



Girl Effect: Ni Nynampinga

The economic theory around empowering girls to break the cycle of poverty in the developing world is one of the most important doctrines to have emerged in the last twenty years.

Building on this, the Nike Foundation in conjunction with the UK Department for International Development, set out with a mission to develop a unique way of igniting change.



Brief

We were tasked with leading this campaign and building a brand to create a positive cultural shift within Rwandan culture. Our challenge was to answer the following: What story could we tell, and in what way, to spread messages of empowerment to affect positive, lasting behavioural change?

Approach

In all of our work, we take a bottom-up approach to building tailor-made solutions. For this project, our mission was to listen, observe and curate the most relevant storytelling methods to inspire, educate and empower girls to rise from poverty.

After conducting various workshops, and working side-by-side with local artists, it was clear that to achieve the goals of this campaign, Ni Nyampinga would demand a radical shift in design practice from anything that had gone before.





Solution

'Challenge set perceptions that showcased female role models'

We created a brand identity that borrowed from traditional craft and injected it with a bold and modern palette and typeface. We developed guidelines to challenge set perceptions that showcased female role models, and ensured the publication offered new skills and advice about education, sexual health and violence otherwise inaccessible.

While we led the first issue hands on, we mentored a local design agency to take over the running of the magazine day-to-day.

We challenged them to think conceptually around the issues presented and bring these to life by creating a bright, open and inviting movement all would want to be a part of.

After a year of operation, the campaign received support from the Rwandan Education Board, and following, we knew it was time to embrace new tools to further amplify this message. We engaged with local radio and created a billboard campaign.

This was the biggest test for the branding we had created – was it iconic and memorable enough for people to instantly recognise?





Result

'Ni Nyampinga is a more widely known brand than Coca-Cola, with 41% of the local population engaging with it regularly.'

Not only did we create the first ever colour magazine in Rwandan history, with circulation sitting at 100,000 copies printed per issue, but five years on, Ni Nyampinga is a more widely known brand than Coca-Cola, with 41% of the local population engaging with it regularly.

As with any successful brand, when momentum becomes so great, soon comes the time to go 'in house.' In 2015, we assisted with the creation of a Ni Nyampinga house to do this. We worked with a local printing house and helped organise a government loan to purchase a press capable of the magazine, and are happy to say the magazine is now a self-sustaining entity.

As a small industry brag, this project also picked up a Nike Maxim Award 2012 and was the first ever non-Nike project to do so.

From the start, the ambition with this campaign was to spur a hotbed of creativity and training for Rwanda's girls and to do ourselves "out of a job." That we have now done this, and curated Rwanda's first girl teen brand for girls, by girls, is a job well done.

