

THE NEXT BILLION

Julie Hanna, Executive Chairman of Kiva, in conversation with
Exponential Center Executive Director Marguerite Gong Hancock



A growing number of innovators and entrepreneurs are focused on the next billion people who are digitally excluded, many of whom live in extreme poverty. Kiva allows people to lend money via the Internet to underserved entrepreneurs. It has crowdfunded more than one million loans to more than 2.1 million entrepreneurs in 82 countries, totaling nearly \$1 billion dollars with a repayment rate over 97 percent.

Julie Hanna, Kiva executive chairman and Presidential Ambassador for Global Entrepreneurship for President Obama, has pioneered products and led companies that have allowed millions of people to connect, communicate and collaborate globally, among them: Healtheon (WebMD); onebox.com (Unwired Planet); Portola (acquired by Netscape); and, open source innovator, Scalix. In this talk, Julie explores how social entrepreneurs are changing the lives of the next billion with the Exponential Center's Marguerite Gong Hancock.

About This Guide

This guide is intended to introduce provocative questions to enhance and extend what you learn through watching the video. It is suitable for mature high school students and college and adult learners in an educational, professional, or social setting. It may be particularly interesting for people who are curious about innovation, entrepreneurship, and the start-up ecosystem of Silicon Valley.

Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zwLyDvkt_Y&t=

Before you watch the video...

Are you familiar with the term "social entrepreneur"? What does it mean to you? Think of the names of any social entrepreneurs or companies you know. How did you learn about them?

As you watch the video...

Note any of Julie Hanna's personal characteristics, experiences, or opportunities that in your mind mark her as an innovator or entrepreneur.

For Discussion

Values and Ideas Forged by Experience (3:30)

Recall Julie's description of her childhood as a refugee and immigrant. What does she mean when she says her early experiences led her to dream of "a world that regards dignity as an inalienable human right"? How does her vision tie in with the inalienable rights of the US Declaration of Independence: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

Julie believes that technology is a democratizing force and that "access is the cornerstone of justice"? How does Kiva address these ideas? Can you think of situations in which technology might lead to opposite results? In other words, where it empowers repression and prevents access?

Solving Social Problems (12:15)

Julie notes that many social entrepreneurs start out by targeting an underserved market and then build from there. What are the reasons for this kind of approach? Is it an effective model for both social entrepreneurs and business entrepreneurs? Why or why not?

Paternalism and ethnocentrism can sometimes be pitfalls when trying to solve problems in unfamiliar parts of the world as well as in your own backyard. Julie argues that it is necessary for entrepreneurs to understand how their product fits into the ecosystem of the people for whom they are building it. If you were a social entrepreneur, what specific actions would you take to ensure that you fully understood your market?

Entrepreneurial Hope (18:37)

Julie believes that promoting entrepreneurship can be an effective solution to the problem of the "youth bulge" (high unemployment among people under 30) in countries around the world. In which countries might this strategy be effective? Why? Which countries might reject this premise? Why? What structures need to be in place to ensure that entrepreneurship is a viable option for young people? What is the relationship between the idea that nations can be stabilized through entrepreneurship and the idea that innovation is inherently disruptive?

While governments can pass laws that provide incentives and disincentives to encourage entrepreneurship, Julie notes, how do you think the more important cultural mindset that de-stigmatizes risk and failure

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can be promoted? What specific political, economic, or social actions can a country take? What could help these actions succeed? What could derail them?

Models of Innovation (26:34)

Julie discusses a Silicon Valley ethos that is committed to changing the world. Do you agree that the region's outsized influence comes with a responsibility to consider how technology can be used to help bring all people along with it, not just the privileged and tech-savvy? Given that Silicon Valley is made up of a variety of people and companies, exactly whose responsibility is it to ensure or promote this outcome? What are other ways that businesses address social responsibility?

The "interdependent" and "hypernetworked" ecosystem in Kibera, a slum in Nairobi, Kenya, is cited by Julie as a place that has resulted in a hotspot for entrepreneurs. What reasons does she give? Do you think this model is possible elsewhere? Why or why not? What other hotspots do you know about, and what are the factors that have led to their growth and development? In what ways do you think they are similar or different from the ecosystem in Silicon Valley?

Looking to the Future (43:44)

Julie cites evidence that "purpose" leads to successful companies and more engaged and loyal employees and customers and so it is not, in the long-term, incompatible with "profit." Do you agree? Is this true for all companies in all industries? Why or why not? What might be the long-term impact of millennials, who tend to strongly value purpose over profit?

Julie suggests that the problems posed to future workers by technologies such as artificial intelligence can be addressed by promoting continuous learning. Imagine what this would look like in practice in your community. What programs and infrastructure would need to be in place? What do you think about her prediction that relational skills will be more important in the future because they can't be automated? What would you do to retool work and workers for the future?

Julie's one word of advice for entrepreneurs is "dream." What would your word be? What is one word of advice you would give to a young person looking for a job in today's world? Do you feel that the word you just chose was more practical or more aspirational? How do you feel about that?