark. In the morning, I got home, bruised, swollen and my clothes torn. I told my mom what happened. She was shocked and she asked, “he didn’t rape you? Really? I said “Hayi mama. Ndingaxoka njani kuwe?”

I told my other family members too. We all knew this guy. His own uncle was just the first to beat him up for what he had done. At the time, I was glad but now I know that is not how things should be handled. I was young. At the time, I also did not know I could open a case. So often, you hear about the police doing nothing. But today, I hear he is in jail for raping a little girl. Innocent like me.

My tears still don’t fall, but inside I cry.
Influences in Popular Education

“To be an agent is to influence intentionally one’s own functioning, and life circumstances. In this transactional view of self and society, people are producers as well as products of their social environment. By selecting and altering their social environment, they have a hand in shaping the course that their lives take.” – Albert Bandura (2004:76)

A core element of GRS’s approach to adolescent health and behaviour change is Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which says "people learn from one another, via observation, imitation and modelling" (1971), and Social Cognitive Theory, in which self-efficacy - one’s belief in their ability to handle a situation - is influenced by others and can determine not only their ability to succeed, but also the world around them (Bandura 2004). GRS employs interactive learning structures, participatory activities, and role modelling and positive peer influence, with the aim of increasing young people’s self-efficacy, which is integral to knowledge, attitudes and behaviour change amongst both mentors and participants.

For GRS, the value of role modelling in an effort to increase self-efficacy of adolescents lies in its peer-to-peer approach. GRS mentors are young people ages 18-24 from the community, only five to ten years older than the youth they mentor. This proximity in age, language, culture and location supports participants to adopt health behaviours, after seeing their Coach experience and tackle similar challenges, and gaining a more personal insight to the positive or negative consequences of those actions (Bandura 1971). The main tenets behind this as seen in GRS’s work are (2016):

1. Kids learn best from people they respect. Role models have a unique power to influence young minds. Young people listen to and emulate their heroes.

2. Learning is not a spectator sport. Adolescents retain knowledge best when they are active participants in the learning process.

3. It takes a village. Role models can change what young people think about, but lifelong learning requires lifelong community support.
As part of my RM study (Warren 2016), mentors described the importance of building this trust with participants, through positive role modelling and the creation of a safe space, in order to share knowledge, values and behaviours. As peer educators, GRS mentors relate to adolescents on a more personal level than their parents, guardians and teachers, and can thus get to the heart of the matter.

4 December 2015. "I make changes in the lives of the youth and give them a chance in life. The kids cannot talk with their parents about things, but when they are with us it is easy for them. We’re on the same level, so we can talk with them.” [KK, GRS mentor]
Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (2004) “considers many levels of the social ecological model in addressing behaviour change of individuals”, and “has been widely used in health promotion given the emphasis on the individual and the environment” (BU 2016), in particular in the field of edutainment. It considers social interactions, experiences and context, and advocates for community-based participation - relevant to C4D, GRS’s youth-friendly approach to health communication and participatory education, and other participatory approaches such as Digital Storytelling. Furthermore, participation is fundamental in team sports such as soccer, an ethos GRS mentors bring to their daily interactions with youth through the creation of Contracts and praise (Tell it, Label it, Celebrate it).

Social Cognitive Theory also shares much with Paulo Freire’s approach to popular education, in that both theories advocate for participatory communication and dialogue-based learning, as well as a horizontal teaching model that breaks down the relationship of domination between teacher and student (Freire 1996:59). While Freire promotes dialogue and engagement in order to understand the context in which people learn and communicate (1996), Bandura espouses the use of peer and social role models (2004). Ultimately, both theorists believed in the power of an individual to become an agent of change in their community, to raise consciousness and “have a hand in shaping the course that their lives take” (Bandura 2004:76). GRS combines the two in its participatory, youth-friendly model that promotes education and agency through play, observation, imitation and modelling (Bandura 1971). Both mentors and participants report significant changes in health-seeking behaviours, self-confidence and efficacy (Warren 2016):

13 November 2015. “I’ve changed a lot from my time with GRS. It’s built so much confidence in me. Most men out there don’t treat women as a special gift. We are women, and we can take charge of everything in our lives.” [Anele]

Paulo Freire and Conscientisation

“Dialogue cannot exist without humility...[and] requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in their vocation to be more fully human.” – Paulo Freire (1996:71)
Dialogic, horizontal and participatory methods in development are “readily traced to the work of Paulo Freire (1970)...who conceived of communication as dialogue and participation for the purpose of creating cultural identity, trust, commitment, ownership and empowerment” (Figueroa, et al, 2002:2). Freire advocated for conscientização within education as a more effective model than the one-way, top-down dissemination of information, which he called the “banking method” (1996:53). The term conscientização refers to “learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (1996:17). In this study, I refer to conscientização as conscientisation. This practice of developing conscientisation and thus liberation, Freire proposed, is a necessary “theory of action” (1996:164) and essential foundation for participatory action and social change.

While GRS participants report changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviour (Hershow et al 2014:11), mentors themselves may be the most notable example of sustainable individual and social change, because becoming a mentor requires them to adapt and model their own behaviours. GRS mentors report improvements in self-confidence and agency, and perceive their position as role models to be instrumental in educating girls about HIV, gender-based violence, and SRHR (Warren 2016).

5 October 2015. “What the kids see in me, and see me do, is what they are going to do themselves. I believe that, if they see you doing positive things, then the youth will do positive things as well. If I do things that I tell them not to do, how are they going to take my message seriously? I was still young at 13 when my mother died. I was at an age where everything was overwhelming: boys, school, alcohol...so I know what my participants are going through.” [Anna, GRS mentor]

The influence of conscientisation is thus also evident in GRS’s approach. “Collective action begins with individual action, as people make connections between their own lives and the lives of others [Freire 1970]” (StoryCenter 2015). Bringing the two theories together is the organisation’s Coach’s Story technique, as introduced earlier. This dialogic and culturally relevant approach to education enables GRS mentors to share a personal story that relates to curriculum messages around SRHR that their participants can learn from, and discuss similar
experiences and challenges. This Talk Time directly opposes the “banking method” (Freire 1996) present in South Africa, in which student voices are not heard.

Freire believes dialogue is the response to traditionally oppressive forms of learning such as rote memorisation: “Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education” (1996:73-74). Towards the end of his life, Freire further explained how he valued the relationship between dialogue, participatory learning and knowledge creation: “I engage in dialogue because I recognise the social and not merely the individualistic character of the process of knowing. In this sense, dialogue presents itself as an indispensable component of the process of both learning and knowing” (Freire 1995:382).

The Gift, by Nomsa

My Dearest Lihlombe, I know you are still just a baby, but someday you will understand why I’m sharing this with you.

It was in 2008 when my father married another woman. I was staying with them, doing grade 11. One day, my stepmom asked, “Do you love your mother?” When I said “Yes,” she knew that she would destroy my life. She started not giving us food, even taking the stove to her room to cook. My sister and I went hungry. We had no food to take to school. Around that time, I started dating boys, and my father kicked me out of the house. So I came to Khayelitsha to live with my mother. Although my mother did not have a permanent job, she still provided for me. We lived in a shack surrounded by many other shacks, and I often found it hard to find my home. I would spend hours looking. There were no toilets. We had to share the public ones with too many people, and we had to share the tap water too. But still I continued school, passed my grade 12, and went on to college. On the 31st of December, a boy was cooking sausage in one of the shacks near where we lived. The oil in the pan caught on fire and set the roof on fire. The whole place went up in flames. Our roof fell in and the shack was completely burnt. So we started sleeping in a big hall in the community. It was full of people; there was nowhere to cook. I had to drop out of school, because they always turned the lights off early, so I could not study. I had so much stress, I started getting tension headaches.

When I became pregnant with you, I knew that all I wanted for you was to grow up in a safe place with a better education. I worked very hard to find a job and a house to rent. I will do everything I can to give you a better foundation. I hope that when you are older, you will be able to stand up and be the strong, kind, caring and brave man I know you will be.

Love, Mama
Jo Tacchi, a researcher experienced in the use of Digital Storytelling for Action Research, states that while participatory development - and DST within this frame - is a messy and “difficult terrain,” there is opportunity for community-based content to play a role in activism and advocacy, thus “promoting a diversity of voices through media and communications” (2009:3). In her project and study *Finding a Voice* - also based on the StoryCenter model - Tacchi investigates the role of ICT in Community Media Centres across Asia and how participatory media and DST can “empower poor people to communicate their ‘voices’ within and beyond marginalised communities” (ibid:2).

Rooted in Freire’s bottom-up, horizontal approach to *conscientisation* and social change, Tacchi defines ‘participation’ as “not only in the creation of content, but also the decision-making surrounding what content should be made and what should be done with it” (2009:6). She expands the concept of ‘voice’ to incorporate “inclusion and participation in social, political and economic processes, meaning making, autonomy and access,... agency to promote self-expression and advocacy,...and the skills to use technologies and platforms [for distribution]” (ibid:2). Voice, dialogue, communication and participation are intertwined and one cannot happen without the other: “participation is communication...intimately knotted as the strings in a fisher’s net” (Gumucio-Dagron, 2007).

Tacchi used DST to empower marginalised people to tell their own stories in their own words, gain “a level of digital literacy,” and focus on the process and “expression of personal voice” as a way to “express social issues and promote positive social change” (ibid:6). In *Finding a Voice*, DST gave citizens the opportunity to name their own challenges and come to solutions together, but as
Tacchi reflects, “Just as with technologies themselves, this project has shown that digital storytelling can contribute to development agendas, but needs to be introduced in ways that recognise local social networks and cultural contexts” (ibid:9). Based on her study, I discuss my approach to this access in Chapter 4.

While individual and social change may occur on a micro level in participatory projects such as Finding a Voice, the change necessary to dismantle an overall structure of power and resulting poverty is unfortunately further afield - as Freire raises (1996). Indeed, there is a debate around whether ‘participation’ and ‘voice’ are just buzzwords to add to development’s growing list - after all, have we seen many changes in policies since the rise of ‘participation’?

Nederveen Pieterse discusses alternative development and its shortcomings, pointing to a focus on practice rather than theory and its “intellectually segmented” elements, such as “participation, participatory action research, grassroots movements,...empowerment, conscientisation,...citizenship, human rights, development ethics,...cultural diversity, and so forth” (1998:352). He acknowledges the growth of human-centred approaches to development in the mainstream, as well as the importance of participatory development (ibid:370), but he does not discuss why bottom-up approaches tend to stay at the bottom, labelled ‘grassroots’ and only celebrated within a pre-approved context. These buzzwords (Cornwall & Eade 2010) are just discourse, and little has changed in the culturally dominant system and red tape of international development (Gumucio-Dagron 2007, McEwan 2009:69).

Interestingly, Ford Foundation recently made the shift towards a grant-making approach that enables grantees to cover more overhead costs, focus on organisational development, and create networks to champion social change from the ground up, through their BUILD programme (FordFoundation.org 2015b). We are seeing this shift firsthand at GRS, through the Foundation’s support of this workshop and to a new round of funding for internal organisational development and participatory programming.
3. Study Design

The purpose of this exploratory study is to investigate whether DST can foster digital literacy, self-awareness and reflection amongst workshop participants, and look at how young women may be able to better support each other and their peers through the act of creating and sharing personal digital stories. The object of the study is to reflect on the (1) cross-pollination of knowledge between workshop participants and facilitators; (2) self-awareness, self-confidence and reflection amongst young women; (3) increase in digital literacy, storytelling and audio/visual skills; and (4) increase in understanding of, or introduction to, digital media and communication, activism and social change. The approach is participatory and qualitative, with reflection of my various roles in the DST workshop. In this chapter, I explain my choice of participatory and qualitative methods, introduce and justify the tools used, explain my approach to analysing and understanding data, describe my position as participant observer, and address the study’s limitations and ethical considerations.

‘Participation’ Within a Structure

In order to attempt to “allow [my colleagues’ and interviewees’] voices, attitudes and responses to be fully articulated and honestly represented” (Birch et al, 1996:15), I approached this exploratory study with an ethos of “participation” within a structure, using a Qualitative toolbox (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Study methodology.
David Coghlan describes a basic tenet of Action Research, as “the powerful notion that human systems could only be understood and changed if one involved the members of the system in the inquiry process itself” (Brydon-Miller, 2003:13-14). Similarly, Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a collaborative process in which community members have a role in the research process, analysis, and recommendations for social change (Brydon-Miller 2015). The importance put on local knowledge, collaboration and rigour in various forms of PAR make it a strong methodological choice for this study; however, given its small scale, I do not make claim to conduct full-scale PAR. That said I do attempt to engage with workshop mentors and facilitators in a multi-layered way, with thoroughness and respect for a participatory, collaborative process.

In this study, considerations raised by Scheyns around working with women and young people (2003:169,174) are addressed through observation and ‘participation’ within a structure that draws upon the ethos of PAR. Observation is a reflective and active process that relies on an exchange between researcher and participants to assist in transformation. Observation encourages power sharing, co-production, and shared editorial control and ownership; involves participants in creative approaches to storytelling and feedback; and integrates digital technologies and visual recordings to develop richer data and more equal participation (Nightingale, in Pickering 2010:112-113).

Due to the limited scope of the study, I view my ‘participatory’ activities within a structure using Arnstein’s ladder (1969:217), and place the DST workshop and study between Consultation and Partnership (Participation in Community Development Projects) - in that mentors did not have control over the workshop agenda. Meanwhile, the act of creating digital stories and decisions around personal stories are placed in Participation (Communication Practices)(Figure 2).
Within the structure of *Participation in Community Development Projects* described above, I involved mentors in strategic stages of the workshop and study:

**Key informant interview: refinement of the initial concept and aim.** As part of my RM paper, I interviewed a key informant (female mentor Mandisa) about the expressed need for increased SRHR support, initial aim for the DST workshop as a catalyst to address this need, and the study.

**The research aim was adjusted with feedback from female mentors,** after expressed hesitancy to discuss SRHR during the recruitment phase. After further consultation with StoryCenter and co-facilitators, a broader aim was presented. This collaboration created a more consultative and meaningful process, in which mentors felt greater ownership over the workshop and results in this study.

**Resource Mapping exercise undertaken before the workshop,** to encourage mentors to discuss support structures and challenges they face, as women in their community. The results of the discussion further inform the context of this study.

**Digital Storytelling workshop in itself is a participatory process,** in which mentors played a role in how the workshop progressed and unfolded.
While the workshop theme and research question were adapted after consultation with the mentors, their inputs sought and noted throughout the process, I don’t confuse their inputs and collaboration with “‘empowered participation’ in decision-making,” because they did not have control over the workshop agenda, or the time to discuss solutions to problems (Fuentes Bautista, 2012:10-11). The workshop was in this sense, only a catalyst - a transformational moment in time, and a spark that storytellers can build upon.

**Workshop Recruitment**

I created an announcement poster (Annex A, Image 21) and held the first informational session about the workshop and study on 25 February 2016, in which 13 out of 34 female mentors attended. During the discussion, mentors stated the ways in which they expected to benefit from the experience and how it might help their peers and community members. Based on questions and considerations raised in the discussion, we paid special attention to the issues of effect on audiences, public screenings, consent and usage forms, certificates of completion and story ownership.

Of the 13 attendants in this session, five applied for the workshop. I reflected upon the lower-than-expected turnout, and discussed reasons with colleagues who have stronger relationships with the women. At the time, feedback included some reservations about sharing their stories:

**4 March 2016.** “I spoke with the Coaches again...but unfortunately...many say they don’t have a story or if they have a story, they don’t want to share. Noxolo is interested and completed the application. I had a conversation with N dikela, and she doesn’t want to share her story because it may cause conflict in her current relationship.” [GRS intern]

Based on the women’s hesitation, I understood the original theme to be too narrow to gender-based violence, sensitive subject matter, and that GRS is not a survivor-support NGO, and therefore adjusted the workshop and research aim. On 11 March 2016, I *re-presented* the workshop aim and themes to mentors within a broader context, i.e. advocacy for women’s ‘empowerment’ and voice, gender equality and rights, gender norms, and being a role model. Final story themes included, but were not limited to:
• A time when you made a difference in the life of one of the girls you mentor
• The first time you played soccer, and what it meant to you
• A moment when you knew why playing soccer is so important in your life
• A moment when you realised women are treated differently than men
• A time when you were treated unfairly because you are female
• A time when you had difficulty accessing information or services for women
• A situation when you spoke up and acted to defend your rights as a woman
• A time when you faced stigma or abuse because you are a woman

During the second recruitment session, there was interest in how as young women they could represent themselves, challenge negative and hetero-normative gender stereotypes, and discuss the struggles with cultural norms and gender expectations they face. I explained that while SRHR fits within this broader scope, participants were not obligated to speak about violence and story themes are for illustrative purposes. In addition to the five applications, another four signed up.

**Methodologies: A Qualitative Toolbox**

In Qualitative Research, reflexivity is important with the researcher positioned as a “central element”, considering bias and power (Schevyns). It is also the responsibility of the researcher to ensure reciprocity of the process, honour local values, recognise power relations, and allow knowledge production to be led by the community.

For the purposes of this study, qualitative data collection was undertaken using a pre-workshop questionnaire and post-workshop semi-structured interviews. Input from mentors and co-facilitators on workshop and study aims, and my own observation of the workshop development and process, were also considered. In addition, a Resource Mapping exercise took place on 18 March 2016, and co-facilitators held post-workshop Evaluation and Distribution discussions on the final day. Fieldwork took place at the GRS Football for Hope Centre in Khayelitsha, South Africa, and at Cape Town Public Library American Corner (U.S. Consulate).

All interviews and discussions were conducted in English. While English is the official language of education and business in South Africa, it is the second-language for seven mentors, and third language for one. Interviews were
recorded and transcribed with support from Research Assistant and workshop co-facilitator, Millie Timms. Table 1 shows techniques for data collection, recording and documentation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection</th>
<th>Data Recording</th>
<th>Documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>• Theory</td>
<td>• Bandura (Social Learning Theory, Social Cognitive Theory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Methods</td>
<td>• Freire (Pedagogy of the Oppressed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Organisation</td>
<td>• Digital Storytelling (Story Center, <em>Hear Our Stories, Finding a Voice</em>, Pathways)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sector</td>
<td>• Participatory Development and Communication (Tacchi, Nederveen Pieterse)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Resource Mapping</td>
<td>• Research Methodologies (Qualitative, AR, PAR, participant observation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Communication for Social Change (model and analysis framework)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• GRS documents and embedded experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• South African context - gender specific (GBV, culture and tradition, media)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Resource Mapping exercise with mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Workshop Questionnaires (8)</td>
<td>• Qualitative paper questionnaire</td>
<td>11-question pre-workshop survey distributed to workshop participants, collected 20 March 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Workshop Interviews (5)</td>
<td>• Audio recordings</td>
<td>12-question semi-structured interviews conducted with self-selected participants one week after the workshop, 5-8 April 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transcribed by Research Assistant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Stories (8)</td>
<td>• Shared orally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Photos, Videos</td>
<td>• Shared and written by participants with editing support from facilitators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Editing</td>
<td>• Photos and videos either taken, or concepted and directed, by workshop participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Observation</td>
<td>• Audio recordings</td>
<td>• Steered by participants, facilitator tech support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transcribed by Research Assistant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Field notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Data collection and recording methods.

**Pre-Workshop Questionnaire**

A pre-workshop questionnaire was distributed to all mentors participating in the workshop on 18 March 2016, and collected 20 March 2016 (Annex C). The aim of the questionnaire was to gather baseline data from mentors, on their: (1) Interest and expectations for the workshop; (2) Opinions on what makes a good role model and how the women see themselves as agents of change in their community; (3) Previous experience in storytelling, photography, video and interviewing; (4) Previous experience with media, and feelings of media
representation; and (5) Opinions on how women should be represented in South African media.

**Semi-Structured Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were voluntary and conducted after the workshop between 5-8 April 2016, with five mentors, in order to explore individual and relational changes promoted through the creation of digital stories, such as: (1) Knowledge gained in digital and media literacy, including photography, audio, video editing skills; (2) Increased confidence, self-representation, and voice; (3) Increased dialogue between mentors about their experiences, resiliency; (4) Opportunities for healing, reflection and self-awareness; (5) Opinions on how the workshop improved leadership skills, ability to be a better role model; and (6) Interest in activism and social change. Mentors reviewed the interview questions, and requested clarification on Question 4 and the addition of Question 11 (see Annex F).

**Dimensions of Change: Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

Advocates for Communication for Social Change (CSC) and participatory communication point to traditional research methods as insufficient, to measure individual and social change (Gumucio-Dagron 2007, Tacchi 2014). Cultural norms, local laws and external forces all influence an individual’s ability and desire to change and promote change in others. CSC is defined as “a process of public and private dialogue through which people define who they are, what they want and how they can get it” (Gray-Felder & Deane, 1999). Focussing on how community dialogue leads to collective action and societal change, the model calls for a catalyst or stimulus that sparks cyclical, relational communication, an outcome of mutual change, and the resolution of a common problem (Figueroa, et al, 2002:iii). It is through this model that I viewed the workshop, and analysed the possible dimensions of change for storytellers.

CSC techniques (also referred to as catalysts) should be carefully selected based on the articulated problem, participant experiences and maturity, language, access to technology, and community context - particularly with regards to history, culture and gender norms (Warren 2016). As described in Chapter 1, I aimed to undertake this study through discussion with a key informant, Mandisa, her interpretation of her peers’ articulated problem and the Digital Storytelling
workshop as a proposed catalyst. The CSC stages in this study are represented in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Visual representation of Integrated Model of Communication for Social Change (Bau 2015), revised for this study.

Tacchi speaks of a “blurred space” between “the synergies or lack of synergies between theoretical scholarship and applied research and practice” (2014), and Gumucio-Dagron advocates, “No one is in a best position to evaluate social change than those that are the subjects of it. Have their lives changed? How? They can tell it through their own stories and their own voices” (2007). Thus, to analyse learnings from the workshop, and determine what, if any, individual changes might have taken place, I adapted Valentina Bau’s CSC framework for identification of individual, relational and social change, as seen in Figure 4 (2015:8), and created a summary of dimensions of change amongst the women in the workshop, to understand:

- **Reasons** why the storyteller decided to join the project and share their story
- **Feelings** on making the digital story
- **New realisation** about themselves as a result of making the digital story
- **Participatory process**, opinions and level of engagement
- **Self-perception** and emotions experienced when watching one’s own digital story
- **Feedback** from other storytellers
- **Ideas for distribution** of stories to promote activism and social change
With these dimensions of change in mind, I created a list of 20 codes/themes for analysis (Annex I). The data collected and reviewed included the pre-workshop questionnaires, final digital stories, post-workshop interviews, and my own participant observation, field notes, workshop photographs and anecdotes. To assist with organising the eight questionnaires, five interviews, and results of two informal discussions, I used HyperRESEARCH, and created seven cases (maximum allowed using the trial software), from which to review and attribute the codes.

**Notes and Observations**

I used field notes for recording and reflecting on my observations as a student researcher before, during and after the workshop. I began with my observations on the cultural, organisational and community contexts, discussions with Mandisa on her day-to-day experiences living in Khayelitsha and opinions on the workshop aim, and relevant feedback from the YouCitizen research. Field notes supported my reflective thinking around difficult issues, and aligned with emerging and important themes I came across over the course of the study (Tacchi et al 2009).

To better understand how DST can help educate, inspire and mobilise young women to assist their peers, and foster digital literacy, dialogue and self-
representation amongst mentors, I observed five group discussions. Drawing on observational and participatory research techniques, particularly the encouragement of dialogue and the active and self-reflective facilitation of ideas (Nightingale, in Pickering 2010:106), these discussions were facilitated by workshop co-facilitators to create some distance in the observation process. There were four stages of fieldwork in which I stepped back to become a participant observer (Story Circle, Evaluation and Distribution discussions, Story Screenings), which provided valuable and rich data in my analysis.

Limitations
While Qualitative Research has a number of strengths, including the flexibility to adjust questions during the interview process and gathering of in depth, personalised data, there are limitations (Anderson 2010:141). Challenges faced in this study included the time consuming nature of transcribing and analysing interview data (ibid). Despite my draw to a collaborative approach, there are also documented challenges to PAR and Observation Method (Nightingale, in Pickering 2010; Brydon-Miller 2003), including: time, cost, complexity and trust (Brydon-Miller 2003:16), as well as “the inescapable fact that the interviewer is in a position of power and organisational control” (Birch et al, 1996:13). Therefore, I endeavoured to approach this study with empathy and contextual understanding, and to “allow [mentors’] voices, attitudes and responses to be fully articulated and honestly represented” (ibid 15). The short timeframe of this study was a significant limitation. Schedule constraints proved challenging, for myself as researcher and also for the women participating. The women lead extremely busy lives, juggling single motherhood, GRS responsibilities, school, soccer practice and coaching.

My various roles in the workshop, described in Chapter 1, proved challenging during the initial phases of project planning, as I struggled to differentiate between the workshop undertaking and my role as student researcher. However, my proximity to the process and existing relationship with mentors proved advantageous during the workshop to ensure things ran smoothly. Wearing multiple hats while undertaking the post-workshop interviews was a challenge. Intersubjectivity must be considered, as the women – myself included – are all part of a micro-culture at GRS, and share common values and an understanding of role modelling and social change. In addition, conducting the interviews myself may
have affected the mentors’ responses (Anderson 2010:141) and limited any negative reports.

While my role with GRS allowed for long-term engagement and understanding of the organisation and mentor cultures, a level of familiarity and trust, and insight into community context, cultural norms and communicative ecologies (Tacchi 2015), this study was not an Embedded Observation (Nightingale, in Pickering 2010). Due to work and travel commitments, my schedule would not allow for the truly open-ended, extended observation required in Embedded Observation or Ethnographic Research. Finally, language was a limitation to participant observation, as the majority of anecdotal discussions took place in Xhosa. In addition, storytellers faced some limitations with writing and telling their stories in English as a second language.

**Ethical Considerations**

**Voluntary and Informed Consent**

I obtained verbal consent from mentors in the three months leading up to the study and DST workshop, and written consent (Annex B) from all participants on 18 March 2016. Mentors were informed of the purpose of the study, recording and transcription, confidentiality procedures, and told they could skip any questions and/or end the interview at any time. Mentors ticked “pre-workshop questionnaire” and/or “post-workshop interview” on their consent forms, and ticked a number of public and online dissemination permissions on their Story Release Form (Annex G).

**Confidentiality**

All of the women chose to use their real names for their digital stories, although pseudonyms are used in this study for confidentiality purposes. While the names of mentors were changed in the study, their anonymity cannot be guaranteed due to their permission to publicly share their digital stories online and in the community, and their position within GRS.

**Consequences**

Malmö University does not require student research to go through an institutional review board process, as long as voluntary and informed consent is sought and the study is documented under the guidance of an assigned supervisor.
4. The Digital Workshop and Stories: Description and Analysis

“I want my story to give hope, I want my story to motivate people, I want my story to make women resilient, and I want my story to have an impact on our society. Being an activist, for me is like being a role model, or like being the fighter or being the pillar for women in society. So my story should empower young women mostly because they are the ones who face so many challenges. Being an activist, sharing my story, people will know that I also came across something in life, and I’m not just saying this. It’s something that happened to me.” [Mandisa]

The use of DST to challenge gender norms and speak out against gender-based violence and societal oppression hinges on a few factors: the practice of making meaning, collectively and within a supportive environment of healing; the ability to move between self-definition and collective reflection, with a group of trusted peers; and the participatory practice of conscientisation - the act of raising awareness of challenges, and collectively determining possible solutions and avenues for activism. This process facilitates choice and leads to ‘empowerment’ and is “designed to transform [storytellers] ‘inner’ embodied worlds, as well as have an impact on ‘outer’ material or structural conditions” (Lewin 2011:56). As in GRS’s core programmes, role modelling, positive peer influence, respect, knowledge sharing, responsibility, connectedness, self-awareness and confidence, are integral to the DST process and the creation and sharing of digital stories.
DST in this context, and its similarity to GRS’s Coach’s Story model, lays a foundation for the introduction of an inclusive and reflective intervention that encourages dialogue between mentors, peers and participants. DST draws on the oral tradition of folklore and metaphor (common in South Africa), while providing storytellers creative ways to re-present themselves and their experiences using media, and “link knowledge to action so that they actively work to change their societies at a local level and beyond.” (Freire Institute 2016). In this chapter, I reflect on the workshop process and how storytellers benefitted from sharing, writing, recording, editing and publicising their digital stories. I begin with logistics, participants, facilitators, venues and workshop design, and end with analysis of interactions between participants and facilitators. I also reflect on specific storytellers and their experience throughout the process.

**Workshop Participants**

We offered the workshop to GRS mentors, women aged 18-24 to ensure maturity and readiness to share. One exception was made for a teenage GRS graduate, Anele (age 16), who was involved in a number of media activities and has a keen interest in the field. Table 2 shows the final list of participants in the workshop:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Relationship to GRS</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandisa</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>High school diploma, Currently undertaking marketing degree</td>
<td>GRS mentor, SKILLZ Banyana programme, Communications Intern</td>
<td>Xhosa, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindiwe</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>GRS mentor, Generation SKILLZ programme</td>
<td>Xhosa, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndikela</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>High school diploma, Attended college but dropped out for financial reasons</td>
<td>GRS mentor, SKILLZ Banyana programme</td>
<td>Xhosa, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomsa</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>High school diploma, Attended college but dropped out for financial reasons</td>
<td>GRS mentor, Generation SKILLZ programme</td>
<td>Xhosa, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vela</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>GRS mentor, SKILLZ Street programme</td>
<td>Xhosa, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noxolo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>GRS mentor, SKILLZ Banyana programme</td>
<td>Zulu, Xhosa, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zola</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>High school diploma, Attended college but dropped out for financial reasons</td>
<td>GRS mentor, Generation SKILLZ programme</td>
<td>Xhosa, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anele</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Currently attending high school, Grade 10</td>
<td>GRS graduate (SKILLZ Street programme)</td>
<td>Xhosa, English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2: Summary of participants in the GRS Digital Storytelling workshop.*
Co-Facilitators and Project Team

Given my many roles and responsibilities in the workshop and this study, I engaged StoryCenter to facilitate the process. Additional co-facilitators are listed in Table 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Interest Area</th>
<th>Role on the team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amy Hill</td>
<td>StoryCenter, Silence Speaks Initiative Director</td>
<td>Safe space, creative trauma therapies, story scripting, editing</td>
<td>Main facilitator with focus on workshop design, safe space, creative writing, storytelling, overall technical skills and digital literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Lambert</td>
<td>StoryCenter, Founder</td>
<td>Safe space, story circle, story scripting, audio</td>
<td>Guest facilitator with focus on safe space, story scripting and audio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thokozile Budaza</td>
<td>Soul City, Programme Coordinator (E. Cape)</td>
<td>Safe space, storytelling process, first person experiences, disclosure, language</td>
<td>Co-facilitator with focus on local context, language, safe space, storytelling, mentorship, distribution of stories for SBCC, evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenn Warren</td>
<td>Grassroot Soccer, Comms</td>
<td>Teaching audio, photography, video and editing</td>
<td>Co-facilitator with focus on creative writing, audio, photography, video editing, logistics, referrals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millie Timms</td>
<td>Grassroot Soccer, Comms</td>
<td>Writing, photography, graphics, editing</td>
<td>Co-facilitator with focus on creative writing, photography, digital literacy, distribution of stories for SBCC, workshop evaluation, logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wandisile Gcelu</td>
<td>Grassroot Soccer, Social Worker</td>
<td>Safe space, disclosure, post-trauma counselling</td>
<td>Social worker with focus on safe space, storytelling, referrals, follow up care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debbie, Mike and Tehru</td>
<td>U.S. Consulate Cape Town, Public Relations</td>
<td>Communications, community and participatory programming</td>
<td>Facilitated logistics at Cape Town Public Library Digital Classroom and Makerspace, for video editing and story screenings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Summary of co-facilitators in the GRS Digital Storytelling workshop.

Workshop Design and Venue

The workshop was designed by Amy Hill of StoryCenter’s Silence Speaks initiative, with input from me as co-facilitator and main GRS contact. We communicated via email and Skype during the planning phase, from 7 July 2015 to 18 March 2016. While DST workshops are generally three or four days, I requested a five-day workshop to focus more on audio, photo, video and editing skills.

Tacchi reminds us, “Just as with technologies themselves...digital storytelling can contribute to development agendas, but needs to be introduced in ways that recognise local social networks and cultural contexts, and adapted accordingly” (2009). I recognised the importance of sustained access to technology following
the workshop. What is the point of introducing ICTs to a community or group when they cannot access them following the workshop? Given my background teaching photography, I wanted to ensure that this time, participants could use their new skills in audio, photography, video and editing, after the workshop. GRS has three sites in South Africa - Alexandra, Soweto and Khayelitsha - with Khayelitsha the closest to Cape Town, where I live. In the event that participants may wish to change an element of their story, or need assistance creating another story, Khayelitsha was the obvious choice.

In the two months leading up to the workshop, I sourced point-and-shoot cameras, audio recorder and microphone, video editing software through StoryCenter, and access to MacBook Pro Laptops in a Digital Classroom at the American Corner, Cape Town Library - which the women can continue to access.

Days 1-3 took place at the GRS centre in Khayelitsha, and Days 4-5 took place at the American Corner Digital Classroom in Cape Town Public Library, so mentors would have access to their own MacBook Pro laptops for editing. The workshop was scheduled pertaining to learning themes and story creation tasks listed below (Annex D), and in preparation Amy drafted a number of documents for co-facilitators and participants (Annex E).

- Day One: Icebreakers, Safe Space, Story Circle
- Day Two: Creative Writing, Working with Audio
- Day Three: Photography and Video (tutorial, shot lists, creation)
- Day Four: Digital Lab Orientation, Final Cut Tutorial, Story Editing
- Day Five: Final Cut Tutorial 2, Music and Sound, Story Editing, Story Screenings, Distribution and Evaluation

**Resource Mapping: Placing Self in the Middle**

In an effort to better understand what day-to-day life is like for the mentors, and how they view themselves in relation to their support networks, resources and challenges, I suggested the women begin with a Resource Mapping exercise on 18 March 2016. The discussion also served as an acknowledgement and *conscientisation* process, for mentors to reflect on their individual and shared resources and challenges. I adapted the Community Mapping technique with Karen Greiner’s *Network Mapping* to “make relationships visible” and “map rather
than measure” (2012:360-361). Image 5 shows Greiner’s design, with the ‘Research Participant’ in the middle and networks surrounding them:

![Participatory Health Communication Research](image)

The research participant at the center of his or her “Scenarios” network.


Because the DST resource mapping took place before the workshop (and thus before the safe space of the workshop was created), women for the most part focussed on their positive resources and networks, and did not delve into challenges. All eight mentioned GRS as a primary support (Image 6). Three of eight mentors described some challenges, citing economic problems such as education and employment (Image 7).

“This is the Eastern Cape, where I grew up. Schools are far, so I decided to go to Cape Town to get a better education. I can say that GRS is the main source of why I’m independent, because everyone in the rural areas is dependent on me and what I get at GRS. What I’m doing at GRS, I give the information for those who don’t have the access about the knowledge of HIV.” [Lindiwe]
Image 6: Zola’s Resource Map, listing her church, family, friends, local ward councillor, Abaneleli Youth Group, and role as a GRS Coach (mentor), as her resources and support network.

Image 7: Lindiwe describing her Resource Map.
Results of the exercise also informed analysis of my field notes, when comparing ways the women represented their resources (and challenges in limited cases) before and after the workshop safe space was created. As the workshop got underway, the more personal challenges were exposed through the digital stories: harmful gender norms, intimate partner abuse, mental health, abandonment and neglect.

**Workshop Expectations**

I am interested because I want to change the world of one person with my own story. [Nomsa]

I care a lot about what women go through and I believe stories are powerful. [Zola]

**Participant Expectations**

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the pre-workshop questionnaire (Annex C) focussed on what the women hoped to learn, as well as their opinions on leadership and being a role model, and previous experience with digital technology and media. Through the pre-workshop questionnaire responses, it was evident they hoped to gain skills in computer literacy and photography, and may not have had an entirely clear picture of the workshop process with regards to the Story Circle and sharing.

All eight women reported joining the workshop to learn photo, video and editing skills and increase their digital and computer literacy. Three said they wanted to learn how to tell and share their story, and three said they want to better understand media and communications as a whole. One participant’s reason to excel in media is so she can teach her peers the skills, speaking to GRS’s strength in building self-efficacy and the belief that if a person can change themselves, they can invoke change in others (Bandura 2004). Because seven of the women are peer mentors for GRS, and one is a volunteer and youth activist, I decided to include questions about role modelling in the pre-workshop survey. This literacy around leadership is exceptionally prevalent amongst the mentors due to their roles at GRS. Every woman responded to the pre-workshop questions around role modelling.

I want to tell my story so that it can help young people that are going through what I went through. [Noxolo]
I also considered how the women might take their efforts as role models beyond GRS, and further into their community and society, and specifically how their digital stories might challenge representation of women in local media and their community. How did these young women wish to be represented?

As young leaders, as role models, as African queens. [Mandisa]

As they are: great leaders, powerful and confident. Strong, brave, humble and having courage to face difficulties. [Anele]

Based on the research aim and questionnaire, I developed codes to analyse the women’s responses: photo/video/editing skills; Digital and computer literacy; Understanding media and communications; Storytelling skills; Overcoming gender stereotypes and gender norms; Women's empowerment – voices; and Role modelling and leadership. Findings confirm that the workshop participants had an idea of the overall purpose of the workshop during the recruitment sessions, and demonstrated existing understanding of media and leadership. While it is evident that the women were prepared (although there could have been greater focus on Story Circle and readiness to share), their position as leaders amongst fellow GRS mentors is also clear. Their interest in joining the workshop, as eight of 34, also establishes existing levels of self-efficacy, their drive to learn and become leaders in their community.

**Partners and Facilitators**

As for partners and facilitators, GRS and Ford Foundation didn’t have set expectations for the outcome of the workshop and understand that DST is more about process than product. During recruitment, I explained how partners hoped to publicly share the stories, i.e. conferences, trainings, community screenings and online. StoryCenter describes the importance of pre-workshop, “This balancing act has required establishing informed consent procedures that make it extremely clear to people before they decide to create a story that the story is intended for various kinds of distribution, and talking with potential storytellers about what some of the risks and benefits of participating might be” (Hill 2010:129). StoryCenter also provided possible impacts gained through the DST process, which included:
Personal reflection and growth: Understand personal narrative as a tool for reflection. Create a personal video story to further young women’s work in equality for women and girls.

Education, training and awareness: Recognise the power of digital stories as tools to motivate others. Demonstrate how to use a digital story to address gender equality and gender norms. Learn technical skills such as writing, photography, audio recording and video editing.

Community and movement building: Educate participants, peers and the public about gender equality. Mobilise individual and community action and garner community support.

Policy and advocacy: Be a champion to advance women’s health, rights and services. Educate the public about gender norms, relationships and HIV. Represent one’s self in media, make decisions that one feels good about.

Research and evaluation: Share findings with partners and donors. Share findings from Digital Storytelling Workshop and stories with the research community to improve programmes.

**My Expectations**

As the initiator of the workshop, co-facilitator and student, I had a personal investment in the workshop. Going back to my various roles in the process, and acknowledging my subjectivity in this study, my expectations included:

**Student:** to maintain a balance and distance from my own expectations and the inherent power dynamics.

**Workshop Initiator and GRS representative:** to ensure the workshop went smoothly and participants were comfortable.

**Co-facilitator:** to support a safe space of openness, trust and bearing witness to storytellers and everyone involved.
Mentor and ally: to strengthen my relationship with mentors, ensure follow up support and counselling.

Multimedia Artist and Communicator: to be conscious of my inclination to focus on aesthetics in multimedia stories, and respect the “polyvocality” (Hill 2010:126) of the process, for participants to lead the creation of their stories.

Creating a Safe Space
As the workshop began and the safe space was created, I quickly saw the process and stories taking shape in a way that reflected the women’s struggles with intimate partner violence, harmful gender norms, abandonment, childhood neglect and poverty. While these topics may have emerged because gender-based violence was a prior reported issue, and SRHR was the first suggested workshop topic, I believe once the safe space was created, the issues of violence and trauma came up anyway (despite initial hesitations) because they are such strong factors in the women’s lives. StoryCenter grounds their work in participatory media, popular education and testimonio practices to “support the telling and witnessing of stories that all too often remain unspoken and unheard” and to “ensure that these stories play an instrumental role in promoting gender equality, health and human rights” (2016). Thus, this workshop was able to serve as an entry point for reflection and disclosure – a guided process to help participants go deeper into their experiences and consider their resiliency.

The Story Circle


Story Circle is a fundamental part of the DST process in the StoryCenter model as taught by Joe Lambert and Amy Hill, both present on Day 1. After sharing Dudu’s digital story with the group and providing an introduction to DST, Amy opened a discussion around ground rules, and the women created their own “contract” similar to the GRS SKILLZ Contract, which focusses on the tenants of Respect, Participate, Lead.
**Workshop Ground Rules and Contract Set by Participants**

- Respect each other’s views
- Take turns, don’t interrupt, no sidetalks
- Phones on silent, wait for breaks to pick up
- Don’t make fun of people’s opinions or experiences
- Safe space, confidentiality
- Punctuality, respect schedule
- Full participation and commitment
- Patience for each other
- Be kind to yourself
- Help each other, support with new learnings
- Open door to the “club”
- Emotional support (access it, offer it)
- Have fun!

We continued with a storytelling name-game to introduce the Story Circle, and then participants broke into pairs to share their stories and ideas (Image 8). Amy uses this pairing exercise as a way to introduce “deep listening,” citing the mindfulness technique as a powerful way to encourage dialogue and conscientisation amongst storytellers (Hill 2010).

Amy then brought the group back together for Story Circle. While I did not take photos due to the sensitive nature of the exercise, the group was seated around a large, rectangular table in the centre’s main hall. The women took turns in a style...
GRS calls *pop while you’re hot*. After each woman shared, Amy asked if they were open to thoughts, questions and comments, in the style of “if it were my story...” This approach allows for suggestions to be made in a non-judgmental way.

During the Story Circle, women also expressed expectations and intentions for their stories, demonstrating consideration of disclosure, connection to their feelings and intentions, use of clear language and connection with audiences and community. This level of media literacy was impressive, but not necessarily surprising, given their training as youth facilitators in Bandura’s SLT model, exposure to media interviews through GRS, and previous work experience.

“I will use simple language and think of the audience so that everyone can understand it. I want my peers and participants to understand.” [Nomso]

In the post-workshop interviews, all five women reflected on the Story Circle and how it felt to disclose personal experiences, saying they had never gone through a process like this before, but they found it relieving - something that brought them closer.

“It was my first time to share a story in front of people. The hardest part was whereby we were sharing the stories. We were very emotional. I think it was that moment, actually. We managed to share, and we became free. I am looking forward to more stories without fear now.” [Vela]

**Recording the Story**

On Day 2, the women finalised their story scripts within their Day 1 pairs, and began the process of recording audio with support from co-facilitators. Some preferred to hand write their story scripts and even prepared before the workshop, while others used laptops and print outs provided (Image 9). Joe facilitated five audio recordings in an upstairs office, while I conducted three recordings in my car. We closed Day 2 with a discussion on photography, shot lists, personal photos and drawings. I observed this process of reflection and action, what Freire calls ‘praxis’ (1996:68), of putting their experiences to paper and audio, as a powerful shift for the women. It enabled them to ‘own’ their stories more objectively and see their ability to take action (Bandura 2004). Thus, it could be said that in the case of
this study, DST becomes a seed for self-efficacy that emboldens the women to take control of their own decisions and relationship to the world around them, “infusing the world with their creative presence by means of the transformation they effect upon it” (Freire 1996:79).

Picturing the Story
Day 3 was the last day in Khayelitsha, beginning with a recap of ideas for photos, video and drawings to accompany their audio files (Image 10). We also held a discussion around confidentiality and safety, agreed on personal photos to use and secondary permission forms (Annex H), and discussed drawings and illustrations for some stories. Based on the shot lists, we split into two groups and moved around Khayelitsha to homes and other locations (Image 11). We were building the digital stories and excitement levels were high. Most women took their own photos and video, to practise their photography and video skills and create original images.
Image 10: Amy and Millie help Zola finalise her photo and video shot list on Day 3.

Image 11: Noxolo and Thoko look through images captured on Day 3 in Khayelitsha.
Upon returning to the centre, Noxolo, Zola and Lindiwe created drawings for their stories, and Zola, Mandisa and Anele selected personal photos to scan (Images 12-13).

**Editing the Story**

Days 4-5 of the workshop took place in the Digital Classroom at Cape Town Public Library. Each participant, and three co-facilitators, had access to their own MacBook Pro and Final Cut Express software. The opportunity to compile digital story elements outside of Khayelitsha allowed the women to own their stories in a more distanced and objective way (Image 14).
As the digital stories came to life, the women’s decisions on how to represent themselves, what to share and how to compile scripts, images and music, were telling of the various stages of their digital literacy, personal experiences, readiness to share and interest in using their story to help others. The two days were divided into tutorial and editing sessions, with co-facilitators moving between mentors to offer support. This guidance became a form of co-authorship, as Amy reflected on previous work in South Africa, “Varied learning curves, traditional teacher-student dynamics, and the need to complete the process in a timely way...contribute to what is ultimately a form of co-authorship” (Hill 2010:130). This process of co-authorship is primarily due to the learning curve required for the photography, video, audio and editing.

The women gravitated to different elements based on their experiences and interests, and while the workshop was intensive, the women have existing degrees of experience with media and technology. The majority own smartphones with photo/video functions, and utilise apps such as Blackberry SlideshowMaker to create slideshows, post and share photos to social media and Snapchat. Hence, the concept of DST and creating a story combining audio, photo and video was not new to their digital realities. What was new was the introduction to professional editing software, and this is where the issue of co-authorship came in.

Access to technology is crucial to possible sustainability in ICT4D programming – particularly in the “Majority World”, i.e. communities that are not as digitally connected as the “Developed World”. Quick fixes are never quick, and technology does not solve human problems, humans do (Toyama 2015). Consideration of access to equipment, both in concept and practice, is key. While the mentors had experience using laptops, few had used Mac, and only one had previously used video editing software. The technical learning curve on Day 4 was a challenge for many. It is challenging and emotional to learn something new, as I have also experienced conducting this research. In the morning check-in on Day 5 (and in the post-workshop interview), Nomsa expressed her frustrations with the software, and confided that she always thought of herself as a quick-learner when it came to computers.

“The most difficult part is editing, I was so frustrated I even cried. Sometimes we would press something we were not supposed to, and it would frustrate you, it was difficult.” [Nomsa]
As someone who is self-taught in multimedia and video editing, I understand how challenging it can be to imagine the finished project but lack the technical skills to create it. As well, the emotional roller coaster is not to be minimised - from excitement putting a new idea on paper or film, to self-doubt of how it will be received, to relief and pride in something accomplished. I therefore suggested ways Nomsa might come to what she envisioned. Despite my artistic urge to emphasise an aesthetic I would personally choose, it was time for me to be the trainer and mentor; a reflective exercise in authorship, control and representation.

In the practice of DST, the multiplicity of voices and creation of media in a group environment is described by Amy as a “polyvocal form of textual and media production [with] potential for enabling people to participate in authoring their own stories as members of a collective” (Hill 2010:130). This “maximalist approach participation,” described by Arnstein as two-way communication with degrees of co-decision and a shared power to decide (1969:217), allowed the women to collectively reflect on their challenges and what they needed in order to complete the task (Image 15).

“I learnt that working alone sometimes is not a good idea. We were working as a group, so if something is not coming up right I could ask for other opinions. Since we were a team, understood each other and respected each others’ stories, it made it easier.” [Mandisa]

Image 15: Anele putting the final touches on her digital story in Final Cut with support from Amy, on Day 5.
Remixing Sound

During the editing process, as well as in a debrief session with mentors on 1 April 2016, we discussed sound effects and background music, creating Xhosa versions of the stories, and adding English subtitles. On Day 4, Amy discussed the importance of avoiding music from professional artists without permission, and Mandisa, Zola and Lindiwe created their own background tracks (Image 16). We sourced YouTube sound effects for Noxolo, a somber piano track for Lindiwe, instrumental music for Ndikela, and open source reggae for Vela.

Translation from English into Xhosa was challenging. Two women immediately said they didn’t want a Xhosa version of their story; they had purposefully used simple English. Two others felt insecure in their command of “formal” Xhosa, as the vernacular is slang and they used formal grammar and click consonants since school. In the end, four women translated and recorded their stories into Xhosa.
Through the workshop, eight women came together to represent themselves and challenge gender stereotypes through crafting and sharing digital stories. Freire’s work in critical pedagogy and praxis is worth mentioning, as reflection, dialogue and action are key components to *conscientisation* and social change (1996). Here, I reflect on the digital stories, which touch on overcoming gender-bias in sport, surviving gender-based violence and intimate partner violence, and the resilience it takes to thrive, in spite of deeply entrenched structural obstacles to poverty, education and viable employment (Table 4), under the themes: Reflection, Representation and Role Modelling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Story &amp; Pseudonym of Storyteller</th>
<th>Gender-bias in Sport</th>
<th>GBV and IPV</th>
<th>Women’s Empowerment and Voice</th>
<th>Abandonment and Childhood Neglect</th>
<th>Poverty, Education &amp; Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women of the Soil, Mandisa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Tears, Lindiwe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Girl Amongst the Boys, Ndikela</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gift, Nomsa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreams Have no Gender, Vela</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love and Power, Noxolo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Mom My Strength, Zola</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grief Over My Place of Birth, Anele</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Summary of mentors’ digital stories and themes.
Reflection

“I chose to tell a GBV story, why? Because I want people who are in an abusive relationship to come out, talk about it, be free, and know that they can have a better life. Also it’s awareness in some sort of way - if we stay together as woman we can conquer and we can make a difference in our communities. My poem means that you are a woman, so even if someone had gone through other problems, at the end they will know, I am a woman, I am strong.” [Mandisa]

When Mandisa shared in Story Circle, facilitators realised she was speaking about a gender-based violence experience that only happened three months ago and in which she was still struggling. Her pain was palpable as she shared her frustration with passersby who failed to intervene during the first abusive event, to friends who failed to realise she was held captive, to police who twice ignored her formal complaints.

When Mandisa returned on Day 2 with a spoken word poem, a response to her situation instead of a detailed account of it, Amy and I were relieved. We had been prepared to counsel her on confidentiality and safety, in particular because we were worried people would know who she was talking about, which could put her in danger. But, she decided to use the storytelling exercise to overcome her challenges, empower herself and stand up to her ex-boyfriend, so that she could continue to be a role model for her participants and peers. Her digital story thus shifted her thinking and became a reminder of her strength and power, something that she can reflect on personally as well as share with others (Image 17).

“At first when I was sharing it was so difficult because it happened recently but by telling it, it gave me that space, the healing space. Now I don’t care about him anymore. I’m still going through a lot, but now it’s easier because I’ve got the guts to face him. I told him to stop. The workshop made me a strong person. I came to a conclusion that if I didn’t share that story, I wouldn’t be where I am today. Maybe I would still have sleepless nights.” [Mandisa]
Noxolo’s story is another powerful example of Reflection, which led her and Mandisa to become closer friends through the experiences they shared.

“It was so good to share like that with everyone. Like I am good friends with Mandisa, but I never knew that she was going through this pain, and she never knew about my past. Now we can help each other. I can help her because I already closed that chapter.” [Noxolo]

**Love and Power, by Noxolo**

We met at school, she was a beautiful girl, so alive. I thought, “She is a woman I want to be with.” The first time I asked her out, she said, “No, I’m straight, I don’t date girls.” But I kept on, and finally after a year and a half, she agreed.

At first it was love. We were there for each other, we comforted each other.

But then slowly, it seemed like she wanted to take control over my life. She started to beat me, because she got jealous if I would chat with other girls. She would even hit me in front of my friends. We had been dating for about six months, and then over the Christmas break she went to Eastern Cape, and I went to visit my family. One night, after we came back to Cape Town, I was standing at the sink doing dishes when she said, “I’m pregnant.” She said, “I’m so sorry, I didn’t meant for it to happen.”

For me at that moment, I felt like I could accept it. Even through the abuse, I still wanted to be with her. But as time went on, I understood I had forgiven her because I didn’t know what else to do. I felt trapped. So I started dating someone else. She got so angry, she confronted the girl and told her to break things up with me. After we went back to my house, we both swallowed a bunch of pills. But it didn’t work. And it just kept getting worse. Once she hit me on the head with a brick. My eye was swollen and blue, I felt dizzy. I didn’t talk to anyone about it. It’s not that I was afraid of her, or that I didn’t have power to fight back; I did. But I had promised myself I would never hit a girl.

Finally, I told my mother, and she told me to get out. It wasn’t easy, but over the next few weeks, I ended it.

It’s only now, years later, that I’ve realised it was not my fault, any of it. She had told me a sad story about her life, so I felt like she needed me. I thought I had to be the one who was strong for both of us.

But being strong doesn’t mean taking whatever someone throws at you.
Representation

“My story is based on how I see the way things are happening around me. I want to make sure that my voice is heard – and not just my voice, but thousands of women. I was crying out loud for those women, and I stood up for them. That means the next generation of young women, their voices will be heard. It doesn’t matter who I am or where I’m from, what matters is that I came to spread the word, so they can now come out and speak.” [Anele]

DST is a participatory exercise in self-presentation, critical reflection, awareness and voice - and with regards to media, the concept of re-presentation is central to the act of looking critically at the world around us. In the context of South Africa’s relationship with women, this re-presentation is glaringly evident in women’s omission and/or domination in the workplace, media and society. As the youngest member of the group, Anele has a surprisingly deep sense of grief for the situation that women and girls in her community face, and a desire to inspire change. She wants to speak for young women and girls in her community, and in her digital story she does this powerfully.

Grief Over my Place of Birth, by Anele

I never chose where to be born, which home to be born in. It happened that I was born in a place that has a high birth rate, a high rate of crime, a high rate of death due to HIV. Sometimes I fail to understand my surroundings. Why was I born here? No one ever answered that. I never asked anyone about it. I always kept it to myself.

Hospitals are filled with innocent souls. Orphanages are filled with children who lost their parents at such a young age. Prisons are filled with men who took advantage of us. Some who we used looked up to. The ones who set their feet in the wrong place, their hands on our private parts. You hurt one woman, you hurt us all.

Why was I born here? How can I make a better place to live, out of this place?
We never scream because no one ever listens. Our voices are small. Our voices are never heard. Is it because we are women?

Who do we turn to when our days are filled with darkness? Who do we speak to?
When I was small, no one wanted to kneel down and hear me shout. No one could hear my voice. No one would listen. I want to know, when will I be heard?
Role Modelling

“I chose my message, my story, because I find that most girls believe those gender norms, stereotypes and gender expectations, they don’t know how to change them. But I believe that something is in you. You can make the situation better. I shared this story in order to encourage young girls. They must not listen to what people say. I want to encourage them. I want to do something.” [Vela]

Role modeling and a sense of connectedness are essential aspects to the work of a GRS mentor. Like Digital Storytelling, soccer is a catalyst, metaphor, and a tool for breaking down barriers and encouraging dialogue. Through the organisation’s two-year mentorship programme, mentors are not only role models for participants, they also see something in themselves - their opinions are heard, their choices are respected, and young people look up to them. This “seed” of self-efficacy sets the stage for social change (Bandura 2004), as mentors graduate from the programme, secure employment outside of GRS, and begin to have influence on their peers and the community. Zola is an example of this transformation, as she recently secured employment with another adolescent HIV-prevention NGO.

My Mom My Strength, by Zola

I respect my mother. She’s the one who taught me to be a good person. When I was growing up, my mother had to provide everything for us; she was always there for us. It’s not like that was what she wanted; it was the situation that existed. Sometimes I wondered, “How can she suffer, on her own?” even though she tried so hard to keep us children from knowing she was feeling pain. At school, I never had new clothes. Our neighbors in the community noticed and didn’t say anything. They worked as maids in the suburban areas and brought us big bags of clothes that their boss’ kids had outgrown. I felt good that other kids in school didn’t know that my clothes weren’t bought from a shop. I used to hope that someone, anyone, would change our home situation. Finally, when I was 16, I asked myself, “What can I do?” I shifted directions. Instead of going to university, I decided, “No, let me get a job.” Instead of begging, I wanted to do something for myself. I don’t think like a typical 23-year-old girl - like someone who wants to have a boyfriend, go out with friends, spend money … I know that when I have money, I must provide for my family and use it wisely. In my community, I see girls caring a lot about their families – more than boys. We are expected to take on so much responsibility. Sometimes I want to tell them, “You know, the situation you’re in now, doesn’t have to determine where you’re going. It’s just the situation you’re in now. There is a way out.” I see my mother’s smile. I am aware of her strength. She provided me with a home, and an opportunity for success. Now it’s my turn.
Evaluation and Distribution

As part of the StoryCenter workshop process, co-facilitators led two informal discussions (Evaluation, Distribution). Not originally part of this study, I decided to see what came out of the discussions that could complement my understanding of the women’s experiences. While these were not formal focus groups, findings from the discussions indeed provided valuable insight to the women’s technical challenges (in line with Servaes, 2008:215). In addition to positive feedback such as increased digital literacy, value of safe space, teamwork, self-reflection, disclosure, healing and empowerment/voice, suggested areas for improvement in future workshops included: longer workshop and offering a pre-workshop story/photo/video session, pairing participants during editing for more support, collaboration in the workshop agenda, and offering the workshop to male mentors.

In the Distribution discussion, mentors agreed to use their names in connection with the digital stories and public screenings. While everyone gave permission to include their stories in a number of outlets (email communications, partner websites, publications, trainings, seminars, educational and community settings, radio, television, YouTube), four women requested their stories not be shared on social media (i.e. “Check out ___’s digital story....” with a link to their page). All women wish to share their stories with family, friends, churches, participants, clinics, NGOs and other community venues. Screenings and community dialogues will be carefully and collaboratively arranged with storytellers to ensure considerations around any possible resistance.

Story Screenings

The first story screening took place on Day 5, and mentors saw their stories come to life for the first time, after five intensive days. The digital stories, and the women’s use of metaphor, audio, images and video, allow viewers to be transported into their lives for a few minutes. The women noted key messages and first impressions from their stories, compiled into the word cloud (Image 18). The closing ceremony highlighted the power of testimony and possibilities for healing through sharing within a safe space. From my field notes it was clear that several mentors were moved by the experience, motivated to make changes in their own lives and to become activists.
The first public story screening, for GRS mentors and staff, was held on 8 April 2016 to a group of 40 people who know the storytellers quite well. Six of eight storytellers were present (Anele was in school and Zola had secured employment), and all were prepared to share with their peers. I first introduced the overall workshop and aim, and then the women said a few words about the experience. Nomsa took an opportunity to remind the audience to respect their personal stories and take the screening seriously.

In this setting, where the audience not only knew the storytellers, but also work with them every day and live the GRS ethos of leadership and role modelling, the stories were well received. The audience was reflective and positive, with five or six people commenting between stories. A few were overcome with emotion. When it was Nomsa’s turn to share, she was as emotional as the first time she shared in Story Circle. After the screening, I asked the storytellers how they felt sharing with a wider group. Four women reported feeling like they were seeing their stories for the first time. They were no longer sharing in the safe space of the workshop, and their stories were seeing ‘the light of day’. As Freire describes, one must see their own oppression before they can see greater oppression around them, and then reflect on opportunities for disruption and social change (1996).
Nomsa chose to share her story for personal healing (Image 19), but it was evident in the screening that she impacted the audience significantly.

“I wanted to forget, I wanted to learn from it. I want to show that it’s not the end of life, there’s always something ahead. I just did it for me, for the burden I was having. Storytelling is important, and it will help people. For instance some people have something to share, but they don’t know where to go. The most important thing is to share how you feel, and the more you talk, the more relief you can get.” [Nomsa]

Viewers noted the message in Noxolo’s story that not all abusive relationships are heterosexual, were moved by the stories from Lindiwe, Mandisa and Anele. Lindiwe and Mandisa responded:

“The comments made me realise that I can make a change. I can make a difference with my story, maybe some women out there will be helped.” [Mandisa]

“The beauty outside may not determine the inside of your heart. All I can say is be strong and alive and talk about things you have been through. It is something that can help a lot.” [Lindiwe]
Workshop Interactions
Because the women knew each other before the workshop, this made for a strong group dynamic during the week. They were moved by each other’s stories, and realised how much they had to learn from each other. The storytellers spoke about the Story Circle and their wish to continue this practice, even if not in a DST workshop. Through my interviews and observations, it is evident that the women are closer as a result of the workshop and are likely to continue supporting each other.

Facilitators were supportive and close-knit throughout the workshop. Thoko connected with storytellers who struggled with English during the writing and audio days. Wandi supported the women with security concerns, counselling, and follow-ups with NGOs in Khayelitsha. Amy ensured the safe space was maintained, including through regular check-ins with facilitators. Millie and I became closer to the women as a result of the week. I took Amy’s lead and provided logistical support, and checked in with Wandi to ensure he had the necessary resources to arrange follow-up support. The inclusion of the library team on Days 4-5 went well, as the men respectfully kept distance. Overall, given the many roles I played as part of this study and workshop, I believe I approached the process in a balanced way that was true to the process.

Dimensions of Change: A Seed Planted?
“New media can be a tool used to help poverty alleviation and positive social change, but as a tool on its own, it can’t. It needs to be utilised by connecting to activities working towards broader social change.” – Jo Tacchi, 2012

In this section, I summarise the dimensions of change introduced in Chapter 2, analyse the mentors’ post-workshop interview responses (using codes grouped into overarching themes, Annex I), and reflect on individual change, intended social change, group dynamic and technical skills. I consider the storytellers’: (1) reasons to join the workshop and share their story; (2) feelings on making a digital story; (3) self-realisations as a result of making a digital story; (4) opinions and levels of engagement on the participatory process; (5) self-perception and emotions when watching their own story; (6) feedback to and from other storytellers; and (7) ideas for story distribution to promote individual and social change.
Can young women re-present themselves in the context of a Digital Storytelling workshop and challenge gender stereotypes through their own digital stories? Has the act of sharing and creating digital stories led to an increase in self-awareness, reflection and confidence? Have their digital literacy, storytelling and audio/visual skills improved? And finally, was a seed of conscientisation planted for the women to explore activism within their own lives and community?

Findings from this study confirm that a facilitated DST workshop can be an effective tool for individual change and conscientisation. Growth was reported in knowledge around one’s self and technical abilities, attitudes improved in the areas of strength, voice and leadership, and communication with each other and peers was found to be more open, substantive and supportive. Most notably, and likely due to the mentors’ positions within GRS as role models, is the seed of conscientisation planted within the storytellers. Conscientisation, in the case of this study, could be deemed the intention of social change, the realisation that one desires change in their own life, and therefore must also seek change in their surroundings (Freire 1996).

When grouping codes into the overarching themes of Individual Change, Technical Skills, Group Dynamic and Social Change (intention), overall, mentors reported benefitting most in the areas of Social Change (Role Modelling & Leadership, Critical Consciousness, Women’s Empowerment – Voice) and Individual Change (Reflection & Self-awareness, Healing) (Tables 5-8).

The women reported: (1) cross-pollination of knowledge between workshop participants and facilitators; (2) increased self-awareness, self-confidence and reflection amongst the young women; (3) increased digital literacy, audio/visual, media and communication skills - however this was noted as an area for further engagement; and (4) increased interest in activism and social change.
Table 5, Social Change (intention), illustrates the greatest-reported impact on the mentors’ role modeling & leadership (28), conscientisation (26) and women’s empowerment/voice (17).

Table 6, Individual Change, illustrates significant reported impact on the mentors’ healing (21), reflection & self-awareness (19) and gender-based violence/intimate-partner violence disclosure (13).
Table 7, Group Dynamic, illustrates moderate impact on the mentors’ feelings towards sharing their story with others (17) and value of the creation of safe space (15).

![Post-Workshop Interview Responses: Group Dynamic](image1)

Table 7: Post-workshop interview responses grouped by Theme: Group Dynamic, and Code.

Table 8, Technical Skills, illustrates some impact on the mentors’ digital & computer literacy (12) and photo/video/editing skills (8).

![Post-Workshop Interview Responses: Technical Skills](image2)

Table 8: Post-workshop interview responses grouped by Theme: Technical Skills, and Code.
Considerations

Subjectivity

From the perspective of a student, I made a decision on when to wear my various hats – specifically as workshop co-facilitator or researcher – and to detach from the process at key times with support from co-facilitators, in order to observe more fully. That said, my access as a consultant for GRS afforded me a greater understanding of the organisation and young women’s backgrounds, insight into the community context, cultural norms and communicative ecologies (Tacchi 2015), and finally, a level of trust and familiarity with mentors that otherwise would have been impossible to achieve in such a short timeframe. At the same time, I am sensitive to my position of power related to the workshop and this study (including nationality, race, class, education). For this reason, it was important that various people contribute to the workshop process in order for me to offer a compassionate, contextually and culturally appropriate space for workshop participants through the inclusion of South African storytellers and social workers. In this way, as a group we were able to support storytellers to “make visible what wants to be invisible, and allow silence to speak” (Lambert 2016).

Men as Allies and Storytellers

After the second story screening, male mentors expressed interest in improving their digital literacy, sharing their stories, and using the platform to educate their peers and young boys in the community. As is reflected in GRS’s approach to health education, working with young people from the same community in their own language is key to changing behavior and ultimately gender norms. Young men and boys are critical allies in the struggle to prevent gender-based violence and challenge harmful gender norms in South Africa, and DST is one method to share experiences and create a spark for social change. Noxolo suggested the next workshop should include her male counterparts, as they could benefit from the opportunity to speak up about their life experiences and challenges. In such a patriarchal society, inclusion of men’s stories may also help prevent possible cultural or male-centred resistance during community screenings.

“I would love to have some guys doing the workshop because most guys don’t speak about their feelings. So if they were given this opportunity to share what they’re going through, maybe you will be amazed by their stories.” [Noxolo]
Sustainability

Digital Storytelling is a time intensive process, and while it is a valuable personal experience for participants that can plant a seed of activism and intended social change, people living in poverty do not generally have time to dedicate to activities that don’t generate income. Leisure activities must be juggled with family, work and school responsibilities, and many times these activities take a back seat. In this workshop, the women were between 15-30 minutes late every morning for a variety of reasons, including single parenting, family illness, transport cost and unplanned emergencies. As these digital stories also demonstrate, life is complicated for young women in Khayelitsha.

While the equipment is now accessible to the women, and they expressed interest in creating more stories, could a Digital Storytelling workshop like this take place spontaneously? The fact is, within the context of life in an impoverished South African township, riddled with insecurity, unemployment and violence against women and girls, this is unlikely. Capture and creation using mobile phones or tablets would be one way to make DST more readily accessible, and although quality of the final digital stories might be somewhat compromised, the main aim – the process – remains the same, because ultimately, as Gumucio-Dagron states, “Communication for social change is about people taking in their own hands the communication processes that will allow them to make their voices heard” (2007).

To facilitate an intensive DST workshop of this kind also requires funding, at the very least for a main facilitator to hold the safe space and guide the process, but also for logistics such as transport and meals. In the case of GRS and Ford Foundation, there is an opportunity to fund another Digital Storytelling workshop for young men – as suggested by Noxolo, and I have begun exploring this with GRS senior management through the Ford Foundation proposal we are currently drafting.
5. Conclusion

From 20-24 March 2016, Grassroot Soccer worked in collaboration with Story Center’s Silence Speaks initiative, with support from Ford Foundation, to lead a storytelling and participatory media workshop with an inspiring group of female mentors. As this study aims to demonstrate, the workshop has increased mentors’ digital literacy, self-awareness and reflection, and encouraged the women to support each other and their peers through the act of creating and sharing digital stories. Overall, the workshop, and the process of creating and sharing digital stories, was a transformative experience for everyone involved.

Participants created digital stories in a hands-on setting using the StoryCenter model. Over the course of five days, the young women shared touching personal stories from their own live experiences in a Story Circle; crafted and recorded these narratives; gained skills in photography and videography; spent an afternoon taking photos and video clips on location, in their area; and learned to use video editing software to edit short 2-3 minute digital stories. The workshop began at Grassroot Soccer’s facility in Khayelitsha, and was completed at the American Corner in Cape Town Public Library.

How can a Digital Storytelling workshop help educate, inspire and mobilise young women engaged in a non-profit organisation, in order to assist their peers? While the limited scope of this study does not allow for evaluation of long-term changes in knowledge, attitudes and communication of the storytellers, the experience of reflection and conscientisation is evident in the process of sharing, creating and publishing digital stories, and reported in post-workshop interviews.

As a body of work, the women’s digital stories speak volumes. They awaken viewers to the personal, raw realities of South African women. They go beyond the media headlines and NGO reports. So often, as journalists or communicators in the development industry, we represent people with and for whom we work. People who are “other,” who are from the Majority World, who are poor or “disadvantaged” – the subject of news reports and object of donor funding. These women and their digital stories remind viewers that they are more than a headline, or a beneficiary. As Mandisa says, they are “our mothers, our aunts, our grandmothers, and our sisters.” The stories demand attention, respect and a
conversation – something Anene Booysen, and the thousands of women and girls who are killed in South Africa every year, could not demand.

**Looking Forward**

While the Digital Storytelling workshop process is significant, so are public screenings and community dialogues, facilitated by storytellers themselves. Practically, the stories will be shared with GRS staff, participants, and the general public, at local screenings and conferences in the coming months. However, due to limitations in length and scope of this study, I was unable to look at a key piece of participatory development for social change – story screenings, community feedback and the digital stories’ impact on audiences. I intend to revisit the idea of a study on audience impact in collaboration with the storytellers and Amy (Image 20), in which we will continue the story screenings from June and July 2016, and conduct audience impact study in August 2016.

Much of Grassroot Soccer’s work is designed in a participatory way, such that mentors are confident in considering what works for them in the research and design processes, and how they can share information that will return to them in a valuable way. As such, it is my hope that GRS will consider results of this limited study as appropriate preparation for adoption of Digital Storytelling - or key elements of the story sharing process - into its programmes as a tool to promote dialogue, equitable gender norms and increased digital literacy, and to support workshop participants to tell stories that can support each other, their peers, participants and community members.

*Image 20: Grassroot Soccer-StoryCenter Digital Storytelling workshop facilitators and participants in the American Corner, Cape Town Public Library, Day 5, 24 March 2016.*
6. References


StoryCenter (2016). Silence Speaks: About the Project. [www.storycenter.org/ss-about](http://www.storycenter.org/ss-about)


ATTENTION FEMALE COACHES!
APPLY FOR DIGITAL STORYTELLING WORKSHOP
LEARN MORE THIS WEEK >>> THURSDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2016, 12:00-13:30

Join us Thursday, 25 February, in the FFHC main hall from 12:00-13:30 to learn about this exciting opportunity - only five (5) spaces available!

Grassroot Soccer, in collaboration with Story Center and the Ford Foundation, is running a multimedia/video Digital Storytelling workshop at the Khayelitsha FFHC for female GRS Coaches. The five-day intensive workshop will take place from Sunday, 20 March through Thursday, 24 March 2016, from 08:00 - 17:00.

Interested applicants should please attend this Thursday’s session to learn more. Interested female Coaches can fill out application forms on the spot.

Jenn will be available from 12:00-16:00 to answer questions and support.

The workshop aims to encourage open dialogue, education, youth mobilisation and social change through personal storytelling, and will focus on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) issues for young women and girls.
B. Information Sheet and Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. Please read this information carefully, and ask me if anything is unclear.

My name is Jenn Warren. I am from the US, but I live in South Africa and work for Grassroot Soccer (GRS). I am currently taking an online degree in Communication for Development from Malmo University in Sweden. **I am studying how Digital Storytelling can be used to help educate, inspire and mobilise young women in South Africa.**

Your participation in my research study is voluntary. I will ask you to fill in a questionnaire before the workshop, and interview you after the workshop. You may skip any questions that you don’t want to answer, and you may decide to end the questionnaire and/or interview at any time. I will record, transcribe, and save your answers in a secure way. If in the future I use parts of your answers in academic publications, your name will be kept anonymous. Before I cite parts of your answers, I will do my best to contact you and ask you to verify that the quotations are correct.

Please keep this information sheet, and I will ask you to sign a copy. You can find my contact information below. Thank you again for your collaboration and your time.

Jenn Warren
Mobile / WhatsApp: +27 (0) 27 72 833 8977
Email: info@jennwarren.net, Skype: jlwphoto

**CONSENT FORM:** By signing below, I agree to participate in the questionnaire and/or interview, and for the resulting responses to be used according to the conditions described above in the INFORMATION SHEET.

Pre-workshop questionnaire ___________ Post-workshop Interview ___________
Name: ___________________________________________________________________
Phone: ________________________ Email: _______________________________
Date: ________________________ Place: _______________________________
Signature: ___________________________________________________________________
C. Pre-Workshop Questionnaire

(Spaces removed for DP annex)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. Please answer the questions below.

Name: ______________________________________________________

What do you think the Digital Storytelling Workshop will be about?

Why are you interested in participating?

What do you hope to learn during the workshop?

Have you ever created a video, taken pictures, or conducted an interview before? If yes, what can you tell me about the experience?

What does a “role model” mean to you?

Do you see yourself as a role model? If yes, how? If not, why?

What would you like to learn in the workshop, in order to be a good role model for others?

Have you ever been interviewed for a newspaper, the radio, TV or an online story? If yes, what can you tell me about the experience?

How did the interviewer refer to you in the story?

Would you change anything about how the interviewer referred to you, if you could? If yes, what, and why? If not, why?

How would you like young women to be represented in South African media?
D. Workshop Agenda

Digital Storytelling With Grassroot Soccer

WORKSHOP AGENDA, Sunday 20 March - Thursday 24 March, 2016

Day One, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Sunday 20 March (in Khayelitsha)
Welcome, Ice-Breaker Activity, Group Agreements 09:00 - 10:00
Overview of Digital Storytelling 10:00 - 11:00
Story Sharing in Pairs 11:00 - 12:00
Story Circle 12:00 - 16:30
Closure for the Day, Collect Scripts 16:30 - 17:00
Evening Work: Facilitators review and suggest edits to scripts.

Day Two, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Monday 21 March (in Khayelitsha)
Daily Welcome and Check In 09:00 - 09:30
Individual Script Work With Participants / Sharing Stories Publicly 09:30 - 13:00
Voice Recordings / Visual Treatments: Photos and shot lists 14:00 - 16:30
Closure for the Day 16:30 - 17:00
Evening Work: Facilitators collect photos brought by participants; scan / organise into folders.

Day Three, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Tuesday 22 March (in Khayelitsha)
Daily Welcome and Check-In 09:00 - 09:30
Complete Voice Recording / Photo and Video Tutorial 09:30 - 12:00
Group Video / Photo Shoot in Khayelitsha 13:00 - 16:30
Closure for the Day 16:30 - 17:00
Evening Work: Facilitators download photos and video clips for use in the stories / organise.

Day Four, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Wednesday 23 March (at Cape Town library)
Daily Welcome and Check-In 09:00 - 09:30
Video Editing Tutorial, Part 1 09:30 - 11:00
Begin Work on Rough Story Edits 11:00 - 16:30
Closure for the Day 16:30 - 17:00
Group Dinner in town 17:00 - 19:00

Day Five, Thursday 24 March, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm (at Cape Town library)
Daily Welcome and Check-In 09:00 - 09:30
Video Editing Tutorial, Part 2 09:30 - 10:30
Final Story Editing 10:30 - 13:30
Workshop Evaluation and Story Distribution Discussion 13:30 - 16:30
Story Screening 16:30 - 17:30
Next Steps and Closing Ceremony 17:30 - 18:00
Final Group Dinner in town 18:30 - 20:30
E. Workshop Preparatory Documents

List of All Workshop Preparatory Documents Provided by StoryCenter

- Project Development Guidelines and Workshop Overview
- Storytelling Programme Impacts
- Digital Storytelling Ethical Practice and Storytellers' Bill of Rights
- Digital Classroom Specifications
- Application for Participants
- What is Digital Storytelling?, for Participants
- How to Prepare, for Participants
- Workshop Facilitators’ Orientation Agenda
- Workshop Facilitators’ Debrief Agendas
- Detailed Workshop Agenda (Annex D)
- Story Release Form (Annex G)
- Secondary Photo/Video Release Form (Annex H)

2 http://tinyurl.com/DSTimpacts
3 http://tinyurl.com/DSTethics
F. Semi-Structured Interviews

How can a Digital Storytelling workshop help educate, inspire and mobilise young women engaged in a non-profit organisation, in order to assist their peers?

(Educate)
1. What was it like for you to create a Digital Story?
3. What did you like best about the Digital Storytelling workshop? What did you like least?

(Inspire)
4. Did you learn anything about yourself that you think will help you to be a better role model to others?
5. What story did you choose to tell, and why?
6. What was it like to tell your story? And what was it like to share it in the workshop?

(Mobilise)
7. Where would you like to share your story? Why?
8. What do you hope will happen, if and when you share your story with others?
9. Did you learn anything from watching the other stories shared in this workshop? (If yes: what? If not: why?)
10. Do you think a Digital Storytelling workshop like this could benefit others? (If yes: how? If not: why?)
11. Today we had the first public screening of the digital stories, and how did that feel to share your story with others outside of the workshop?
12. That was my last question. Is there anything you would like to add?
G. Story Release Form

**Digital Storytelling With Grassroot Soccer**

**STORY RELEASE FORM**

Instructions: Please review this form, complete it, and return it to Amy Hill (Story Center) or Jenn Warren (Grassroot Soccer). They will provide you with a copy of the fully completed form. Thank you!

I, (print name) _________________________________________ (“Applicant”), understand that I own my final digital storytelling project (“Project Materials”). I grant Grassroot Soccer and StoryCenter (“Project Partners”) permission to use all and/or part of my Project Materials on a strictly noncommercial and permanent basis. Such use may include but is not limited to: featuring the Project Materials on Project Partner web sites (check if approved) ___; sharing the Project Materials via Project Partner social media accounts (check if approved) ___including the Project Materials in printed publications (check if approved) ___; presenting the Project Materials at seminars, trainings, and conferences (check if approved) ___; screening the Project Materials in educational or community settings (check if approved) ___; airing the Project Materials on radio or television (check if approved) ___; and uploading the Project Materials to YouTube (check if approved) ___.

I confirm that my participation in the digital storytelling project was completely voluntary. I release the Project Partners from any and all claims, demands, damages, or causes of action, relating in any way to the project.

**This Release Form is effective as of January 1, 2016.**

**APPLICANT (Print Name):** _____________________________________________
Signature: ________________________________
Email: __________________________________________
Phone: ________________________________________
Date: ________________________________

**PROJECT PARTNERS:**
Signature: ________________________________ Date: __________________
Amy Hill, Story Center, amyleenita@storycenter.org, +1 510 548 2065

Signature: ________________________________ Date: __________________
Jenn Warren, Grassroot Soccer, jwarren@grassrootsoccer.org, +27 (0) 21 426 5154
H. Secondary Permission Form

Digital Storytelling With Grassroot Soccer
Secondary Release Agreement, Photo and Video Images

I, (print name) ______________________________ ("Applicant"), grant to (fill in name of workshop participant) ______________________________, StoryCenter, and Grassroot Soccer (storyteller and “Project Partners, respectively”) the right to use my image, including composite or modified representations, as part of the storyteller’s Project Materials, on a strictly noncommercial and permanent basis. Such use of my image may include but is not limited to: featuring the Project Materials on web sites; including the Project Materials in printed publications; presenting the Project Materials at seminars, trainings, and conferences; screening the Project Materials in educational or community settings; and airing the Project Materials on radio or television.

Release: I release the storyteller and the Project Partners from any and all claims, demands, damages, or causes of action, relating in any way to the project.

I have read and understood this agreement.

This Agreement is effective as of January 1, 2016.

APPLICANT (Print Name): ______________________________

Signature: ______________________________ Date: ___________

Email: ______________________________ Phone: ______________________________

PARTICIPANT / STORYTELLER (Print Name): ______________________________

Signature: ______________________________ Date: ___________

Email: ______________________________ Phone: ______________________________

PROJECT PARTNERS:

Signature: ______________________________ Date: ___________

Amy Hill, Story Center, amylenita@storycenter.org, +1 510 548 2065

Signature: ______________________________ Date: ___________

Jenn Warren, Grassroot Soccer, jwarren@grassrootsoccer.org, +27 (0) 21 426 5154
I. List of Data Analysis Codes

List of All Codes in this Study

Activism and social change
AV photo video editing skills
Conscientisation - Critical Consciousness
Creation of safe space and supporting each other
Cross-pollination of knowledge and experiences
Digital and computer literacy
Distribution
GBV/IPV Disclosure
Gender equality in sport
Healing
Overcoming gender stereotypes and gender norms
Reflection and self-awareness
Role modelling and leadership
Self-confidence
Setting goals
Sharing story with others
Storytelling skills
Understanding media and communications
Women's empowerment - voices