



WAVES FOR HOPE



Impact Report

Surf Therapy Intervention

November 2024 - August 2025, Balandra, Trinidad & Tobago

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Waves for Hope is a local non-profit organisation providing youth development programs in underserved communities along the east coast of Trinidad. Our mission is to reduce poverty and empower at-risk youth through education, mentorship, and sport, with a strong focus on physical, emotional and mental well-being.

We envision communities where young people are empowered to thrive and create better opportunities for themselves and their families. Our goal is to reduce poverty, crime, and dependency while fostering positive, resilient, and healthy communities.

Waves for Hope is part of a **world-wide mental health alliance (Wave Alliance)**. To this day, we have worked with over 70 beneficiaries and can show a positive impact in their overall well-being.

01.



PROGRAMS



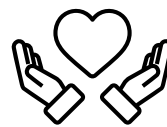
Surf, Skate and Freedive Therapy

Mental health intervention to promote overall well-being.



Waves for Hope Club

Sports, workshops, learning opportunities for all graduates.



Young Leaders Training

Creating young leaders through education and training.



School assistance

School supplies, homework assistance, exam preparation.

02.

WHY SURF THERAPY?

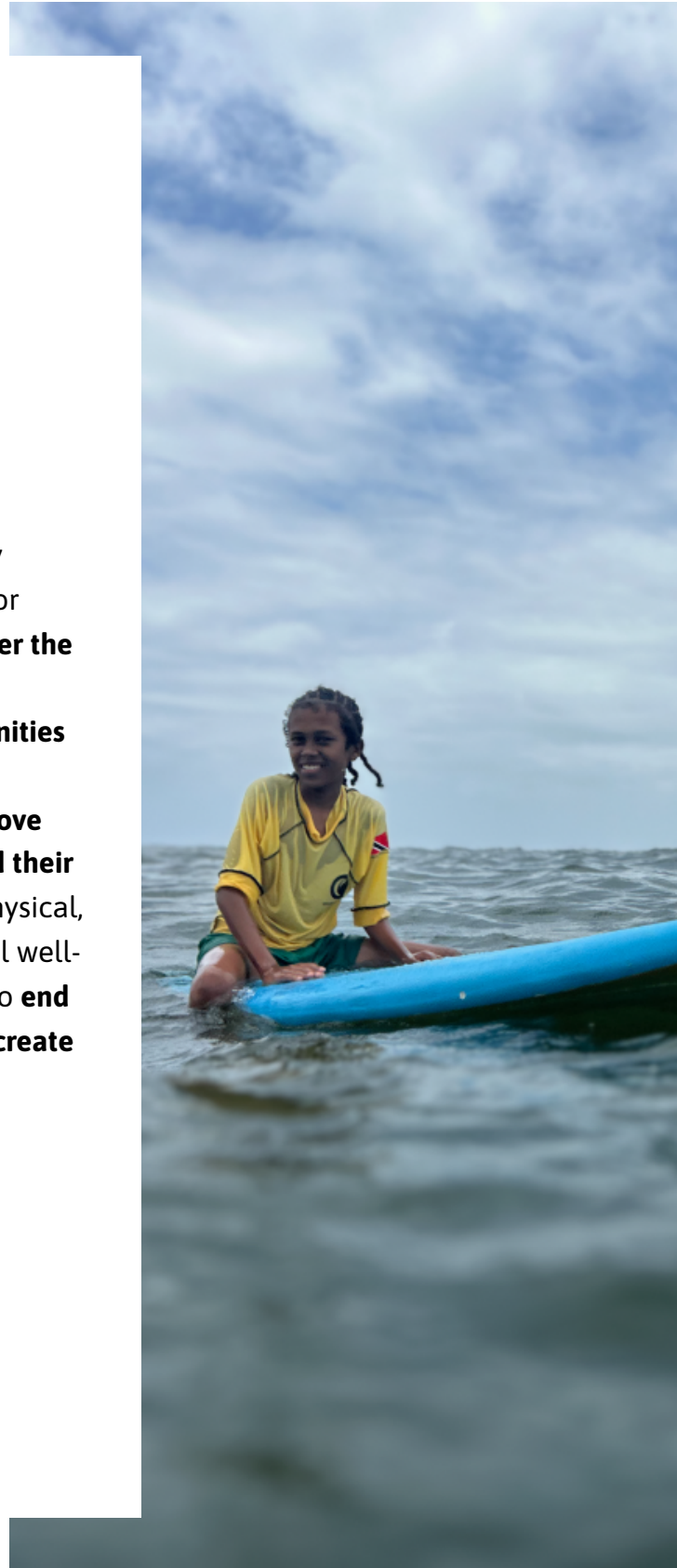
PROBLEM

Adolescence and young adulthood are times when **growing up in poverty can hamper educational performance, increase the risk of unemployment and lead to risky behaviors**, such as substance abuse, involvement in gangs and other criminal activities.

These factors can have a **detrimental impact on the physical, emotional, and social development of young people**, threatening their life chances and risking the creation of intergenerational poverty.

SOLUTION

With the Surf Therpay intervention, Waves for Hope aims to **empower the young people of marginalized communities** and offer them opportunities to **improve their coping skills and their overall well-being** (physical, emotional and mental well-being) with the goal to **end the poverty trap and create striving communities**.



03.

PROGRAM FACTS

19 sessions, weekly between November 2024 and August 2025.

The sessions took place on **two beaches**, depending on swell size.

11 beneficiaries were enrolled, of which 2 dropped out of the program.

This cohort started off with **91% male and 9% female** participation. Upon graduation all beneficiaries were male.

A total of **9 beneficiaries graduated** and became WFH club members.

Beneficiaries came from the communities of Balandra, Cumana and Toco.

Beneficiaries **ages ranged from 11 to 20. Average age was 15.**

2 young leaders plus 2 senior facilitators (mentors) lead the intervention.

Average session attendance was at 85%.

04.

IMPACT

DATA COLLECTION

The **World Health Organisation Five Well Being Index (WHO-5)** was used in pre and post surveys to **measure current mental well-being** (time frame the previous two weeks).

The WHO-5 is suitable for children aged 9 and above. All measures were administrated before the start of the surf therapy intervention and at the end.

Session participation, duration and gender distribution was captured using an **attendance app**.

In addition, the **beneficiaries' access to social support alongside satisfaction scores** were assessed. To support the data, qualitative feedback from the beneficiaries, mentors, guardians and stakeholders was collected.

All 9 graduates submitted usable data from the pre and post surveys.

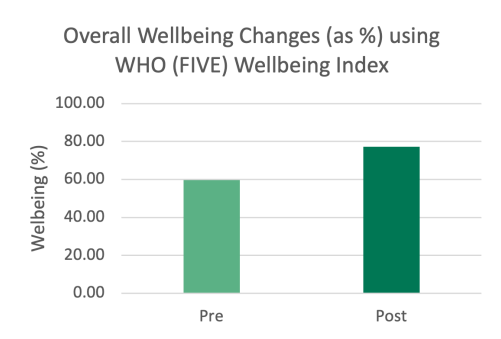
It should be noted that the sample size is quite small and spikes in one or the other direction are likely.



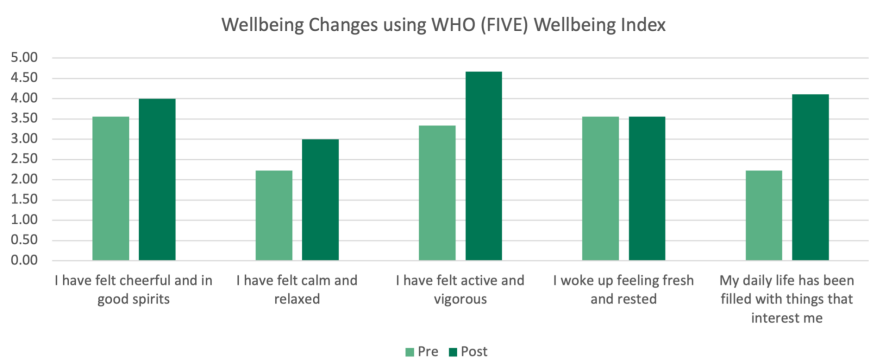


OVERALL WELL-BEING

A **significant increase of 17.78% in overall wellbeing** can be noticed in the beneficiaries at the end of the surf therapy intervention.



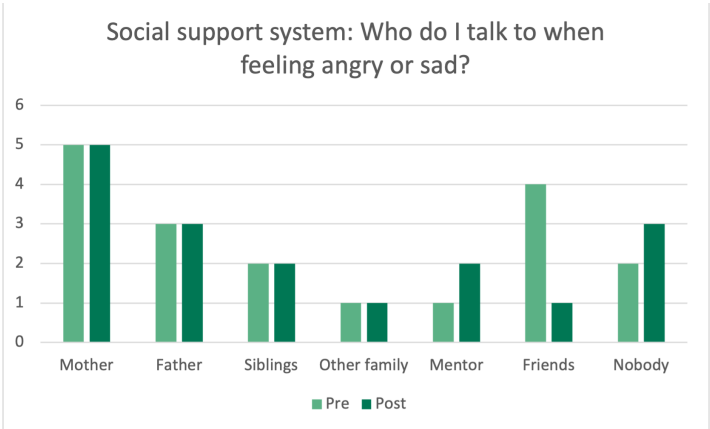
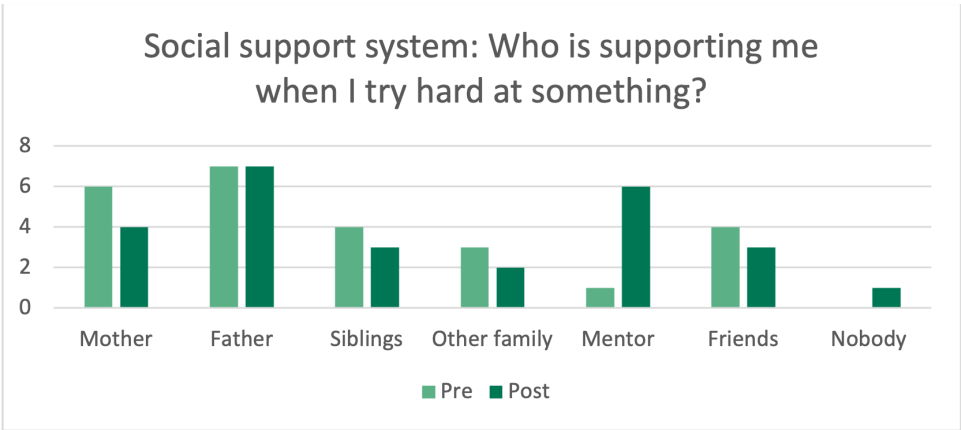
Four individual wellbeing items that are part of the overall well-being index show a **positive change** after the intervention. One item stayed unchanged.. The biggest increase is seen in "My daily life has been filled with things that interest me".



SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

The **social support system** of the beneficiaries does not show any drastic changes after the intervention..

What can be noticed is that the mentors of the surf therapy intervention have seen the biggest increase





OTHER FINDINGS

All beneficiaries indicated that they made **new friends** thanks to the surf therapy intervention.

All beneficiaries want to join the Waves for Hope Club program to continue with their surfing and spend time with their new friends.

8 out of 9 beneficiaries noticed positive changes in themselves. These changes include learning how to being calmer and more relaxed, being more considerate towards others.

Besides surfing, the beneficiaries stated that their favourite part of the program was the Take 5 (meditation) with the discussions and the surf contest that was held around Christmas.

LEARNINGS

FEMALE PARTICIPATION

Female participation has dropped significantly, especially outside the community of Balandra. The need for **programs specifically designed to address the needs and challenges of at-risk girls and young women** will be evaluated, with appropriate program offerings developed based on the findings.

PROGRAM LENGTH

A more compact and focused curriculum is being developed to **improve participant retention and reduce dropout rates.**



06.

QUOTES

BENEFICIARIES

"My best memory from the last few months is when I caught a wave and came on shore. There is something I learned with Waves for Hope and that is always get back up every time you fall. I have noticed changes in myself since I started the program, I noticed that I have been more patient with others. My favorite part of the program is communication with others and surfing. I can say that the mentors are smart, skilled, they look out for us and they educate us on not only surfing but on life. It means a lot to come and surf, it calms me, and it ables me to enhance my concentration etc. "

Beneficiary, 15 years old

"Throughout my time spent with the mentors and other students at Waves for Hope I learnt a number of things that I can use in my daily life but most importantly I learned how to be considerate of others and emotional wisdom. I noticed that I became calmer and more understanding of things. The mentors are fantastic. This program means a lot to me because I am in an environment where I learn a lot and have fun at the same time. "

Beneficiary, 17 years old



06.

QUOTES

BENEFICIARIES

"The best memory with Waves for Hope from the last few months is the christmas / end of year competition. One thing that I have learned that I use at school/home is the Take 5. I learned to surf and I feel more connected to the ocean and relaxed. My favorite thing about surf therapy is learning to surf and just being in the water around the others. The mentors are caring and trying to help the youth to learn to control or learn about life challenges. It means a lot to be able to come and surf. "

Beneficiary, 17 years old

"I learned to persevere through different tasks although it may seem challenging. I've become more calm. My favorite thing about the program is how our mentors encourage us to do better. "

Beneficiary, 19 years old

"I learnt the Take 5 with Waves for Hope and I use it when I get frustrated. I have noticed that I keep myself calm in rough situations. My favorite thing about the surf therapy program is the discussions. "

Beneficiary, 14 years old



07.

EXPENSES

The programming expenses for this surf therapy intervention were a **total of USD 3730**.

Some of the expenses were covered by **in-kind donations** from companies and individuals.





WAVES FOR HOPE



Thank you!

Thank you to our partners and supporters:

Repsol | WAM | Wave Alliance | Friends & Family

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Proud member of The Wave Alliance

