



Participants at the Social Innovation Lab convening at The Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center in Italy, Sept 2-6, 2014

SOCIAL INNOVATION LABS

HOW SOCIAL INNOVATION LABS CAN ADVANCE YOUR WORK

October, 2014

CONTEXT FOR THIS WORK

[Click here for a recent blog post on the project](#)



- Traditional approaches to complex problem solving are insufficient to fully realizing our ambitions to solving the most challenging problems faced by poor and vulnerable people. Social innovation labs provide a useful approach. They offer a **unique process that involves diverse stakeholders in a given field, creating an environment conducive to innovation and experimentation.**
- In September 2013, The Rockefeller Foundation [launched a project](#) to **understand the value** of social innovation labs in accelerating solutions to complex social problems.
 - The goal of the lab effort was to learn if and how these labs develop **better solutions, more efficiently, while building the innovation capacity.**
 - The Rockefeller Foundation funded and worked with **six lab partners from around the globe** to develop innovative solutions and strategies to complex social problems.
 - We've [captured our lessons](#) along the way and developed this tool to help others understand **how social innovation labs can advance their work.**
- The following materials draw on learnings from several avenues developed by the Bridgespan Group, including:
 - Research and interviews with 30+ lab experts
 - Observations of [labs working on several focus problems of Rockefeller's various initiatives](#)
 - Surveys of [23 funders](#) and [75 labs](#)
 - Global social innovation lab gathering of lab leaders and practitioners at The Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this document is to address six key questions for individuals looking to understand when and how to work with social innovation labs.

- 1 WHAT ARE SOCIAL INNOVATION LABS? PP. 4-9
- 2 WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO GET OUT OF WORKING WITH A LAB? PP. 10-17
- 3 WHAT IS NEEDED TO SUCCESSFULLY WORK WITH OR THROUGH A LAB? PP. 18-19
- 4 WHEN IS THIS METHODOLOGY NOT THE BEST APPROACH? P. 20
- 5 WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW LABS SOLVE SOCIAL PROBLEMS? P. 21

What are social innovation labs?



PHOTO: SARA FARLEY, GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE

Labs are entities that work on complex problems by integrating a range of perspectives to re-frame the problem and prototype solutions using multiple approaches, activities and tools.

THREE DEFINING FEATURES OF LABS

Diverse perspectives from the whole system

- Labs emphasize a **“whole systems view”** – **bringing together a diverse set of stakeholders**, often including people from different sectors, unusual suspects, and beneficiaries. These perspectives are critical to: 1) Reframe the problem, 2) Identify root causes, 3) Co-create and refine prototypes of solution, and 4) Mobilize a network necessary to implement and sustain solutions
 - E.g., The Global Knowledge Initiative, with support from the Rockefeller Foundation, conducted **“challenge mapping sessions”** in six countries to identify root causes of food waste and spoilage
 - E.g., [The MaRS Solutions Lab worked with the Rockefeller Foundation Youth Employment team](#) Starbucks & LeadersUp to hold workshops with government policymakers, educators, foundations, big employers like The Gap, and youth themselves to co-create five potential solutions to complex challenges

Experimentation and learning

- **“Rapid prototyping”** is at the core of what labs do. Testing and refining early versions of the solution or elements of the solution are critical to: 1) Ensure solutions are grounded in the “real world”, 2) Decrease risk at the time of implementation down the road, and 3) Efficient learning
 - E.g., [InSTEDD developed Verboice](#), a mobile voice solution, through multiple iterations with users in the field
 - E.g., [MaRS Solutions Lab](#) used story boarding to build and test prototypes coupled [with a pilot computer simulation game](#) to test assumptions (website will be active until 12/2014)

Unique facilitation and design approaches for problem-solving

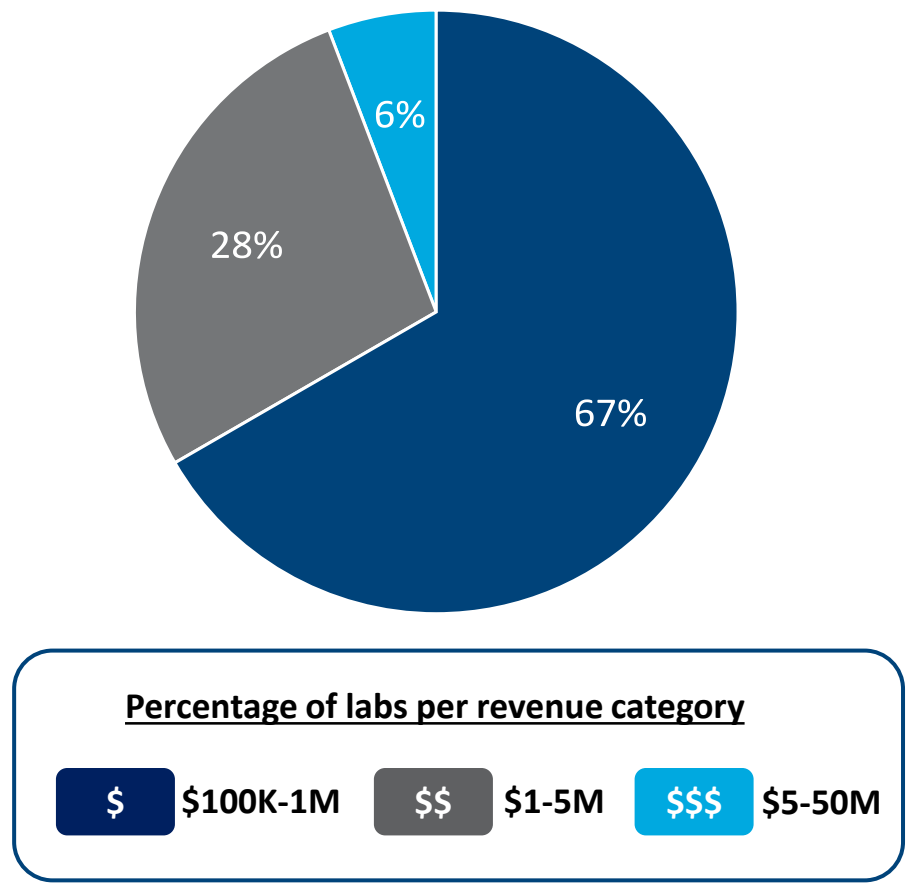
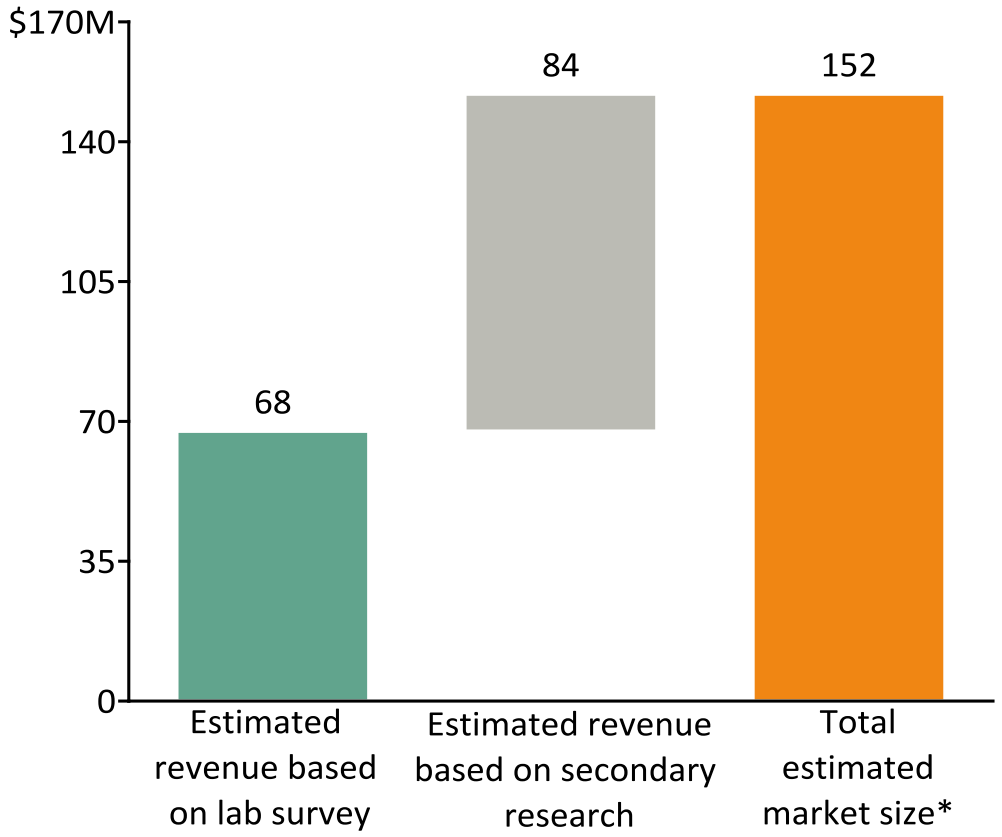
- Labs strategically use of a **variety of methods, activities, and tools** to encourage interaction and collaborative problem-solving among participants
 - These include human-centered design (HCD) techniques, business model canvas, role playing, spider diagrams, and highly engaged facilitation
 - E.g., [AfriLabs](#) hosted a virtual global gathering to co-create solutions to youth unemployment in Africa through digital jobs
 - E.g., [InCompass](#) conducted a 3-day field study in a rural village in Cambodia to deeply test assumptions around the energy needs and preferences of the poor

1

The social innovation lab sector is relatively small and comprised mostly of organizations with <\$1M revenue

THE TOTAL MARKET SIZE IS AN ESTIMATED \$150M

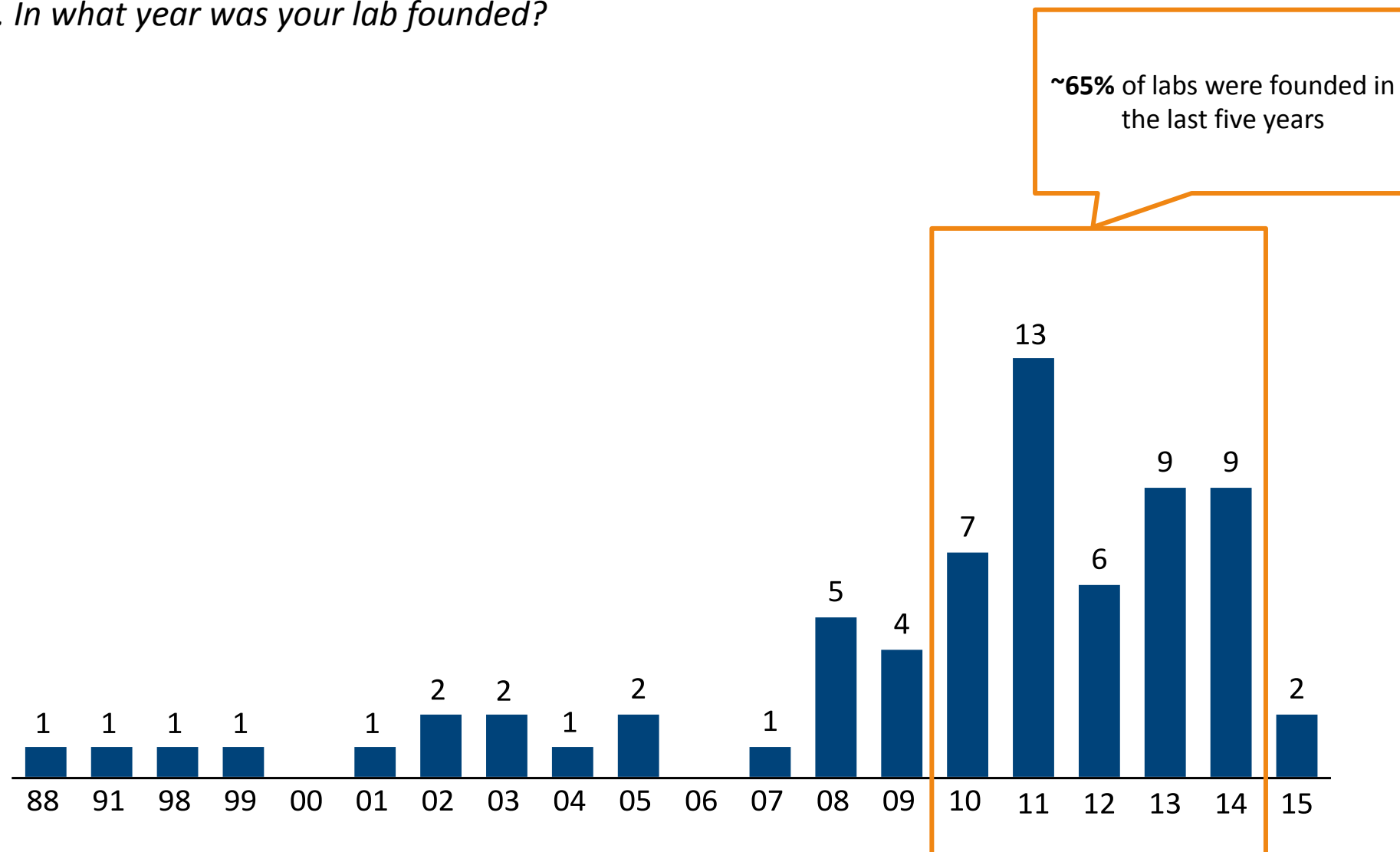
~70% OF LABS SURVEYED HAVE DEDICATED ANNUAL BUDGETS <\$1M



Note: RHS: Includes responses to the question "Please estimate your organization's total annual budget dedicated to social and public sector work" (N:59, 17 skipped this question); Also includes information for an additional 10 known labs who did not complete the survey but whose revenues were available (e.g., MindLab, Nesta, MIT D-Lab); this figure also includes an additional ~\$30M to account for 10-15 small to medium size labs

The lab sector has experienced significant growth in recent years

Q. In what year was your lab founded?



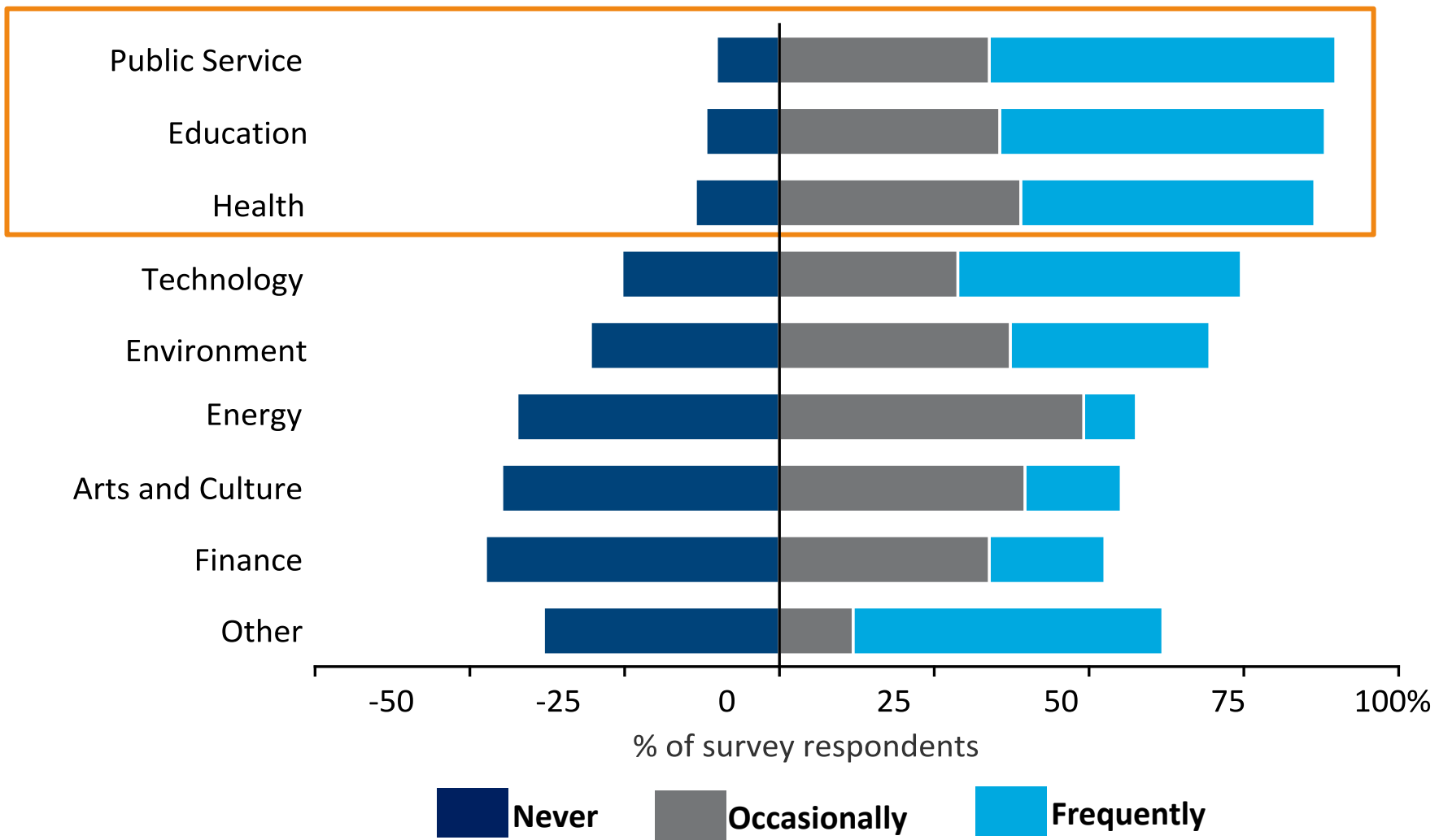
Note: Includes responses to the question "In what year was your first lab founded?" (N:59, 17 skipped this question)

Chart includes the founding dates of 59 labs from the survey along with founding dates for 9 additional labs identified through secondary research ; FROG design is an additional lab included in analysis that we haven't highlighted here as the organization was founded in 1969. We hypothesize that doesn't reflect when the social innovation lab was created

1

Most labs work across a range of sectors with public service, education, and health being the primary focus areas

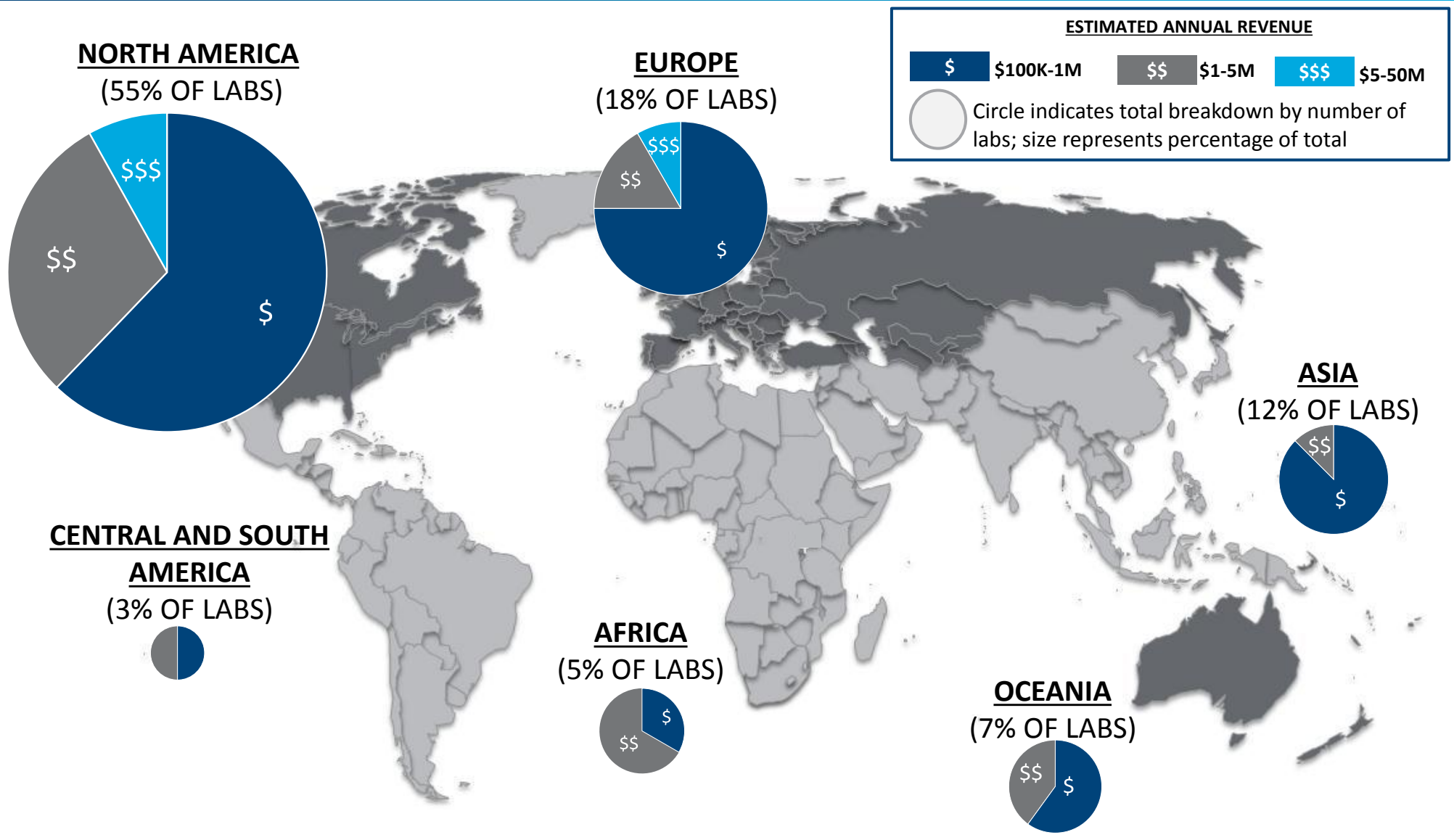
Q. Which sectors does your lab focus on?



Note: Includes responses to the question "Which sectors do your lab(s) focus on?" (N:59, 17 skipped this question). Other includes sustainability, food security, agriculture, water, and sanitation, housing and social justice

1

The majority of labs—and larger labs in particular—are concentrated in the Global North



Note: Includes responses to the questions “Where does your organization have a permanent local presence?” and “Please estimate your organization’s total annual budget dedicated to social and public sector work?” (N:59, 17 skipped this question). 3 respondents stated that their labs had no permanent local presence. Includes 10 additional labs identified through secondary research . The total labs adds up to 67 here (instead of 69) because two survey respondents didn’t include both revenue and geographic information, key inputs into our calculations

1

Labs vary along several dimensions but can be categorized based on *who they serve*

LABS ADVANCING FUNDER GOALS

- Serve specific clients like foundations, development agencies, or other organizations in their efforts to address complex social problems

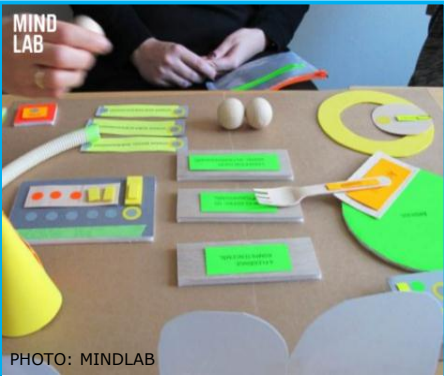
E.g., [Stanford ChangeLabs](#), [InSTEDD](#)



PUBLIC LABS

- Serve the public sector and are either enabled by or form part of a government

e.g., [MindLab](#) (Denmark), [Public Policy Lab](#) (New York), [Behavioral Insight Team](#) (UK)



INTERNAL LABS

- Serve the organization they are embedded within

E.g., [UNICEF Innovation Labs](#), [World Bank Innovation Labs](#), [BRAC Innovation Lab](#)



AUTONOMOUS SOCIAL LABS

- Standalone labs built to address a problem; these are multi-year or permanent labs

E.g., [Sustainable Food Lab](#), [Electricity Innovation Lab](#)



See appendix for case studies under each category

2

What can I expect to get out of working with a lab?

PROBLEM

What kinds of problems can labs help solve?

PROCESS

How do labs develop solutions?

SOLUTION

What forms do these solutions take?

RESULTS

What is the impact or results of the work (both process and lives impacted)?




2

PROBLEM: What kinds of problems can labs help solve?




Labs are most useful for complex and adaptive problems without pre-defined solutions that require a “systems view” and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

- The problem is **adaptive** (e.g., it changes in unexpected ways over time as different actors constantly adjust their behaviors in response to new information. This is different from “technical” challenges where the problem and solution are clearly defined, even though implementation may be difficult).
- The problem is **complex** – it requires a systems view and involves multiple actors, disciplines, perspectives, and sectors.
- There is **no clear accountability** for solving the problem (e.g., many stakeholders are responsible for carrying out a solution).
- Previous attempts to solve the problem have **not sufficiently taken into account end-user/ stakeholder experiences** and **systemic dynamics**.
- There is **no strong hypothesis on the solution** or there is a **willingness to re-evaluate** the current hypothesis.



② PROCESS: Labs apply a prototyping-based process that follows a few principles



- Prototyping as an approach describes the **guiding philosophy** of experimentation, quick iterations, and learning that labs use as a way of working
- Given the extensive iteration and testing in real-world situations early in the process, prototyping serves as a means to **increase confidence levels** before making big investments
- The approach is intended to test - rapidly and cheaply - for **known and unknown failure modes** (e.g., explore both the predictable areas where interventions may break down as well as the unintended consequences) and surface **early signals that demonstrate desired outputs and outcomes**
- To be effective, a prototype should **simulate interaction between the relevant actors/agents** (e.g., system dynamics, feedback loops, multiple perspectives, trade-offs); A static definition of a solution is not a prototype
- While this approach increases confidence, it **cannot predict all possible consequences**, especially at the systems level
- Although they are often used interchangeably, prototypes are **distinct from pilots**. They are often less expensive and in depth in their implementation and are refined in quick cycles of iteration
- **While systems are complex, prototypes are usually simpler** representations of elements of the system

② PROCESS: There are three key differences between planning-based and prototyping-based processes

PLANNING-BASED PROCESS

STAKEHOLDERS PROVIDE *INPUT*

- Planning-based approaches draw on **input from several stakeholders** to inform the strategy design (e.g., interviews, focus groups, etc.)
- Prototyping-based approaches view **stakeholders as active – and equal – collaborators** in driving towards solutions

LINEAR APPROACH

- Planning-based approaches follow a **linear process** until the piloting stage; typically invests **significant time upfront into the design** until confident intervention will work (e.g., 6-8 months in design)
- Prototyping-based approaches follow an **iterative process with multiple loops of quick feedback and refinement**; relies on **early and fast testing** of components of an intervention (e.g., cycles of 2 weeks)

LEARNING BY *RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS*

- Planning-based approaches draw primarily on **research and analysis** to inform the interventions design; testing in the field typically occurs in the pilot stage
- Prototyping-based approaches engage users in the field **as early as possible and with a lower investment** (~2 months into the project) with the goal of refining the solution


PROTOTYPING- BASED PROCESS

STAKEOLDERS *CO- CREATE SOLUTIONS*

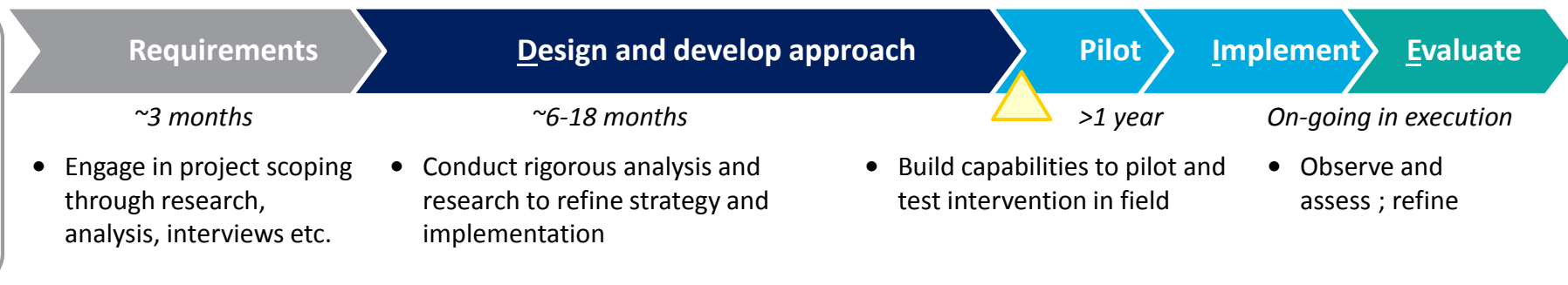
ITERATIVE APPROACH

LEARNING BY *DOING (AND FAILING FAST)*

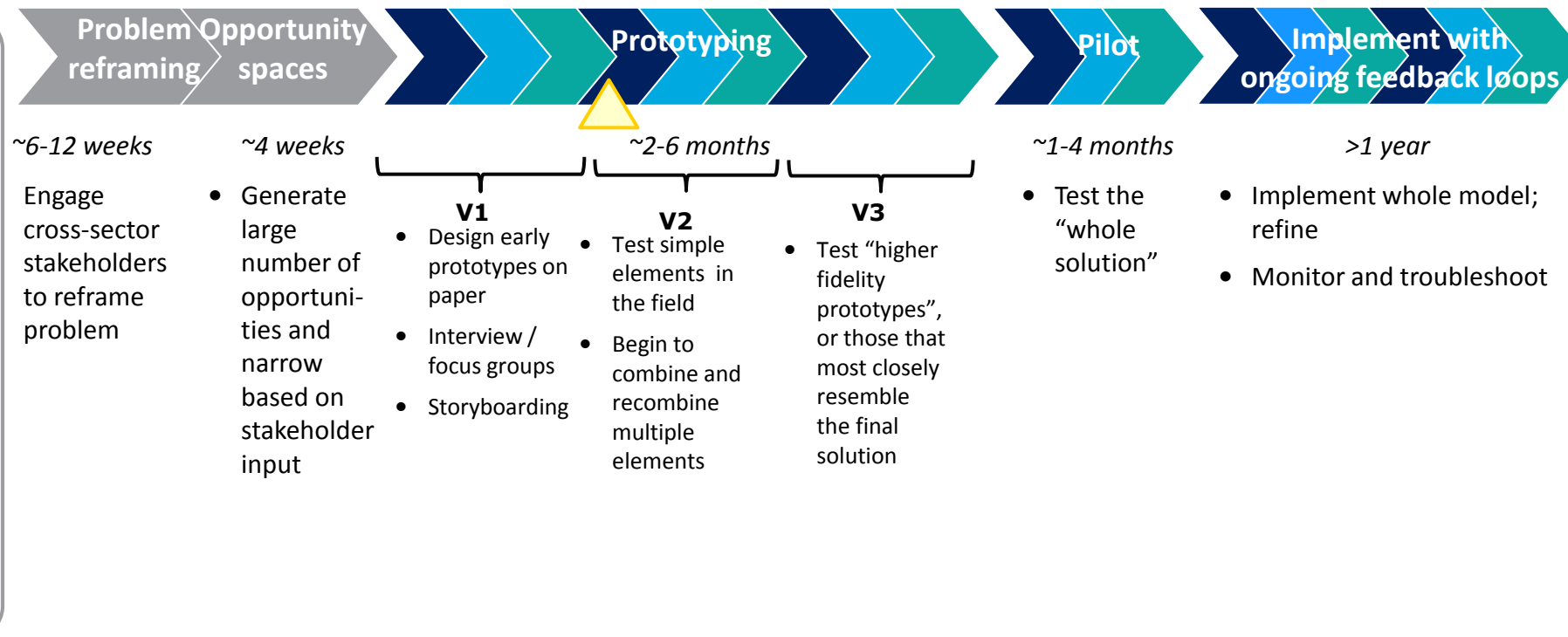
② PROCESS: Illustrative comparison of planning-based and prototyping-based processes

 *Test with users in the field*

Planning-based approach



Prototyping-based approach



② SOLUTIONS: What forms do these solutions take?

The solutions produced by labs fall under four overlapping categories.

A new and different product offering

Example: [InSTEDD](#) developed [Verboice](#), a mobile voice responses system used to provide critical information to illiterate populations, including maternal health information



A new or different organizational model (incl. networks)

Example: [BRAC's Social Innovation Lab](#) is focused on internal support to identify innovations within the broad network and be an agent for culture change



Multiple categories

Example: The [Global Knowledge Initiative](#) helped tackle the [“potato-taste defect”](#) threatening coffee farmers in East Africa by building new networks of academics and private sector, developing new processes, and surfacing nine areas of action on technical and market-based solutions such as potato taste detection tools



A new and different way of doing things

Example: [Business Innovation Factory](#) conducted a [The Children's Wellness Experience Lab](#) to convert a hospital model from “sick care” to “well-care”



A new or different structure of resource allocation

Example: The [Sustainable Food Lab](#) is a large-scale, multi-stakeholder entity that advances market-based solutions to key issues in sustainable food production, including market incentives



2

RESULTS: What results can I expect to get out of working with a social innovation lab?

SOLUTIONS

- **Deeper understanding of the problem:** In-depth understanding of the root causes and dynamics of problems through access to diverse perspectives from stakeholders and end-users
- **New solutions or innovative opportunities:** Solutions informed by reality on the ground; Ideas that reach beyond existing solutions or what seems possible
- **Solutions designed with the end-goal of being scaled:** Solutions designed with greater likelihood of scale (e.g., more people reached, systems level impact)

KNOWLEDGE

- **Efficiency of learning:** Faster learning as a result of engaging multiple stakeholders and gathering perspectives in a short time; Ability to test and refine solutions at a lower cost and more efficiently
- **Holistic perspectives from the system:** Gathering of input and perspectives from all key stakeholders in the system
- **Knowledge creation:** Development of resources to advance the field

CAPACITY-BUILDING

- **Skill-building:** Creation of new tools and processes for participants and teams; Development of an innovation mindset and new perspective on future work
- **Capacity for implementation:** Building of momentum and capacity to implement throughout the process

NETWORKS

- **New ecosystems:** Development of an ecosystem of players enabling and owning the solutions
- **New networks:** Stronger and/or new networks and relationships result from collaborative process

② RESULTS: Examples from The Rockefeller Foundation project

SOLUTIONS

- *[InSTEDD's Verboice System](#), a tool developed to provide access to Information, has enabled illiterate populations worldwide to make 2M+ calls and disrupted communication technology in low-resource environments.*
- *After attending a meeting from the Global Knowledge Initiative, Ghana Export Development and Agricultural Investment Fund recalibrated its post harvest funding strategy based on the top opportunities identified during the Lab's session held in Ghana.*
- *A large corporation wants to prototype "youth-versity", an idea surfaced in the Rockefeller Foundation New Solutions to Youth Unemployment lab. Starbucks and LeadersUP plan to integrate the lab process into their work as they carry this idea forward.*

KNOWLEDGE

- *"I learned **more in 3-days than I did in the last six months.**" – Lab participant*
- *Over 10 months, Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI) has engaged **220+ global experts from a range of sectors**—agribusiness, finance, research, policy, civil society—to surface opportunities to improve the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable people*
- *GKI has catalogued **hundreds of resources** being put to use by dozens of organizations to reduce post harvest loss in an effort to maximize existing investments and reduce duplication and create more opportunity for poor and vulnerable people.*

CAPACITY-BUILDING

- *"I have learned a lot about innovation theory and techniques for assembling the right people in a room and getting them excited and thinking in a generative mode. The sessions **helped our team and participants to think in new ways and contribute constructively.**" – Lab participant describing the process of developing solutions to meet the needs of the poor*

NETWORKS

- *The Youth Employment team has built a **network of 15 employers and stakeholders** committed to piloting solutions to the challenges of youth unemployment developed through the lab.*
- *"For ten years we've been waiting for this conversation on food loss to occur in our country in which SAGARPA, CIMMYT, Bimbo and the other players here actually sit down together. **It took GKI and The Rockefeller Foundation to make this happen** and we are grateful!" – Participant in GKI session in Mexico*

3

What are the **key success factors** for working with or through labs?

FIT

- Right **problem**
 - *See p.11*
- Clear articulation of the **purpose and goals** for the lab, e.g.,:
 - Desired outcomes and outputs (e.g., what “success” would look like)
 - Scale in which the work would occur (e.g., policy level, beneficiary level)

MINDSET

- Comfort with **ambiguity**
- Willingness and desire to **co-create with other partners**
 - Agreement that convener has a seat at the table vs. leading the table
 - Openness to allowing stakeholders to push forward the process after the lab ends
- Openness to **engage in an iterative process**
 - Acceptance of changing hypothesis
 - Openness to following a process that requires experimentation and exposure to failure

WORKING MODEL

- **Clear expectations** on process, e.g.,:
 - Timeline
 - Deliverables
 - What is in and out of scope
- Clarity of **roles**
 - *See p.19*
- Ability to bring the **key stakeholders** to the table
 - Either lab or convener have relationships

What are the major roles that are required?

	THE CONVENER	THE ORGANIZER	THE DECISION-MAKER(S)	THE PARTICIPANTS
DESCRIPTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual entity or group of stakeholders who lead the lab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group of people running the day-to-day work of the lab (e.g., pre and post workshop preparation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The person(s) with decision-making power (vs. providing <i>input</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders who 1) participate in the lab to co-create solutions or 2) new stakeholders who may engage at different phases Some of the original or new stakeholders could transition to prototyping solutions
KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will your organization be the only convener or are there others you would like to involve? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g., The Youth Employment lab was co-convened by The Rockefeller Foundation, Starbucks and LeadersUp to ensure multiple perspectives were engaged, and the Foundation would not be viewed as the “audience” for the outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do individual conveners or involved entities expect to be engaged in the various phases of the labs works? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g., in the pre-work for the events, in the facilitation of the event, in the post-event work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is/are the decision-maker(s) on key decisions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope of the lab Participants Budget Share-back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the perspectives that you want represented? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g., all members of the system—policy, practitioners, beneficiaries What is the role of participants during and in between sessions? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g., In the Youth Employment lab, the same participants attended every workshop and were responsible for “owning” the outcomes. In the Waste & Spoilage lab, each workshop had different participants with little overlap. Who is best positioned to test various prototypes?

When are social innovation labs *not* the best approach?

- If the problem is a **technical problem** and/or the solution is largely known
- If the main objective is **action planning** (e.g., business planning)
- If the need lies primarily in quantitative **data analysis** (e.g., if a key analysis of an existing idea is the core of the work)
- If the need for **formally-evaluated, evidence-based** results is high
- If there is not sufficient willingness to engage in an **iterative process**

What are some examples or case studies of labs work?

See appendix for case studies on the following examples

Case studies from The Rockefeller Foundation Social Innovation Lab Project

Organization

Slide

- | | |
|---|-------|
| • Overview of all of the Rockefeller Foundation projects | p. 24 |
| • Stanford ChangeLabs & Oceans and Fisheries Initiative | p. 25 |
| • Global Knowledge Initiative & Food Waste and Spoilage Initiative | p. 26 |
| • MaRS Solutions Lab & Youth Employment Initiative | p. 27 |

Additional case studies

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| • InSTEDD | p. 28 |
| • MindLab | p. 29 |
| • UNICEF Innovation | p. 30 |
| • Sustainable Food Lab | p. 31 |

Thank you and please join the conversation on the Social Innovation Lab Insights Center hosted by Bridgespan and The Rockefeller Foundation

WEBSITE

[Bridgespan.org/Publications-and-Tools/Innovation-Labs-Insight-Center.aspx](https://bridgespan.org/Publications-and-Tools/Innovation-Labs-Insight-Center.aspx)

NEWSLETTERS, ALERTS, TWITTER POSTS & RSS FEEDS

[Bridgespan.org/Newsletters](https://bridgespan.org/Newsletters)

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Appendix

OVERVIEW OF ROCKEFELLER INITIATIVES AND LAB PARTNERS (2013-2014)

Strategy innovation

Technical innovation



Lab	Stanford ChangeLabs	Global Knowledge Initiative	University of Waterloo / MaRS Solutions Lab	InCompass	InSTEDD	AfriLabs
Project	Oceans & Fisheries	Waste & Spoilage	Youth Employment	Smart Power in India	Health Vulnerabilities of Informal Workers	Digital Jobs Africa
Goal	Apply innovation tools to develop innovative solutions & strategies to small scale fisheries management	Accelerate innovative solutions to waste and spoilage challenges	Identify and catalyze innovative solutions to youth unemployment in the US	Apply HCD method to understand how to catalyze demand for micro-enterprise/ rural electrification	Apply rapid design approach to prototype intervention(s) for meeting health needs of informal workers	Identify technology innovations with the potential to create jobs for Africa's youth
Timeline	November 2013– July 2014	October 2013 – November 2014	January 2014 – September 2014	March 2014	September 2014 – February 2015	November 2013 – March 2015
Types of activities	Interviews and research ; Two multi-stakeholder convenings and one workshop to assess scalability of solutions	Research; Six “challenge mapping” sessions in 6 countries to identify key problems; two large scale convenings to assess resources and build coalitions	Interviews and research; Three workshops with key stakeholders to develop prototypes; computer modeling to test solutions	Interviews and research; Five-day field “deep dive” in Cambodia villages to gather end-user insights on rural electrification	Interviews and research; 2 workshops to gather aligned input from stakeholders and a 72-hour design workshop to develop and refine prototype	Two convenings – one virtual and one physical—to surface potential innovations; grants to further develop ideas

Stanford ChangeLabs and Oceans & Fisheries

Results as of September 30th, 2014

In October 2013, the Rockefeller Oceans & Fisheries (O&F) team began working with [ChangeLabs](#), a lab at Stanford University focused on developing new large-scale innovation approaches to tackle the world's most pressing challenges. ChangeLabs is an **inter-disciplinary team of Stanford faculty, experts, and graduate students, representing a diverse set of fields**: product design, innovation, mechanical engineering, environmental sciences, behavioral sciences, social psychology, entrepreneurship, co-creation, and strategic marketing. ChangeLabs co-created strategies with potential to **produce scaled impact in local fishery management and secure the lives of vulnerable people**. ChangeLabs also partnered with [The Center for Ocean Solutions](#) to ensure cutting edge perspectives and expertise was integrated into the process.



ABOUT THE PROCESS

Over six months, ChangeLabs conducted background research, facilitated two multi-stakeholder innovation summits, and developed prototypes for five strategic interventions.

- The first summit (Dec 2-5), held at Stanford University, engaged 19 participants to generate 10 innovation pathways surrounding the management of small-scale fisheries and the livelihoods of people who depend on them
- The [second summit](#) (Feb 11-13), held at the Bellagio Center, engaged 21 participants including fisheries experts and unusual suspects to develop high potential intervention strategies. These five strategies were designed for scale, feasibility, and viability as a result of a co-creative innovation process with experts and practitioners. The O&F team has integrated two of the pathways into their Strategy for Execution

ChangeLabs facilitated an additional 2-day workshop on scale (June 24-25) with members of the O&F team, Innovation Pathway and 7 experts to identify actionable opportunities for increasing scalability of the current O&F strategy more broadly. The event resulted in 30 scaled strategies and a larger framework for envisioning scale opportunities that directly respond to specific barriers and opportunities within the current strategy

BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS

- **New scaled strategies:** Five high-potential intervention strategies that have been co-created with participants and designed for scale. Each strategy includes an articulation of its potential impact, target outcomes, value to beneficiaries and critical stakeholders, and scaling plans
- **New partnerships and networks:** A large foundation is exploring how to bring the methodology into their fisheries work in Indonesia; A large seafood company is eager to pilot aspects of the five intervention strategies as part of a multi-stakeholder intervention strategy involving seafood distributors, policy-makers, and ground-level fisheries in Indonesia; ChangeLabs Director, Banny Banerjee, was invited to serve on EDF's Board
- **Capacity-building and new tools:** ChangeLabs developed a tool for identifying leverage points specific to the fisheries space
- **Knowledge:** The Center for Ocean Solution has expressed interest in collaborating with ChangeLabs on publishing the process and outcomes of this project to inform future work in small-scale fisheries

Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI) and Food Waste & Spoilage

Results as of September 30th, 2014

In November 2013, Rockefeller Foundation supported the [Global Knowledge Initiative \(GKI\)](#), a non-profit organization that builds and supports collaborative networks to solve pressing development challenges, to address [food waste and spoilage](#)

- With operations in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and the US, GKI helps its partners—researchers, entrepreneurs, donors, community members—locate resources critical for problem solving; enable effective collaboration by building skills and designing shared agendas; and connect resources and stakeholders to form durable networks

GKI has supported stakeholders in the Food Waste & Spoilage field to prioritize key interventions based on:

- Gathering robust information about what is needed and available to address post harvest loss;
- Envisioning what is possible given collective resources and expertise;
- Mobilizing key stakeholders interested and willing to push opportunities forward (will occur in early 2015)

ABOUT THE PROCESS

Over one year (from Nov 2013 to Oct 2014) GKI engaged over 220 global experts in an innovation design process that included significant research, analysis, and multi-stakeholder workshops:

- [Six problem framing workshops](#)—held in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Malaysia, Mexico, and the United States—revealed **more than 600 opportunities** to reduce post-harvest loss in Africa, from which the over **120 global expert participants** identified 50 “potential big wins” for reducing food loss.
- The [resource assessment](#) features **26 case studies** of organizations and programs demonstrating momentum on **Top 10 Potential Big Wins** for reducing post harvest loss. The Lab revealed **hundreds of resources**—technological, human, institutional—that can be tapped to deliver integrated innovation solutions for reducing post harvest loss in Africa.
- The [solution visioning session](#) brought together **30 high-level experts** from the financial, agribusiness, and other sectors and facilitated them in **visualizing and stress-testing integrated sets of innovations**. These innovations address [six critical elements of an emerging RF strategy](#) for reducing post harvest loss and delivering impact for poor and vulnerable people at scale.
- This work culminates in early 2015 with a Collaboration Colloquium designed to align key stakeholders and resources around highest-potential interventions, vetted by experts

BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS

- **Vetted prototypes for strategic interventions delivered:** At the conclusion of the year-long process, GKI will deliver a set of integrated solution prototypes sourced, vetted, and refined by global agricultural value chain experts. These prototypes will highlight actions to be taken, stakeholders to be engaged, and impact expected for specific interventions.
- **Action mobilized:** The social innovation lab process inspired many participating experts to take insights they derived from the design workshops back to their institutions and make substantive changes in post harvest policies, funding structures, and programming as a function of their experiences with the Lab. For example, the Ghana Export Development and Agricultural Investment Fund recalibrated its post harvest funding strategy based on the top opportunities identified during the Lab’s problem framing session held in Ghana.
- **New partnerships forged:** As an example from the Mexico problem framing session, one participant stated: "For ten years we've been waiting for this conversation on food loss to occur in our country in which SAGARPA, CIMMYT, Bimbo and the other players here actually sit down together. It took GKI and RF to make this happen and we are grateful!"



MaRS Solutions Lab & Youth Employment

Results as of September 30th, 2014

In January 2014, the Rockefeller Youth Employment initiative began working with the [MaRS Solutions Lab](#) (MSL) and the [Waterloo Institute of Social Innovation and Resilience](#) (WISIR).

- **MSL** is a public and social innovation lab that helps to tackle complex social and economic challenges which require systems change and multi-stakeholder collaboration.; **WISIR** is a research center committed to generating trans- and inter-disciplinary knowledge about social innovations and the social innovation process.



The ‘New Solutions for Youth Employment Social Innovation Lab’ co-created scalable, employer-focused solutions to address unemployment amongst vulnerable youth in the United States. The Lab was co-convened by the Rockefeller Foundation, Starbucks and LeadersUp. The lab brought together employers (e.g., suppliers of Starbucks and large US companies like Southwire and GAP), NGO’s, government and foundations to develop new solutions for creating jobs for opportunity youth.

ABOUT THE PROCESS

- Over 8 months, the Lab conducted background research, facilitated a three-workshop multi-stakeholder process, and developed prototypes for five strategic interventions. It also developed a change strategy, 120+ ideas and several lab tools to be used by Rockefeller and other participants.
- Feb – May, 2014: Lab conducted initial research to gather different stakeholder perspectives, refine the challenge question, and identify key tensions in the current employment system.
- May – Sep, 2014: Lab facilitated 3 workshops, 25-30 participants per workshop with a core group of 15-20 attending all three.
 - Workshop 1: “Seeing the System” – develop a deeper, shared understanding of the employment system, including strategic leverage points for change.
 - Workshop 2: “Designing Interventions” – co-creation of interventions with the potential for high impact (scale).
 - Workshop 3: “Prototyping and Action Planning” – rapid, iterative prototyping of each proposed intervention, refining both the concept and implementation of the idea, as well as planning for first round of live-testing. Then pitching ideas to expert panel and delivering a final report to Rockefeller on outcomes of the lab.
- May – Sep, 2014: Lab designed and built a simulation game of the youth employment system, used for prototyping. [See “Simulation Game”](#)

BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS

The Lab process has built real momentum for change efforts on the issue of youth unemployment. This includes:

- **Actionable solutions:** : A large corporate participant will prototype 1 of 5 innovative solutions within the company.
- **Network:** The lab built a highly engaged network of 15+ large employers and stakeholders committed to piloting solutions to youth unemployment.
- **Capacity-building:** Starbucks and LeadersUp plan to integrate the lab process into their work.
- **Change strategy:** new insights on the problem and many ideas for solutions, as well as a change strategy identifying leverage points in the employment system.
- **Prototype Interventions:** 5 high-potential interventions, co-created with users. Each intervention positioned as part of the overall change strategy, and detailing the theory of change, scaling potential, value proposition for user groups, costs, revenue streams, roll out and next steps for prototyping.

Profile of lab advancing funder goals: InSTEDD



iLab SEA developer (right) conducting a participatory design interview. Photo: InSTEDD

InSTEDD is a non-profit organization focused on designing and using open source technology tools to improve global health, safety and sustainable development

- **Background:** Conceived as the result of a 2006 TED Conference Prize awarded to epidemiologist Dr. Larry Brilliant and launched in 2007
- **Scale:** Headquarters in California; two independent labs in Cambodia and Argentina; worked on 15+ projects in 10+ countries
- **Funding model:** Supported primarily by contracts; labs rely mostly on local funding sources (~70%)
- **Approach:** Use human centered design and other participatory methods to primarily develop technological solutions

Sample project: Verboice

- [Verboice](#) is an adaptable, open-source tool for anyone, speaking any language, to create and run their own customized interactive mobile voice response system
- The product was developed to help provide critical information to illiterate communities
- [InSTEDD's iLab Southeast Asia \(SEA\)](#), in Cambodia worked closely with end-users in the field to design a product to meet their needs
- Verboice has been used to make over 2 million calls, ranging from health-related reminder calls for pregnant women in East Africa to a election information in SE Asia

Learn more:

- [“Listening Closely to a Scaling Innovation”](#), The Rockefeller Foundation blog

Profile of public lab: MindLab

**MIND
LAB**



MindLab is a Danish cross-governmental innovation unit that uses human centered design to involve citizens and businesses in developing new solutions and redesigning services for the public sector

- **Background:** Founded in 2002; [MindLab](#) is based in Copenhagen and part of the Ministries of Business and Growth, Employment, and Children and Education and one municipality. The projects are typically initiated by ministries and then decided upon by the MindLab Board which is comprised of senior staff with representation from each ministry
- **Scale:** Based in Denmark but lead workshops (300+) and shared knowledge worldwide; 12 staff and £1M annual spend (2012)
- **Approach:** Use human-centered design (HCD) to engage civil servants and citizens in identifying problems and developing policy recommendations

Sample project: National Board of Injuries

- MindLab worked with the National Board of Injuries to help improve the experiences of young victims of industrial injury wanting to re-enter into the workforce. MindLab used ethnographic research to understand the perspectives of the end-users and how they experienced the bureaucracy
- Based on these experiences, MindLab worked closely with staff from the National Board of Industrial Injuries to re-shift their efforts and core mission to focus on employment outcomes for citizens
- They also developed four specific ideas and solutions, helping simplify how services are communicated and making it easier for young people to re-enter the workforce

Learn more:

- “i-teams” [Case Study](#) and [full profile](#), Nesta and Bloomberg Philanthropies (2014)
- [Design-Led Innovation in Government](#), SSIR (2013)

Profile of internal lab: UNICEF Innovation Labs



UNICEF Innovation Labs are open, collaborative incubation accelerators that bring business, universities, governments and civil society together to create sustainable solutions to the most pressing challenges facing children and youth

- **Background:** In 2010, UNICEF established a network of labs to serve as both in-country problem solvers and solution banks for issues that cross borders, themes, and geographies. Using the Lab system, UNICEF has been able to partner with other UN agencies and the private sector – breaking through existing siloed structures
- **Scale:** Currently have [12 labs around the world](#); some have slightly different focus areas (e.g., Sudan Lab focuses on technology; Copenhagen lab as an engagement hub)
- **Approach:** Focuses on collaboration across several partners from the civil and private sector—providing a space for several partners and resources to work together., and engaging citizens and end-users in designing and scaling innovative solutions

Sample project: Youth Opinion Forum (uReport)

- [uReport](#) is a toll-free SMS-based system—developed at the Uganda Innovation Lab—that allows young Ugandans to speak out on what’s happening in communities across the country, and work together with other community leaders for positive change
- The system is built off RapidSMS and is used to send poll questions to 15K young people around the country; the results are then aggregated and shared with the media and politicians to inform youth positions on key issues (e.g., teen pregnancy, education)
- Have been used to reform policies and is now being scaled to Liberia through their Innovation Lab

Learn more:

- [Innovation Labs: A Do-it-Yourself Guide](#)”, UNICEF Innovation Labs (2014)
- [“A chat with Dr. Sharad Sapra on how UNICEF is using technology to provide rapid solutions to local problems”](#), UNICEF Stories (2014)



Profile of autonomous lab: Sustainable Food Lab

The Sustainable Food Lab is a global network of organizations working together to facilitate market-based solutions to key issues necessary for a healthy and sustainable food system to feed a growing world

- **Background:** The [Sustainable Food Lab](#) was first established in 2004 by a group of 22 global leaders representing the nonprofit, business, and government sectors—ranging from the Brazilian farmer association to Unilever—to develop, pilot and implement projects related to sustainability in the global food systems
- **Scale:** Currently have [70 member organizations](#) from around the world
- **Approach:** Deeper understanding the problems in food sustainability through field trips and “learning journeys” to different parts of the food system; prototyping potential solutions and testing in the field; collaboration across multiple partners

Sample project: Sustainable Livelihoods Initiative

- The Sustainable Livelihoods Initiative focuses on improving the competitiveness and sustainability of small-scale farming systems. They continuously identify and develops solution to address important barriers to small-scale farmers’ participation in national and international food supply chains.
- Recent projects include working with Green Mountain Coffee Roasters to develop indicators of poverty and hunger that would allow them to understand their impact and better partner with communities; these indicators have been piloted in select food chains
- Through ongoing participation in the Sustainable Food Lab, Unilever has shifted its [sustainability policies](#) and has publicly committed to halve the environmental footprint of its products by 2020”

Learn more:

- [“Sustainable Food Lab: A Case Study”](#), Reos Partners (2010)
- [“The Sustainable Food Lab: Growing Mainstream Sustainable Food Chains”](#), Reos Partners (2013)



List of labs researched as part of the landscape of social innovation labs (1/2)

- AfriLabs
- Aiding Dramatic Change in Development
- Alberta CoLab
- BRAC
- Business Innovation Factory
- Center for Social Design, Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)
- Center for Knowledge Societies (CKS)
- Bihar Innovation Lab
- Communautique
- Design Impact
- Ecotrust Lab @ RADIUS
- Forum for the future
- Future of Fish
- Global Knowledge Initiative
- Goteo / Platoniq
- IDEO.org
- igniter
- inCompass Human-Centered Innovation Lab (formerly HCD i-Lab), part of iDE
- World Bank Innovation Lab
- InSTEDD
- Institute for the Future
- Interaction Design Masters, California College of the Arts
- IPLANFOR
- Kennisland
- Kolba Lab-United Nations Development Programme - Armenia Country Office
- Lifehack HQ / Enspiral Foundation
- Mainova
- MaRS Solutions Lab
- MASS Design Group
- Masselink Environmental Design / FELÁNET Centre for Innovation and Peace
- Minnesota Social Innovation Lab
- Moneyforfutures Initiatives
- Movement Strategy Center
- New Leaf Social Innovation
- Open Service Design Ltd
- Pluk-Reos network
- positivecapitalcorp.pbc
- Promethean Community LLC
- RLabs
- Stanford ChangeLabs
- Strategic Innovation Lab (sLab), OCAD University
- T Lab (an initiative of Tipping Point Community)

Source: Secondary research including Torjman, Lisa "Labs: Designing the Future." SiG@MaRS (2012); results from 75 respondents to lab survey conducted by Bridgespan, The Rockefeller Foundation, and Reos Partners in September 2014 ; participants at the MaRS Solutions Lab "Labs for Systems Change" event in May 2014



List of labs researched as part of the landscape of social innovation labs (2/2)

- The Lien Centre for Social Innovation, Change Lab
- UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence
- UNICEF
- UNICEF Indonesia
- UNICEF Innovations Lab Kosovo
- Waterlution
- IDEO
- Reos Partners
- Sustainable Food Labs
- NESTA
- Frog
- MindLab
- Insight Labs
- Participle
- Oasis
- Social Innovation Lab for Kent (SILK)
- MIT Media Lab
- MIT D-Lab
- Jump Associates
- d.School
- Harvard Innovation Lab
- G-Lab
- ChangeFusion
- Point B
- The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI)
- United Nations Pulse Labs
- Laboratory for the City
- InWithForward
- FutureGov
- OPM Innovation Practice
- The Public Policy Lab
- Governance Lab (GovLab)
- 27e Region
- Pontificia Universidad Catolica De Chile School of Business; Innovation Lab
- UK Policy Lab