



global development lab

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT LAB JOURNAL

2019-2020

UCLA



VOLUME 1

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Thank you to our 2019-2020 Spark campaign donors!

NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear readers,

I am so excited to present the inaugural volume of the Global Development Lab Journal at UCLA. We are a student-run organization that endeavors to create a community of individuals with a passion for international development and establish a space for students to learn, experience, and engage in community development projects critical to the alleviation of global poverty. Our vision is that students gain the skills necessary to experiment with initiatives of their own, while at the same time gaining an understanding of “development” that is sustainable, culturally-relevant, and in alignment with the goals and needs of their community partners.

Each year, a portion of our students apply to join the Project Incubator where they research, formulate, and pitch their own development initiatives. At our end of year Project Showcase, they compete to win funding to kickstart their ideas. Previous winning projects include Govind Srivastav's STI Clinic in Cape Town, South Africa which won funding in 2018. In 2019, Shelbie Pettiford won funding to implement a much-needed after school program in Tijuana, Mexico. Olivia Hansen, Ronni Ravid, and Malyhea Haghshenas also won funding in 2019 to bring wifi connection to Atatur Hospital, a rural government health facility in Kumi, Uganda. More about previous projects can be found on our website.

Moving forward, this journal will be a published compilation of the student initiatives from each annual Project Incubator cohort of the Global Development Lab at UCLA, regardless of if they won funding. By doing so, we hope to leave the door open for alternative partnerships and funding to support these projects. We hope to encourage undergraduate students to engage in development academia and to bridge the gap between theoretical classwork and hands-on engagement in local and global communities. This year, Project Incubator members were forced to adapt their projects amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic; this resulted in an inability to reach organizational partners that were out of the office and pushed groups with on-the-ground plans to transition to virtual ones. As a result, the four COVID-related projects in this edition coalesced under one larger group project that vied for funding to create one comprehensive website together.

We would like to thank our partners at the UCLA International Institute and our GDL Advisory Board for their continued support, resources, and guidance. We would also like to thank our generous donors for allowing us to bring these projects to life by funding the Entrepreneurial Information Sharing and Mentorship Hub and the larger COVID-19 project.

Sincerely,

Abbey Willett

Executive Director of the Global Development Lab at UCLA

AlternativeFour

Ilina Bhor

Abstract

Obtaining a college degree in the US is becoming increasingly competitive and expensive; securing a stable job and future seems harder than ever to achieve. On the other hand, students often pursue a college degree as a necessity but still face trouble finding jobs and paying off debt upon graduation. Either path seems risky and expensive to pursue after high school- so what should students be doing?

AlternativeFour is a website designed to help high school students plan for their future in a way that is comprehensive, useful, and sustainable in regards to financial and career goals. Its information and planning tools target the potential for students in learning about career misconceptions, uncommon opportunities, and in-depth self-evaluation.

As a remote and free platform, AlternativeFour hopes to alleviate broader issues that youth and young adults face- poverty, incarceration, poor physical and mental health- through allowing them to find the best path for self sustainment and fulfillment.

Problem Statement and Background Research

Pursuing a four-year university education right after high school is not always a feasible, ideal, and/or necessary plan for short-term and long-term well being. However, students are often unaware of the many pathways they can take after graduating that can help them be successful, whether or not they eventually want to pursue higher education. Because of this, two outcomes often result: a) going to college and incurring debt without having the perspective/ maturity/opportunities to get a degree that is meaningful and/or useful or b) settling for a job or pathway that they don't see the chance to improve or leave.

Whether or not everyone *should* go to college is still a debated topic. But school is always an option for later for those who don't want to pursue it immediately, and is difficult enough for those who know they want to go down that path. Students should have a free and easily accessible tool that can help them plan and modify their post-high school life in a way that fits well with their financial, career, and personal needs.

Personal experience drove me to understand the roots and effects of this problem beyond just the strong statistics. As a student at community college, I spoke to several individuals who had been accepted to transfer to top UC schools with scholarships but hesitated to leave their lower paying but stable current jobs for family reasons. As a tutor for BruinCorps, I spent months with my coworkers preparing games, presentations, and a campus tour to show our high school students how obtainable a UCLA degree could be. But despite explaining to them how they could attend for absolutely no cost, almost every student in my group said they didn't plan to apply because their families didn't think college was worth the time investment. These sorts of

backgrounds and needs aren't addressed by larger scale solutions for higher education; they require a more qualitative breakdown of the benefits of college and how to get there.

Needs Assessment

The perceived needs of AlternativeFour to be useful to its target group of users are as follows:

- Actual usage:
 - A computer and basic internet access
- Fundamental financial literacy information and assessments
- Assessments to gauge:
 - Goals
 - Needs
 - Preferences
 - Strengths
 - Possible careers
 - Priorities
- Productive ways to use pre-university time to help prepare for eventually transferring
 - Community college
 - ROTC / military
 - Vocational school
 - Apprenticeships
 - Including government tied ones
 - Work (ideally with ties to universities)
 - Volunteer or service programs (AmeriCorps and PeaceCorps esp)
- Links to other college or career prep services (Khan Academy, Avid)

Project Plan and Timeline

To create and implement Alternative Four in an effective manner over the 20 week period since starting, this is the breakdown of steps needed:

1. Brainstorm and finalize idea goal and platform
2. Interview and talk to students and teachers about their opinions on college, jobs, and resources for students
3. Modify and add content of AlternativeFour based on interview information
4. List off the areas that will be addressed on the website
5. Find a website and secure a domain
6. Specify exactly (titles, content) which pages will be featured on the site
7. Specify features on the site to also incorporate (ie, feedback)
8. Write out the information and assessments
9. Upload onto website
10. Publish website
11. Continually update and upgrade in response to feedback

Social Lean Canvas

<p>Purpose: To create an interactive tool for teens and young adults to plan for a financially secure, realistic, and flexible future as an alternative to immediately pursuing a four-year university education.</p>				
<p>Problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of info on options and finances - financial hardships - personal obstacles - no guidance in schools 	<p>Solution:</p> <p>Info, assessments, example paths, and planning sheets for students to explore options and interests</p>	<p>Unique Value:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - long terms needs/goals included - more inclusive - with non-ed and ed paths, and how to combine them 	<p>Unfair Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - did CC/UC “non-trad” - work in LAUSD - juvenile justice - study structure of ed for hr 	<p>Key Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inclusivity - financial stability - flexibility of changing paths - incorporation of personal needs/goals/preferences - emphasis on location - financially sustainable (minimal dependency on funds)
<p>Goal Impact: Students not going to university are able to: make the most of the opportunities surrounding them, have entry/exit options for what they pursue after, make choices that will benefit them the most, plan for long-term goals realistically</p>				

Impact Evaluation Plan

Because my project is remote, with voluntary and self-initiated participation, Alternative Four impacts communities more broadly but also less directly. It seems that the main concerns ethically that need to be considered about the impact of this website are a) being mindful of the different needs and realities for different populations, b) not promoting one life choice as better/superior to another, and c) keeping track of how students are influenced by this information. There are a few features I hope to build into the website to address these potential issues.

I hope to incorporate a feedback feature that will address A and C. This brief questionnaire can ask students questions about how confused they were, how relevant that information was, and if/how they might reconsider their post-grad options after using AlternativeFour. Ensuring B is based mostly on making sure that *all* sorts of options are included (college, community college, trade school, work, military, self-employment) and emphasizing the *pros* for all of them. If the website makes it far enough, I think it'd be cool to find and feature people who have taken each of these options and are now successful by an unconventional path. Finally, I will definitely include a comments section in the website where people can submit criticism or comments that might not be addressed in the questionnaire. From all of this, I hope to create a platform that is truly useful and up to date for as many people as possible.

Sustainability Plan

I will be addressing three types of sustainability that AlternativeFour should be mindful of: financial, organizational, and environmental.

Financial sustainability is an aspect of Alternative Four that is implemented into the basis of how its services are provided. Because everything is based online, the only funds

needed to directly keep it going are paying annual dues for its website and domain name. As of right now, I am the only person who is working to create and upkeep the website; in the future, funds could also be directed for hiring interns or freelancers for more complex and interactive tools.

Maintaining organizational sustainability given the current structure of Alternative Four is both easy and difficult for the same reason- I'm the only person behind the organization. Because responsibilities aren't delegated to another person, there is no worry about what to do if that support is lost. On the other hand, if I cannot maintain my responsibilities to the organization, it is entirely left on its own. With this in mind, I'm aiming to make it as self-sustaining as possible and definitely am open to the idea of expanding if the need or opportunity arises.

Environmental sustainability is easily maintainable since the platform is entirely online. Its resources can be used with computers that individuals and schools would have anyway. It can be easily shared virtually and does not require materials or travel that have a significant negative environmental impact.

Budget

My budget for AlternativeFour is extremely simple at the moment: \$40 per year for maintaining a domain and web page through Squarespace. Some versions can also be used with a student discount, so it may be even less. Overall, I would only need to request \$150 to keep the website afloat for three years.

Call to Action

Regardless of one's age or level of education, prioritizing post-grad support and planning for young students is a cause that benefits individuals and society as a whole. There are countless controversial debates regarding college and jobs right now: tuition rates, affirmative action, whether or not everyone should attend, etc.

But at the heart of these issues lie common concern about our youth being able to select and afford the right pathway: a route that allows them escape conditions of poverty, avoid incarceration or illegal methods of earning, gain skills to contribute to the workforce, be able to save and invest enough to buy a house and start a family in the future.

The problems and vicious cycles we see in the world today are hard to understand, expensive in their solutions, and unpredictable in response to intervention. Investing in the individual success of students now is the most effective and empowering way to help those broader issues become less prevalent and less inevitable in the future.

Acknowledgements

Much of I've learned to motivate me to pursue this project and shape it the way I did has come from EDU185 (Education through Community Engagement) and PUBAFF170 (Non-profit Governance and Management), as well as work experience and conversations with people who've worked with me at BruinCorps and International Rescue Committee. In addition to those, the following materials have also influenced my approach to this project:

De Soto, Hernando. *The Mystery of Capital*. New York: Basic Books, 2000.

Increasing Access to College: Extending Possibilities to All Students, ed. Tierney, William G. and Linda Serra Hagedorn. State University of New York, 2002.

Stevenson, Bryan. *Just Mercy*. New York: Spiegel and Grau, 2015.

Entrepreneurial, Information Sharing, and Mentorship Hub

Grace Stanley

Abstract

This project will be an information and asset sharing platform where people with lesser developed business, entrepreneurial, and technical skills (in most cases in the developing world) can access knowledge, information, business strategies, marketing techniques, various tutorials, intellectual property, etc. from individuals with more experience and knowledge in these areas (mostly in the developed world). This platform will resemble a combination of a Google Drive, a library, a Khan Academy mixed with a mentorship hub where companies and individuals can come to upload and access knowledge, various forms of know-how, and technological advancements. This platform will cover many different fields and have various sections including: business strategies, marketing know-how, computer/data science, information technology, intellectual property, code, innovative technology, and development technologies. This platform also intends to be a mentorship space where young entrepreneurs can interact, share, and gain ideas with mentors that are willing to share their time and know-how.

Location: Generally: Africa, Specifically: Ghana, Morocco, Egypt, Rwanda, South Africa

Problem Statement, Background Research and Justification

The problem that this project is addressing is the concept that we live in a highly globalized world that has the potential for a level international business playing field where entrepreneurs from all over the world can understand similar strategies and technologies and learn from each other. Although the young entrepreneurs in the developing world I am focusing on do have access to the internet and much of the technology and knowledge I am putting into this platform currently, there are various aspects of this platform that make it original. Rather than being a place of simple knowledge consumption this platform promises to be a tool kit to inform entrepreneurs of the tools and strategies that they should know within this realm. Additional aspects of the platform that set it apart include the ways in which business professionals will be able to philanthropically share intellectual property which is not open-sourced. A similarly innovative part of this platform has to do with the ways in which this platform will bring together various development technologies such as water sanitation techniques or electricity extending technologies for example. Lastly, the mentorship and commentary portion of this platform creates a space where entrepreneurs can learn from each other and better understand what knowledge is necessary within our globalized economic system.

Needs Assessment

The perceived needs that this project hopes to address include various sectors including but not limited to: technology, business, intellectual property, knowledge access, and mentorship. In a general sense, the overarching need for this project is related to the

need for a space for young entrepreneurs in the developing world to come and gain an understanding of what strategies and technologies are necessary for them to be successful within the international business world. Within this platform, they can begin to learn these strategies and technologies and gain mentorship from professionals within the field to gain a more nuanced understanding of how to succeed within our interconnected and international business world. In regards to specific technological perceived needs, all of these will be handled on a case by case basis. This will entail being much more specific in terms of reaching out to entrepreneurs in the developing world and asking what their specific needs are. This same process will apply for various business strategies, marketing know-how, and intellectual property. I plan on gaining insight into the specific needs of entrepreneurs in the developing world by first working with college students who are attending business schools in Ghana, Morocco, Rwanda, Egypt, and South Africa. This will allow me to have a regional focus of Africa generally but a more specific focus on these five countries. While I initially hoped I could make this platform accessible and useful to young entrepreneurs all over the world I recognize the value of having a regional focus. In regards to mentorship perceived needs, I intend on creating a platform where individuals in Africa can connect with and learn from successful and established business owners and professionals in the developed world. This mentorship platform is not the traditional way business owners provide philanthropically, and I think they would be very excited to share what they have learned and assist individuals with their businesses in the developing world. It is also important to simply create lines of communication where individuals in the developing world can clearly voice their needs and concerns. In regards to this, within the mentorship center, there will also be a commentary area where entrepreneurs can voice what barriers they are facing in creating successful businesses and what assets would be useful for them in terms of this platform.

Project Plan

Within this project, I began by reaching out to the UCLA Technology Development Group. I asked the contact I interviewed there these various questions:

- How does the tech community usually share intellectual property?
- Is there a point that intellectual property is public, and can just be found on the internet?
- Do you think that this could be a useful platform for people to share information from their business experiences?
- How do you think I should execute this?
- Do you think people would be willing to share business experiences and know-how?

I am still working on gaining contact with students at business schools in Ghana, Rwanda, Egypt, Morocco, and South Africa. Once I have gained a sufficient list of contacts in each of these areas I will conduct interviews and surveys with students. Asking them questions such as:

- If you were to make a tool kit regarding what you have learned in business school what various strategies, technologies, and know-how would it include?
- Looking towards the future of your business career what skills, strategies, and

and technologies do you want to gain an understanding of?

- What do you think of the idea of this platform? Do you think it could be of use?
- You are attending a school in one of the city centers in your country. How do you envision moving the business strategies and know-how you learned at school to the more rural parts of your country? How can this platform work to do this too?

After these interviews, I plan to interview various intellectual property lawyers and include these various questions:

- How does the tech community usually share intellectual property?
- Is there a point that intellectual property is public, and can just be found on the internet?
- Do you believe that business owners/companies would be willing to share their intellectual property as a type of philanthropic work?
- What would be the legal framework I would have to go through to make business owners feel confident that people would not take this intellectual property and re-sell it for a profit?

After these interviews, I would like to interview people within the technology community and ask them questions including:

- What types of tutorials, code, manuals, and intellectual property would be beneficial for young entrepreneurs in the developing world?
- Do you know of a similar platform or company that shares business know-how, mentorship, technological know-how?

Development Experts:

- How would I get in contact with budding entrepreneurs in the developing world?
- What type of technology do you think young entrepreneurs in the developing world would benefit from most?
- What type of technologies have you heard about that could aid development?

Social Lean Canvas

The Purpose: An information-sharing platform that will allow for young entrepreneurs in the developing world to come and learn from companies and business owners in the developed world. This learning will take the form of publicly available tutorials, academic articles, intellectual property, business strategies, marketing know-how, mentorship platform, etc.

The Problem: The problem is that within the developed world we have found many solutions to the problems we face with business development and success while young entrepreneurs are still struggling to find answers to the problems they face when opening and creating a successful business. This platform would be a seamless and simple way for young and budding entrepreneurs in the developing world to learn from business success and know-how gained in the developed world.

The Solution: The solution is simply to provide entrepreneurs with business strategies that will benefit them within their business endeavors. As I speak to more and more entrepreneurs I will understand more specifics of what assets would assist them.

The Existing Alternatives: There are ways that individuals potentially could access these business strategies and learn various technological platforms but this would be a unique place where all of these assets would be in one area and be a place for individuals to learn what they should know within this realm.

The Unique Value Proposition: This platform holds a unique place within the business development world not only because there is nothing like it but because it promises to bridge cultures and individuals while informing individuals of what is happening in regards to the success of businesses in the developed world. This last part is especially exciting to me. I am imagining a young entrepreneur in the developing world visiting this platform and gain a better understanding of the skills and platforms they should know in order to make their career and business ventures successful.

The Impact Evaluation: The impact of this platform intends to be the development of these entrepreneurs' knowledge on business strategies and in turn the resulting success of their businesses.

The Stakeholders: The various stakeholders are the individuals who will be working to create this platform, the people that will add intellectual property and business strategies to this platform, individuals that will be mentors on this platform, and the individuals that will use and learn from this platform.

The Costs: There will be costs in paying an individual for their time and energy to create this platform and perform the outreach necessary to collect various assets. It will also cost a small fee to pay for the website to put this platform online.

The Financial Sustainability: The seed funding for this project will be very low and once it is built out it will not cost a lot to maintain. As I build connections with companies and individuals that are willing to donate intellectual property, know-how, or offer mentorship I believe I will be able to ask for help to fund the maintenance and ongoing nature of this platform.

Impact Evaluation Plan

When considering the impacts of this project we can first consider the positive. In this regard, the positive impacts could include a space for entrepreneurs and tech-savvy individuals to come and learn what technologies and knowledge they should know in order to be competitive within their respective fields. This space not only promises to inform individuals concepts they should be familiar with but also introduces them to these platforms and how to use them. This platform also promises to be a space where successful business owners can come to upload intellectual property that is otherwise not available open-source on the internet. Also, the positive impacts are endless when considering the mentorship part of the platform where successful business owners and tech experts can mentor young entrepreneurs on how to be successful. These positive impacts are all intended.

In regards to the negative and unintended impacts of this platform, this platform could potentially not be what young entrepreneurs in the developing world need. It may be the case that various business strategies and tech platforms that I find useful within the

United States context do not apply to entrepreneurs in developing countries. In this case, I am creating a section of the platform where individuals will be able to comment on their needs, what they are struggling with, and tools that would be useful for them. Another negative impact of this platform is if business owners in the developed world agree to donate various types of intellectual property as a philanthropic donation and then individuals on this platform download this IP and sell it for a profit. I am speaking with an intellectual property lawyer in regards to this. Another negative impact would be if a lot of work and effort went into the platform and in the end, nobody uses or benefits from it. A way I plan to measure this is by using the analytics of my website to see how many people are visiting the pages, how much time they are spending on it, and how many different parts of the website they utilize. I also plan to make connections with universities within the developing world so that this platform can be easily accessed and used by young individuals hoping to create their own businesses and enter the workforce.

Sustainability Plan

Due to the fact that my GDL project is simply an online platform the initial funding to create it will just be the cost to buy the domain name and make the website live which is approximately \$150 per year. A part of this project that could become expensive is outreach in terms of advertising this platform. I do not like the idea of doing paid advertising in order to promote this platform. Rather I think an effective method to advertise and involve more individuals in the creation of this platform is by partnering with universities in the developing world in order to promote this platform. This way I could utilize university students that are going to business school or wanting to become entrepreneurs and use their knowledge in order to build out the platform and publicize it. An additional aspect of sustaining the platform would involve me committing vast amounts of time and energy in order to collect data and information, gaining donations of intellectual property and business strategies that are not open source, and finding successful business owners that would be willing to be mentors.

Budget

Year-long subscription to an online platform, approximately \$150. Not completely necessary but funding to advertise the platform via various academic websites, job boards, and at various business universities. Also not completely necessary but it would be useful to gain funding to make the running and success of this platform something I can pursue and be paid for my time. This amount will depend on many things including how much time and effort I am putting into the success of the platform and the overall success and usefulness of the platform.

Call to Action

We live at a point in history where we have come to the conclusion that aid will not create sustainable development and equity that is necessary within our globalized and interconnected world. On the contrary, we are moving towards an economic system where we can achieve an equal playing field where entrepreneurs and business owners can learn from each other and benefit from knowing the same business strategies and

technologies all over the world. Within this realm, it is necessary to create a platform where young entrepreneurs can come and access a tool kit that not only informs them of the business strategies, technologies, and platforms they should know and understand but also begins to give them the tools to learn these various skills. Additionally, over time this platform will begin to offer various technologies, intellectual property, code, and business blueprints that are donated by successful business owners and not open-sourced on the internet. Lastly, this platform will offer two other innovative sections, a development technologies section and a mentorship and commentary hub. This platform holds great potential and there are many ways to get involved and contribute to the success of this project. This involvement can include: suggestions on useful assets to be added to the platform, connections with successful business owners and established entrepreneurs, connections with young entrepreneurs in Africa, funding for various aspects of the platform.

Project COVID-19: Newsfeed

Audrey Aldisert, Nurhan Elgamil and Yashwini Sodhani

Abstract

Since the onset of Covid-19, there has been a pervasive circulation of misinformation surrounding the virus and its effects, which has had detrimental effects on the American public. This misinformation is generated by a host of different actors, whether it be scammers with devious agendas looking to profit off the pandemic, institutions or individuals misleading the public with a political motivation in mind, and even those who are well-intentioned yet still contributing to the spread of false information. Moreover, social media has exacerbated this problem with studies showing people are even less likely to think about a source or information's reliability before clicking "share"; what it has resulted in is a public that doesn't understand the character of the virus, believe in false cures, violate stay at home orders, and more. Our project attempts to combat this problem through the development of a website that resembles a Covid-19 only news feed that is personalized to each user. This feed will consist of links to reputable information and articles (like CNN, NYT, Wall Street Journal, etc.) that supply the American public with factually correct, relevant news. In this report we have included our problem statement, needs assessment, project description, impact evaluation, sustainability plan, operational budget, a prototype, and some concluding thoughts.

Problem Statement and Needs Assessment

The background for an ongoing pandemic is one piece of knowledge that most know all too well, but provides relevant context for our project's response. Since late 2019 an outbreak of a respiratory disease named SARS-CoV-2 or abbreviated as Covid-19 has moved from its initial genesis in China to most corners of the world. March 11 marked the official declaration by the World Health Organization of Covid-19 as a worldwide pandemic (AAPM&R). While the symptoms can be mild for many, those with underlying conditions such as the immuno-compromised along with the elderly are at risk of the virus proving lethal for them.

One of the large issues for Covid-19 is the rapid spread and long incubation period, increasing the possibility of asymptomatic carriers. This perfect storm contributed to the rapid spread of the virus before stay at home orders and lockdowns were put in place in a majority of countries. Even still, the number of cases continuously spikes as people do not take the measures with the level of seriousness as they should. Outside of the health risks the economy and many people's means of livelihood have been negatively affected and the longer unsafe behaviour contributes to more spread of the virus, the worse Covid's effects on society will get.

Amongst the dangers of the unprecedented times in which we are living, the spread of more than just a virus is contributing to the danger of these times. That is, the prevalence of misinformation and unreliable news surrounding Covid-19 and its effects.

Earlier this month, U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres said that we are in the midst of a “pandemic of misinformation”, highlighting the severity of this spread of misleading sources, statistics, and “cures” going around. (Pazzesse Screen 1). The misinformation makes sense and is not always ill-intentioned, but as hordes of people frantically look for any information that they can, the flow of misinformation has only been exacerbated by social media. Instantaneously, incorrect data and facts can be shared with an extremely wide platform of people and suddenly the work of institutions tasked with giving public health guidance is harder as they now have to combat falsehoods.

The differing strands of misinformation provide different levels of risk to a community. There is the strand of motivated misinformation whether it be by scammers trying to make money off of the pandemic, people trying to pull pranks, or political groups/individuals with political motivations in swaying public opinion one way or the other. According to a Pew Research Center study, “nearly two-thirds of Americans said they have seen news and information about the disease that seemed completely made up” (Pazzanese screen 1). When it comes to Covid-19, “this misinformation comes in many forms - from conspiracy theories about the virus being created as a biological weapon in China to claims that coconut oil kills the virus (Pennycook et. al. 2). What differentiates the misinformation surrounding the virus from viruses the world has encountered before is the pervasive social media culture of today’s world. An ongoing study has found that, when it comes to deciding what to share on social media “participants were far worse at discerning between true and false content” relative to when they were “asked directly about accuracy”. This was the starting point of our needs assessment that led us to our project.

Project Description

Our proposed solution is designing and implementing a website that provides the latest and most up-to-date information about Coronavirus. This site will be one section of a larger Covid-19 website also designed by other Global Development Lab Project Incubator members. This platform will be broken down into sections, including politics, business, economy, environment, foreign relations, democratic structures/international development, social distancing measures/updates, etc. Ideally, every user will have their own individual feed that is designed to present articles based on that users most frequently searched, downloaded, or read articles. For example, if one were to read many articles on reopening measures, then their feed would more heavily incorporate articles about what measures the United States and other countries are taking to incrementally open the economy and when these plans will take place. In fact, the first time a user visits our website, we plan on asking them a few brief questions about what information they are most looking for in order to immediately customize their experience.

Our group is interested in forming partnerships with other news sites for various reasons. First, we want to give our website credibility. Second, partnerships will allow us to have a consistent source of feedback because they have more experience in the

media industry than we do. While we understand that it may be out of reach to partner with sources such as CNN, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, MSNBC, etc., we will use sources from their websites, especially because of the established following each of these platforms has. Primarily, we are looking to partner with new and upcoming news sites that will be more compelled to gain increased viewership. We are looking for partners in the local Los Angeles area for logistical reasons and because they will have a smaller target audience and therefore a smaller following. The more low-scale a company's operations are, the more interested they may be to share resources.

The resources needed will primarily reside on human capital in order to keep our website as updated as possible. By human capital, we mean technical assistance with the actual creation of the website itself, building a news sorting algorithm, and ensuring its functionality and maintenance. We also will need a domain name, SSL certificate, WordPress Hosting Plan, and Codegaurd. These will be further discussed under the "operational budget" section.

Existing solutions are limited, but we have drawn inspiration from CNN's new Covid-19 page called "Coronavirus pandemic: Updates from around the world." The page is set up similar to a newsfeed and provides articles in the order in which they have been published. It also has tabs including: all, cases, catch up, economy, lockdowns, politics, and reopening (CNN). From first inspection, our site may seem quite similar, but the primary distinguishing factor is that we are providing invaluable information from limitless sources, while CNN is restricted to only CNN articles.

Lastly, we wanted to specify that our project will not be infringing on copyright laws given that generally speaking no permission is needed to provide a link to another website, which is exactly what we will be doing (University Library System). However, while it is not required, we will make an effort to reach out to the media outlets that we provide links for in order to not put too much stress on their servers. On the other hand, if we provide links for smaller platforms who may enjoy the extra needed traffic, we may be encouraged to continue this practice and under rare circumstances, they may even provide financial compensation.

Prototyping and Features

In order to create a compilation of news and content from the most reliable online publishers, we plan to utilise a piece of technology called a feedburner. A feedburner is a content aggregator that collates information from various feeds, filtering them to meet required specifications. Although an AI algorithm can be used to filter feeds and tailor them to individual users' preferences by using their browsing history as an indicator, we decided that this may be an invasion of privacy and settled on filtering feeds by broad content categories that any user can choose to see on their feeds when registering. (Fig. 1)

We created this prototype by asking potential users what features they would like to see, and included direct links to important resource repositories (Fig. 2). These direct links include CDC and WHO's Covid-19 pages, and USAGov's complete list of federal

government pages dedicated to coronavirus response across domains. We also linked the WHO's case tracker for up to date information of country-specific spread and tolls, as well as a symptom self-check bot created by JHU for diagnostic purposes.

Fig. 1: Registration Page of Prototype Website

Fig. 2: Home Page of Prototype Website

Another important question for us to address is how sources are chosen to be displayed on the website. Specific sources are dependent on the category chosen, but each content publisher will be approved to be published based on factual accuracy, political unbiasedness and expert authority. We have chosen to evaluate the sources allowed to be displayed by the Ad Fontes Media Bias chart developed by the Ad Fontes Media, a Colorado based media bias watchdog, to report transparency issues and political biases

in reporting. The source list is the component of our website that requires constant review in order to ensure quality content, and therefore we aim to re-evaluate the quality of content from selected sources on a periodic basis. User feedback is also essential to this process, and we can include a section where users can rate the news sources they prefer in the registration survey.

Evaluation Plan

We have defined multiple success metrics for our project, primarily those based on the number of people engaging with the website. First, through diagnostics, we intend on measuring how many people are clicking on the article links. By measuring the amount of traffic, we can also evaluate how much time each user is spending on each section of the website and improve the areas that get less attention. Once we have a stronger grasp on the average number of active users, we will be able to set more concrete goals in terms of the amount of people we want browsing.

Our primary impact evaluation tactics will be in the form of survey responses. Sample questions include: Did you find the information on this website useful and relevant? Did this website provide the information you were looking for? What would you like to improve about this website? Essentially, we want to capture the user's experience. Feedback through multiple choice and short answer responses will supply us with necessary information to make changes to the website as needed. Another critical success metric will be the levels of interaction with these surveys.

After the implementation of the website, if we believe a subscription email or app is necessary, we will develop just that. In brief, the app will contain the same components as the website, presented in an easy-to-access and consolidated manner. The email subscription service will provide users with technical updates and Covid-19 breaking news headlines. The more people that sign onto the subscription email (an easier endeavour than the creation of an app) will therefore provide valuable information for the popularity of our website.

Sustainability Plan

Website development can be made more efficient through the use of machine learning and artificial intelligence algorithms that can efficiently filter content for any biases or factual inaccuracies. If the website reaches an economically self-sustaining size, we can employ developers to implement algorithms that can keep the news feed running with potentially fewer human effort required. This will ensure that the content remains relevant to the users, and until such algorithms are implemented we plan to consult our user base frequently on the credibility of sources provided and update them accordingly.

On another note, we also want our website to be sustainable in the sense of minimizing its carbon emission footprint. Tons of electricity, primarily generated by fossil fuels, is needed to power websites and store data. However, shaving off weight from each page of our website will diminish its carbon footprint. Through content strategy, videos won't be present and instead we will resort to still pictures. Moreover, we intend on saving

these images in the correct format and size. We intend on using free services (like smush.it) to have the photographs optimized; indeed, “good optimization could shave 72 percent off mobile image weight” (Christie). Our code design will also be optimized through “shrinking scripts, compressing downloads, setting appropriate caching times, and combining files,” which can “all help reduce data overhead and HTTP requests” (Christie). Depending on how our funds will be allocated and leftover money, we can even pay for a green host, which is powered by renewable energy.

Operational Budget

In order to build the proposed news aggregator website, most expenses are associated with technical component requirements, development, and maintenance. The proposed level of funding is also applicable to the entire Covid-19 website project, as it can encompass all the larger website functions. The component requirements for website development, at the very least, are a domain name and an SSL certificate. A specific piece of software technology required for aggregating links automatically to news from various trusted sources is an aggregator. This customizable aggregator plugin is available with the WordPress services at no additional cost, therefore we will use it to develop our website. Since our team’s combined domains of expertise do not include website development, we hope to learn how to assemble the bits through research and existing online services. In case we are unable to fully realise the goal due to our knowledge limitations, we will utilize external help for website development and expect to compensate the professional or experienced developer a small fee.

ITEM	COST	DESCRIPTION
Monthly Domain Cost:	\$9.99-\$12.99 per month	The monthly cost of using a platform for creating a domain and web hosting.
SSL Certificate	\$50-\$75 per year	A news aggregator compiles news items from feeds of different publication sources.
Marketing Cost	\$100 per month for 3 months	A maximum budget for reaching audiences during initial launch, by promoting it using google ads.

<p>(Possible): Contracted Developer Cost:</p>	<p>Depends on the hourly rate of developer (can vary from \$25 - \$100 per hour)</p>	<p>Developers would aid with the implementation of all components, maintenance, and technical difficulty resolution.</p>
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Fig. 3: Itemized Expenses

Since the level of funding required at the scale we plan to implement this website is small, we do not anticipate a requirement for additional grants outside of the GDL funds. If we are able to scale this model to reach a larger audience through the website, we can expect to generate an amount of advertisement revenue from the website which can fund maintenance and upkeep. At a very large scale, it is possible to generate revenue from the content creators (news websites, government agency websites, etc.) looking for new distribution networks to reach their audiences.

Project Plan with Timeline

	May	June	July	
Initial website prototyping				
Unit and Integration Testing				
Initial Launch				
Further refinement based on user feedback				
Marketing				

Fig. 4: Project Timeline

Since this project has been created as a short term response to Covid-19, it is to be developed on a shorter time frame and does not have a long lifespan. In the US alone, the pandemic recovery is expected to take years across all domains - death tolls, business losses, and policy changes are going to be essential information until and after a cure is found.

The development plan follows one required for any technological product, beginning with initial prototyping. We have developed a prototype website layout, and will initiate actual website development once proper funding is received to purchase the necessary

development tools and services. Each individual component of the website, such as the feedburner and the external links will be tested individually, called the unit testing phase. Then, the website will be integrated with the other Covid-19 response project websites, and this phase would require integration testing to ensure they function properly together. We aim to launch the project by the end of June, while the pandemic and information related to it is still relevant and there is adequate time to develop a reliable product.

We will continue to tweak and maintain the website once launched, based on user survey feedback and evolving requirements. To ensure maximum reach, we will market the website on social media using a part of our budget to pay for advertisements.

Conclusion

Misinformation is something that each individual can have a hand in combatting. By creating a one-stop destination for reliable news surrounding the pandemic we have attempted to ease this task. By taking a few extra seconds to check on the reliability of information before clicking share, each and every one of us can help ensure a safer tomorrow. Our project hopes to coalesce all of that information into one place, making the public's job a bit easier.

Note

Due to the unprecedented circumstances presented by the global pandemic, the implementation of our initially chosen project was rendered impractical in the near term and our team made the strategic decision to divert our resources towards a COVID-19 Response Project. Our initially chosen project was a financial literacy resource for low-income urban youth in Mumbai, India. We identified a gap in knowledge access which we realized was crucial to increase financial inclusion, security, and service uptake among the next generations. In our research we interviewed non-profits in the financial inclusion sphere and micro-credit lenders to understand the resources already available. Our project aim was to build an easily implementable curriculum and resource base for schools to teach young adults the basics of personal and business finance. We appreciate those who helped us fundraise to meet this goal, and hope we can continue to make progress on this front despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

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Addressing Educational Inequities in the Age of COVID-19

Tasneem Sadok and Julia Houshmand

Abstract

This proposed project aims to address the inequity in primarily immigrants' access to accurate information as it pertains to the COVID-19 pandemic and its recommended precautions. Through rigorous research of accredited sources, a revised pool of knowledge concerning COVID-19 precautions has been formatted, taking into account often overlooked factors such as cultural sensitivities and immigrant resource insufficiencies. Dissemination of this information will take the form of convenient posters, pamphlets, and virtual materials translated in English and Spanish and distributed in highly frequented physical locations in the greater Bay Area deemed to provide high visibility to immigrant communities. Translated materials will also be provided to healthcare and small business contacts in Cusco, Peru to fortify their preexisting efforts against COVID-19 with free and convenient access to this information. Online disbursement of virtual versions of these materials has also been taken into account via a planned targeted social media campaign and the publishing of findings on a joint website with other Global Development Lab members.

Background Context and Needs Assessment

Targeting Spanish-speaking populations was inspired by this project's original trajectory prior to limitations placed by COVID-19. During Tasneem's volunteer work in a local military clinic in Cusco, Peru, diligent recording of patient cases revealed that social determinants of health were just as influential in informing patient outcomes as were their strict medical diagnoses. Social determinants of health are defined by the CDC to be factors external to one's direct medical status that still profoundly affect their ultimate health outcome (Social Determinants of Health, 2018). The Cusqueñan community, which resides at the axis of many such determinants including poverty, lack of equitable education, and restrictive cultural norms, no longer have these factors adequately assessed on their own but rather compounded with each other to create large and systemic disadvantages in health outcomes, especially those pertaining to nutrition.

Ultimately, many clinic visits came down to lackful knowledge concerning basic and non-invasive tenants of food safety that resulted in preventable ailments, often progressing to more serious stages of illness that required specialized medical care, placing an unnecessary strain on an already overly exerted and underfunded health system (Alcalde et al., 2011).

Recognizing this educational gap to be a reality just as pertinent for immigrant communities here in the United States, contending with added linguistic and cultural barriers, reorienting the scope of this project to local Spanish-speaking communities

and other minority groups logically followed. This issue of adequate access to accurate, medically relevant information is heightened further in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic which has polarized and exacerbated existing issues running the gamut of socioeconomic determinants of health. With the globalization of information, backed primarily by the democratization of the internet, we have seen an unprecedented increase in exposure of ideas, increasing exponentially and posing new unconsidered ethical dilemmas (Clark et al., 2017). Due largely to the unprecedented nature of the internet's meteoric rise and unapproached discussions concerning the ethical tradeoffs of censorship, controls on harmful or inaccurate information are present only on an ad hoc basis, are poorly designed, and are even more poorly enforced (Li et al., 2014). Without the right tools and educational background to learn how to effectively contend with this massive, often contradictory body of knowledge, individuals can easily fall prey to the pernicious effects of sponsored messages, propagandistic advertisements, and uncredentialed advice, relying on these otherwise persuasive sources for their response to a deadly disease.

Beyond the general difficulty in navigating and screening this informational minefield, immigrants and minority communities in the United States face a suite of unique challenges in grappling with the new age deluge of information as it relates to COVID-19. In a clarifying town hall executive director of the Los Angeles County Office of Immigrant Affairs, Rigoberto Reyes, emphasized that due both to immigrant communities' understandable mistrust of the United States government given the recent political climate and deeply entrenched cultural norms, there is a proclivity to glean information from social media such as Whatsapp message threads and celebrity-endorsed messages as opposed to scientifically validated sources or local health organizations (Rabin et al., 2020). Insufficient access to better-validated information is further compounded by the fact that the majority of quality information on the internet today is exclusively offered in English, (Kralisch et al., 2006).

In the context of insurmountable systemic issues concerning federally regulated immigrant health support here in the United States and the glaring inadequacy of state-run programs and institutions designed to provide marginal aid, unvetted information sourced online can prove a tipping point in immigrants' decision-making and ultimate health outcome. However, the systemic weak point of informational regulation and circulation can conversely be utilized as an access point in this hierarchical continuum of immigrant health, offering an opportunity to interject and dampen the effects of other social determinants. Given limited time and the high proportion of immigrants who speak primarily Spanish compared to other languages in our demographic of interest - immigrants in Northern California - English and Spanish proved to be the most effective translations for this endeavor (California QuickFacts from the US Census Bureau, 2020). Additionally, tying back to the roots of this project, informational materials will be disbursed in key areas throughout Cusco, Peru.

Project Plan

A. Contacts

- Volunteer Program Coordinator - Andrea Garcia

- Peru Healthcare Clinic Staff Coordinator
- Peru Healthcare Clinic Healthcare Professionals (Doctors and Nurses) - Dr. Rosa Gonzalez
- International Health and Policy Expert - Amel Najjar
- Empirical Research Director at UCLA - Benjamin Nyblabe
- Epidemiology Researchers
- Coronavirus Researchers
- Healthcare personnel having treated (or treating) COVID-19 positive patients
- Spanish Translator - Javier Hernandez Lopez
- Business owners in Northern California (for poster displays)
- Business owners in Cusco, Peru (for poster displays)

B. Plan for Implementation

Due to limitations posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, initial plans to travel to Peru to hold in-person workshops and work directly with healthcare professionals in curating culturally-sensitive educational programs are no longer feasible. However, sharing of gathered information with the community in Cusco, Peru is still an endeavor of interest, concurrent to the dissemination of this information virtually and locally in Northern California. The amended plan for implementation will thus take the following course of action:

- Development of informational materials in physical and virtual form to be subsequently translated
- Vetting of these materials through their review by contacts with credentialed experience in coronavirus research, contacts who have cared for COVID-19 patients, and contacts who hold insight into the cultural nuances of our two demographics of interest
- Publishing of our finalized virtual materials on the joint Global Development Lab COVID-19 website
- Kickstarting a Twitter and Instagram social media campaign targeted towards Spanish speakers and immigrants in the greater Bay Area
- Ascertaining highly-trafficked and relevant locations in Northern California and abroad in Cusco, Peru conducive to display of these materials in poster form
- Undertake printing process to accommodate the physical display of materials at these targeted locations

C. Timeline

Assuming we will be able to begin implementing this project this summer, this general timeline will be followed:

- June 15th - 30th:
 - Data collection and Interviews with healthcare professionals, coronavirus researchers, and other key contacts
 - Scouting highly frequented areas within Northern California at which posters would be beneficial

- July 1st - 10th: Creation of Posters (English and Spanish format)
- July 15th - 20th: Posters sent to Cusco, Peru and placed at selected areas within Northern California
- July 21st - 31st: Creation of the website page based on data collected the month prior
- August 1st - continuing: Regular updates to the posters and website based on ongoing research and new knowledge on the coronavirus

D. Impact Evaluation

This project will be evaluated through long-term data collection from which we will observe for any change in incidence of coronavirus within Cusco, Peru's population and within lower-income communities. Surveys will be conducted to evaluate whether there has been a decrease in burden on healthcare professionals within clinics in Cusco, Peru and California in response to a potential decrease in coronavirus incidence. In addition, these surveys will also give the healthcare professionals a chance to offer feedback on the efficiency and format of these materials. Finally, we will also ask to be given regular managerial reports from the Cusco, Peru Healthcare Clinic Staff Coordinator for an overview.

Social Lean Canvas

- Purpose: Create a model for educational materials effective at minimizing the incidence of coronavirus within vulnerable communities in the US and in Cusco, Peru.
- Problem: Low-income and Spanish-speaking communities in Cusco, Peru and Northern California respectively, disproportionately grapple with educational adequacy issues, compounding their predisposition to poorer health outcomes and overburdening the local healthcare systems. As such, they are more vulnerable to increased coronavirus infection and subsequent deadly consequences.
- Solution:
 - **Training Initiative**: The first phase of the project aims to create an effective, robust, and ethically sound set of educational materials. Rooted in empirical research and input from professionals in the relevant fields, this curriculum will be distributed in written and online formats (posters and website, respectively). These materials will then be used as the basis for educating community members on the coronavirus and the precautions to take, in addition to the incorporation of medical education into the discussions between healthcare professionals and their patients.
 - **Educational Dissemination**: This second phase of the project aims to empower the above personnel to conduct outreach with the provided materials in whatever capacity relevant and feasible in their role. Posters will also be placed in areas highly frequented by low-income populations to supplement their knowledge on preventative measures and critical information in regards to Covid-19.

- Key Metrics: An ongoing initiative of this project is to continually evaluate the effectiveness of this project by remaining in touch with involved healthcare professionals and research experts and conducting primary research on our demographics of interest. This will allow for assessment of the effectiveness of this outreach to use as the basis for improvement and replication moving forward. This will mainly comprise data in the form of short surveys, open-ended interview answers, managerial reports, public health research, and long-term data collection.
- Unique Value Proposition: Our work will be based on primary research gained through the use of surveys of willing physician collaborators to better cater our services to them and systemically work at alleviating one social determinant contributing to poor health outcomes.
- Impact: This educational model will serve to disrupt the endless cycle of preventable disease by educating the population and strengthening the community on preventative measures easily followed. If positive results indicating a decrease in coronavirus incidence and associated conditions are collected, this program will be expanded to other similarly vulnerable communities.
- Unfair Advantage: This model will succeed because we are utilizing trusted community members (physicians and other healthcare providers) to educate the population. With a knowledge of the social landscape in Northern California and personal experience with the immigrant narrative, we are uniquely equipped to interact with our local community. Foreign aid is not being delivered by us, but rather facilitated by community members equipped to address the pandemic, alleviate concerns, educate their community, and reduce incidence.
- Channels: COVID-19 preventative measures will be spread via designed conversation points (assuming remote appointments are available) between physician and patient, as well as through subsequent word-of-mouth and displayed posters (Cusco, Peru). Based on interviews with public health experts, posters will be placed at key locations within low-income communities. Research findings will be displayed on the joint global development lab website, which will be promoted through social media campaigns targeted to low-income individuals, immigrants, and Spanish speakers.
- Cost Structure: The major costs lie in the printing of posters and the sending of a portion of them abroad to Peru. In addition, financial assistance will also be needed for the maintenance of the website.

Budget and Sustainability Plan

A. Budget Proposal

Project Expenses

Website Maintenance

Wix Website Builder Subscription (1 year)	\$60
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Printed Materials

40 Laminated Posters for Display	\$1,880
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100 Informational Brochures	\$75
15 Poster Tubes for Shipping to Peru	\$25
Postage for 15 Posters Sent to Peru	\$115

Total Project Expense Budget: **\$2,155**

B. Plan For Financial Stability

For this project to be financially sustainable, a portion of the funds will go towards maintaining the website that will share COVID-19 health and prevention information with the rest of the funds going towards printing educational posters to be placed in highly-frequented areas of vulnerable communities.

C. Plan For Organizational Stability

For this project to be organizationally sustainable, the website and posters will be updated based on continuous research alongside virtually disseminated information. The posters will be placed in low-income communities and neighborhoods, where the online format may not be as easily accessible.

Call to Action

Already facing a barrage of social determinants to their health, low income and immigrant populations - such as those found in Cusco, Peru and Northern California - are at a systemic disadvantage in regards to their health outcomes. The factor of access to quality information is profound as it relates to health outcomes, heightened in the context of a global pandemic. Thus great power lies in dissemination of accurate information, one that can be left unregulated and confound other variables to result in poorer health outcomes or one that can instead be effectively harnessed to empower vulnerable populations and minimize the damage incurred by other systemic barriers to their wellbeing.

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COVID-19 Website: Platform for those Disproportionately Affected

Raven Maier Bell, Landon Goldberg and Emily Gardner

Purpose

When we first began GDL, Landon, and I wanted to create a project that would help the unhoused in Los Angeles. Although that is still our goal, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Landon, Emily, and I have decided to work along with our fellow GDL members to create a website that would provide much-needed information, organization, and help people find the resources they need during this chaotic time. Thus while we are still focusing on those most marginalized during this time, which includes the unhoused, we want to do it on a much broader scope – looking at how race, socioeconomic standing, and citizenship status have played major roles in resource and healthcare provision during quarantine and how that has negatively affected the communities we are looking into.

Now that we have geared our project to be COVID-19 related, as students from UCLA with access to resources far beyond what the majority of people under this pandemic have, it is our duty to help those that have become more marginalized and to help our country as a whole, understand how we got here, how the pandemic should have been handled, and what people need to survive and thrive under quarantine and in the world after quarantine has been lifted. The U.S., supposedly one of the world's-leading nations, has been unable to provide adequate testing, information, and action on the pandemic. While other nations like South Korea tackled the pandemic head-on, quarantining immediately and providing an abundance of testing and resources for their populations, resulting in dwindling case numbers of COVID-19 (McKenna). By creating a website with much-needed updates on COVID-19, potentially a policy memo for future pandemics and actions on how to best help those marginalized, and a resource page, we hope that in the short run, people will receive much needed factual knowledge on COVID-19 and further actions they can take or that the federal and state government needs to take to mitigate the negative effects of COVID-19. In the long-run, we hope that community members will be able to receive and the government made aware of the resources they need and are provided for future pandemics, as well as providing ways to mitigate the effects the upcoming recession will have on those, (especially those that were already marginalized before – communities of color and those undocumented), and to bring a sense of organization in the chaos of fake news, national unpreparedness, racial and class discrimination of access to health care services, and anything else people may need through this dizzying time.

Needs Assessment

The circumstances of COVID-19 are so unprecedented that no healthcare, social, or economic system could have been adequately prepared for the influx of issues. Thus, a plethora of gaps in our system have been exposed and they need documentation. Additionally, in these tumultuous times, many individuals have expressed that they are feeling alone, as though nobody is experiencing the same issues as them. Our project

will attempt to satisfy two different identified gaps. Firstly, we hope to fulfill the need for a platform of connection between people to mitigate these feelings of loneliness. Secondly, we also hope that these stories will serve as documentation of the gap of support that marginalized communities are facing at this time. If we have documentation of what these communities are up against right now, then we can not only have more data about what is needed right now but also our systems can be better prepared to support individuals in the case of a future event.

Project Description

As a part of the greater COVID-19 related website, our section of the site focuses on different ways the virus has disproportionately impacted already disadvantaged populations. We aim to show these effects through a qualitative lens by sharing individuals' stories from different affected communities. It is our hope that by putting faces and stories to the statistics of coronavirus, we can help viewers of the website better comprehend the types and severity of harm the virus is inflicting on already-vulnerable populations.

Below is our social lean canvas we used to develop our idea:

Global Development Lab at UCLA Social Lean Canvas

PURPOSE				
The purpose of this project is to show qualitatively how COVID-19 is impacting vulnerable individuals and communities.				
PROBLEM	SOLUTION	UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION	IMPACT EVALUATION	STAKEHOLDERS
<p>According to the CDC, COVID-19 "current data suggest a disproportionate burden of illness and death among racial and ethnic minority groups." However, statistics on their own often fail to properly explain a problem on the magnitude of COVID-19. The problem is showing these disproportionate effects more descriptively to stakeholders.</p>	<p>One part of the larger COVID-19 website will be dedicated to sharing stories of how the virus has effected individuals. We will analyze the disproportionate effects of coronavirus through pictures and words.</p>	<p>Our idea is unique in that it focuses on the effects of COVID-19 from the perspective of an ethnographer. Rather than flood the internet with even more difficult-to-understand statistics, we aim to give people short, descriptive but easily digestible stories that help visitors to our website better understand how this virus has impacted the lives of communities who were already disadvantaged prior to the pandemic.</p>	<p>I think the more we spend in both effort and dollars advertising the website, the larger impact we will see. If our website is shared and we leverage the existing relationships we have within and outside the UCLA community along with possible strategic internet advertising, we can get our message and these stories out to a wider audience.</p>	<p>The major stakeholders of the project would be the people who's stories we are sharing. We ought to do our best to give their voices a platform to be heard. While initially our audience will largely consist of family and friends, hopefully we can attract viewers from outside those circles as we collect more stories and continue promoting the site.</p>
	EXISTING ALTERNATIVES			
	<p>There is a high degree of interest in quantifying the effects of the virus but little in the way of descriptive, anecdotal analysis that puts faces and stories to the numbers.</p>			

<p>COSTS The initial costs <u>involves</u> hosting the website and whatever advertising dollars we decide we need to properly promote the site.</p>	<p>FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY Websites are relatively cheap to maintain on an annual basis. If we are flooded with visitors to the site, that could present additional costs as far as hosting goes, but overall we are still talking about a 1 or 2 year small down payment to sustain the website until a vaccine is developed.</p>
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Evaluation Plan

Currently, our goal is to provide accurate information and connections to resources to marginalized communities during the pandemic, as well as to create a policy memo, and an online platform to advocate for changes these communities desperately need. In particular, we are looking at communities that are socioeconomically disadvantaged, those unhoused, undocumented, minority communities, and others that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 due to discrimination and disproportional unemployment in service sectors (Kantemneni). For example in major cities like New York and Chicago, communities of color have been found to be more vulnerable to the disease and to face more serious symptoms due to pre-existing conditions such as diabetes and heart disease (of which have been linked to the effects of racial segregation), (Williams and Blanco). In trying to understand this problem, as well as provide this community with necessary resources, I believe our team is a needed link in the chain of advocacy that we have seen in the past few months for these communities. The extremely malignant and discriminatory effects of the pandemic and institutional discrimination are unavoidably clear as we see firsthand the ramifications of inaction, therefore they must be addressed.

We would like to start our project by conducting ethnographic studies, rooted in qualitative feminist methodology, principally community-based participatory research. Because none of us are personally from the communities we would like to work with, we want to use the community-participatory approach by going through the leaders that are directly connected to the communities, to then ask community members their perspective, experiences, and input to better understand the socio-cultural and economic needs of the community (and to develop a toolkit that has immediate meaning to them (Chigudu). Simply, we want to start a dialogue, not a one way, "my way or the highway," approach, but we want to understand their own unique stories, and then let them tell us what we can do to help. In doing so, we believe the key is to recognize that as economically secure, UCLA students, we are incredibly privileged over those that we would like to work with, and thus cannot determine what issues they face without discussing with them first.

However, that is why we are using a community-based participatory approach so as to help those communities transform their own knowledge of and needs for their community and to turn that into a toolkit they can access and use to their liking. As of now, we are a part of a team of students that are working to create a COVID-19 website. In terms of data collection, we have personally reached out to conduct interviews, create surveys, analyze documents and news sources, and have the potential to conduct a photo ethnography to analyze the impact of COVID-19 on marginalized communities. To

evaluate the effectiveness of our project, we will look at visitor usage of the site, conduct surveys to determine the impact and usefulness of the site with a series of both qualitative and quantitative questions, and with a policy memo, we hope to influence California governmental decisions, therefore judged based on the effectiveness of promoting change that these communities would like to see.

Sustainability

Not only do we want our project to be sustainable in terms of being well-funded enough that it can remain around for a long time, but a larger goal of ours is also to ensure that the information written into the testimonies remains beneficial in the long term. In the short-term, it is our hope that the implementation of our specific page onto this website will help within disadvantaged communities to connect. In the long-term, as mentioned, we want this project to also serve as personal testimonies to gaps in the system that must be addressed before another crisis happens, giving our project an importance outside of the current COVID-19 pandemic. As for funding, since we are a part of the larger COVID-19 website and as will be discussed in the operational budget section, our operating costs will remain under \$20/month for the entire website. To keep the information as relevant (and thus our project more sustainable) we are going to add a submission box to our page for people to upload stories for review which then we can then post. These will keep up engagement with our website amongst followers who enjoy the stories they read.

Operational Budget

We anticipate the following costs:

1. \$18 per month for hosting a website on Squarespace
2. <\$50 to acquire a domain name

In addition, after discussing with the larger COVID-19 website group, we may be interested in asking for a small amount of additional funding to market the website.

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Understanding COVID-19 with a Cultural Lens: Search for Solutions Outside Your Boundary

Haru Nishigaki and Ohnha Ro

Background

The global pandemic placed a brake on every part of the world, economically, politically, and socially. The number of deaths is surging without definite breakthrough paths; economies are slowing down with no promising rebound in the future. As a response, states are developing domestic and foreign tactics to protect the public health, the economy, and the general society. While societies are fighting against the same virus, their countermeasures are far from identical. The countermeasures are shaped by the unique social structure of the societies, and are customized to cope with the different obstacles and priorities raised by the pandemic. The enforcement, effectiveness, and impacts on citizens also differ significantly—US is facing severe backlash to the basic lockdown orders, while Saudi Arabia is imposing fines and imprisonment to curb public gatherings. On another end, South Korea has never enacted lockdown, but is tracking individual telephone GPS to trace the virus spread without much complaints. The differences are not trivial, especially as they directly affect the death rates and economic performances. Thus, looking into the sociocultural differences of the societies, and the correlation with the countermeasures and the effectiveness will provide valuable data to predict the future globalscape, and will serve as historical data to interpret the actual impacts in the future.

The existing online websites and databases provide statistical data on the death, positivity, and recover rate, etc., or analyses on economic policies and adjustments. This lacks the cross-cultural analyses on COVID-19 countermeasures and performances, and neglects the fundamental factors shaping the statistics. By analyzing COVID-19 countermeasures by countries, and interpreting the measures and outcomes within the given sociocultural context of each country, our project aims to investigate the missing link between the reality and the statistics. The analyses will be accompanied by personal interviews of the nationals to examine how the different operation models are realized at the individual level.

By sharing the comparative analyses online, we look forward to educating people on how different countries are reacting to the global pandemic, and how the differences are affecting the citizens of the countries. By putting the different paths into sight, the users will be able to broaden their perspective, learn from different cultures, and build solidarity with citizens across the world. The practical information aside, we hope to provide a platform where people can bond across borders and overcome the growing anti-globalization sentiment.

Interviews

[Interview with Eric Sheppard \(UCLA Distinguished Professor in Department of Geography\)](#)

Q1. The lack of information and representation on the peripheries' COVID-19 countermeasures makes it hard to understand how this “global” pandemic is affecting different parts of the globe. We also see media distorting/fetishizing Asian cultures and their achievements in harnessing the pandemic. What can we do, as students and researchers, to shift the discourse into a more culturally sensitive and nuanced perspective?

A1. A great question. One way to do this, is to take a data-based approach to understanding the phenomenon itself to identify those seeking to spread fake news, reinforce racial stereotypes, and be proactive—collaboratively challenging this on social media. Also by doing our own research—familiarizing ourselves with the relevant medical and public health studies. The question of who started this is a distraction: The question is how to ameliorate the pandemic and how this particular pandemic reflects long-standing penetration of human societies into the more-than-human world, exacerbated by capitalist growthism and expansionism and globalization.

Q2. ‘Third World’ innovations have long been disregarded by the ‘First World’; are there examples of ‘Third World’ COVID-19 countermeasures that we can learn from?

A2. This is an emergent question to which we have limited knowledge—but an important one. The one thing I know is that kampung leaders in Jakarta—hung out to dry by the government neglect—are proactively working to familiarize residents with the dangers and what can be done and developing their own initiatives. For example, with population densities in these kampungs higher than in Manhattan social distancing is a real challenge. But there are deep social networks and lots of people power available to supplement social distancing with the labor- and knowledge- intensive labor of contact tracing.

Q3. Are there ongoing researches on how sociocultural factors are affecting COVID-19? We’re interested in studying how different cultures and social values shape the governments’ countermeasures, the implementation, and the performances. Are there researchers you would recommend us to reach out to regarding the topic?

A3. There must be such research—but very much a work in progress. Nothing refereed will be published yet, but funding agencies will prioritize this. I attach a reading list compiled at NYU about pandemics and cities¹, and a paper co-authored by one of our graduate students (Dimitar Anguelov) giving a contemporary overview.² Another of our graduate students, Dian Irawaty, just organized a workshop on urban resilience and covid in Jakarta.

[Sample Interview with Anh Nguyen \(UCLA student from Vietnam\)](#)³

The following is an excerpt from a personal interview with a UCLA student. As we will discuss later in the paper, we will conduct personal, conversational interviews with

¹ See “Pandemic Urbanism: Praxis in the Time of Covid-19.”

² See “Contextualizing Coronavirus Geographically.”

³ Note: Situation in Vietnam (at the time): 324 confirmed cases and 0 deaths; 261,000+ tested

citizens to learn about how citizens are responding to the pandemic in each country.

[**Q4.** How was the environment/condition of quarantine?

A4. After I came back to Vietnam, I just went straight to the camp after arriving at the airport. They allowed my family to bring stuff for me but did not allow contact. (Few days later, the government even banned families from bringing essentials for the sake of containment and safety.) I live in a room with 2 other people. We shared a bathroom among 3 of us. We are required to wear masks all the time, because there are positive cases here. But they do not provide masks. They do not even have wifi here, so I need to use my own cellular data. It's really hot, but we have no fans or air-conditioner. We don't even have hot water. We also don't have a mattress or pillow. But I have heard worse stories from my cousins who also have to go to quarantine camps. He shares a room with like a dozen people.

...

Q15. What are people's reactions to the crisis?

A15. My dad could not travel back to my grandparents' place just because he lives in the city. People are so scared of death here and it is so wild. They literally announce to the whole town should there be a person from the city set foot inside that town. My dad lives in this apartment complex and there are a bunch of students coming back from foreign countries and are in home quarantine. They literally put up pictures and addresses of those people so that if they notice them outside people would call security. It's like a freaking witch hunt. It's crazy. Same here actually students coming back from foreign countries are being criticized by some ppl so much. They see us as burdens of society. It's actually kinda bad. People are being cautious by this point, it's just plain nonsensical. I mean but even for people who get infected it's not a crime they did not choose to get infected. The blaming is crazy like someone intentionally causes the virus.]

Perceived Needs/Problem

- Easy access to credible and comprehensive data set of:
 1. List of COVID-19 countermeasures by countries
 2. Sociocultural background and explanations of the different measures
 3. Comparative evaluation on the effectiveness of varying countermeasures
- Platform to share individual experiences with their governments' COVID responses

Solution



The image above is a model of how we will format the website (the design of the model is based on google news, and will be redesigned as we build the website). The interactive world map will guide the users to the basic statistics, policy summary, and cultural analysis of the areas they are interested in. For example, if viewers click on the US in the map, they can see the COVID-19 statistics and summary of countermeasures in the US. Summary of the cultural analysis will be attached below. Moreover, if the users click on the “United States” tab on the map, they will be redirected to the detailed information about the US COVID-19 situation. For each country, the detailed information site will provide:

1. Detailed description of policies (with links to relevant official websites)
2. Interviews with researchers, citizens, and organizations
 - General survey on target population⁴
 - In-depth personal interviews
3. Open section for users to post their ideas and comments

Existing Alternatives/Unique Value Proposition

Navigating online resources, we could easily find hard statistics (ex. death, positivity, recovery rate) or analyses on economic policies by country. The online resources do not serve as sufficient alternatives to our project, since they lack cross-cultural analyses in how countermeasures are formulated, implemented, and performing. Moreover, we expect that the relevant research will require a longer time period, and would be published individually.

This project is unique because it provides easy, comprehensive access to culturally sensitive perspectives on the crisis. The interactive online platform will provide the users with a pool of relevant research and interviews at one click, and will be updated regularly. Moreover, by conducting and sharing the interviews and survey results, this

⁴ We wish to start surveying and analyzing young adults with online access to start off with, since it is the population we have most access to and are reachable through online surveys. As we establish and expand the database and scope of analysis, we wish to conduct customized surveys and analysis on different target populations (researchers, manufacturing workers, etc.). See appendix for sample survey template.

⁵ See “Policy Responses to COVID19” (IMF) and “Country policy responses” (ILO). Private sector also produces a variety of research on COVID-19 countermeasures by countries: see “COVID-19 European measures” (Deloitte).

project will provide unique information on the sociocultural contexts of the pandemic crisis. The platform will bring into light the sociocultural factors shaping the crisis, motivate people to learn from different societies, and provide insights on the post-COVID world.

Stakeholders

The major stakeholders will be those accessing the website. This project will educate the general public with a culturally sensitive lens, and connect them across borders. By putting the sociocultural impacts into sight, we expect that this project will shift focus from biological and economic aspects to the differential social impacts of the pandemic. We acknowledge that this project will not reach those without internet access, and has limits in saving people in severe and imminent threats due to the pandemic. By providing an alternative perspective on the crisis, we hope to establish a platform where people can bond and are motivated to help others outside of their boundaries.

Costs

The costs will mainly consist of website fee and survey service fees. Since the project is based online, no physical cost will be required. The website fee applies commonly and will be shared by all COVID-19 response sub-projects, while the survey service fee will be particular to this project. Additional costs will be used for purchase of survey prizes to incentivize participation. Prizes will be distributed as gift cards through raffles for every fixed number of surveyees participated.

ITEM	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	DESCRIPTION
Website	\$500 (annual)	Global Development Lab	*Cost for entire COVID-19 project
Survey Service	\$100 (annual)	Global Development Lab	Cost for surveying service
Miscellaneous survey prizes	\$200 (Twenty \$10 prizes)	Global Development Lab	Prizes to incentivize surveyees to participate

Total projected expenses: \$800 (\$300 specific for this COVID-19 sub-project)

Impact Evaluation

To gauge the effectiveness of the website as an online data platform, we will mainly rely on the number of people who access and engage with the website. Also, we will monitor the comments and feedback from the users through our interactive open section. If possible, we hope to create a fundraising channel on the website, and track the amount

of funds raised. By doing so, we will be able to track how far the information travels, and how helpful the resources are for the people accessing the website.

To enhance accessibility and spread the website, we will update various social media and contact UCLA departments and chancellor's office. After enhancing accessibility, we will also create a facebook/instagram page to provide updates on the website content and receive feedback from the users.

Sustainability

Because the surveys and interviews will be conducted online, we expect the main cost would be on the website and its maintenance, which makes it sustainable for the duration of the pandemic with given funding. Also, some additional costs would consist of minor compensation for longer conversational interviews. For the initial periods, the small compensation costs will be funded with the grants from the Global Development Lab, but will be made self-sustainable as the website stabilizes and expands to have a fundraising channel.

The website will be updated on a weekly basis with supplementary updates for any major changes. The updates will be shared via social media and UCLA-affiliated mails to make the information spreadable and accessible, providing a short preview of the updates of the week. In doing so, we would like to obtain information from the researches and countermeasures UCLA organizations are conducting, which will improve the credibility of the information and reduce the daily maintenance/research burden of the project. More generally, by outsourcing research on national policies (which are readily available in credible research institutions), and focusing on the ground-level interviews, the project would be more manageable and sustainable.

By using interview templates (See Appendix), and standardizing the conversational interview process, we expect the interviews and the editing to be more manageable, especially as the website expands in its scale and accessibility.

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