

# databoom

## Inspiring Change for Girls

A theory of change to drive impact for girls





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### A THEORY OF CHANGE TO DRIVE IMPACT FOR GIRLS

Girl Effect builds youth brands and mobile platforms to empower girls to change their lives.

Girl Effect needed to articulate a strategy that donors could understand and the development community would support.

Databoom worked with Girl Effect to articulate a theory of change that makes a clear link between girls' agency and behavior change. We also worked with teams across the organization to disseminate and operationalize the theory of change.

### SERVICES

Qualitative Research and Analysis  
Behavioral Theory  
Participatory Workshop  
Team and Stakeholder Engagement  
Strategic Communication



# Inspiring change

for girls

Girl Effect builds youth brands and mobile platforms to empower girls to change their lives in health, education, safety, and economic empowerment. Founded by the Nike Foundation in 2004, today Girl Effect is an independent creative non-profit working from nine global locations and active in 66 countries.

For several years, Girl Effect occupied a unique position in development: it used a brand-led approach to inspire change among girls. As Girl Effect shifted from Nike Foundation to more traditional sources of funding, it needed to articulate a strategy that donors could understand and the development community would support. Girl Effect needed to articulate the connection between brands, agency, and the problem being solved, specifically, which behaviors would be changed.

**That's where**

**we came in**

Databoom worked with Girl Effect's Gender and Evidence teams to articulate a theory of change that makes a clear link between agency and behavior change. We also worked with teams across the organization to disseminate and operationalize the theory of change.

We started by understanding the change Girl Effect wanted to have in the world. Then we identified how to better connect building girls' agency to behavior change and strong development outcomes. We reviewed the organization's original theory of change and revisited the literature on behavioral theory. During a consultative process with Girl Effect's teams, we articulated a grounded theory that focuses on factors that help girls adopt positive behaviors in four thematic areas: health, education, safety, and economic empowerment.

A key insight was that regardless of thematic area, Girl Effect believes four conditions must be present to enable adoption of promoted behaviors among girls:

1. Improved gender norms and power dynamics;
2. A positive social environment where girls are supported by boys, their families, peers, and communities;
3. Motivation and ability within the girl at the individual level; and
4. A supportive structural environment.

We then worked with the Brand and Strategy teams to link the theory of change to a behavior-centered approach for programs. At the core is Girl Effect's brands, girl and youth-facing activities in each country with a shared sense of meaning, value and purpose. Then there are five core components in the approach:

1. Behavior change;
2. Multi-product and high-frequency consumption;
3. Content, conversations, and experiences;
4. Locally appropriate channels; and
5. Targeting

## Impact

Establishing a behavior-centered approach has fundamentally changed program design at Girl Effect. The theory of change contains the detail staff need to design and implement programs, and measure the impact of the organization's work. Donors and other stakeholders are impressed with Girl Effect's ability to articulate the link between agency and behavior change and the positive life outcomes that result from girls exercising agency.