THE BILLION GIRLS COLAB

Introducing the CoLab model and what the Billion Girls CoLab seeks to achieve.
Inspired to re-define what’s possible and design for the future of adolescent girls.

IDEO.org is a non-profit design studio with a mission to design products and services alongside organizations that are committed to creating a more just and inclusive world. We use human-centered design (HCD), a creative problem-solving approach that starts with empathy and ends in a product, service, or experience tailored to meet the needs of users.

Over the past six years, IDEO.org’s Global Health practice has delved into the question of “how might we increase girls’ awareness and uptake of contraception?”

Over this time, we’ve experienced the potential of HCD to transform adolescent sexual and reproductive health, and the limitations of discrete, bespoke projects with partner organizations. We’ve seen our partners struggle to collaborate across silos, create solutions that girls demand and seek out, and anchor on the needs of users.

Grounded in these challenges, and in a spirit of optimism, we believe the time is right to explore new models of collaboration that respond to girls’ needs and reimagine how we get to the design of solutions.
WHAT IT IS

Collective problem solving to address systemic challenges in the adolescent reproductive health sector.

The Billion Girls CoLab is a collaborative approach to problem solving to address systemic challenges facing adolescent girls in East Africa.

We're kicking off a global innovation portfolio focused on creating solutions to address challenges ranging from access to health services, employment, financial inclusion, education, and more.

These challenges have typically been addressed through siloed, single sector approaches. We have the opportunity to design for holistic and sustainable solutions.

Let's break the silos and design across them.

Over the next three years, we’re bringing together community based organizations, start-ups, regulators, service providers, and other stakeholders to design and launch new innovations.
Here are a couple different modes in which the CoLab will operate. To start, we needed to map the opportunities most ripe for collaboration and design.

1. **Hard Problems Workshops**
   - Allow us to map content areas, system challenges, and opportunities ripe for collaboration and design.

2. **Makeathons**
   - Allow us to get tangible and flex our building muscles while identifying early thought partners.

3. **Design Sprints**
   - Allow us to explore partnerships and prototypes deeper through user testing, iteration, and refinement.

4. **Collaborative Cohorts**
   - Allow us to build smaller cohorts of partners that can work to implement a solution or bring it to market.
GLOW RECAP

Here’s a summary of the Hard Problems Workshop that took place in San Francisco earlier this month.
WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

Mapping the opportunities that are most ripe for design and collaboration.

For Glow, the Hard Problems Workshop, we convened over 60 participants to join us in San Francisco to explore, frame, and articulate the challenges that adolescent girls face in East Africa. This diverse group of participants, ranging from large tech companies, philanthropy, international NGOs, and small grassroots organizations, was well positioned to offer a systems-level view of the challenges and help us map what’s not working so well and frame up opportunities for design.

By the end of the day, the goal was to map different content areas of interest and land on a handful of opportunities that this community and others could work on designing together with girls in 2020.

Following this workshop, we know makeathons and design sprints will have a role in getting solutions built, tested, and on a path towards implementation.
AGENDA - DECEMBER 4, 2019

8:30 AM – 9:15 AM  
**WELCOME + REGISTRATION**

9:15 AM - 10:00 AM  
**CREATIVE TENSIONS**  
Get to know each other, and explore tensions in the room.

10:00 AM - 10:20 AM  
**ABOUT THE BILLION GIRLS COLAB**  
Context for the day + introduction to our challenge areas.

10:35 AM - 11:00 AM  
**HER WORLD**  
Introduce the archetypes of girls we’re designing with and for

10:00 AM - 12:00 AM  
**PANEL: EAST AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES**

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM  
**LUNCH**

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
**DEEP DIVE IN SMALL GROUPS**  
Mapping the challenges and exploring the potential for design

3:15 PM - 4:00 PM  
**SHARE OUT + REFLECTIONS**

4:00 PM - 4:15 PM  
**COMMITMENTS + CLOSING**
CREATIVE TENSIONS

Sparking dialogue around tensions we face in the adolescent and sexual reproductive health sector.

Does empowerment for girls behind with health or wealth?

Should technology solutions be about creating efficiency or building connection?

Should additional funding be directed towards scaling proven things or towards generating new things?

These are some of the questions that we grappled with to start off the day. With every question, participants moved to opposite sides of the room, based on whether they agreed with “this” or “that.” Participants had the chance to voice their positions and convince colleagues to move their position in the room. There weren’t any solutions proposed or agreements made, but it served as a moment to see where tensions, agreements, and disagreements lay across participants, organizations, and sectors.
GIRL ARCHETYPES

**Grounding ourselves in the dreams, worries, and environments of the girl.**

In the absence of having adolescent girls from East Africa present in the room, participants took a moment to read stories about girls we’ve met in our work designing for girls and adolescents in the region. Participants shared reflections about similarities or differences they saw in themselves and were prompted to think about how they could keep these end users in mind when making programmatic decisions.
PANEL DISCUSSION

Discussing trends, bright spots, and challenges when reaching adolescent girls in East Africa.

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Pauline Kanana | Nairobi Design Institute
Larrissa Muthoni | IDEO.org Nairobi
Winny Obure | Teenseed Africa
Aissata Sall | Global Fund for Women
Malyse Uwase | Kasha

The five panelists drew on their experiences to share and reflect on the aspirations and realities of adolescent girls they’ve worked with. They discussed the role of technology-based solutions, social norm change, and popular culture in making meaningful shifts in individual behaviors and in the larger systematic shifts needed. Everyone agreed that meaningfully bringing adolescents to the table for co-design and decision-making was a must-have starting point for new programs and solutions.
“Getting a chance to hear perspectives from those who live and work with girls in East Africa was vital to invite participants into that context as they explore the different themes.”
Discussing the future state and the barriers that are currently getting in the way of each challenge area.

1. **The Access Moment.** Girls can access contraception on their own terms; at home, at the clinic, or somewhere in between.
2. **Navigating Relationships.** Girls can navigate and maintain healthy relationships. They have agency to decide when and how to have sex.
3. **Stand Up For Her Rights.** Girls know they aren’t alone. They know how to connect with others to stand up for what they believe in.
4. **Achieving Self-Actualization.** Girls have the space to dream big about their futures, and the tools and resources to turn these dreams into reality.
5. **Sex Positivity.** Girls can enjoy sex, and freely express and live their desires.
6. **Activating Support Networks.** A girl’s community, including her family, friends and community, are supportive of her dreams and aspirations.
7. **Menstruation Nation.** Girls understand how their bodies work, and have access to menstrual products to manage their periods without disrupting everyday life.
8. **Family On Her Own Terms.** Girls can decide when, how and if they want to start a family.
BREAK OUT SESSIONS

**Discussing the future state and the barriers that are currently getting in the way of each challenge area.**

In smaller groups, participants contributed their expertise to specific challenge and topic areas. Given the setting and group of participants, discussions were not intended to arrive at solutions (we envision that happening locally and with the girls– our end users– at the table). Rather, discussions aimed to help us imagine new collaborations, break down barriers across sectors, and articulate new opportunities across the problem area that the CoLab could start to tackle next year.
“It was really constructive to have the time to dive into and explore an issue with a small group, and then to see how those ideas could be integrated into other groups’ ideas in later sessions.”
FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

Which opportunities is the CoLab best positioned to take on, and which are generating sector enthusiasm?

. . .
WE ASKED

What’s one thing you will commit to, following this workshop?

Learn more about grassroots feminist organizations.

Trust girls from the start. Allies are all around us.

I will reflect on how my work in education can better support adolescent girls, their reproductive health, and their sexual identities.

PSF can leverage our understanding of market & consumer to help the movement of ‘normalizing’ sexuality & menstruation.

1. Affirmation that I’m in the right arena—fighting for girls!
2. Follow up with 3 people from today.
3. Continue to dream. What’s gonna happen?
LOOKING AHEAD

What are the next steps for the Billion Girls CoLab and how can you get involved?
Here are milestones we anticipate in 2020.

**FALL 2019**
- Conversations with stakeholders about challenges, priorities, and interest areas

**WINTER 2019**
- Glow Hard Problems Workshop to scope and identify challenge areas

**SPRING 2020**
- Makeathon(s) in Nairobi to start building prototypes with partners against specific design briefs (Jan 16)
- Scoping design sprints with partners to build out prototypes

**SUMMER 2020**
- Prototyping solutions and partnership models with a smaller subset of CoLab members

If you are interested in connecting, reach out to Courtney (courtney@ideo.org) and Ridhi (ridhi@ideo.org)
HELLO

THANK YOU

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