Designing Programs for People: Human-Centered Design

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Programs are designed with good intentions

• Transfer program delivers cash directly to beneficiary bank accounts – but cash is not being used.

• Food program offers online application with strong infrastructure – but takeup is weak.

• Training and job placement services are offered – but completion rates are low.

• Administrative steps taken to ensure attendance by service workers – but attendance does not increase and services don’t improve
But they can fail to work as intended

Why?
Who are the people we are trying to serve? Are they a homogeneous or diverse group? What are their characteristics, situations, perspectives?

What is their experience navigating the program or delivery processes? What does that journey look like? What are their pain points?

How can programs and delivery processes be better designed to serve these end-users?
Pay more attention to the clients and people using the program

**Who are the people** we are trying to serve? Are they a homogeneous or diverse group? What are their characteristics, situations, perspectives?

**Need**

Human-Centered Design

**How can programs and delivery processes be better designed** to serve these end-users?
HCD: Series of steps to arrive at a collaborative solution

1. **Empathize**
   - Observe the problem objectively

2. **Define**
   - Define the problem based on evidence

3. **Propose**
   - Generate ideas for possible solutions collaboratively with stakeholders

4. **Prototype**
   - Build working examples of ideas

5. **Test**
   - Test the best at scale

**Human Centered Design**
HCD: Series of steps to arrive at a collaborative solution

**Empathize**
- Observe the problem objectively
  - Interviews
  - Immersion
  - Peers Observing Peers

**Define**
- Define the problem based on evidence
  - Journey Mapping
  - Personas

**Propose**
- Generate ideas for possible solutions collaboratively with stakeholders
  - Brainstorm
  - Focus Group share stories
  - Frameworks (Journey map, relational map)

**Prototype**
- Build working examples of ideas
  - Concept creation
  - Mockups
  - Storyboards

**Test**
- Test the best at scale
  - Small scale
    - Role playing
    - Eat your own lunch
  - Larger scale pilot testing
Journey Mapping:
Wage Subsidies for Firms to Hire More Workers (experience of a travel agency)

**Processes**
- **Learned about the program through internet & newsletter**
- **Applied online for program**
- **Received application number online**
- **Received participation letter**
- **Visited Public Employment Service (PES) to provide extensive documentation**
- **Collected 3-4 signatures for verification**
- **Received participation letter**
- **Visited PES to pick up Letter of Approval**

**Pain Points**
- **Online Process**
  - Number is issued quickly
- **3 months to receive letter**
- **Too much work**
- **Could have got docs online**
- **Too many visits**
- **2-3 hour wait**

**Processes**
- **Received 3-4 resumes of job candidates from PES**
- **Selected 2 candidates, sent to PES to register**
- **With missed deadline, had to go to PES to plead**
- **Once registered, must go to PES to provide payroll proof, bank statements – every 3 months.**
- **Wait 2 months to get wage subsidy payment (while having to pay the workers)**
- **Receive PES auditors for spot checks**
- **1 wage-subsidized worker left the firm, and payment of wage subsidies stopped**
- **Appealed twice: rejected once, then accepted. Then payments reinstated**

**Pain Points**
- **Many job candidates are weak**
- **Too many visits**
- **Missed registration deadline. Had to plead**
- **4 times/year; 4-5hrs wait time each visit**
- **2 months wait**
- **No value in this step**
- **2 months wait**
- **2 years to receive missed payment**
Advantages of building *personas*

- **Personas** are archetypes that represent different user types relevant to the program.

- A single persona represents many individuals’ aggregated experiences and behavioral patterns, beyond their demographic data, like age, race, or gender.

- **Personas** help program designer focus on manageable and memorable cast of character instead of getting lost in details.

- **Personas** are particularly helpful for those who may not interact with end users, yet are responsible for generating processes, products, and protocols that directly impact these individuals.
• Madagascar’s National Nutrition Program has been using HCD for several years to design more effective behavior change interventions.

• The “prototyping” phase of HCD has allowed the program to test several early concept ideas with beneficiaries, focusing on those with promise.

• The HCD approach has led to testing the impact of adding in a home visit and community meetings on healthy development with behavioral “nudges” to boost children’s development.

• The National Nutrition Office is seeing a shift in mindset from designing for beneficiaries to designing with beneficiaries.

Source: Madagascar: Nutrition & Health Project, The World Bank
Testing:
Challenge of Low Take-Up Rates for Food Stamps Program in California (USA)
Welcome,

This website is a fast and easy way for California residents to learn about and apply for medical, food, and cash assistance programs. MyBenefits CalWIN also provides ongoing access to secure and private benefit information. Select a topic below to get started or sign in to your account.

Community Based Organization, get started here.

MyBenefits CalWIN allows you to:
- Check your benefit status and amount
- See if you are eligible for other assistance programs
- Apply for benefits or Continue an application
- Submit your reports or renew your benefits online

View MyBenefits

See if I Am Eligible

Apply for Benefits

Report My Changes Or Renew Benefits
Simple, mobile application

Get help putting food on the table

Apply for food stamps in 10 minutes

Apply now →

This website is a free, non-profit service to help California residents apply for CalFresh (food stamps).
In-Kind Subsidy Reform at Scale: India PDS

1. Procurement of grain through decentralized market-based scheme

2. Allocation of grain to shops through Electronic funds transfer and e-tickets

3. Transportation by private contracted trucks tracked by GPS from warehouse to shops

4. Distribution of grain using electronic scales with digitally recorded receipt

5. Allocation to shops based on low-income individuals in Socioeconomic Census
Designing solutions to deliver social protection systems...

- We move **rapidly from a problem statement to solution**.
- There is **no right answer**
- **Many stakeholders** and factors affect outcomes
- Having **deep understanding of people** while seeing the bigger picture
- Spend considerable time **understanding the problem** and generating alternatives
- Gaining **clarity and conviction** despite incomplete information
- Discovering and **choosing interventions that have impact**