



## **Shield Us From Gang Violence**

### **Shield Us Personalized Learning School (SU PLS) Evaluation Plan**

Cruz Mejia, Du, Nwokeji-Iwuala, Patterson, Purakayastha

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## **Background and Context:**

Over the past several decades, gang violence has become a growing public concern in many nations around the globe, as gang violence can have a corrosive effect on individuals, entire communities, and economic and health outcomes. In particular, gang activity has been increasing in Caribbean nations. In a 2011 survey of citizens in seven Caribbean nations, “29% of respondents reported that their neighborhoods have experienced some level of gang violence;” in these countries, more than half of homicides are now thought to be gang-related (Katz and Maguire, 2015). Concurrently, in Trinidad and Tobago, one small Caribbean island country, the majority of violent crime is perpetrated by gang members, and gang activity continues to increase. The country has one of the highest murder rates in the world, and 63% of homicides are related to gang violence (Katz and Fox, 2010). Most concerningly, youth involvement in gangs in Trinidad and Tobago is rising; 7.7% of youth report being a gang associate, 6.8% report being a former gang member, and 6.2% report being a current gang member (Katz and Fox 2010).

The jurisdiction of Trinidad and Tobago continues to face numerous barriers in its effort to combat gang activity and youth involvement in gangs, including an “overburdened legal system, unemployment in marginal areas, disenfranchised youth, and an economic recession” (OSAC, 2019). In particular, inaccessibility to education has been attributed to the prevalence of gang activity amongst vulnerable youth. Education is only obligatory for children ages six to 12 in the country; after the completion of primary school, students have the choice to either continue or end their formal education (Katz and Fox, 2010). This is particularly pertinent given the relationship between reduced access to education and youth gang involvement as it is presented in the literature.

Youth with a low level of commitment to school and/or a low level of academic achievement are significantly more likely to join a gang than more committed or higher-achieving peers (Hill, Lui, and Hawkin, 2001). Additionally, according to a survey of incarcerated individuals in Trinidad and Tobago, over 60% had incomplete secondary education (IADB, 2020). Thus, the impact of educational achievement on gang involvement is significant. Many similar studies exist that investigate and prove the relationship between education and youth criminality that are beyond the scope of this report. However, in summary, a great deal of literature exists, both within Trinidad and Tobago and outside the nation, that reveals the relationship between education

and gang involvement. Therefore, the aforementioned reduced access to education in Trinidad and Tobago and the lack of obligatory education for older students greatly influence youth crime and gang involvement, necessitating the development and maintenance of programs that target this issue.

### **Program Description and Logic Model**

In response to the complicated coalescence of gang activity and reduced access to quality education in Trinidad and Tobago, Shield Us from Gang Violence (Shield Us) was developed. Shield Us is a non-profit organization that serves vulnerable young people from high-crime and gang-dense areas to address gaps in youth access to quality education, prepare students for safe and productive community involvement in adulthood, and reduce youth participation and involvement in gangs. The organization aims to “advocate for and empower persons who are under emotional stress due to unique learning needs” and strives to “give these individuals hope for a better tomorrow for themselves and their families.” These goals are achieved, in part, by educational programs through which students master the core concepts of both pre-established national educational curriculum and Shield Us core competencies (Shield Us).

Among these educational programs is a remote education project called the “Shield Us Personalized Learning School” (SU PLS). The efforts of this program remotely target at-risk primary students from underserved communities in Trinidad and Tobago. The program provides technology-enhanced, personalized education and psycho-social support for participating students so that students are not left behind during the COVID-19 pandemic, students have increased access to quality education, and students will be better prepared to contribute to the advancement of their community and society at large. Longitudinally, through SU PLS, Shield Us from Gang Violence aims to reduce youth involvement in gang activity through the provision of quality education, psychosocial support, and adherence to a targeted curriculum.

The SU PLS program acknowledges that each student has a unique learning style and pace of concept mastery. Students’ educational objectives differ based on national and regional exams, as well as students’ personal interests and professional aspirations; however, ultimately, the SU PLS program drives students’ progress from present status to goal status using Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education curriculum and Shield Us core competencies. To do this, participating students from Standard 1 to Form 5 access a personal device with internet capabilities during preferred school times, and complete practice exercises that are offered

through a mobile application/platform called “IXL.” The platform identifies students’ mastered skills, proficiencies, and areas for improvement across the disciplines of Mathematics, Language Arts, and Science. Using this technology, SU PLS teachers send a diagnostic report to students and their parents weekly, outlining the concepts mastered by their child that week and a plan of action for learning moving forward.

The SU PLS program aims to:

- address gaps in education during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- improve student mastery of national educational curriculum topics and Shield Us competencies;
- improve student performance on national and regional examinations;
- increase students’ confidence;
- improve students’ perceptions of their future trajectory;
- improve students’ social skills and help-seeking behaviors
- increase student participation in higher education; and
- reduce youth membership in gangs and involvement in gang activity

The SU PLS program is currently offering a two-week “free trial” period to determine whether the SU PLS program is the best fit for parents, their child/children, and their specific circumstances. After the free trial period, the cost of participation in SU PLS is 750 TTD per month and can be cancelled at any time. Although the SU PLS program is entirely remote at this time to supplement students’ education during the COVID-19 pandemic, prospectively, the program and its related software will continue to be used for supplemental learning if traditional schooling resumes.

The following table details the stakeholders of the SU PLS program.

Those Involved in SU PLS Operations	Those Served or Affected by SU PLS	The Primary Users of the SU PLS Program Evaluation
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SU PLS principal, Operations Manager, and Director of Curriculum, who are responsible for SU PLS content and functioning	Students, who directly participate in the program and whose learning, interests, and professional aspirations are impacted by the program	SU PLS leadership, including Desrie Slinger-Griffith, SU PLS behavioral therapist and principal, and Whitney Griffith, SU PLS Operations Manager and Director of Curriculum
Teachers, who are trained to work with and support students remotely	Parents, whose engagement with their child's learning and participation in SU PLS is an essential component of student and program success	SU PLS partners at the Center on Crime and Community Resilience (CCR)- Renee Contreras and Eileen Kirk
Other staff members, including the secretary, receptionist, and volunteers at SU PLS		
SU PLS funders		

The functioning of the SU PLS program has been visually displayed in the logic model that can be found in Exhibit A. The logic model presents the relationships between inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact for the program. The stakeholders in the table above that are listed as “involved in SU PLS operations” are a key component of the inputs of the program; program staff members, including the Board of Directors, the president and founder, Operations Manager, Director of Curriculum, principal, secretary, receptionist, teachers, volunteers, and external service providers contribute time and effort to the functioning of SU PLS. The program also requires funding through sources such as fundraisers, donations, corporate and governmental grants, investments in social initiatives, and client contributions, as well as a physical facility. In addition, the input of Trinidad and Tobago’s national educational curriculum and supplemental SU PLS competencies provide a basis upon which learning can take place. For learning to take place, an input of students’ time is also needed, as well as items such as the IXL learning platform, network connectivity, and a computer, tablet, or other similar device.

The activities of the program occur as a result of the inputs into the program. Staff members, because they are equipped with adequate time, funding, and a physical facility, recruit at-risk students for participation in SU PLS. Similarly, staff members, because they are equipped with adequate time and funding, facilitate useful communication between themselves, students, and

students' guardians beginning at the time of student recruitment. With the inputs of staff members, their time, and adequate funding, teachers are also recruited for the program, and these teachers are trained and supported by staff members to perform effectively within the SU PLS model and remote education system. In a similar way, with the inputs of funding, an existing educational curriculum, staff members and their time, the time of students and guardians, and various learning items, students and guardians are trained and supported in the use of the IXL learning platform.

The outputs of the program are then products of the activities of the program. As a result of the recruitment of at-risk students for participation in SU PLS, 22 students were enrolled in the program. Similarly, because communication occurs between staff members and students' guardians from the time of student recruitment, guardians were engaged with SU PLS and their child's learning. Furthermore, as a result of the recruitment of teachers, two teachers were introduced to SU PLS; as a result of the training and support of these teachers, individual support was provided to students struggling with curriculum topics, and teachers provided students with remote psychosocial support and extracurricular activities. Finally, because students and guardians are trained and supported in the use of the IXL learning platform, students were provided with remote, technology-enhanced, personalized education using the IXL software.

Short-term outcomes of SU PLS then follow program outputs. Because students were enrolled in SU PLS, guardians were engaged with the program, teachers were introduced to the program and provided individual support to students, and students were provided with quality remote education, student mastery of curriculum topics and SU PLS competencies increased and gaps in education were addressed. Furthermore, because teachers provided individual support to struggling students and remote education, psychosocial support, and extracurricular activities were provided, students' confidence increased and students' social skills and help-seeking behaviors improved.

Intermediate outcomes then follow short-term outcomes. Due to student mastery of curriculum topics and SU PLS competencies, the addressing of gaps in education, increases in student confidence, and improvements in student social skills and help-seeking behaviors, students' perceptions of their personal trajectories, professional trajectories, and ability to contribute to the community improved, student participation in higher education increased, and student

performance on national exams and educational entrance exams improved.

Finally, from the SU PLS program's intermediate outcomes, the program's impact results- youth membership in gangs and involvement in gang activity decreased. By participating in SU PLS, students receive high-quality education and a number of educational and non-educational outcomes are improved for students, thus reducing the risk of involvement in gang activity. This long-term outcome reflects the mission and vision of Shield Us as a whole; the evaluation of SU PLS that is discussed at length in the remainder of this report, therefore, aims to support Shield Us in its pursuit of this goal and function within the components of the SU PLS logic model to do so.

### **Evaluation Purpose and Priority Questions to be Addressed**

SU PLS leadership and their partners at the Center on Crime and Community Resilience requested an evaluation of the SU PLS program in the fall of 2020. In collaboration with these stakeholders, the following evaluation questions were developed, which fall into three categories- students, guardians, and program activities:

#### Students-

- To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' academic confidence levels?
- To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' social confidence levels?
- To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' level of comfort seeking help?
- To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' perceptions of their professional trajectory?
- To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' perceptions of their personal trajectory?
- To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' perceptions of their likelihood of participating in gangs?
- To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' perceptions of their social isolation?

- To what extent are students engaged in online learning using the IXL platform?
- To what extent are students engaged in non-IXL activities?
- To what extent do students enjoy participating in IXL activities?
- To what extent do students enjoy participating in non-IXL activities?
- How often are students reaching out for help on a weekly basis?

#### Guardians-

- How are guardians engaging in their child's learning?
- How are guardians participating in SU PLS?
- To what extent does student participation in SU PLS impact guardians' perceptions of SU PLS?
- To what extent does student participation in SU PLS impact guardians' perceptions of their child's learning?
- To what extent does student participation in SU PLS impact guardians' perceptions of their child's future?

#### Program Activities-

- To what extent do guardian forums impact the likelihood of guardian participation in SU PLS?
- To what extent do guardian forums impact the likelihood of guardian engagement in their child's learning?
- To what extent does weekly, one-on-one communication with a teacher impact students' level of comfort reaching out for help?
- To what extent do extracurricular events impact students' level of comfort reaching out for help?

### **Evaluation Design**

As can be ascertained from the above evaluation questions, the proposed evaluation of SU PLS is an outcome evaluation. Outcome evaluations serve the purpose of assessing program effectiveness and focus on short-term results; these evaluations can ensure that short-term results will translate into the successful achievement of long-term goals; please see the logic model in Exhibit A for the short-term outcomes and the long-term impact of SU PLS.

Because the evaluation questions described previously are tripartite- involving students, guardians, and program activities- the proposed evaluation design is correspondingly tripartite. The approaches to answering the student- and guardian-related questions are similar, as these approaches both employ surveys and qualitative data collection methods. Each survey and qualitative data collection event will occur at a single point in time with the purpose of gaining a descriptive picture of students' and guardians' target characteristics; each survey and qualitative data collection event, however, will be readministered after time with the purpose of gaining a descriptive picture of the *changes* in students' and guardians' target characteristics.

### **Data Collection Methods and Data Analysis Plan**

To answer the student-related questions described previously, a survey will be emailed to students after their first week of participation in SU PLS; instructions will accompany the survey and instruct students to honestly and completely fill out the survey. This survey will be readministered to students in the same manner once students have participated in the program for six weeks and again at the end of students' participation in SU PLS (approximately three months after the first survey administration). Because only 22 students participate in SU PLS, the survey will be administered to each student. The surveys will be administered by Whitney Griffith- SU PLS principal- using an online survey-creation platform. Please see Exhibit B for this survey, which will employ Likert scales.

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of SU PLS on student participants, qualitative data will also be collected for some evaluation questions; the evaluation questions for which qualitative data will be collected were chosen in collaboration with SU PLS leadership. SU PLS teachers will meet remotely with students on a one-on-one basis using a video calling platform to obtain verbal feedback about topics addressed in the surveys. These meetings will occur one week into students' participation in the program, once students have participated in the program for six weeks, and at the end of students' participation in the program (approximately three months after the first interview). Because only 22 students participate in SU PLS, each student will be interviewed. Please see Exhibit C for a facilitator's guide to completing these interviews.

To answer the guardian-related questions described previously, a survey will be emailed to students' guardians after students' first week of participation in SU PLS; instructions will

accompany the survey and instruct guardians to honestly and completely fill out the survey. This survey will be readministered to guardians in the same manner once students have participated in the program for six weeks and again at the end of students' participation in SU PLS (approximately three months after the first survey administration). Because only 22 students participate in SU PLS, the survey will be administered to each student's guardian. The surveys will be administered by Whitney Griffith using an online survey-creation platform. Please see Exhibit D for this survey, which will employ Likert scales.

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of guardians' perceptions regarding SU PLS, qualitative data will also be collected for some evaluation questions; the evaluation questions for which qualitative data will be collected were chosen in collaboration with SU PLS leadership. Every month, forums are held remotely to facilitate communication, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing between guardians and SU PLS leaders. At these forums, Whitney Griffith will obtain verbal feedback from guardians about the chosen evaluation questions. Guardian participation will not be required to attend these forums, so data will be collected only from guardians who choose to attend. Please see Exhibit E for a facilitator's guide to holding these forums.

Lastly, SU PLS leadership are interested in obtaining information about three specific program activities- the parent forums mentioned previously, weekly, one-on-one meetings between students and teachers, and extracurricular events (which include guest speaker events, gardening workshops, etc.). The evaluation questions pertaining to these program activities have been listed previously. To assess these activities, a survey will be administered to attendees before and after the activity in question which will assess characteristics and perceptions of interest. Please see Exhibit F for surveys for each of these program activities. Because the program activities in which SU PLS leadership are interested may take place more than once throughout students' participation in the program, the activities can be assessed each time they occur.

To facilitate the data analysis process, a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet has been developed into which responses can be inputted to yield useful statistical information. This Microsoft Excel spreadsheet will ease the burden of data analysis for Shield Us from Gang Violence, as it has been designed such that responses can be inputted to yield statistical information without completing any statistical calculations "by hand." Once survey results are inputted, the

spreadsheet will also clearly indicate whether the indicators of the success of the program, which are discussed at length hereafter, have been achieved. Please see Exhibit H for images of the spreadsheet, which features drop-down Likert scale answer selection and embedded formulas for average answers, answer standard deviations, and percent changes.

While this spreadsheet will provide information about the quantitative (survey) data that is collected during the evaluation, it will also include space to record qualitative information, including students' responses during interviews and guardians' responses during forums. In this way, qualitative information will be clearly recorded and organized, which will aid in the comparison of this data over time. To analyze the qualitative data, there will also be space within the spreadsheet to record emergent themes and interviewers' perceptions of answers, as the goal of the collection of qualitative data is to elaborate upon survey answers. Because both quantitative and qualitative data will be recorded in the spreadsheet, the spreadsheet will act as the main tool with which conclusions are made about the evaluation.

This spreadsheet has been designed to complete data analysis and indicate success or failure in accordance with the evaluation questions and indicators that have been developed at this time; however, this spreadsheet can be updated as new evaluation questions and indicators are developed. As such, this spreadsheet will be a living document for this and future evaluations of SU PLS.

Performance indicators, in conjunction with the surveys, interviews, forums, and spreadsheet discussed previously, will assist in evaluating the success of SU PLS. These performance indicators address the student, guardian, and program activity questions and can be divided into four subgroups- students (non-educational), students (educational), guardians, and program activities.

The students (non-educational) subgroup examines how participation in SU PLS affects students' personal and professional development outside of the learning environment. The program is seeking an increase in the following areas by the end of a cohort's program participation: students' average academic and social confidence levels each by 25%, students' average level of comfort seeking help by 25%, students' average positive perception of future professional trajectory by 25%, and students' average positive perception of future personal trajectory by 25%. In addition, the program is seeking a decrease in the following areas by the

end of a cohort's program participation: average feeling of social isolation by 25% and average likelihood of participation in gangs by 25%.

The students (educational subgroup) will examine how student participation in SU PLS affects their academic development and engagement. The program is seeking an increase in the following areas by the end of the cohort's program participation: average level of engagement in online learning using the IXL platform by 25%, average level of engagement in non-IXL activities by 25%, average level of enjoyment in IXL activities by 25%, average level of enjoyment in non-IXL activities by 25%, and average number of times the cohort of students reaches out for help on a weekly basis by 25%.

The guardian subgroup will assess guardian participation and engagement in SU PLS. The program is seeking an increase in the following areas by the end of the cohort of students' program participation: average engagement level of the cohort of guardians in the program by 25%, average participation level of the cohort of guardians in their child's learning by 25%, average positive perception of SU PLS by 25%, average positive perception of the cohort of student's learning by 25%, and average positive perception of the cohort of students' future trajectory by 25%.

Lastly, the program activities subgroup will assess the extent to which guardian forums, weekly communication, and extracurricular events yield positive outcomes for SU PLS. The program is seeking an increase in both the cohort of guardians' average likelihood of participating in SU PLS and the cohort of students' learning each by 25% by the end of the parents forums. In addition, the program is seeking an increase in both the cohort of students' average level of comfort of reaching out for help by the end of one-on-one meetings and extracurricular events by 25%. Please see Exhibit G, the evaluation methods grid, for specific target statements for all evaluation questions.

The standards for judging the performance of SU PLS have been determined from both SU PLS leaders' desires and evidence from the literature. SU PLS leadership are seeking increases in students' academic and social confidence levels, level of comfort seeking help, number of times help is sought each week, positive perceptions of the future, engagement with SU PLS activities, and level of enjoyment in SU PLS activities; increases are sought in these areas because the literature reveals that these factors increase academic performance on an

individual level. For this same reason, SU PLS leadership are interested in determining whether one-on-one meetings between students and teachers and extracurricular events impact students' level of comfort seeking help. Further regarding students, SU PLS leadership are seeking decreases in student social isolation, as the literature reveals that social isolation has detrimental effects on students' overall wellbeing (including academic wellbeing), and likelihood of participating in gang activity, as this is the mission of Shield Us from Gang Violence as a whole (Mushtaq & Khan, 2012).

Concerning students' guardians, SU PLS leadership are seeking increases in guardian engagement in SU PLS and their child's learning, as well as guardians' positive perceptions of SU PLS, their child's learning, and their child's future. Increases in these areas are sought because parent engagement and other meso-systemic factors, such as school environment and teacher capacity in traditional schooling, impact students' academic performance (Bertolini, et al., 2012). For this same reason, SU PLS leadership are interested in determining whether parent forums impact guardian participation in SU PLS and their child's learning (Mushtaq & Khan, 2012).

Stated summarily, the evaluation questions discussed previously were designed to address factors that are known to affect students' academic performance, such as parent engagement, confidence, help-seeking, attitude/optimism, and attendance. While there are many additional factors that impact students' academic performance, these factors were determined by SU PLS leadership to be most relevant to the program at this time (Mushtaq & Khan, 2012).

To assess these factors in the context of the SU PLS program, the evaluation design described previously was established in collaboration with SU PLS leadership. Using a combination of quantitative data collection methods (surveys) and qualitative data collection methods (forums and interviews), the proposed mixed methods evaluation design will garner important and useful information for the improvement of the SU PLS program.

However, the proposed evaluation design is not without limitations. First, the evaluation of SU PLS makes extensive use of surveys, which can pose limitations that are largely the result of the use of self-reported data. For example, surveys may introduce several kinds of response bias; in the case of the surveys developed for SU PLS, biases include demand characteristics bias (when respondents' answers are influenced simply because they are completing a survey),

social desirability bias (when respondents answer with the socially desirable response, rather than their own response), acquiescence bias (when respondents select only positive responses), and extreme response bias (when respondents provide only extreme responses to questions, especially when a Likert scale is used). To overcome response bias, the instructions that accompany the surveys must emphasize that respondents should answer all questions completely and honestly. The surveys developed for SU PLS may also suffer from question order bias (when respondents answer questions differently based on the order in which the questions appear in the survey); question order bias may affect the SU PLS surveys in ways that cannot be predicted. However, the surveys have been designed to be as neutral as possible, and it has been ensured that a range of answer choices are acceptable (Lavrakas).

Furthermore, the qualitative data collection methods developed for SU PLS can also pose some limitations. The student interviews may introduce interviewer bias (when respondents' answers are distorted or influenced by the person facilitating the interview), as well as demand characteristics bias, social desirability bias, and acquiescence bias. To overcome these kinds of biases, teacher interviewers must remain neutral during the interviews, and it must be clearly communicated to students that all responses are acceptable and that they will not be disciplined due to their responses (Lavrakas).

Similarly, the guardian forums may introduce interviewer bias, demand characteristics bias, social desirability bias, and acquiescence bias. Again, to overcome these biases, the forum facilitator (Whitney Griffith) must remain neutral during the forums, and it must be clearly communicated to guardians that all responses are acceptable and appreciated. The guardian forums may also introduce selection bias; these forums will employ a convenience sample, as only those guardians who attend the forums will be included in the data collection that occurs at those forums. Therefore, the sample of guardians will likely not be representative of the entire population of SU PLS guardians. To attempt to overcome selection bias, the forums should be highly publicized to guardians, and their attendance should be strongly encouraged or required if possible (Lavrakas).

## **Plan For Dissemination and Use of Findings**

Dissemination is the process by which findings and information about project efforts are communicated and made available to and usable by others (CDC, 2009). It is critical to consider all relevant audiences and stakeholders that may benefit from or be impacted by knowledge gathered from the evaluation. This includes the primary users of the SU PLS program evaluation (Shield Us leadership and partners), those served or affected by SU PLS (students and guardians), and those involved in SU PLS operations (all staff, including the Operations Manager, Director of Curriculum, principal, teachers, and other members, as well as program funders). The purpose of dissemination aligns with the purpose of the evaluation overall, and seeks to inform key participants as to the effects of program activities. Detailed information regarding each activity in the Dissemination Plan can be found in Exhibit I.

The written products of the evaluation will include a series of reports, each written by evaluators to translate evaluation results for use by key stakeholders. A preliminary report narrating pilot results will be produced by evaluators to be utilized by SU PLS leadership in informing secondary analysis of findings. For informational use, this report will directly inform subsequent decisions. Secondly, an abbreviated report written by evaluators and SU PLS leadership will be circulated internally. This summarized document will be tailored to communicate discovered outcomes to SU PLS students, guardians, and staff, specifically. For both conceptual and persuasive use, this report is meant to provide detailed context and influence engagement with the program. Finally, a full-length report will be produced by evaluators and SU PLS leadership, to share with SU PLS partners at the Center on Crime and Community Resilience, funders, and program leadership. This document may also be published for reference by a broader audience. For persuasive use, the intent of this report is to summarize the effectiveness of activities and garner ongoing support for the program. These formal reports will be complemented by a brief public, executive summary of findings, to be more accessible, written, and marketable. This may be used for publication on the Shield Us website, any media inquiries, or for outwards facing descriptions of the evaluation.

A presentation in the form of an open forum to SU PLS participants, guardians, and staff will follow dissemination of the second, abbreviated report. This is intended to foster internal stakeholder engagement and support. The presentation may be utilized to inform these key players of results, to help convey the importance of the evaluation, and to facilitate utilization of the evaluation results. This meeting will be a critical opportunity to connect with SU PLS

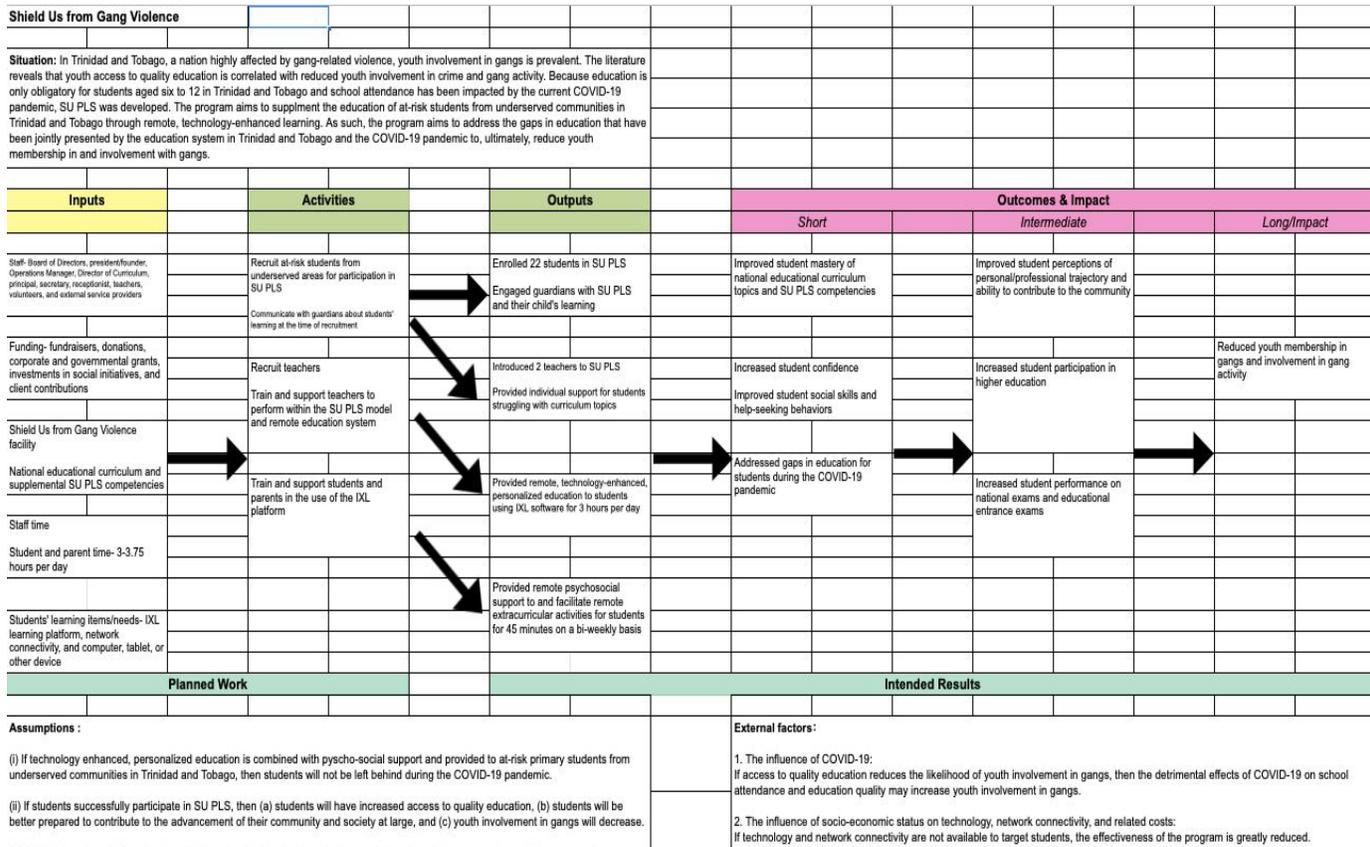
students, guardians, and staff members to communicate the role they played in the evaluation, and to discuss what they specifically can do with the results.

In addition to written reports, the evaluators will collaborate with program leadership in the creation of two media projects to share outcome results to a broad audience and market ongoing efforts and findings. The first will be a graphics-driven video relaying evaluation outcomes and addressing target parents and students. This may be published on the Shield Us website, social media, and other relevant media outlets. The second project will be an eye-catching flyer, offering information about the program and evaluation results. This will be made available in both printed and digital formats, allowing for communication and advertisement both physically and electronically. The intended use of both media projects is to advertise the program and communicate evaluation findings in an interesting, flexible format. The purpose of this is to garner ongoing stakeholder support and engagement.

### **Concluding Statements**

The proposed outcome evaluation of SU PLS described herein was designed in collaboration with SU PLS leadership and their partners at the Center on Crime and Community Resilience. As discussed, the evaluation questions are tripartite, focusing on students, guardians, and program activities. The proposed evaluation corresponds with this approach, employing a reflectively tripartite, mixed-methods design to measure findings through the use of scaled surveys and qualitative data collection methods. The aim for evaluating the SU PLS program in this way is to assess program effectiveness, focusing on short-term results, to best ensure the achievement of long-term goals throughout the lifetime of the program.

# Exhibit A- SU PLS Program Logic Model







## Exhibit C- Teachers' Interview Guide

Have a conversation with the student using the following prompts as a guide. Ask open-ended questions and ask the student to explain themselves often. Help the student to understand that their responses will be used to make SU PLS a better program for everyone; they will not affect the student or their participation in SU PLS. Make note of the student's responses.

1. Ask the student to take a moment to think about their future.
  - a. Ask the student to tell you about their future professional trajectory.
  - b. Ask the student to tell you about their future personal trajectory.
2. Ask the student to explain how likely they would be to participate in-
  - a. Crime
  - b. Gang activity
  - c. Gang membership
3. Ask the student to explain how COVID-19 has affected them socially.
  - a. Ask the student how they're having fun during the pandemic.
  - b. Ask the student how they're interacting with their friends and family during the pandemic.
4. Ask the student to explain how much they enjoy completing their IXL skills
  - a. Ask the student what they like the most about the IXL activities.
  - b. Ask the student what they like the least about the IXL activities.
5. Ask the student to explain how much they enjoy completing their non-IXL skills
  - a. Ask the student what they like the most about the non-IXL activities.
  - b. Ask the student what they like the least about the non-IXL activities.
6. What would you like to see different about the SU PLS program?

Thank the student for their time and answers.

## Exhibit D- Survey 2 Questions

Please answer all questions completely and honestly. Your responses will be used to make SU PLS a better program for everyone; they will not affect you, your child, or your child's participation in SU PLS.

1. How do you feel about the SU PLS program right now?

1	2	3	4	5
Negative				Positive

2. How do you feel about your child's learning right now?

1	2	3	4	5
Negative				Positive

3. How do you feel about your child's future trajectory right now?

1	2	3	4	5
Negative				Positive

4. To what extent are you engaged with your child's learning right now?

1	2	3	4	5
Not engaged				Very engaged

5. To what extent do you participate in the SU PLS program?

1	2	3	4	5
I don't participate				I participate often

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

## Exhibit E- Facilitator's Forum Guide

Explain the purpose of the forum to the parents and guardians. Have a conversation with the attendees using the following prompts as a guide. Ask open-ended questions and ask the parents and guardians to explain themselves often. Help the parents and guardians to understand that their responses will be used to make SU PLS a better program for everyone, and that they should answer honestly. Make note of their responses.

1. How do you engage with your child's learning?
  - a. How would you like to engage with your child's learning?
  - b. What are the barriers to engaging with your child's learning?
  
2. How do you participate in the SU PLS program?
  - a. How would you like to participate in the SU PLS program?
  - b. What are the barriers to participating in the SU PLS program?
  
3. How do you feel about the SU PLS program right now?
  - a. What do you like about the program?
  - b. What do you dislike about the program?
  - c. What are your suggestions for the program?



Uncomfortable

Very comfortable

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

**Extracurricular events:**

Before event-

1. How comfortable do you feel reaching out to your teachers for help?

1

2

3

4

5

Uncomfortable

Very comfortable

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

After event

1. How comfortable do you feel reaching out to your teachers for help?

1

2

3

4

5

Uncomfortable

Very comfortable

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

**Exhibit G- Evaluation Methods Grid**

	<b>Evaluation Question(s)</b>  <i>What questions will be answered by the data you collect?</i>	<b>Evidence</b>  <i>What will be measured to determine if change occurred?</i>	<b>Method(s)</b>  <i>How will data be collected?</i>	<b>Sample</b>  <i>Who will be the source of information and how will they be selected?</i>	<b>Time Frame</b>  <i>When will data be collected?</i>	<b>Target statement</b>  <i>(including what success is, the expected benchmark)</i>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Students-Non-Educational</b>	To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' academic confidence levels?	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 1	All SU PLS students	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Increase the average academic confidence level of the cohort of students by 25% by the end of the cohort's program participation	Whitney Griffith
	To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' social confidence levels?	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 1	All SU PLS students	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Increase the average social confidence level of the cohort of students by 25% by the end of the cohort's program participation	Whitney Griffith

	<p>To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' perceptions of their future professional trajectory?</p>	<p>Likert scale responses to question</p> <p>Descriptions of perceptions of future professional trajectory</p>	<p>Survey 1</p> <p>Interviews</p>	<p>All SU PLS students</p>	<p>3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation</p>	<p>Increase the cohort of students' average positive perception of their future professional trajectory by 25% by the end of the cohort's program participation</p> <p>Increase the number of respondents who show positive thoughts about their professional future by the end of the cohort's program participation</p>	<p>Whitney Griffith</p> <p>SU PLS teachers</p>
	<p>To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' perceptions of their personal trajectory?</p>	<p>Likert scale responses to question</p> <p>Descriptions of perceptions of future personal trajectory</p>	<p>Survey 1</p> <p>Interviews</p>	<p>All SU PLS students</p>	<p>3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation</p>	<p>Increase the cohort of students' average positive perception of future personal trajectory by 25% by the end of the cohort's program participation</p> <p>Increase the number of respondents who show positive thoughts about their personal future by the end of the cohort's program</p>	<p>Whitney Griffith</p> <p>SU PLS teachers</p>

						participation	
	To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' likelihood of participating in gangs?	Likert scale responses to question  Description s of perceptions of likelihood of participatin g in gangs	Survey 1  Interviews	All SU PLS students	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Decrease the cohort of students' average likelihood of participating in gangs by 25% by the end of the cohort's program participation  Decrease the number of respondents who show interest in gang involvement by the end of the cohort's program participation	Whitney Griffith  SU PLS teachers
	To what extent does participation in SU PLS impact students' feelings of social isolation?	Likert scale responses to question  Description s of perceptions of social isolation	Survey 1  Interviews	All SU PLS students	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Decrease the cohort of students' average feeling of social isolation by 25% by the end of the cohort's program participation  Increase the number of respondents who report no or reduced social isolation by the end of the cohort's program participation	Whitney Griffith  SU PLS teachers
<b>Students-Educational</b>	To what extent are students engaged in	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 1	All SU PLS students	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of	Increase the cohort of students'	Whitney Griffith

	online learning using the IXL platform?				student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	average level of focus in online learning using the IXL platform by 25% by the end of the cohort's program participation	
	To what extent are students engaged in non-IXL activities?	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 1	All SU PLS students	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Increase the cohort of students' average level of focus in non-IXL activities by 25% by the end of the cohort's program participation	Whitney Griffith
	Do students enjoy participating in IXL activities/learning?	Likert scale responses to question  Description of level of enjoyment in participation in IXL activities/learning	Survey 1  Interviews	All SU PLS students	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Increase the cohort of students' average level of enjoyment in IXL activities/learning by 25% by the end of the cohort's program participation  Increase the number of respondents who report they experience enjoyment when performing IXL activities by the end of the cohort's program participation	Whitney Griffith  SU PLS teachers

	Do students enjoy participating in non-IXL activities?	Likert scale responses to question  Description of level of enjoyment in participation in non-IXL activities	Survey 1  Interviews	All SU PLS students	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Increase the cohort of student's average level of enjoyment in non-IXL activities by 25% by the end of the cohort's program participation  Increase the number of respondents who report they experience enjoyment performing non-IXL activities by the end of the cohort's program participation	Whitney Griffith  SU PLS teachers
	How often are students reaching out for help on a weekly basis?	Numerical responses to question	Survey 1	All SU PLS students	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Increase by 25% the average number of times the cohort of students reaches out for help on a weekly basis by the end of the cohort's program participation	Whitney Griffith
<b>Guardians</b>	To what extent are guardians engaged in their child's learning?	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 2	All SU PLS guardians	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end	Increase the average engagement level of the cohort of guardians by 25% by the end of the cohort of students' program	Whitney Griffith

					of the cohort of student's participation	participation	
	How are guardians engaging in their child's learning?	Responses to forum questions	Forums	SU PLS guardians in attendance at the forums	3x- once per month during the cohort of student's participation	Increase the number of ways in which the cohort of guardians are engaged in the cohort of student's learning by the end of the cohort of student's program participation	Whitney Griffith
	To what extent are guardians participating in SU PLS?	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 2	All SU PLS guardians	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Increase the average participation level of the cohort of guardians by 25% by the end of the cohort of student's program participation	Whitney Griffith
	How are guardians participating in SU PLS?	Responses to forum questions	Forums	SU PLS guardians in attendance at the forums	3x- once per month during the cohort of student's participation	Increase the number of ways in which the cohort of guardians are participating in SU PLS by the end of the cohort of student's program participation	Whitney Griffith
	To what extent does student participation in SU PLS impact	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 2	All SU PLS guardians	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's	Increase the cohort of guardian's average positive	Whitney Griffith

	guardians' perceptions of SU PLS?				participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	perception of SU PLS by 25% by the end of the cohort of student's program participation	
	To what extent does student participation in SU PLS impact guardians' perceptions of their child's learning?	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 2	All SU PLS guardians	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Increase the cohort of guardian's average positive perception of the cohort of student's learning by 25% by the end of the cohort of student's program participation	Whitney Griffith
	To what extent does student participation in SU PLS impact guardians' perceptions of their child's future trajectory?	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 2	All SU PLS guardians	3x- at the beginning of the cohort of student's participation, six weeks into the cohort of student's participation, and at the end of the cohort of student's participation	Increase the cohort of guardian's average positive perception of the cohort of student's future trajectory by 25% by the end of the cohort of student's program participation	Whitney Griffith
<b>Program Activities</b>	To what extent do parent forums impact the likelihood of guardian participation in SU PLS?	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 3	SU PLS guardians in attendance at forums	2x- before and after parent forum	Increase by 25% the cohort of guardian's average likelihood of participating in SU PLS by the end of parent forums	Whitney Griffith
	To what extent do parent	Likert scale responses	Survey 3	SU PLS guardia	2x- before and after parent	Increase by 25% the cohort	Whitney Griffith

	forums impact the likelihood of guardian participation in their child's learning?	to question		ns in attendance at forums	forum	of guardian's average likelihood of participating in the cohort of student's learning by the end of parent forums	
	To what extent does weekly, one-on-one communication with a teacher impact students' level of comfort reaching out for help?	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 3	All SU PLS students	2x- before and after one-on-one meeting	Increase the cohort of student's average level of comfort reaching out for help by 25% by the end of one-on-one meetings	SU PLS teachers
	To what extent do extracurricular events impact students' level of comfort reaching out for help?	Likert scale responses to question	Survey 3	All SU PLS students	2x- before and after extracurricular event	Increase the cohort of student's average level of comfort reaching out for help by 25% by the end of extracurricular events	SU PLS teachers





## Exhibit I: Dissemination Plan Grid

Product	Target	Audience	Lead	Status	Notes
<b>Presentations</b>					
Class Presentation	December 14	SU PLS leadership	Evaluators	Planned	
Community Forum Presentation	June 2021	SU PLS students, guardians, staff	SU PLS Leadership	Proposed	
Video for Website	September 2021	Broader public	Evaluators, SU PLS Leadership	Proposed	Can be posted to the Shield Us website, sent to relevant media outlets
Recruitment Flyer	September 2021	Interested and/or potential students/guardians	Evaluators, SU PLS Leadership	Proposed	Print and digital formats, can be for physical distribution and/or posting on social media and the Shield Us website
<b>Written products</b>					
Evaluation Plan (Deliverables 5 and 6)	December 14	SU PLS and CCR leadership	Evaluators	Planned	
Pilot Results	April 2021	SU PLS leadership	Evaluators	Proposed	
Abbreviated Report	June 2021	SU PLS leadership, students, guardians, staff	Evaluators, SU PLS Leadership	Proposed	
Full-Length Report	July 2021	SU PLS leadership, SU PLS partners at	Evaluators	Proposed	Can also be published

		the CCR, broader audience (publicize), all key stakeholders			
Public Executive Summary	September 2021	Broader public	Evaluators, SU PLS Leadership	Proposed	Can be posted to the Shield Us website, sent to relevant media outlets

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