Designmatters and the Illustration Department at Art Center College of Design
A collaboration between Mpalal Community Trust, Kenya and Art Center College of Design, California
Design by Ching Ching Cheng, Andrew Behr, Melissa Galvez, Rosanna Ravn Trinidad and Sara Hofmann.
dedicate this book
to MPALA: SIRAM, ROSE AND ROGER,
who had to climb a mountain to make possible
the dialogue between a kenyan medical center and us students from california.

WE WOULD LIKE TO
ALL THE PEOPLE WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THIS WONDERFUL PROJECT AND WHO BELIEVE THAT EVERYBODY CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE...
A few years ago I was in Africa, and every day I found myself saying, “There's got to be something here that Art Center can help with.” But nothing made sense to me until my very last day there, and then I got it: Mpsala. With its mobile health clinic, the Mpsala Community Trust serves the remote communities of Kenya's Laikipia District, a vast and harsh terrain. Mpsala's critical work allows for a large number of the Laikipia's different peoples to receive basic and reliable healthcare, a different but much-needed service for Kenya's dichotomous population.

I knew that design could contribute in some way to helping them achieve one of their important goals: communicating with more literate people, in the area about HIV/AIDS and family planning. And so, knowing Designmatters through knowing its director, Mariana Amatuli, I made the connection.

Ultimately, that's what this entire project was about—connecting, from Kenya to Mpsala, from Art Center, Mariana Amatuli to Mpsala's Shanee Wedford-Smith, from faculty and advisors to students, from students to the Mpsala community, and ultimately to the People of Kenya that Mpsala serves.

At Art Center we were connected in the belief that through hard work and dedication, teamwork and talent, we could make a difference in the world, and that people would be genuinely helped.

In a way, I think we all grew as a result of this project. It helped Mpsala see further and do more and it helped students see how much they could do beyond their city, state, and country by thinking bigger. For me, although just one small piece of a much larger puzzle, I knew that I too had grown and changed as a result of the part I played. I realized connections weren't limited to specific places, people, or institutions. Real connections lie deeper: they lie in an honest desire by people to help one another, whether it be a neighbor next door, or a neighbor across the world.

I am thrilled with the results from the students of the Designmatters Mpsala Project, and am delighted to see them presented here.
In the summer of 2006, an article came across my desk with a note from Judy Webb—at the time Art Center College of Design’s Chairman of the Board of Trustees. She had just returned from her first trip to Kenya and was profoundly touched by the country and its people. The article profiled a small community-based organization—the Mpala Community Trust (MCT)—that she visited at Art Center’s International Initiatives Department to be aware of for its inspiring work. I learned that MCT was running a highly efficient mobile clinic despite few resources and a tiny staff. As the sole professional and sole health care provider in a region roughly the size of Wales, the clinic’s infrastructure consists of a couple of modest sized rooms at base camp, and an integrated outreach system that relies on a yellow Land Rover, a few bikes, and periodic raidel convoys, to deliver critically needed medicine and health counseling to the nomadic population who live in the vast plateau southeast of Nairobi, Kenya.

I recall filling the article away—just in case—and not certain exactly how, or when, I would refer to it again. As chance would have it, by the fall of the same year, I had the perfect reason to go back to the article, and to Judy. The call was out for entries for the 2007 World Bank Development Marketplace competition; the theme focused on social innovation solutions related to challenges in healthcare and nutrition, and guidelines called for a partner based in a developing world region. I had become a big fan of this social entrepreneurship incubator and grant-making program when visiting its staff at the Bank in 2005, and was convinced that there was a place for Art Center to engage in future competitions. With the motto “turning ideas into action,” and its support for social projects with high potential for impact and scalability, this international competition represented a terrific platform for participation by Art Center’s Designmatters initiative. For the submission process, a core project team of Art Center staff, alumni, and faculty was assembled—and thanks to Judy’s introductions, we approached MCT’s program coordinator and the founder of the Mpala Mobile Clinic, Sharnie Wheelesmith. As a design education institution with a college-wide program like Designmatters, whose mandate it is to research and develop design solutions to critical humanitarian issues— we hoped there could be areas within the clinic’s operations that we could jointly identify, and where we might be able to help. When we asked if Mpala would be open to partnering with us, two key areas of critical need and opportunity for design surfaced immediately: 1) Expanding upon the mobility and outreach capacity of the clinic by designing a system of transport, packaging, and interventions adaptable in that would allow small convos to carry medicines that they currently cannot, because they spoil under heat conditions; 2) Visually-based and culturally immersive materials to support the health education effort of the MCT classrooms.

This following months were a roller coaster of emotions and knowledge sharing as Art Center and MCT prepared to participate in the May 2007 exhibition highlighting the small pool of competition finalists selected to come at the Bank’s headquarters in Washington D.C. In February, the two lead designers of the competition project, Art Center alumni Patrick Kiekul and Wendy MacNaughton, traveled to Kenya and visited with the MCT staff, undertaking two weeks of critical field research within the community. The many conversations and exchanges that later ensued with Shane, Maji
Smith (a Princeton graduate volunteering in Mpala), and MCT counselors Rogers Ade and Rose Kimani provided critical feedback and triggered important design ideas, pushing concepts forward for the team back in Princeton. By the time we finally made our presentation to a jury of development experts over three intense and memorable days, our chief priority was to find a way to make the project a reality beyond the framework of the competition’s prize.

Since then, Art Center’s ongoing collaboration with the Undergraduate Engineering Department of Princeton University has made possible the full development of the feasibility system proposed by Patrick. In turn, and as this book attests, Wendy’s research and initial proposals for vr-based education platforms became the basis and inspiration for a class of dedicated Art Center students who, under the guidance of Illustration Department Chairwoman Ann Field and the exceptional faculty team of Martha Rich and Esther Pearl Watson, took up the challenge of reimagining and conceptualizing the five distinct approaches for visual tools that promote HIV/AIDS awareness and family planning, and are showcased in the following pages. This is a publication brought to life by Andrew Behr, Ching Ching Cheng, Melissa Galavie Rocamora, Raun Trinidad and Sara Hofmann—all students from original illustration class. Together they tell a compelling story of the educational journey they undertook with their peers.

And so it is that we have come full circle since my first encounter with that article chronicling the work of Mpala’s Mobile Clinic. Now, with fully functioning prototypes of the casual kiosk innovations and public education campaigns about to undergo field-testing with the MCT community, we are looking forward to new learning opportunities ahead. With deep gratitude for their enormous contributions thus far, and so much hope for what still can be accomplished, I say to everyone who is part of this extraordinary project and partnership with Mpala: “acuata sana”—thank you very much!

The studio’s success in creating viable health education tools for non-literate communities in Kenya was largely a result of the truly collaborative spirit that existed among the students, faculty, and our client, the Mpala health clinic in Naivasha. As is the case with any Art Center educational partnership structured by Designmatters, the students’ exploration, development, and production of design solutions must occur in tandem with the expertise of both the client and guest experts. This collaboration ensures that the outcome, and the real-world deliverables that result, will resonate with the target and users. In this case, we were very fortunate to count on the generous feedback contributions of Mpala, and the rich professional experience afforded us by Dee, Wendy, Patrick, and Kirsti.

For many of these student designers, the Mpala Project represented a new opportunity to engage in user-centered research. (Many of them shared with me afterward the sobering number of hours they had spent in the “Kenya section” of various libraries.) They were asked to do things they believed could work, and thoroughly revise those that didn’t. They were asked to think outside the box about materials, messages, and modes of communication. At the same time, they had to balance their innovations with a concrete understanding about the community for which they were designing—a community completely unlike their own.

It was particularly thrilling to watch the students’ investment in this project manifest in a tireless motivation to produce the best work they could. And when they were able to reflect on the project at its conclusion, I sensed that many of them now looked at their design skills in a very different way. The studio and its initiatives that inspired this project are on the last day of the studio exhibition, to show just a sample of what Designmatters students have been able to achieve in their studies, and to allow them to share their potential with a wider audience, and the design process with the wider world.
Through the means of a mobile health clinic, Mpala Community Trust has been delivering reliable and accessible healthcare services to the communities of central and northern Laikipia since 1999.

Many of these communities are pastoralist, either transient or living in remote regions and often lack adequate access to basic health resources.

The Mpala Mobile clinic services include reproductive health and family planning advice, HIV/AIDS awareness, basic curative healthcare facilities, immunization, and many other healthcare services.

Founded in 1999, the Mpala Mobile Clinic successfully treats and educates thousands of Kenyans annually. Consisting of one clinical officer, three nurses, a health worker, a driver, and a sturdy Land Rover, the Mpala Mobile Clinic visits a different community and school each day of the month. Sites are revisited monthly, providing communities with reliable and accessible healthcare services.

This information and more about Mpala and their healthcare services can be found on the Mpala website at www.mpala.org.
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EXACTLY WHAT IS AIDS AND HOW DOES IT AFFECT THE PEOPLE OF KENYA?

AIDS STANDS FOR ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME AND IS CAUSED BY A VIRUS CALLED HIV. HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV) CAUSES AIDS.

KENYA HAS OVER ONE MILLION PEOPLE ESTIMATED TO BE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS.

THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 100,000 CHILDREN IN KENYA LIVING WITH AIDS AND ABOUT 65,000 OF THOSE CHILDREN ARE ORPHANS...

WHAT ABOUT FAMILY PLANNING? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

A HEALTHY POPULATION IS CRUCIAL TO KENYA'S EFFORTS TO REDUCE POVERTY, IMPROVE LIVING STANDARDS AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, REDUCE THE SPREAD OF HIV AND AIDS TO CHILDREN.

INFORMING FAMILIES AND PROMOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF USING DIFFERENT CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS IS THE FIRST STEP IN EFFECTIVE FAMILY PLANNING.

BECAUSE OF FAMILIES' LIMITED RESOURCES, THEY HAVE TURNED TO OTHER METHODS TO PREVENT EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES THAT UNTIL RECENTLY PROMOTE FAMILY PLANNING AS WELL AS OTHER SEX METHODS NOT HEALTHY DISPOSAL OF BIOHAZARDOUS WASTE.

CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU ARE NO LONGER UNAWARE OF THIS SERIOUS SITUATION!

WHAT FAMILIES WILL STRUGGLE DUE TO AN INEFFICIENT FOOD SUPPLY.

A WOMAN'S RISK OF DYING DUE TO MOTHER-TO-CHILD TRANSMISSION IS 1 IN 15.

CHILDREN ARE THE ONES WHO SUFFER THE MOST. MANY ARE ORPHANED AND ALREADY BORN WITH HIV/AIDS.

FAMILY PLANNING INFORMATION IS FROM THE REPORT: COUNTRY ANALYSIS OF FAMILY PLANNING AND AIDS, KENYA, BY COLETTE ALICO-OLUNGA, POPULATION AND HEALTH CONSULTANT OF MAROI, KENYA.

AS THEY SAY: "GREATER RESPONSIBILITY IS THE FIRST STEPS TO A GREATER CHANGE."

I THINK I'VE ACHIEVED COMPLETE ENLIGHTENMENT.

HE'S SO DRAMATIC.
Mpala was a different kind of experience for the students. In a lot of ways, the most significant thing that everyone involved had to step out of his or her own skin. Early on in the semester I wrote on the board: "This is not about you." This project was not about how great a painter or illustrator or photographer any of us might be. And it wasn't about what we were going to get out of it. The Mpala Project really came down to just one thing: What are others going to get out of it?

It didn't surprise me that the students quickly grasped this essential aspect of the project. In fact, nothing they accomplished surprised me. I never doubted them, and I never doubted that their products would succeed. They all worked hard. Designmisters supported us in every way, and the speakers they provided offered a real-life connection to how different it was to live in Kenya, because we couldn't be there.

I think the students, at times, may have doubted their own abilities. Some of that probably came out of frustration with the process—a process that was fairly typical of what they will encounter in the real world. All along I hoped that they would get inspired, and they did. And I hoped that their excitement and passion, which I saw growing each week, would help them push through when they came to a roadblock. And that also happened. I got inspired, too, from all that I was learning from the students themselves, and from Mpala and everything they hope to accomplish and change.

The Mpala Project's success started and ended with one idea: keeping an open mind. We began by asking the students to look inside themselves to try to gain an understanding of what they believed—about illustration, about being a student, about being a person, about people of Kenya, about nomadic tribes, and about themselves. This turned into a conversation that lasted the whole semester.

We structured the class in order to promote insights on the part of the students, and also to keep moving the project forward so we would meet our real-world deadline. Looking back, it seems like an overwhelming challenge, but I always believed it would all come together in the end. I kept saying, "It's going to work, you'll see." The students needed the encouragement, because it was a long and trying process that tested them in ways they'd never been tested before.

When it was over, there was a great sense of accomplishment amongst everyone who participated in this project. At the last class, no one left. They all lingered—even the guests, who talked with students, answering questions such as "What more can I do after Art Center?" and "How can I use my talent to better society?"

Sometimes it feels as though we live in our own sleepy world with eyes partly shut, and then something happens that helps you realize, "Wow, I have this talent and I could really do something with it." That's what happened for the students in the Mpala Project. I like to think that Mpala opened a door for these amazing illustrators and gave them a path to go out in the world and, somehow, make a difference along the way.
The world is getting so small. That is one of the things I wanted the students of the Mipala Project to capture—a broad thinking, even universal thinking, thinking that goes beyond borders. As designers, we must prepare for the time when we have to design for the world, yet, we get so comfortable within our culture that we often lose any sensitivity to other cultures. These Mipala students were dealing with something that was foreign to them, many for the first time, out of their comfort zone.

As a former Art Center student, and as someone who comes from Kenya, I’ve mixed my worlds together: I have been able to maintain my sensitivity to where I’m from, and also be competitive in the work environment where I am. I wanted the students to see that this could be done. The way to do it, I believed, was through their research without research.

Design is pointless, because when you are designing to solve a problem, you can design anything we want, but will it be worth the time spent designing if it doesn’t fulfill a specific need? And all of the Mipala products addressed a clear and specific need.

Helping them in their research often meant serving as a bridge between what I knew from being here, and what I knew from being over there. I was able to give them an idea of what I saw when I went back to Kenya. I told them what I observed the people doing. I told them how materials might be more acceptable to women rather than men, or men rather than women. I told them what might work better, and what might not work at all.

The way they came up with different perspectives to address the problem they were working on, and seeing how each group was able to design solutions that were unique to the problem, led me to believe that they had assimilated the information given to them. It was impressive. It was also important because they weren’t working on a project just for the sake of a project. They were working on a project for real people.

The Mipala students had to go through an amazing, discourse-learning course in order to reach the problem, but the course will open up their thinking and present it in other ways. Hopefully it will lead to new ways of communicating important information, different cultures, and to transforming vaccinations to currently reached populations. If successful, this can be applied over Africa, and help people across the entire continent.
I am from a neighboring tribe, Menu. Although we are a non-nomadic people, growing up in the same kind of region, with slight variations between the tribes, one learns a lot from and about the different tribes. Most of my studies have been cross-cultural, and as an advisor in the Mipala Project, I speak on my world to their world—pointing out some of the things I knew coming from an older storytelling culture, rather than a modern, technology culture.

Talking to the students about how we live, and how that is different from how an American lives, I wondered if design students would be able to understand these differences. Would they be able to address specific needs across the world and accomplish what they were attempting to do? It was, after all, very far removed from them and their experience.

What a tremendously difficult task they had in front of them. With only scant information on the Web and the inability to look at anything firsthand, they relied heavily on me and others from Kenya, or who had travelled there. And to this challenge they responded very well, asking questions that were extremely curious, and showing such enthusiasm. I saw how seriously some of them took my words; they were so very keen to connect ideas into something that would be applicable on the other side of the world.

There are many of us from outside of America (and even some Americans who seem to think, ‘Ah, America only cares about themselves.’) What was interesting for me to see was how much depth there was among the Mipala Project students. Looking at how they connected our talks with their design knowledge led me to believe that there is more to them than I had first imagined. When the semester ended, it gave me a great feeling to hear students ask, ‘How can I continue working on this?’ Perhaps this project will result in more involvement of Art Center with Mopala. There is such a need on the other side to see this initiative make progress.

My hope is that this will translate into actual products. My prayer is that it will be beneficial to the community in Kenya.
Entering the Mpalia Project as an advisor, I hoped to impress upon the students how difficult the work they were about to do truly was. Students from the Art Center are renowned for their creativity and innovation, but designing media for a totally different culture is a very difficult and sensitive task. Creativity is only a piece of the puzzle.

I was particularly impressed with the students’ ability to rise to the research challenge. The idea of being completely unfamiliar with the culture that was very real. When you have grown accustomed to using yourself as a model and suddenly you’re unfamiliar, then a real test must be taken. Then you must ask—’Can I learn enough about this without going to Kenya?’ ‘What can I do to avoid making serious mistakes?’ ‘How do I know if I have had any positive (or negative) effect?’ There’s much to learn when you ask yourself those questions, as those students did. They became intensely involved in figuring out what the research would be. They worked hard to learn what they didn’t know. They showed great energy and enthusiasm to go out and learn about the culture—to not make assumptions. To me, this is all a part of the process of opening intercultural doors and encouraging students to realize all the complex ways that people read and understand messages and media.

Their ideas showed an ability to synthesize research and feedback. Their products are a reflection of a combination of their understanding of appropriate HIV/AIDS messages and media, their creativity in using this understanding and the direct response they received from the local communities in Kenya.

The Mpalia Project was such an ambitious idea. We all hoped it would work. But design need not offer a clear and easy path. When these students found out just how hard it was, they didn’t back away. They tried to be sensitive to values and cultural framings that were very different from their own and they took seriously the issue of designing material around sexual messages and different belief systems. Perhaps the most important thing they learned was how difficult this process is and how important respect and good listening can be in designing media that matters.
For me, this project has always been about hope. Going into it, my greatest hope was that the products created would help people in the Samburu and Laikipia live longer and healthier lives. Remembering this, remembering why we were doing this project, was the starting point in advising the Mpalah Project students—repeating to them, like a mantra—'it’s going to make people’s lives better.'

The way to get there was by getting them to kick all their assumptions to the curb so they could open themselves up to the whole new landscape in front of them. This is the biggest challenge for all of us who are designing in a socially responsible way—opening our eyes fresh each time. And yes, it’s hard, but what an incredibly rewarding journey to be on.

From the start I also hoped I’d be able to get them engaged, interested, and excited to learn about a very different way of life.

I hoped I could transfer information from my field research in Kenya to them so that they would gain empathy for the user. Having tools of empathy was one of the most important elements in this project. The need to do thorough, ethical, and culturally responsive research was another. Without both of those there would be no way that any of the design products, or campaigns could have its intended effect and desired impact.

All along there were great leaps the students needed to make. Foremost among those leaps was accepting that people invariably know themselves better than we know them. That meant learning to ask questions, listen to the answers and then accept them as true. This led to another leap: abandoning an outsider’s perspective from which they said, “You need this, and you’re missing that,” and adopting the insider’s perspective by asking “What do you need, and how can we use our skills to make it happen?” Eventually, the students got to the point where their outcomes were evaluated on one fundamental criterion: “Will this work?” It was a remarkable transformation.

When this project started, “Mpalah” meant to me a group of committed people working, alone, with isolated communities in Northern Kenya. When the project ended, my definition of Mpalah had transformed to encompass a group of committed students from Art Center willing to open themselves up to new ideas and new ways of using the students to support communities in Northern Kenya. All in the hope that their products would let them answer the question “Will this make people’s lives better?” with a clear “Yes.” It’s a transformation that leaves me full of hope.
GOING INTO THE PROJECT

At first, I did not really know where to go to get the information that I needed.

4th Term Photography: Mark Grassell

I assumed that the Native American people would perceive the images we made the same way that we do, but they don't. And since they don't, we might be confusing them. If we don't do it right we could actually hurt them.

5th Term Illustration: Jody Spencer

I was excited to be a part of a very large scale learning experience that actually had a real role in helping the Native American people of Nevada.

5th Term Photography: Mark Pfeiffer

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?
Is it any Westernization that created the problems and now we're trying to fix them?

5th Term Illustration: Linda Prinz

IT WAS A CHALLENGE TO COME UP WITH A CONCEPT THAT WORKS NOT ONLY IN A COLLEGE CLASSROOM BUT ONE THAT SIMPLY HELPS PEOPLE IN REAL LIFE.

5th Term Illustration: John Kopanski

My art should be done outside of commercial design and designing to sell something. Instead, I was able to use design to help people and that mattered to me.

4th Term Illustration: Ford Spencer

students' thoughts before class...

advisors' thoughts before class...

IT SEEMS LIKE AN OVERWHELMING CHALLENGE, BUT I ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT WE'LL COME TOGETHER IN THE END.

Instructor: Esther Filippini

ENTERING THE MEDIA PROJECT, I HOPED TO IMPRESS UPON THE STUDENTS HOW DIFFICULT THE WORK THEY WERE ABOUT TO DO REALLY WAS.

Joe Myers

THIS IS NOT ABOUT YOU.
THIS PROJECT WAS NOT ABOUT HOW GREAT A PHOTOGRAPHER, OR ILLUSTRATOR, OR PHOTOGRAPHER ANY OF US MIGHT BE.

Instructor: Carl Baumer

FOR ME, THIS PROJECT WAS ALWAYS ABOUT HOPE THAT THE PROJECTS WOULD HELP PEOPLE IN THE NATION AND LEARN TO LIVE LONGER AND HEALTHIER LIVES.

Wendy Prochnow

TALKING TO THE STUDENTS ABOUT HOW WE LIVE, AND HOW THAT IS DIFFERENT THAN HOW AN AMERICAN LIVES, I WONDERED IF DESIGN STUDENTS WOULD BE ABLE TO TRANSFORM THESE DIFFERENCES.

Karmi Miyake
NOTEBOOK and CHALKBOARD

Focus: FAMILY PLANNING

Group Members:

CHING CHING CHENG
CONNIE WONG
BEVERLY SHEN
**Notebook and Chalkboard**

**Why does this project matter to you?**

Ching: I liked the women in prison and the opportunity to learn more about rape, sex, and family planning, so they could learn that they have choices.

Snoie: At first, I assumed that it would be easy to prepare an illustration for this class as for any other class. Then I realized that a different angle makes a huge difference.

**What was the most challenging aspect of the project? Why?**

Ching: I think it was easier to change the next generation in order to improve future generations.

**What did this project mean to you?**

Ching: This project made me think that design can be really important in terms of improving human lives.

**How did the project affect you?**

Ching: I really enjoyed working with a group and collaborating. I think something I got to be a part of often makes an illustration.
Focus on the main illustration

The main illustration needs to show the benefits of family planning without using words.

Product: Notebook + chalkboard
Target: Students

Discussion:

Since family planning is a very different concept to the Kenyan communities, we wanted to target the younger generations because they might be more willing to accept new ideas.

We must research the most common birds in Kenya, especially those with cup nests.

Bird: Common Bulbul
One of East Africa's best-known birds.
REVISING

The same bag

Metal cup

Metal cups don't really
fit with our target group
(School, Children)

The illustration has
text and children

The image is too straight
forward to test them
what is right and what
is wrong. It will be hard
for them to accept our
message.

FOCUS ON

NOTEBOOK AND
CHALKBOARD

FRONT → main illustration (birds)

BACK → instruction about different kinds
of birth control methods.

AGE 12-18

BACK → no instruction of birth control
methods. (Age 6-18)

Because of the harsh weather where these
nomadic communities live, the materials
we use need to be durable. We tested our
materials in school, and left them outside
for a week.

FINAL PROTOTYPE

NOTEBOOK AND CHALKBOARD

C.H.A.T.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVISORY TEAM
IMPRESSIONS ON RECYCLED ALUMINUM

GROUP MEMBERS:
YANN KANEMBUYA
BROOKE ABOOT
JARED SCHNARR

FOCUS: FAMILY PLANNING
**Stage 1: Brainstorming**

A Samburu woman's beaded head ornament, with large aluminum ornament attached.

The aluminum is soft and can be easily carved and cut with any sharp tool. The Samburus make ornaments from old aluminum pots, so there wouldn’t be much of a difference making ornaments from recycled aluminum caps.

**Stage 2: Research**

In order for the ornaments to have a successful impact on the community, the smallest details in the images portraying the people were very specific and important to get right.

One subtle detail learned early was that nomadic people in Kenya do not sit cross-legged, but rather with their legs straight out. Also, beads and jewelry indicate a woman’s wealth and marital status. This is very important to keep in mind when depicting a woman in these communities.

“Getting current research was a big challenge. Journal publications take a couple of years to come out, so we had to rely on sources from the 70s and 80s.”

YAMU KAMUSHIKYA

Once communication with MPAFA took Mwale, current information and feedback was difficult.”

**Impressions on Recycled Aluminum**

Drawings presenting the positive aspects of family planning and HIV/AIDS education will be translated onto steel stamps. The images on the stamps will then be pressed into recycled aluminum. This process could be taught to any member of the community. When the ornaments are complete, they can then be decorated with beads and strings.

We are hoping that the ornaments will provide engaging conversations among the community regarding family planning and HIV/AIDS.
How the prototype was made:

Our drawing was turned into a vectorized illustrator document, which Infinity Stamps translated onto a steel stamp. Art Center’s 12-ton press was then used to imprint the image onto a 1/16” aluminum sheet, which was cut out of a recycled can.

Production and distribution:

Drawings will be transferred onto stamps in Nairobi. The stamps will be given to the tribes by Mpala, along with a press or an alternative stamping device. Mpala will then demonstrate the stamping method, encouraging members of the tribes to press the ornaments themselves.

Both manufacturing of the stamps and mass production of the pressed ornaments will take place in Nairobi. Mpala will then hand out and explain the images on the completed ornaments to the tribes.
STAGE 4 - FINAL IMAGES

The focus of our project is to reiterate the benefits of family planning and HIV/AIDS education throughout a series of five images, each geared towards a specific age group and gender, imprinted on ornaments made from recycled aluminium.

The images consist of: A large group of mixed age and sex, eating a plentiful meal, woman wearing and making beaded jewelry, boys and girls reading under a tree, a man accompanied by his wife and a cow, and a camel representing Mpala.

Hopefully these items will help Mpala perpetuate improved family planning and reduction in HIV/AIDS amongst the community.

**Final Prototype**

*Aluminum Coin Stamp*
grandmother's Kit

Focus: HIV/AIDS prevention

Group members:
- Melissa Rodriguez
- Sarah Lam
- Chang Min Fang
grandmother's kit

This kit is a way for girls, the grandmothers, and school teachers of the tribes to discuss the importance of using condoms as a method of prevention against HIV/AIDS. 

The target audience are boys and girls at the age of circumcision.

Kinoli taught us about the important role the grandmothers play. In these communities, they are extremely influential. We decided that if we wanted to reach the rest of the community, we would have to start with the grandmothers.

We spent most of the early process researching about the tribes. We learned that storytelling is important, so we made a story about the possible consequences of transmitting HIV/AIDS through unprotected sex. This is the concept that holds the kit together.

The characters we designed had to be simple and easily associated with all the communities.

First, we started thinking about ways to make communication interactive.

We came up with an idea of something similar to a book that also had the intention of a puzzle.

We created a materials board to get an idea of what patterns, textures, and colors we wanted to work with. Early on, we wanted to use velcro, but we found that was not practical because it would not last very long and it was not easily accessible to the tribes.
The kit would be made of cotton so that it is lightweight and easy to store. Since it is made of fabric, the kit can be easily rolled up or folded.

Three pockets make it convenient to store condoms, the story cards, and many other items in an interior compartment.

The fabric cards will have drawings that illustrate the key points of the story. The cards can be used sequentially as the story is told to help visualize the message. Each card is attached by looped hems around the large beads.

The story of the two warriors

Two men had just become warriors. One of the men was very strong and was the best warrior of his tribe. The other (small) was not the strongest, but he was very wise and he was a great problem solver.

Their grandmother talked to the strong warrior first and said: "(Strong warrior,) you must use this condom as your shield. It will protect you from HIV/AIDS." The strong warrior replied, "Grandmother, do not worry. I am a strong and fearless warrior. I do not need such a shield. No matter how the grandmother insist, the strong warrior would refuse to wear the condom.

This made her very sad. She then went to the wise warrior next. The grandmother said, "(Strong warrior will not listen to me. I'm afraid that he will make a very foolish mistake." She then told the wise warrior the same thing she told the strong warrior. "Wise warrior, you must use this condom as your shield. It will protect you from HIV/AIDS." The wise warrior knew that he was not a strong warrior and that this shield will give him protection. He replied, "Grandmother, I am not a so strong a warrior, but I know that I want to be safe and healthy so I can look after my family and cows." The wise warrior did what his grandmother told him to do and used the condom everytime he had sex.

A year later, the strong warrior became very sick and did not know why. Soon he was too weak to take care of his family and cows. Since the wife was busy taking care of her sick husband, nobody could look after the cows. And so the cows were dying too. A doctor told the once strong warrior that he had AIDS and that he was going to die very soon. "Who will look after my family and take care of my cows now?" asked the once strong warrior. He then remembered what his grandmother told him long ago and told the doctor: "I will use that shield that grandmother told me about. It should protect me!" The doctor shook his head and said, "The condom will not cure you from HIV/AIDS. You should have used it to protect yourself and others from getting AIDS."

Six months later, the once strong warrior died. Soon after, his wife and kids were also diagnosed with AIDS. The entire family died within a year. So did the cows, since no one was around to take care of them.

In a neighboring village, the wise warrior continued to use condoms every time he had sex, just as his grandmother had told him to do. He knew that the shield was working because he felt strong and healthy. The wise warrior went on to live a long life and he had many strong cows. He and his wife had a beautiful child and healthy cows. The family was very happy and prosperous.

The End.
Primary Target Audience:
Male and female youth, mostly 12-18 years old. Both in and out of school. Literate and semi-literate.

Our goal is to produce a product that will help keep condoms in close reach and easily accessible.

We want to design a product that stores condoms safely and securely, one which is able to be carried around and stored inside their home.

We also intend on using designs and materials that fit within their culture, materials that are sturdy, comfortable, and last all season, especially in the rainy and dry periods in the mushroom.

Illustrations that introduce why using a condom is important and why one should carry around a condom at all times will also be addressed.

STAGE I: BRAINSTORMING

A RED BRACELET
We were thinking of a design that is very simple, including the material. We believed that designing something that would look like something they already have wouldn’t be so striking.

STAGE II: IDEAS FEEDBACK AND RESEARCH

CONDOM POUCH
We wanted the design to reflect the stretched-out condom and thought of using the material with rubber. Inside of the pouch there would be condoms, and the pouch would be see-through. The pouch is meant to be carried around by grandmothers, aunts, and sisters.

PILLOW
We thought of a pillow that would have two layers of fabric. The inside would be have a small pouch which would contain condoms. The pillow is functional and comfortable at the same time, so what better idea is there than a pillow.

STAGE 3: INITIAL IDEA FEEDBACK AND RESEARCH

Pillow
This would be a great idea, that is, if our target audience uses pillows. If not, then what else do they use in its place, or in a similar fashion?

Red bracelet
The issue with this is does it create stigma for the wearer? Who has to wear it first for the rest of the group to perceive it as valuable? How does it actually impact people’s perception of HIV prevention, or condom use, and therefore, impact their behavior? Does it do all?

Condom pouch
The general standard of clothing here is a tasse, a fabric cloth wrapped around the body. Sex is kept as private as possible so having pockets may be an issue. If this design is followed through, an explanation will be needed for the purpose of having such pockets. Otherwise, the pockets will be used to carry tobacco and other items.

“Group projects can be very useful because when one thing is over, you learn that this is a different kind of experience. You learn that this is not about you.”

Susan Kim

Research: What do they usually wear in everyday life?
Wondrous Powers
"Maror, Sandals, and a Condom Pouch."

To be told by Mpalala before handing out the condom pouch, a reminder to practice protected sex for their health and family. Hopefully, the men will remember the story that came with the pouch and will get other men interested in the discussion of condom use.


An old man had three children, all boys. When they had grown up to manhood, men in the village began to grow very weak, and die. The old man called his sons together and told them that he wanted his family and his sons to live long healthful lives, in order to provide, even for himself. He ordered them to go out and bring home something that will keep the man and their families healthy. The three brothers set out, and after a very long while they came to a river. As they had gone on together for such a time, they decided that once they got a cross they would separate. The eldest told the youngest to take the middle road, and the second to go to the right, while he himself would go to the left. Then, in a year’s time, they would come back to the same spot.

So they parted, and at the end of the year, as agreed, they found their way back to the riverside. The eldest asked the youngest what he had gotten during his travels, and the boy replied, "I have nothing but a mirror, but it has wonderful power. If you look into it, you can see all over the country, no matter how far away." When asked, in turn what he had gotten, the second brother replied, "Only a pair of sandals that are so full of power, that if one puts them on, one can walk at once to any place in the country in one step." Then the eldest himself, said, "I too have obtained but little, a small magic pouch that always contains a single condom inside, that is all. But let us look into the mirror and see how the village people are doing."

The youngest produced his mirror, and they all looked into it and saw that many more men had died. Then the elder said, "Let us hasten home and see what we can do."

So the second brought out his sandals, and all three placed their feet inside them and, immediately, they were running to the village. Then the eldest took out the condom from the pouch and placed it on their father’s penis. Soon the old man and his sons saw that were protected, so they began to give other men in the village condoms from the pouch, which gave the men in the village, long healthy lives. How which one of these sons has performed the best?
The Slide-Viewing Device is a family planning project that focuses on providing an informative and instructional handheld aid during storytelling. The images shown through the Slide-Viewing Device will share information regarding the benefits of family planning. Methods such as birth control and spacing will be promoted through visual storytelling. School children are the target audience, as this slider can also be used for general education purposes as well. Perhaps in time other instructional slides can be made to target the appropriate audience with valuable information.

**Preliminary Sketches**

**Approach #1: Cloth Slider**

The simplicity of a cloth slider allows for easy duplication of replicas. A simple cloth or fabric is folded in half and sewn together. A viewing window is cut out in the center.

**Approach #2: Wood Base Slider**

The wood base slider would be much more durable and multifunctional. A cloth with imagery would slide through two pieces of wood, one of them with a viewing window cut in the center.

**WHAT WERE THE MOST CHALLENGING ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT?**

**ONE THING THAT I FOUND CHALLENGING WAS THE FEELING I WAS NOT REALLY IN A POSITION TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM WE WERE ASKING. THEN I BEGAN TO REALIZE THAT IT WASN’T A PROBLEM TO TACKLE EVERYTHING, AND THAT TRYING IT EVEN ONE STEP AT A TIME WAS REALLY IMPORTANT.**

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**First Prototypes**

**Cloth Slider**

Function: The instructor/storyteller will be able to hold the base of the slider with ease and comfort. Replaceable and interchangeable cloth slides will provide visual aids along with their instructions and other informational materials.

**Wood Slider**

Dimensions: Prototypes for both slider bases, wood and cloth, are roughly about 6 by 12 inches. They each have slot systems to slide the cloth pieces through them for viewing purposes. The slide cloth pieces themselves are 4 inches in width and the prototypes are 45 inches long but can be lengthened or shortened for need and ease. The cloth can also be provided with a sketch which is utilized to refer to the window.

It should be noted that these dimensions are welcome to be changed to fit any needs that arise, whether it requires longer pieces of cloth for more storytelling purposes, a larger base for better viewing, or even a smaller base for easy transport and quick references.
Feedback from the field indicated that despite negative framing, the following comparisons could be very effective.

In this first series of images, a family who does not practice family planning is shown to suffer economically. As the family grows without pacing, it becomes harder to maintain livestock and make a living.

In this next series of images, when compared to the previous set, a different sequence shows increasing wealth and overall well-being of an already well-to-do family that practices adequate family planning.

Finally, in this last series of images, a simple fable was created involving a rabbit with more bunnies than she can take care of, and a very hungry lion.

Can you think of a project when you realized the project meant something beyond my center?

At around the second or third week I became a little scared when it dawned on me that I have this very big responsibility because of the significance of the problem we were dealing with. The reality of what we were doing hit me, and I realized that we couldn’t afford to be wrong, that our mistakes could have a real effect on others.

Ultimately, I learned to take more responsibility for the work I do as an artist and designer.

Mayk Mekonnen
THE GROUP

STAGE 1
brainstorming:
how to communicate
how to use a condom

1. animated flip-book
2. large children’s book
3. puppet show
4. animation
5. “flash cards” as reminders (condom, flipbook, etc.)
6. “Three sticks” as reminders (gender, flipbook, etc.)

Animation and puppet show might not be engaging
and confuse more than instruct.

We left a flipbook dummy in a fabric pocket
and ducksloths with an iron-on transfer in the
Art Center forest for a whole week.

STAGE 2
storytelling
thirteen images

1. Samburu hut (cover)
2. Samburu man with condom in hand, woman
3. man’s hand with condom
4. man’s hands open condom
5. how to put on a condom
6. how to put on a condom
7. how to put on a condom
8. “flying approaching” laying woman
9. “flying approaching” laying woman
10. happy couple
11. how to dispose a condom (take off 1)
12. how to dispose a condom (take off 2)
13. how to dispose a condom (top)

warship might offend people of Sambura community.

They don’t make love the way we do.
Is the couple married?
TOO GRAPHIC!!!
Feedback from Mpaia and guests

Claire and Shamin from Mpaia:

“Flip chart – great idea but again a bit worried about the fabric. Really need to be robust and ideally waterproof as our MVCT Counsellors will be carrying around the countryside. Would it be possible to print onto a plastic page, or perhaps we need to laminate pages after printing? We particularly like the idea of hanging on the arm.”

Doe Mayer (USA):

“Engage women to use condom, right now it is man’s job…”

STAGE 3:
Final presentation

This project focuses on the awareness and prevention of HIV & AIDS. It consists of two elements - the Safe Sex Fabric Book and the Flipbook. Both elements will teach and remind communities in Kenya in an entertaining way how to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS by using a condom.

Target group:
Men and women, pre-teen ages 12-24 are just exploring sex.

Materials:
Papers, dark cloth (heavy duty) over cardboard, brushes, thread, string, buttons, iron-on transfer paper. All materials available in Nairobi.

Dimensions:
Canvas Chart: 31 x 17 in
Imagery: 8.5 x 11 in

Where to use:
Mpaia counselors will present the elements in front of groups of men or women during their typical meetings.

The Fabric Book will be light-weight and made of simple woven fabric so that Mpaia counselors can hang it over one arm. The counselor can then walk around or stand during the demonstration. Pages will easily flip back as story progresses.

Flipbook:
This book is small, portable and hand-held conversation starter. It demonstrates proper application and disposal of a condom. As pages are flipped, images will animate. Flipbooks may be given to teens 12+ as well as grandmothers for distribution. Flipbooks will be a fun take-away item that reminds the people of the lesson taught by the larger Fabric Book presentation.

The production team have improved the front of booklets and included a condom until ready for use.

The proposed booklet will be used to demonstrate in pictures, different messages: either how to practice safe sex or proper disposal of bio-hazard waste.
Alongside a room full of illustrators was Kaile Hart Crowell, the only photographer in the class.

Kaile had a tough challenge of finding a way to use photography that would not be confusing to the Kenyan communities.

Kaile worked with Raven Trinidad to create a website that has imagery using a combination of both photography and illustration.

Unfortunately, the imagery was found to be too sophisticated and ultimately the idea was abandoned.

Kaile was very determined to play her part and went forward using only photography with another idea for an instructional booklet of how to put on a condom.

Although Kaile used a dummy, the imagery was still too graphic considering such a sensitive audience.

Even with news of this project not going overseas, Kaile knows that it's not about who's project makes it. What's important is the good it could potentially do for people.

"Sometimes the work isn't about being cutting edge and hip. It's about being able to communicate in a functional way and being understood. You have to take time to understand someone else's culture or else the work will be meaningless."

Kaile Hart Crowell
Final Prototypes Group 6

Safe Sex Fabric Book
Detail Fabric Book
Pouch and Flipbook

These are the 2 prototypes (the Safe Sex Fabric Book and the Safe Sex Flipbook) that group 6 submitted for testing in Kenya.

All prototypes will be shipped to Mpalà in Kenya.

Final Prototypes
On the way to Kenya
**Final Conclusions**

I was challenged by not being concerned above style or persons, artistic taste, but rather in finding a way to tell a story that is understandable by another.

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**Advisors' Thoughts After Class**

I like to think that pupils opened a door for these amazing illustrations and gave them a path to go, but it's not so clear cut.

**Instructor**

Ester Pearl Washington

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**Students' Thoughts After Class**

When these students found out just how hard it was, they did not back down. They tried to be sensitive to values and cultural differences that were very different from their own.

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**Instructor**

Martin Arch

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When the project ended... the hope was that from this product, world leaders can give them the answers they will need.
When language and writing are barriers to communication, what will allow us to bridge this gap of understanding? This was the question that I asked myself when first talking with the Designmatters team about the Mpalala Project. I believed the bridge could be found in drawing and illustration, which connect us on a primal level—one that doesn’t rely on words or letters.

My project was about understanding the context—human context, well-being—in language, the less obvious being shared cultural experience. Throughout, the students were faced with the limitations of their knowledge and understanding. Strangely and beautifully, this seemingly negative aspect had the positive outcome of making them want to learn more and work harder. And they did so much of both.

They learned about the need for adding subtlety and observed detail in order to tell the story to the people of Kenya. They worked hard at letting go of their personal drawing styles to focus more on what they needed their images to truly communicate. Hardiest of all was having to unlearn so much of what they knew and recommit to sharing something so they could understand and reach their audience. Realizing that the problem was so much bigger than they had imagined was humbling to them. But understanding that their creativity could be used to produce a viable solution to the problem was empowering.

Humanitarian projects, such as the Mpalala project, teach so much. First, to see people outside of their own frame of reference, and that is an invaluable tool as they leave Art Center and venture forth into the world. But perhaps of even greater benefit is learning how, in a world that seems so disparate and isolated, we can make a difference. In the end, these students contributed their deep talents to a greater sharing of ideas that sprang from many sources, all the while moving toward a solution to help families in Africa.