

WHS Girls Part 1

(Alka, Ana, Anahera, Ella, Zeni)

[Interviewer question to 00.14: What technological changes have occurred over the last 50 years?].

Alka: Medical science. Child mortality rates have dropped hugely and we can keep premature babies alive if they're not a lot younger.

Anahera: Oh I think the thing is that now that we've got like the technology, we're able to make our lives a lot more comfortable and we're able to live a lot longer, because we've eliminated all these factors that were killing us before – except obviously diseases have become more prevalent in our lives. Because now people are living longer, so you notice them more and you're affected by them more.

Zeni: Just adding to that as well, farming, people would always have to farm each cow, so and so and so on, but now we have machines and artificial impregnation [Participant agreement x 1 1.00] so cows don't even need to mate with a bull anymore. They're just pregnant.

[Interviewer question 1.03 to 1.09: What sort of changes do you see happening in the future?]

Anahera: They say that if we continue farming and producing food the way we do, because it's not very sustainable, we won't be able to feed everyone by 2050, and that's one of the massive challenges we're gonna face.

Alka: I think maybe curing cancer could happen sometime in the future – not necessarily in the next five or 10 years, but longer.

Ana: They're doing a lot with genes and like sequencing DNA. [Participant agreement x 1] And splicing stuff into it and just eradicating diseases....

Ella: Genetic engineering.

Ana: ...before you're even born or taking it out of your body altogether.

Anahera: They're starting to develop the technology to be able to decide what traits you want your baby to have - what alleles you want them to get from your...

2.00 **Participant:** [out of visual range]: DNA.

Anahera: Yeah, from the DNA that you have and your partner. You can pick and choose what you want.

[Interviewer question 2.06 to 2.13: Do you think these changes will be shared globally?].

Zeni: The changes in technology should be spread evenly in the future, but they probably won't be. And the reason I say they should be is that one person can do so much. The rapper Akon, he just supplied electricity to millions of people in Africa and it's changed so much for them. It's lowered rates of murder and things because now there's light after dark and things like that. They have cooling – electricity, we take it for granted so often, [Participant agreement x 1] how

much it's surrounding us right now. So things like that one man could do all that. But yeah, so many people who have the power to do that, aren't.

Ella: I think yeah it's, there's, it's kind of sad that we are like being asked that question, 'will the technology be spread evenly'. Our automatic response is, 'it should be, but it won't be,' almost because it's become like a norm that there's these Third World countries and these First World countries and it shouldn't be like that. It should be like, 'yes, we can spread this technology evenly,' and we should be able to help everyone.

Anahera: If we do want to stop global warming and everything, everyone needs to be doing something, but that means that everyone needs to get equal treatment.

Ana: Yeah, there's so much idea that one person can't make a difference, but it kind of gets lost, so you give up.

Ella: Everything you do makes a difference, I think. Even if you just don't throw your gum wrapper on the ground and you actually put it in a bin. I feel even that just makes the biggest difference.

[Interviewer question 3.48 to 3.53: What kind of leadership will we need?]

Zeni: A lot more things are becoming big now. People are realising that what we've been doing for decades now are actually having a detrimental effect on our environment and stuff and there's a lot more awareness surrounding that. So I feel like as time goes on, not only the awareness is getting bigger, but also our knowledge on how to change it is getting bigger. And we're only 16 and we're already thinking about how to change the world, even if it is just picking up a gum wrapper.

Anahera: I think nowadays, our generation has been brought up being told that we're the generation who needs to... We're the last generation that can make the change. [Participant agreement x 1] So our whole lives, we've been educated about climate change and what we do, what needs to happen.

Ella: Yeah, in primary school, everything we did, I remember doing so many enquiries in primary school. We did one trying to get our local New World to charge you to buy, use plastic bags.

Zeni: And look where that got us! Now you have to.

Ella: Yeah, and we've been...

Zeni: Things like that matter.

Ella: Ever since primary school we have had this whole awareness. We'd go down to the beach and have clean-up days and involved citizen days.

Ana: We've been taught to care about [Participant agreement x 1] the world we're in right now. We've been taught that it all matters and we have to make a difference. You can't just not do anything, because...

Anahera: I think we've all been taught like 'reduce, reuse, recycle'. [Participant agreement x 2]

That's been drilled into our brains. You hear that everywhere. Growing up in our generation, that's one thing I remember clearly from school, like primary, was just 'reduce, reuse, recycle.' [Participant agreement x 1]

[Interviewer question: 5.28 to 5.34 What needs to be done on a larger scale?].

Ella: I recently wrote an essay about this. I always think, what's the Nelson Mandela quote: "education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world." I really believe that through education... Just us being educated since we were little on climate change and reducing and recycling, that kind of stuff, and even if we started from a young age educating people on more things other than climate change, but equality in Third World countries and agriculture and being aware of what you eat and what you use. I just feel because in our world there's so much ignorance around things, if you go to a clothing store and you buy something and you're like, 'yeah', but you don't know where that clothing has come from. It's probably come from a sweat shop in Afghanistan or something and I just think that if we were taught these things from a young age, people being aware would make *such* a big difference.

[Interviewer question 6.34 to 6.39: Do you think the current education system will continue to steer future generations in the right direction?].

Zeni: The education system needs to keep evolving as the world keeps evolving, to keep up. If we were still learning things that people were learning in the 1950s now, it wouldn't really [Participant agreement x 1] relate to what our society and world is right now. And even things not to do with the environment but more to do with sociocultural issues such as, such as gay acceptance – even big things...

Ella: Gender issues.

Zeni: ...gender issues, transgenders – yeah, equality just in all regions. If we were still being taught like we were back in the 1900s, I feel like females would be treated less equally, gays would [Participant agreement x 1] still be – yeah.

Alka: I read somewhere that people are going to be working a lot more different jobs in their lifetime. Because it used to be you went to school and then maybe you went to university or an apprenticeship and then you went to a job and you did that until you retired. But now we'll be working lots of different jobs before we have to retire. And I feel like school and the education system needs to take that into account. Because if you have to go back and re-train for all those things, it can get quite difficult.

Zeni: At school it's quite easy to learn about algebra and English and subjects like that – which is great, I'm not saying it's bad – and sciences and stuff. But I personally want to go into – well, I don't know what I want to do, I'm 16, like we said – but I personally want to go down the route of environment sciences and studies. But at school there are no subjects like that that are gonna help...

Ella: Well, there's Bio.

Zeni: Yeah, but there's no subjects that lead me into the [indistinct 8.20].

Ella: That specifically cater, yeah.

Zeni: And say if I pay lots - don't get a scholarship and have to pay a lot to go to a university in another city...

Ella: Where you have to pay for flatting and food and yeah.

Zeni: And then it turns out that I don't actually like where the subject's going, it could be quite difficult.

[Interviewer question 8.33 to 8.38 Are you afraid of the future?]

Participant: [out of visual range] Yeah, I'm excited. I'm excited because I've always known what I want to do.

Anahera: I'm definitely excited for the far future. I'm not excited for next year when I have to [indistinct 8.51]. [Overtalking 8.51 to 8.52]

Zeni: I'm [indistinct 8.53] tonight when I have homework. [Participant agreement x 1]

Anahera: Yeah, not excit-...

Ella: Not excited

Anahera: I feel like that whole transition from secondary to tertiary and tertiary out into getting your first proper job – *that* is really really scary. But I think – well this is the generalisation; obviously it doesn't go this way for everyone – but once you get those foundations, you become more aware of yourself and you start to care less about what society thinks of you and you just do what makes you happy.

Ella: With change in the world and we were talking about all these things like gender, fluid, becoming more accepted and people becoming more aware of the environmental impacts we have and all those kind of things. I feel like for us, this is easier to say because we all come from reasonably privileged families where we have that opportunity to make our change. All of our friends are really open-minded people. [Participant agreement x 1] We go to a really open-minded school. But there's so many places in the world that a) people, even if they wanted to, they don't have the opportunities, and b) there's still people who are very very conservative and they wouldn't think about the same things that we do. So from our perspective it might seem like we're coming to this huge point where the world's gonna change, but I feel like there's still a long way to go. A lot of people in society, yeah, they have many different points of views to us because they've been raised in a different way and they have different experiences to us.

[Interviewer question 10.28 to 10.34: In 2065, what do you think we would say about what we are doing now?]

Alka: I guess in the most optimistic pathway, I'm glad that we cured cancer and I'm glad that we made huge advancements in terms of equality – gender, racial - and that we're a healthier, happier society that we are at the moment, because we've had a tough couple of years. [Participant agreement x 1] But if we're looking at, looking at it pessimistically and nothing's changed, well then...

11.08 **Interviewer:** What sort of regrets might we have?

Alka: I guess that we just didn't take this chance. Because if we, if we don't do anything – who will?

Ana: I guess when I think about bad things that will happen, I always think about stuff that can't be replaced. I don't know, we've been taught all the ice caps are melting or these things are going extinct, and I think that might happen, because we're not doing enough. And the amount of people who are just not doing enough is overwhelming. And with the temperatures rising and anything, all the rainforests being cut down, I can't see that being reversed at all. So I just imagine for all technological, all these cities everywhere and just all the natural beauty being destroyed. But if I looked back and saw what I think had improved, I think that it would be a lot of medical stuff, a lot of technology would have improved to improve our quality of life and quality of life everywhere. And I would hope to see that we've all become a more considerate, compassionate society and that we accept each other more. Because I think a lot of people right now, they're focussing on other people and that's a good way. We still have to worry about the environment, but we're worrying a lot more about how others are and being more caring.

Ella: So I'm 65 now and I'm looking back. I think that making, yeah, huge advancements towards environmental changes, with clean water and everything.... It really scares me that we only have 1% of drinkable water or something. And I think that big advancements towards that, I would love to see that. I think that I'd love to see a lot more, yeah, equal society with racial and gender and just everyone being treated a lot more equal. Because we are all humans and I think that everyone really deserves to be treated like a human and treated just like everyone else. Everyone deserves the same chance at life. I think I'd love to see that.

Zeni: I think that if I was 65 years old looking back on what we had achieved in our lifetimes, I'd like to see that people stopped choosing where their compassion lay and started realising that we're all in one world and we need to start working together and be compassionate about everyone and everything.

[Interviewer question 13.36 to 13.44: Any final thoughts?]

Alka: I guess for me personally the biggest success that we could have as a global society would be that everyone was born with the same opportunities in life. [Participant agreement x 2-3] And no matter where you grew up, you could go out and change the world.

Anahera: Whatever you do, you should always be thinking, how is this going to affect me in the future. [Participant agreement x 2]

Ana: Is it thoughtful? Is it kind? Is it necessary?

Zeni: Wow, I like that.

Anahera: Yeah, is it necessary?

Ella: Ooh.

[musical interlude to END]

Recording ENDS: 14.21