Leveraging Innovation to leave no one woman behind : the experience of ELLES

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Genesis

Background

Young African women often lack reliable resources to access sexual, reproductive and mental health services.

Obstacles

Taboos and stigmatization
Lack of reliable information
Low availability of services
Healthcare human resources crisis

Consequences

Increased vulnerability to:
- Unwanted pregnancies
- Gender based violence
- Unsafe abortions
- Low managed chronic female conditions

The birth of the ELLES project

Led by young healthcare professionals

An initiative led by young healthcare professionals who have witnessed preventable deaths and disabilities.

Feminist philosophy

by women, for women, rooted in local realities, to give them back their full power over their health

Transformative vision

Giving young women a simple digital tool to regain control over their health, an all-in-one space, a woman's ally at every stage of her life.

Inclusive approach

Participatory design incorporating the real needs of African users.

Methodological approach

01 Participatory design

Surveys, interviews and tests directly involving the women concerned.

02 Pool of skills

A network of healthcare professionals specializing in the monitoring and support of women

03 Priority accessibility

Mobile tool chosen for its proximity to young users, lightweight (11 MB), suitable for low literacy levels.

04 Dual approach

Mobile technology combined with community engagement for sustainable adoption.
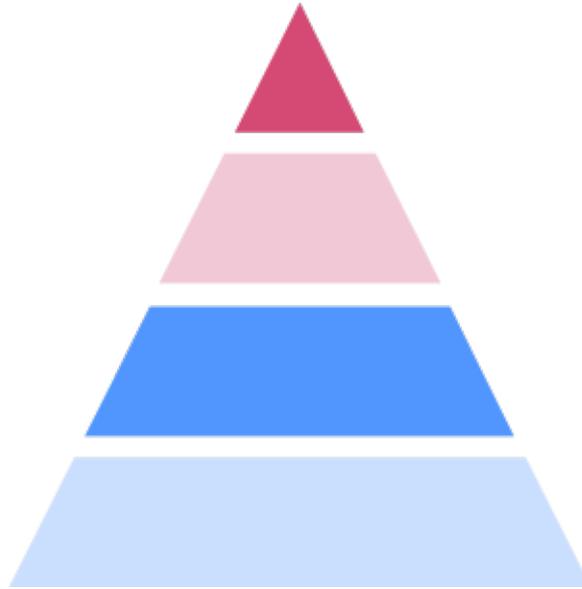
Mobile-friendly features

Menstrual cycle tracking

Personalized reminders to monitor your cycle and breast health.

Clear information

Content tailored, contextualized and confidential for young African women.

Teleconsultation

Direct communication with women's health specialists for personalized advice and referrals.

To be done ...

Distribution chain, integrated mapping of healthcare facilities – health insurance, and media.

Integration recommendations

AI integration

Develop future versions including chatbot in direct collaboration with young African women.

👋 Bonjour ! Je suis ELLES

Votre assistante spécialisée en santé féminine. Je peux vous aider avec vos questions sur :

• Cycles menstruels
• Contraception
• Grossesse
• Bien-être féminin

Posez-moi votre question ! 😊

Public – private partnership

Incorporate ELLES into official digital health strategies to ensure the sustainability of the initiative.

Health insurance

Technical Partnerships

Collaborating with mobile operators and health institutions to improve accessibility and reach.

Digital map integration

Analyze usage information to guide public policy while respecting confidentiality.

+3000 users, 10 countries

Active users

Women connected to the application in several French-speaking African countries, mainly in Benin.

Young people and women made aware

More than 2000 adolescent girls and young women were directly informed about reproductive and sexual health in person.

Feedback and continuous improvement

Appreciation of confidentiality, ease of use and relevance of the information provided.

Private sector commitment

Private sector involvement and support in the development and expansion of the solution.

Success Factors

01 — Participative conception

An approach centered on the real needs of African women users.
Continuous improvement based on feedback++

02 — Ease of use

Intuitive interface suitable for basic smartphones and low literacy levels.

03 — Community anchoring

Local awareness-raising that strengthens the adoption and lasting impact of the application.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

1

Limited resources

Maintenance and scaling are difficult due to a lack of financial and technical resources.

2

Public – private partnerships

Adoption in national public health programs and in international programs. Use of data to guide national health policies.

3

Technical challenges and new features

Adaptation to digital infrastructures that vary across African regions. **Development of offline functionalities and speificity of people living with handicap**
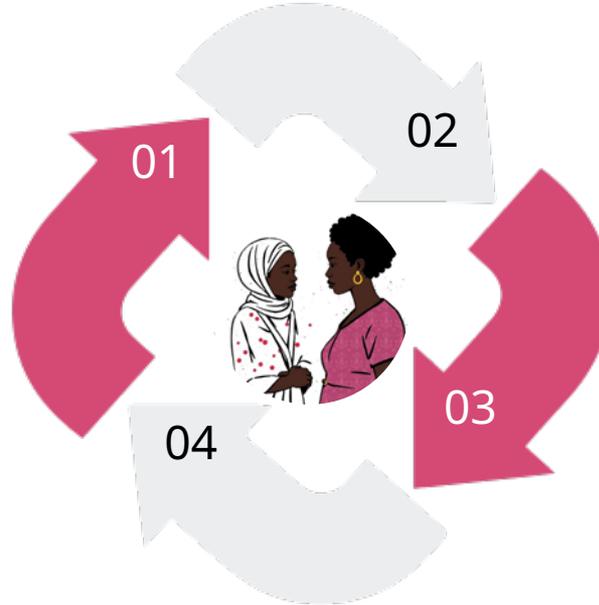
ELLES, a tool for female empowerment and inclusivity

Access to healthcare

Persistent inequalities for African women, lack of suitable and confidential services.

Major obstacles

Taboos, stigmatization, and digital exclusion limit young women's health autonomy.

01
02
04
03

Phone as a tool

Everyday device transformed into a space for empowerment and accessible health education.

Technological impact

Digital technology is transforming access to healthcare and strengthening women's decision-making power.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGq4jWwVpvg

THANKS !

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