TEGAs: The New Face of Data Collectors

Developing content and models for the TAAP Approach and Toolkit affords us the privilege of connecting with organizations and individuals pioneering innovative approaches to inclusive design. Recently, a colleague shared with us Girl Effect’s TEGA and we are excited to share this approach with you. The Technology Enabled Girl Ambassadors (TEGA) program is being piloted in Northern Nigeria, one of the most dangerous places in the world to be an adolescent girl. TEGA is a data collection methodology that is also now operating in Rwanda, India, and Indonesia. 18 to 24-year-old girls, who have become known as “TEGAs”, serve as data collectors, using a mobile platform to interview peers. During a 3-month training program, TEGAs become certified...
researchers collecting real time quantitative and qualitative data such as audio and video clips that can be used by Girl Effect and partners to design better programs. TEGAs develop employable skills and 94% of TEGAs report an increase in confidence because of their participation in the program.

What does this mean for inclusive design? Where traditional research approaches can be intrusive for communities, TEGA is a peer-to-peer approach. TEGA meets the Lean Research standards, an initiative based on principles of human-centered field research, which was established in 2014 by MIT D-Lab, Feinstein International Center and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and Root Capital. One example of how TEGA is meeting the standards is TEGA’s innovative consent approach. A respondents’ consent to participate in a research session is often obtained passively by a researcher reading a statement and respondents signing a piece of paper or verbalizing their agreement. TEGA’s engaged consent process requires respondents to demonstrate comprehension of what they are consenting to. There are 3 steps. First, an audio file is played that “verbalizes the required consent using clear and simple language.” Second, respondents or their guardians must correctly answer a multiple-choice question that “demonstrates their comprehension of the consent by selecting the corresponding option.” Finally, the TEGA captures the respondent’s, and, if required, a guardian’s consent via an audio recording, which is instantly uploaded and stored on the TEGA Content Hub (TEGA Lean Research Case Study Oct 2016). This is one example of TEGA’s rigorous and thoughtful methodologies and relates to TAAP’s participatory and deliberative approaches principle.

Laura Scanlon, Director of TEGA, Girl Effect shares how TEGA can be applied to inclusive design: “When it comes to understanding girls and attitudes to girls in hard to reach communities, conventional research methods have their limitations. Through TEGA, we strive to create inclusion for one of world’s most excluded demographics: adolescent girls living in poverty. We do this by placing girls’ needs at the heart of all of our design decisions - we are constantly exploring new approaches, techniques and technologies to evolve and strengthen TEGA’s research experience. This innovative approach helps us to better understand adolescent girls and their realities, unearthing new insights about the challenges they face and how they can be best addressed.” We think you will agree that TEGA is a model approach for inclusive design. 

Photo courtesy of Laura Scanlon, Director of TEGA, Girl Effect, 2016.
Putting Human Rights, Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Value for Money Assessment

Is it possible to reach the furthest behind while also maintaining the highest standards of value for money? A recent policy note, “The value for money of leaving no one behind,” argues that “no program that discriminates against persons with disabilities, or other marginalized groups, can be considered good value for money.” Developed by the Bond Disability and Development Group, a consortium of UK-based international NGOs working to promote the systemic inclusion of disabled people within international development policies and programs, the policy note offers useful guidance on best ways to achieve the pledge of the Sustainable Development Goals to “leave no one behind”. The policy note calls on global development communities to simultaneously focus their priorities on persons with disabilities and guarantee the highest standards of value for money.

The five key recommendations from the policy note are:

1. **Recognise the value of disability-inclusive programming.** Respect for human rights and equitable inclusion of persons with disabilities should be recognised as intrinsically beneficial and as basic pre-requisites of value for money. Disability-inclusive programming has wider benefits for societies and economies – but the value for money case should not hinge on these instrumental arguments: human rights are a compelling value for money argument on their own.
1. **Avoid quantitative comparisons between different disability-inclusive programmes.** Such comparisons can be very misleading, given that costs and benefits are highly context-dependent, under-researched, and often difficult to measure. Qualitative analysis of the value for money of disability-inclusive programmes is more meaningful, and the Bond Disability and Development Group has developed a draft framework to help with this.

1. **Ensure that disability-inclusive programmes follow best practice in project management and cost control.** Programmers have a responsibility to invest in disability inclusion – whether this is funding for accessibility or for challenging discriminatory social norms. But they also have a responsibility to ensure these investments are well managed, as with any other programme.

1. **Document and share evidence on the cost drivers, and wider benefits, of disability inclusion,** so that the evidence base for value for money decisions becomes ever more informative.

1. **Ensure that persons with disabilities participate meaningfully at all stages.** Value for money assessment is a complex and controversial field; the principle of “nothing about us without us” is particularly important in this context. This, of course, bears a cost, which should be taken into consideration, but the added value of participation means that programmes will be better designed to realise the rights of persons with disabilities.

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**Logo: Bond Disability and Development Group, Public Domain, 2016**

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**The Power of Rebranding Disability**

We would like to share two inspiring videos, one from *Ted Talks* and the second from the [Ford Foundation’s #InequalityIs Ford Forum](https://www.fordfoundation.org/ford-forum). **Elise Roy,** a disability rights lawyer and design thinker, explains in her video “*When We Design for Disability We All Benefit*” *Ted Talk* in 2015, “I believe that losing my hearing was one of the greatest gift that I ever received.” Elise Roy lost her hearing at an early age and learned how to view her disability as a unique experience that
allowed her to discover her hidden genius and problem solving skills.

Roy advocates for design thinking as a powerful tool that can solve some of the world's greatest problems, disability or not. She points to the five steps of design thinking: “The first is defining the problem and understanding its constraints. The second is observing people in real-life situations and empathizing with them. Third, throwing out hundreds of ideas -- the more the better, the wilder the better. Fourth, prototyping: gathering whatever you can, whatever you can find, to mimic your solution, to test it and to refine it. And finally, implementation: ensuring that the solution you came up with is sustainable." She points to the many solutions that were originally made for people with disabilities, and that ended up being picked up, embraced and loved by the mainstream, disability or not. (One example) is an OXO potato peeler. It was originally designed for people with arthritis, but it was so comfortable, everybody loved it. Text messaging: that was originally designed for people who are Deaf. And as you know, everybody loves that, too. What if we started designing for disability first -- not the norm? As you see, when we design for disability first, we often stumble upon solutions that are not only inclusive, but also are often better than when we design for the norm.”

**Tiffany Yu**, the founder of [Diversability](#), a movement to rebrand disability, shares her story and similar perspectives on reframing the way we look at disability. Yu converted her incapacity to use one of her hands into a challenge. She positioned herself in her workplace as an added value contributor and argues that exclusion is more disabling to a person than an actual disability and that employers should hire people
with disabilities because of their strengths, not to meet a quota. She notes that “if we ground ourselves in our humanity we’ll remember that we are all the same and we should be equal.”

TAAPing into Democracy Leaders from MENA

World Learning’s Inclusive Development team led a full-day interactive TAAP Inclusion workshop for 23 young and enthusiastic participants from the Middle East and North Africa, who are participating in the 2016 Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Leadership for Democracy Fellows Program. The hands-on workshop, which was held on Friday, October 28th, provided a thoughtful and collaborative platform for participants to explore inclusive development. The Fellows examined elements of power dynamics that perpetuate social exclusion and marginalization as well as pathways for normative and systemic change. They also explored effective strategies to integrate inclusion into their individual projects while in the United States and their home countries. It was great to ground-truth with this group and we look forward to integrating their contributions to the Toolkit.

Photo courtesy of World Learning, 2016.

Got Inclusion?
We want to hear from you! Please share your inclusion activities, success stories, upcoming events, and intriguing resources. Send to TAAP@worldlearning.org.
New to TAAP? Read past newsletters and learn more by clicking here.