



# FINAL REPORT

University of Iowa January 2023 Women Empowerment  
Study Abroad Program in the Dominican Republic (DR)  
Designed and Implemented by Entrena





Produced by:  
ENTRENA SRL

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# UNIVERSITY OF IOWA WOMEN EMPOWERMENT



Planting a tree in  
Casa Museo Hermanas Mirabal



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study abroad program took place in the DR from January 2-13, 2023 entitled as ABRD: 3361 Women’s Empowerment in the Dominican Republic and was custom designed for Professor Mothier Haskins, Instructional Track Lecturer, University of Iowa School of Social Work.

A total of nine students plus Professor Haskins participated along with the full-time Entrena facilitator Ruth Baez. Entrena is a leading development organization in the DR managing projects related to education, youth, health, entrepreneurship, employability, and empowerment, all of which have components in research, monitoring, and evaluation. The program was designed to expose students to a wide array of grassroots and community activities related to women empowerment and provide active engagement and participation with participants.

All students evaluated the program as excellent, including activities and facilitation and articulated a variety of professional and personal learning opportunities. Opportunities were identified to improve accommodations in two hotels; we should mention that this program took place during the heavy holiday season hereby affecting selection of hotel within the established price range. Last minute changes by the DR government in the selection of official holidays also impacted one planned activity. Based upon evaluations and feedback from student participants and lead professor, Entrena is pleased with the results of this Women Empowerment activity and looks forward to implementing in 2024 with an increase in students. The following sections of this report include student perceptions and evaluations.



# SECTION 1

## WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES YOU AS A STUDENT TAKE AWAY FROM THIS EXPERIENCE ?

- Experience at Caminante and ENED – a lot of what we learned throughout the trip came together.
- Learning about non-profits, job opportunities, and the impact that can be made outside of the USA.
- That I cannot be as effective if I do not take care of myself first.
- To respect culture but still push boundaries.
- Connecting with other students and people.
- How to empower myself as a woman in my professional career.
- Experience with international NGOs.
- More experience with language skills.
- Learning about NGOs/how they are organized.
- Political structures of different countries.
- The underlining of NGOs; see firsthand what they do.
- The openness of the children everywhere.
- The Mirabal sisters' museum.
- The university we visited that educated us on sexual violence among young DR women.
- The completeness of the NGO Children International.
- I made many personal/professional relationships.





## SECTION 2

### WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES YOU AS A STUDENT TAKE AWAY FROM THIS EXPERIENCE?

- Facing and overcoming the challenges of riding a horse and climbing a mountain.
- Experiencing the pride of the Mirabal family.
- Learning more about my identity as a Latinex person and how white Americans interpret the world differently.
- Feeling empowered with the knowledge that one person can make a difference.
- To have balance in my life.
- We all have different things to bring.
- Improving my Spanish conversational skills.
- Learning how to educate others and connect with my community.
- Experience with international NGOs.
- More experience with language skills.
- One person can still make a change even with big problems.
- Listening to different experiences is so important such as testimonials, because history and media does not always get it right.
- That I could do things on my own.
- Having been without my family I learned a lot about myself.
- Riding horses down the waterfall and learning about that community's lifestyle.
- Going to the culture house in Haina.
- Community is so important for growth and development.
- Together we can do things that are seemingly impossible alone.



## SECTION 3

### STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE ENTRENA FACILITATOR

- Ruth is a 10 of 10.
- Ruth made this experience so special and unforgettable; a true asset to our team/family
- The Best! Ruth made everything all the more special and fulfilling!
- Ruth was **INCREDIBLE**. She made this trip so much fun and taught us so much. Literally all the people were so welcoming.
- Ruth was amazing!
- We love you Ruth!
- All students rated the Entrena facilitator Ruth Baez as *excellent*.





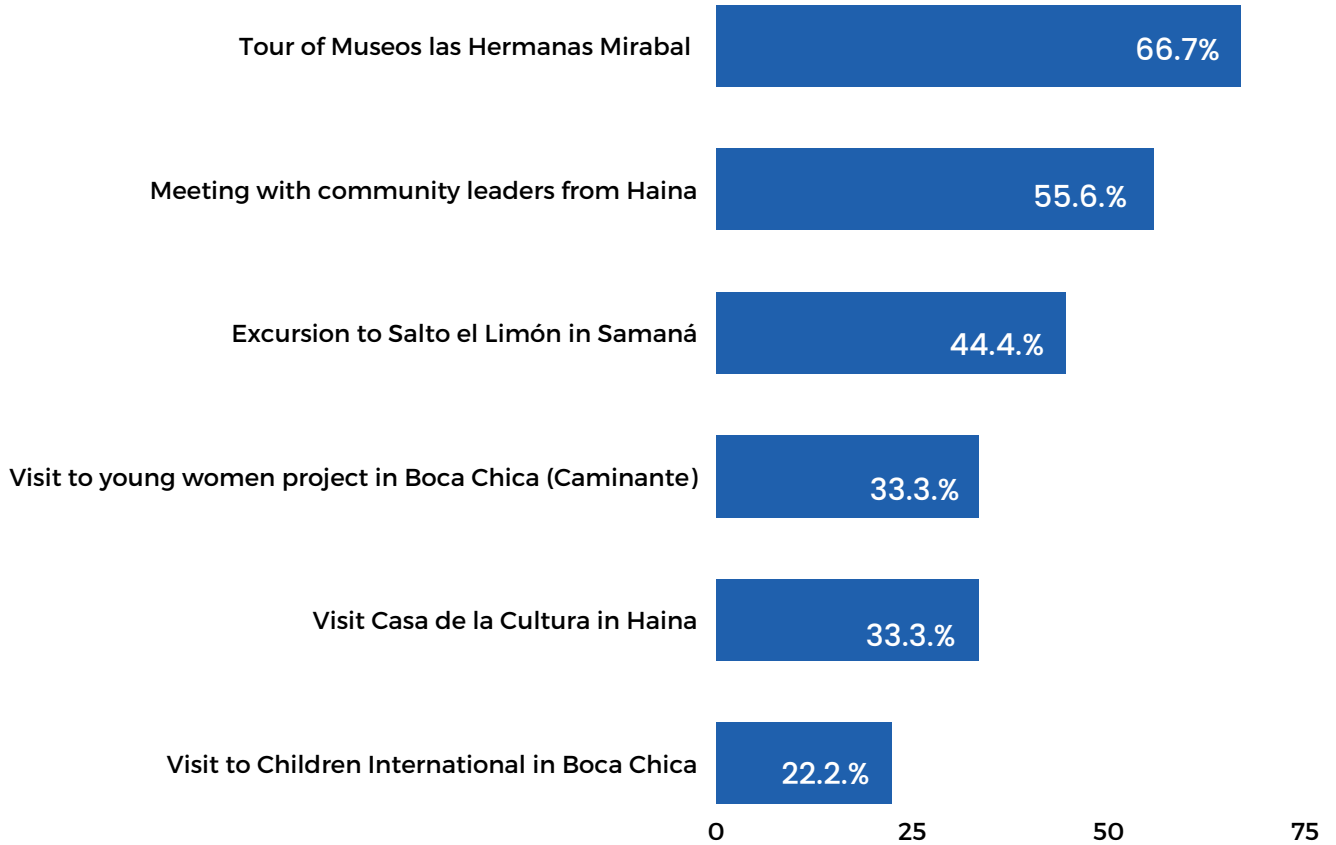
# SECTION 4

## RATE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent
1. Tour to Museo de la Resistencia Dominicana	0%	0%	0%	44%	56%
2. Visit to Ministerio de la Mujer in Haina	0%	0%	0%	11%	89%
3. Visit to Casa de la Cultura in Haina	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
4. Meeting with community leaders from Haina	0%	0%	0%	22%	78%
5. Environment talk with community in the beach Gringos in Haina	0%	0%	44%	22%	33%
6. Visit to Fundación La Merced in Manoguayabo	0%	0%	11%	33%	56%
7. Round table with youth from networks in Villa Riva	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
8. Tour of Museo de las Hermanas Mirabal in Salcedo	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
9. Excursion to Salto El Limón in Samaná	0%	0%	0%	11%	89%
10. Visit to Parque Nacional Los Tres Ojos	0%	0%	22%	0%	78%
11. Visit to young women project in Boca Chica (Caminante)	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%
12. Round table with empowered young leaders from Boca Chica	0%	0%	0%	22%	78%
13. Visit to Children International in Boca Chica	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
14. Visit to Jazme Yow Dance Studio in La Caleta	0%	0%	11%	0%	89%
15. Visit to Fundación ENED in Boca Chica	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

# SECTION 6

## SELECT YOUR THREE FAVORITE ACTIVITIES

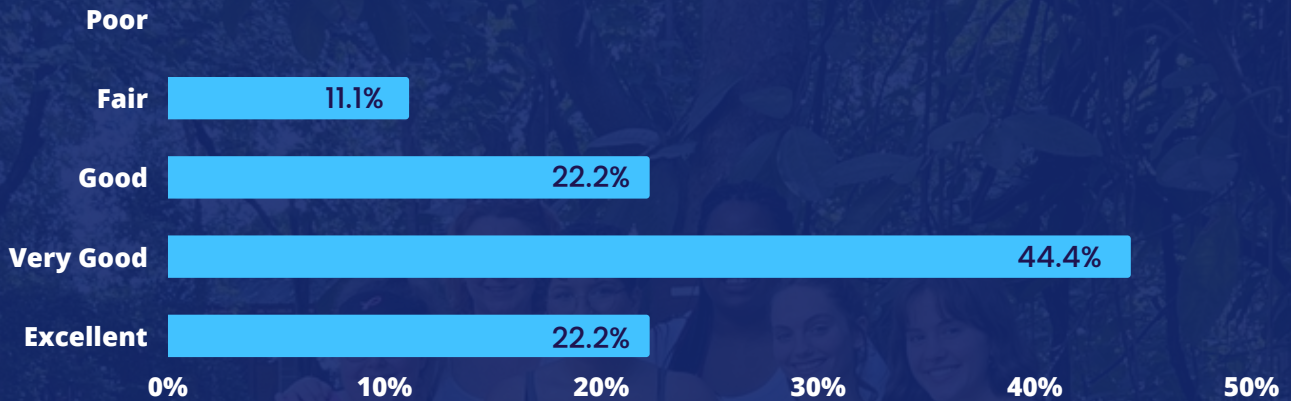




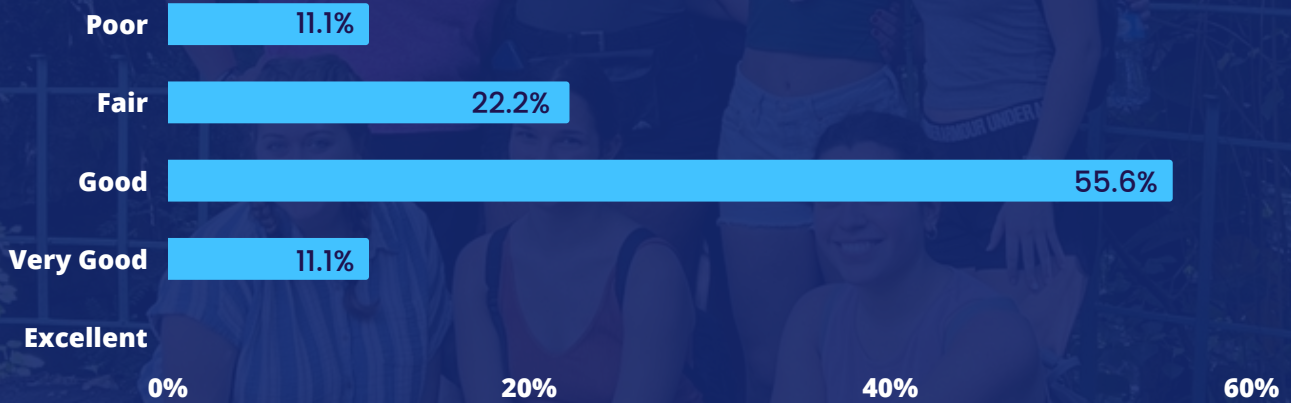
# SECTION 5

## RATE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE ACCOMMODATIONS AT THE FOLLOWING HOTEL

■ Hotel Novus Plaza in Colonial Zone



■ Hotel Las Caobas in San Francisco de Macorís

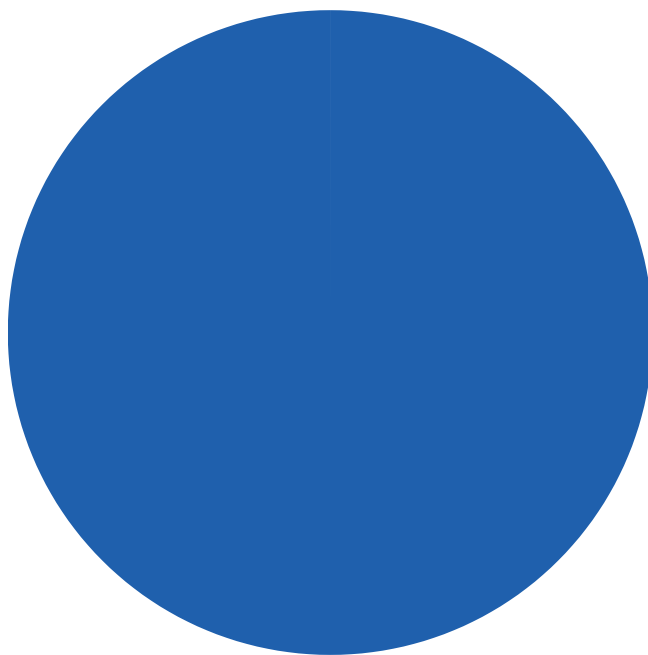


■ Hotel Whala in Boca Chica



# SECTION 7

## OVERALL RATING OF EXPERIENCE



**Excellent  
100%**





# SECTION 8

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMS

1. Assuming that this will continue as a winter program coinciding with similar dates, try to confirm as soon as possible thereby facilitating confirmations by Entrena and opportunities for the most competitive costs.



2. Evaluate the possibility of having the program at alternative dates which do not coincide with either Christmas/New Year or Easter.

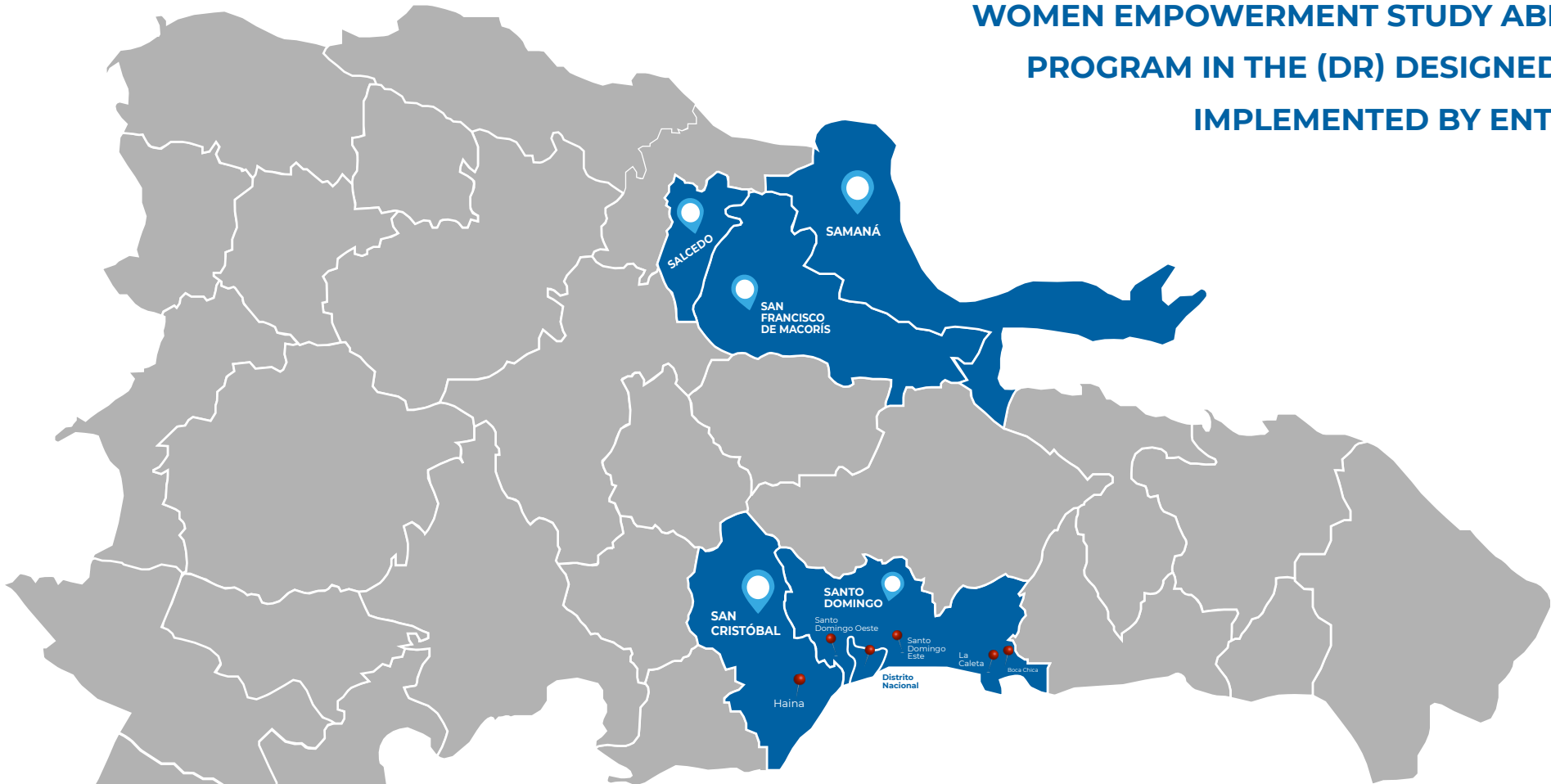


3. Continue to build upon and expand the successful activities as evaluated by the student.



4. Review non-satisfactory evaluations of hotels/lodging and continue to identify additional alternatives.

## UNIVERSITY OF IOWA JANUARY 2023 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM IN THE (DR) DESIGNED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ENTRENA



### MAP LEGEND

#### SAN CRISTÓBAL

Environment talk with community in the beach Gringos in Haina

Meeting with community leaders from Haina

Visit to Casa de la Cultura in Haina

Visit to Ministerio de la Mujer in Haina

#### BOCA CHICA

Visit to Yazme Yow Dance Studio in La Caleta

Visit to young women project in Boca Chica (Caminante)

Round table with empowered young leaders from Boca Chica

Visit to Children International in Boca Chica

Visit to Fundación ENED in Boca Chica

#### SAMANÁ

Excursion to Salto El Limón in Samaná

#### SALCEDO

Tour of Museo de las Hermanas Mirabal in Salcedo

#### SAN FRANCISCO DE MACORÍS

Visit to Universidad Católica Nordestana (UCNE)

Round table with youth from networks in Villa Riva



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**EMPOWERING  
PEOPLE  
AND BRIDGING  
CULTURES**

— SINCE 1982 —



**INVENIO**  
JOURNEYS