THE GIRL CENTER
FIVE-YEAR ROAD MAP

The Journey to Evidence-Based Investments for Adolescents.
Today, the world is witness to the largest generation of adolescents (aged 10–19) in history. In the current environment, funding for adolescents is distributed across donors and sectors without cohesion. Investments are often not based on evidence, and funds are usually distributed with short-term, project-based deliverables in mind rather than a focus on the long-term impact for improving the lives of adolescents, especially girls.

In June 2017, the Population Council launched the Girl Innovation, Research, and Learning (GIRL) Center to facilitate evidence-based decision making for adolescent programming and policies. The GIRL Center ("the Center") is a global research and thought leadership hub that generates, synthesizes, and translates evidence on adolescents, especially girls. This road map captures the Center’s pathway forward for the next five years. It articulates the Center’s vision, mission, and values as well as strategic priorities for reaching a destination where investments in adolescents are based on rigorous evidence.

Priority Stakeholders

**Donors**
Those who currently fund adolescent initiatives or are likely to fund them, including foundations, high-net-worth individuals, governments, and UN Agencies (e.g., UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO).

**Decision-Makers**
Those who craft and execute the adolescent agenda, including political leaders, policymakers, practitioners, and advocates for adolescents, especially girls.

**Researchers**
Other experts working on adolescent issues, such as education, sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, sexual and gender-based violence, child marriage, migration, and climate change.

The GIRL Center Pillars

**Conduct Research**
We conduct high-quality, rigorous, and practical research and analyses on health and development issues affecting adolescent girls.

**Communicate Evidence**
We ensure that evidence is easily accessible, understood, and relevant to stakeholders to influence global debates, investments, policies, and programs on adolescent girls.

**Convene Experts**
We create a space for experts and other actors to collaborate and innovate on problems affecting adolescent girls.

**Build Capacity**
We support the next generation of critical thinkers and researchers in their commitment to using evidence to improve the lives of adolescent girls.

High-Quality Data

**Priority Stakeholders**

- **Donors**: Those who currently fund adolescent initiatives or are likely to fund them, including foundations, high-net-worth individuals, governments, and UN Agencies (e.g., UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO).
- **Decision-Makers**: Those who craft and execute the adolescent agenda, including political leaders, policymakers, practitioners, and advocates for adolescents, especially girls.
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The GIRL CENTER FIVE-YEAR ROAD MAP

The Journey to Evidence-Based Investments for Adolescents

Our vision
A world where adolescent girls can achieve their full potential as healthy, productive individuals and be agents of change in their communities

Our mission
To ensure that investments and programs for adolescent girls are based on rigorous evidence

BUILD CAPACITY
There is a larger talent pool of young researchers and professionals with expertise on adolescent girls

COMMUNICATE EVIDENCE
Evidence is easily accessible, understood, and relevant to decision-makers who influence global debates, investments, policies, and programs on adolescent girls

CONDUCT RESEARCH
The most influential decision-makers in each development sector use the Center’s results to inform their work

BUILD CAPACITY

STAKEHOLDERS
Donors
Decision-Makers
Researchers

Efficient

Action-Oriented

COMMUNICATE EVIDENCE
Five-Year Milestones

High-Quality Data

**Purpose:** To offer high-quality data that donors, decision-makers, and researchers can use to ask and answer the most pressing questions about adolescents, especially girls, around the world.

**Year 1**
- Adolescent Data Hub (ADH)
  - Solidify systems and processes; obtain funding to support the ADH.

- Indicator Database
  - Determine feasibility – conduct landscape analysis of databases on adolescents and how the Center fits in; identify indicators to include; identify funding; possibly start building database.

**Year 3**
- Adolescent Data Hub (ADH)
  - The ADH is a comprehensive catalogue with links to all open data on adolescents.

- Indicator Database
  - The indicator database is comprehensive and includes visualization tools.

**Year 5**
- Adolescent Data Hub (ADH)
  - The ADH is the first place researchers and students go to access and share data; the ADH is the first place donors go to identify gaps in data collection on adolescents.

- Indicator Database
  - The indicator database is the first place advocates, policymakers, and practitioners go to understand the state of evidence on adolescents and identify where to implement programs; donors go to identify investment opportunities for adolescents; students and early career researchers go to find indicators for descriptive analyses or to frame their research.

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Five-Year Milestones

Conduct Research Pillar

**Purpose:** To conduct high-quality, rigorous, and practical research and analyses on health and development issues affecting adolescent girls.

**Year 1**
- Data synthesis
  - Identify key questions in priority sector areas; identify opportunities to pilot better processes for producing syntheses; identify sources of funding for syntheses; and establish process for producing syntheses, involving decision-makers.

- Cross-country analyses on key issues affecting adolescent girls
  - Analyses for the most important issues affecting adolescent girls completed; analyses for the biggest gaps in research on adolescent girls completed.

**Year 3**
- Data synthesis
  - Syntheses for the most important investments in adolescent girls completed.

- Cross-country analyses on key issues affecting adolescent girls
  - The most influential decision-makers in each sector use the Center’s syntheses.

**Year 5**
- Cross-country analyses on key issues affecting adolescent girls
  - The most influential decision-makers in each sector use the Center’s cross-country analyses.
Five-Year Milestones

Build Capacity Pillar

**Purpose:** (1) To build research and fieldwork skills among early career professionals. (2) To create a larger talent pool of professionals to support evidence-based programs and policies for adolescent girls. (3) To increase Center knowledge on topics related to adolescent girls, particularly those where we lack expertise.

**Year 1**
- Define Capacity Building Strategy for Early Career Professionals
  - Strategically align the Center’s capacity-building efforts with the Council’s larger capacity-building initiatives. Define scope for mentoring program.

**Year 2**
- External Capacity for Early Career Professionals
  - Expand the Center’s mentoring program to support external early career professionals.

**Year 3**
- External Capacity for Senior Career Professionals
  - Identify specific needs and Center’s resulting support strategy for senior career professionals.

**Year 4**
- Capacity for Early Career Professionals
  - 1-2 mentorship rounds completed.

- External Capacity for Early Career Professionals
  - 1-2 rounds of interns/fellows completed.

**Year 5**
- Capacity for Early Career Professionals
  - Larger pool of talent within the Council; improved staff retention and return rate.

- External Capacity for Early Career Professionals
  - Larger talent pool of young researchers and professionals.

- External Capacity for Senior Career Professionals
  - The Center has increased academic and applied knowledge capacity.

Five-Year Milestones

Convene Experts Pillar

**Purpose:** To create a space for experts/actors to collaborate and innovate on problems affecting adolescents, especially girls.

**Year 1**
- Thought Leadership
- Innovation Labs
- Translation Convenings
- Seminar Series
  - Review other collaboration/networking models and identify where the Center is best-placed to “bring the right people to the table”; finalize research advisory service model; identify opportunities to pilot a few convenings and on strategic topics.

**Year 3**
- Expand research affiliate advisory service model to external experts/actors; service model up and running.

**Year 5**
- Best ideas are funded, taken to scale.
Five-Year Milestones

Communicate Evidence Pillar

**Purpose:** To ensure that evidence is easily accessible, understood, and relevant to stakeholders to influence global debates, investments, policies, and programs on adolescent girls.

**Year 1**
- **Translate Evidence**
  Map priority investors and decision-makers and develop strategic engagement plan; align the Center’s research and policy agenda within the Council’s priority framework.

**Year 2**
- **Amplify Evidence**
  Define priority policy and program areas where the Center can demonstrate impact, generate evidence road map, and engagement.

**Year 3**
- **Translate Evidence**
  Strong relationships with the biggest investors in priority areas.

**Year 4**
- **Amplify Evidence**
  Key influencers engaged and appropriate suite of products generated and disseminated to engage priority audiences (e.g., research briefs, op-eds, convenings).

**Year 5**
- **Translate Evidence**
  The Center’s research/work is used to influence funding and investment decisions.
- **Amplify Evidence**
  The Center’s work informs implementation and research practices.