21ˢᵗ Century Youth Employment Programs: How to Go Digital

December 7, 2017

Agenda

- Introduction and Presenters
- What is Digital and Save the Children's Digital Ambition
- Digital Development Process

Purpose

- Present Save the Children's digital development process for youth employment programs.
- Using hypothetical scenarios, build understanding of digital development process

Presenters from Save the Children

Jessica Lippman
Specialist, Technology and Innovation,
Skills to Succeed
Save the Children

Jessica is a specialist at Save the Children where she manages a portfolio of digital projects across the youth employment and financial capability portfolio in Asia and Latin America, helping Save the Children create digital solutions for youth to become personally empowered and professionally successful. She has 6 years of project management experience in international development and 3 years of digital product management experience – bringing to life solutions that range from enterprise level database management systems to augmented and virtual reality Android applications. She is fluent in English and Spanish. She earned an undergraduate degree from Colgate University, a Master's Degree in Conflict Resolution and a certificate in Project Management from Georgetown University.
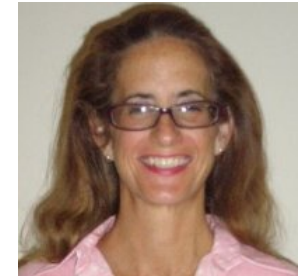
Patricia Langan
Program Director,
Skills to Succeed
Save the Children

Through her leadership at Save the Children, International Youth Foundation, Making Cents International, and her own consulting practice Consulting for a Better World, Patricia leads and advises on strategy, management and fundraising for global and local non-profits, foundations, governments and corporations in Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, Africa, Europe and the former Soviet Union. Her work has focused on global youth development. She currently is Program Director for Save the Children's Skills to Succeed program, which has prepared more than 125,000 deprived youth to get decent jobs and build businesses. At the World Bank, she pioneered the integration of citizen voice into public sector reforms and anti-corruption work. She started her career in project finance on Wall Street at The Fuji Bank and National Westminster Bank. She earned an undergraduate degree from Brown University and a Masters of Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School.

Setting the Stage: What is Digital?
Technology is the infrastructure, digital is the experience.

TECHNOLOGY

IT is the engine, this means anything concerned with the infrastructure supporting services and people in their use of computers and devices

IT is the engine under the hood of a car

Implications

- For an NGO, IT means the technologies that enable you to provide a personal service
- It can be the system that help you keep track of your participants and their interests and needs

DIGITAL

Digital is the experience, its what you do with the technology.
It focuses on how you should evolve to survive and thrive in an increasingly digital world.

Digital is the experience of driving the car

Implications

- For an NGO, Digital can be the personal experience your partner will get when browsing your web site for information or engaging with your mobile app
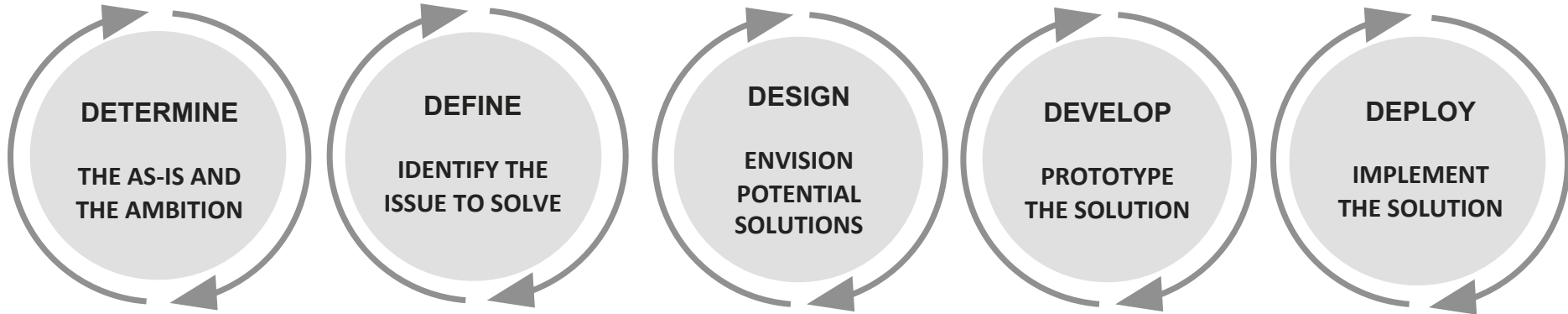
Save the Children's Digital Ambition

"UNLEASH THE POWER OF DIGITAL INNOVATION TO UNLEASH THE POWER OF YOUTH"

Our digital vision statement, developed 2017. Save the Children aims to be a creator of digital solutions for youth to be personally empowered and professionally successful.
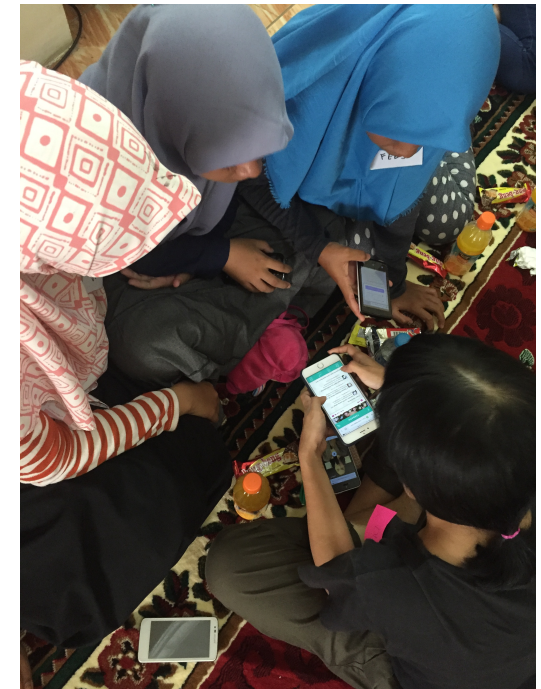
Save the Children's Digital Development Process

The innovation process we developed with Accenture Development Partners

DETERMINE	DEFINE	DESIGN	DEVELOP	DEPLOY
THE AS-IS AND THE AMBITION	IDENTIFY THE ISSUE TO SOLVE	ENVISION POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS	PROTOTYPE THE SOLUTION	IMPLEMENT THE SOLUTION

Key Objectives
- Understand the as-is "current-state"
- Agree on a vision and mission
- Align objectives
- Define principles

Key Objectives
- Understand the realities of users and context
- Define problem(s)/ pain points
- Evaluate issues

Key Objectives
- Ideate
- Develop concepts
- Prioritize concepts
- Rapidly test ideas

Key Objectives
- Test and refine chosen concept/ solution
- Make the case for investment

Key Objectives
- Implement/pilot
- Measure
- Roll out
- Replicate

Key word

Aligning

Key word

Understanding

Key word

Ideation

Key word

Proving concept

Key word

Scaling

Scenario #1

Organization A was approached by a donor with a grant offer to create a mobile app for boys aged 13-18 living in peri-urban areas in the Philippines. The donor presented Organization A with a lot of evidence from market research showing that this was needed by this population and was feasible within the country (e.g. sufficient connectivity, affordable data rates, youth controlled devices). They assured Organization A that they had all of the developers and other consultants needed ready to go. Organization A Headquarters (US based) jumped on the idea and convinced the field office that they need to do this.
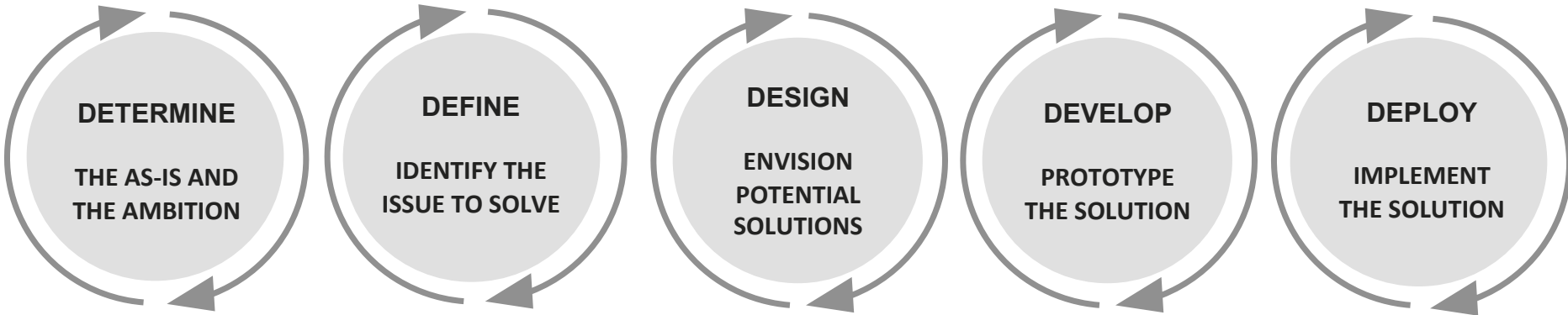
For Organization A Headquarters – who were talking to the donor about nationwide and global scale – success meant that Organization A launches nationally and reaches every Filipino boy aged 13-18, and the field office would continue to use and develop it. The field team was not involved in these conversations, and for them – success meant that a specific number of program participants in one city used the app – and when the project was over the Field Office would not continue to incorporate this application into projects. After all, the targets in the logframe for this donor's project only asked for (1) development of a mobile solution and (2) 1000 boys aged 13-18 use mobile solution.

Neither Headquarters nor the Field Office had ever managed a mobile application before. They assigned one junior officer with limited project management experience to lead. She was a millennial who used devices and social media extensively, but had no experience in market research, ICT4D projects, or app development. – The development process was slow and frustrating for them. The software developers that the donor chose had a rigorous schedule and the Field Office did not have enough staff time to answer quickly enough. The developer did not have enough time to test features on youth, so they used their best judgment. They only piloted the application with 5 youth before rolling out to the 1000 boys. Even though they saved time with shortcuts, it still launched 8 months behind schedule. The mobile app launched 8 months later than anticipated.

After the application launched, Organization A found that the donor's market research results missed some key information about the local population of boys 13-18 they were serving – they mostly used feature phones, instead of the Android Phones indicated by the donors market research. It was difficult for Organization A to find 1000 boys who fit the criteria and had appropriate devices, and it was a real challenge to reach the target. Organization A abandoned the application as soon as the grant period ended.

Scenario #1- What did you notice?

Scenario #1 : Youth employment program in Philippines, targeting 1000 boys aged 13-18 years old living in peri-urban areas.

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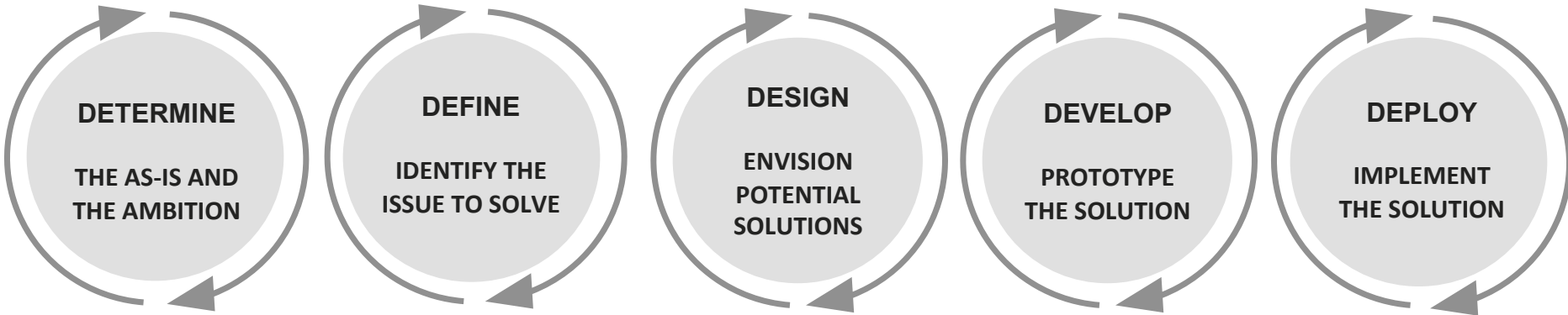| Key word	Key word	Key word	Key word	Key word
Aligning	Understanding	Ideation	Proving concept	Scaling

Scenario #1: What We Noticed

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Aligning	**Understanding**	**Ideation**	**Proving concept**	**Scaling**
No alignment/ agreement between HQ and field office on rationale for using digital, what success looked like, sustainability plan	Donor provided market research and defined problem and solution for the implementing organization.

This is not sufficient understanding of the problem that the organization's youth face | Design was led by donor developers.

Limited staff capability and capacity for managing and driving this project. | Development timelines too ambitious for staff.

Did not prove concept with a sufficient sample of target group.

Launched without validation by end-users. | Application did not work for target population.

Organization changed implementation model to hit grant target of 1,000 youth.

Abandoned application after launch |

Scenario #2

Organization B worked for the past year to develop a digital strategy and develop a decision framework for Headquarters to use with Field Offices to make decisions on pursuit of digital products.

They have recently come to a decision to work on a new M&E tool to use in programs in Latin America. All offices (Headquarters and Field Offices) agree that they want to use this tool in youth employment programs, and after a 1-year trial period they will extend to other thematic programs. The tool will help youth more easily communicate with Organization B staff, and to provide answers to M&E surveys. This would help Org B track participants' outcomes. The tool would be used by both project participants and M&E staff.
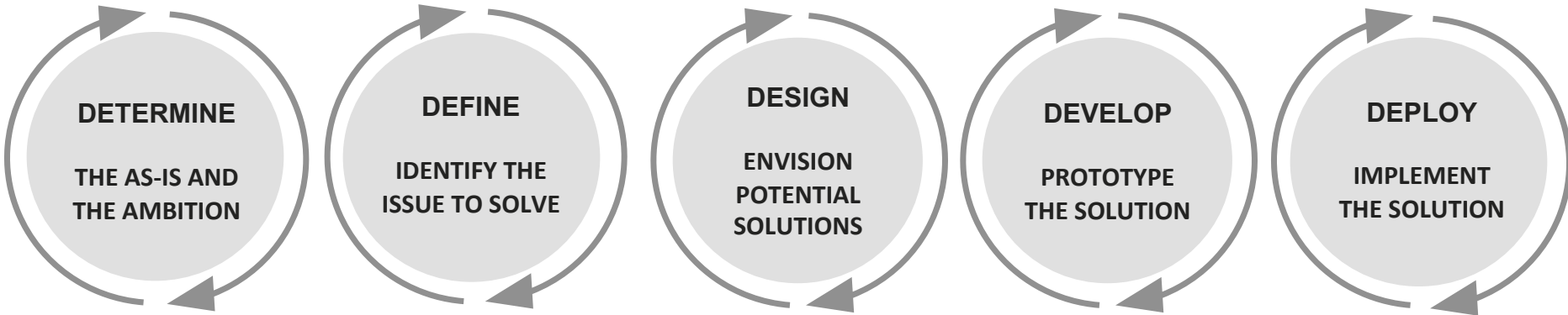
Organization B decided to build their own tool – so they can present this proprietary tool to donors and be ahead of their competitors. Organization B hired one person to manage the project across all countries. They assumed that M&E and IT staff in country could do what needed to be done locally. They hosted several conference calls for all countries and one in-person workshop to understand needs of the M&E staff. M&E staff were not consulted again until after the tool was built.

The tool was built on time to the specifications and requirements that Organization B M&E staff expressed. After a short period of testing, the M&E staff agreed that this is what they wanted. Field Office staff were asked to create their own change management and adoption plans. No design sessions were held with youth or other stakeholders (such as implementing partners who may need to do M&E activities)

Youth participants had real difficulty using the tool and quickly stopped in all countries. M&E staff had to scramble to go back to old, more labor-intensive ways of collecting data, such as paper-based forms and telephone calls. M&E staff also found that they had been wrong in their initial specifications and requirements. The tool wasn't performing well in the field. Organization B, however, had run out of funding for the development of the solution.

Scenario #2 – What did you notice?

Scenario #2: Organization B needs a regional M&E tool to improve data collection and youth engagement with program staff in LAC.

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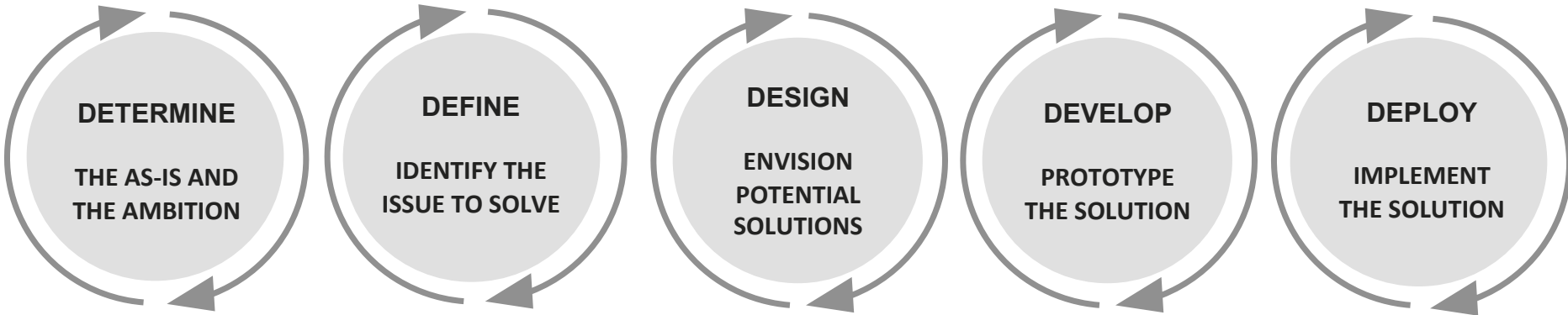| Key word	Key word	Key word	Key word	Key word
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Scenario #2: What We Noticed

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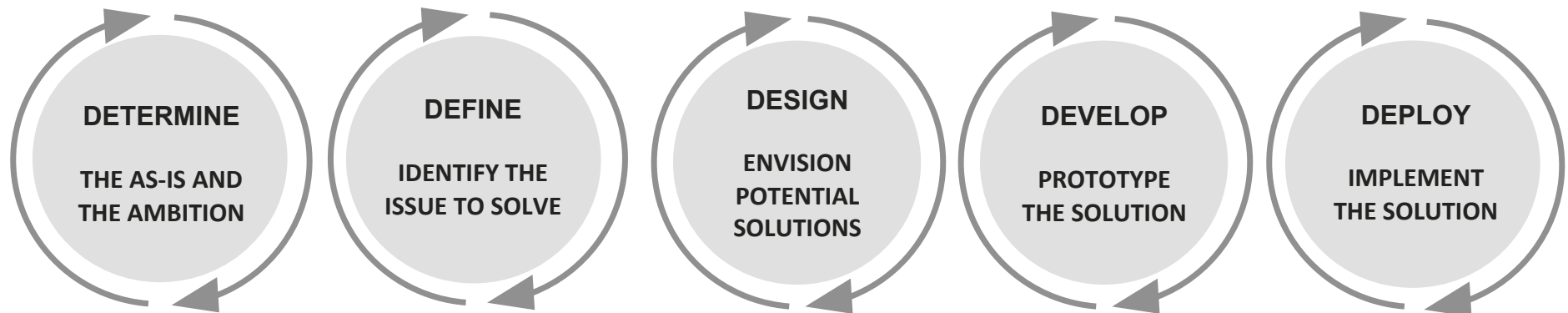| Key word	Key word	Key word	Key word	Key word
Aligning	**Understanding**	**Ideation**	**Proving concept**	**Scaling**
Clearly defined digital strategy, agreed upon by all parts of Organization B. Clear criteria for how to select digital projects	Solution narrowly defined – only understood issues from staff. Youth who are also supposed to use this tool, were not consulted!	They chose a costly path to build their own tool versus use tools already on the market. Stakeholders only consulted once at the start of the design phase	Product not tested with youth or staff during the development process. Did not factor in field-testing the solution before launching ($$ ran out to fix)	Implementation not guided or supported. Country staff left on their own to figure out deployment plan.

Other Considerations and Lessons Learned in Digital Product Development from Save the Children

1. The right people:
   - Project success relies on having the right people assigned to working on it, and the right buy-in from leadership.
2. When is technology most appropriate:
   - A technology is not always the most appropriate! Do a thorough analysis to determine what the problem is and what possible solutions are. Can it be solved by training staff, hiring different types of staff, or changing business processes?
3. How can developing a strategy and determining ambition help you?
   - Developing a digital strategy can help you decide what types of digital solutions you want to pursue. Moves organization from being reactive to being proactive.
4. Sustainability
   - Define your vision for sustainability up front. Is this just for a specific project? Is there a longer term future?
   - Keep in mind not just the product/project sustainability, but how this fits in with the broader market. What is the outside competition doing? Can we see around the corner?

Discussion

• What do you think went well in these scenarios?

• What could have been done better or differently? What stages of the development process did they miss or not address sufficiently?

• Have you experienced something similar?

• What types of local capacity (i.e. training, new staff) do you think was required to ensure success?

DETERMINE

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Thank you!

For further information, contact:

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Additional Resources

Links to additional resources on human centered design approaches and activities

There are numerous resources available that can be used to maximize the activities

- ✓ Ideo Design Kit
- ✓ D.School Crash Course
- ✓ D.School Reading List
- ✓ Design Thinking at Accenture
- ✓ Design Thinking Myths: Fjord and Accenture
- ✓ Design Thinking Playbook
- ✓ Design Thinking Case Studies