

ART CENTER COLLEGE OF DESIGN

DESIGNMATTERS FELLOWSHIP

with the UNICEF INNOVATION UNIT,
NYC during the SUMMER of 2013

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Designmatters Fellow

Each year Designmatters awards select Art Center students, Fellowships to work within organizations performing ‘social and humanitarian work on a global scale.’

This year, I was thrilled at the opportunity to spend the summer with the UNICEF Innovation Unit in New York.

UNICEF works in improving the lives of women and children across the world. The Innovation Unit is a small team of social innovators who solve for the present with an eye on the future, using technology and design thinking to ‘translate ideas, technologies, and partnerships into products, services, and processes’.

As a media designer I am interested in possibilities that emerge from the intersection of technology, systems and communities and the role of design in facilitating formation of self-sustaining frameworks.

I was looking forward to a summer immersed in a new environment and was thrilled to be New York. That city became my friend. By the end of summer, It also made me appreciate Los Angeles for what it is. I was surprised by the differences and at how much a city and its environment influence design.

1.

The UN Secreteriat as seen from the UNICEF building: my view from work for a brief period

2.

New York City



3



4



5

Workplace

The UNICEF building is an official green and grey glass grid, similar to the UNDP and the Secreteriat across from it. I got my official key card to swipe myself in and the summer had begun.

The workspace on my first day was like any corporate office might be, with cubicles and automatic electric lighting, a space far different from the Art Center campus. Over summer, it underwent modification to accomodate an increase in team members. A gradual process, it was coaxed into existence from a pool of suggestions and constrains. The result was a more open and modular space to allow for cluster of individuals to work together. This act of breaking down and reorganizing was strangely therepeutic and it helped form a space the team felt they had jurisdiction in.

The team is a small unit, constantly changing in size and expertise.

One of the things that I was introduced to early on was 'Fail Friday', a weekly ritual where the team comes together to recap individual sucess, failure and confusion for the week. It was a great exercise in sharing suggestions, advice and/or frustrations.

3.

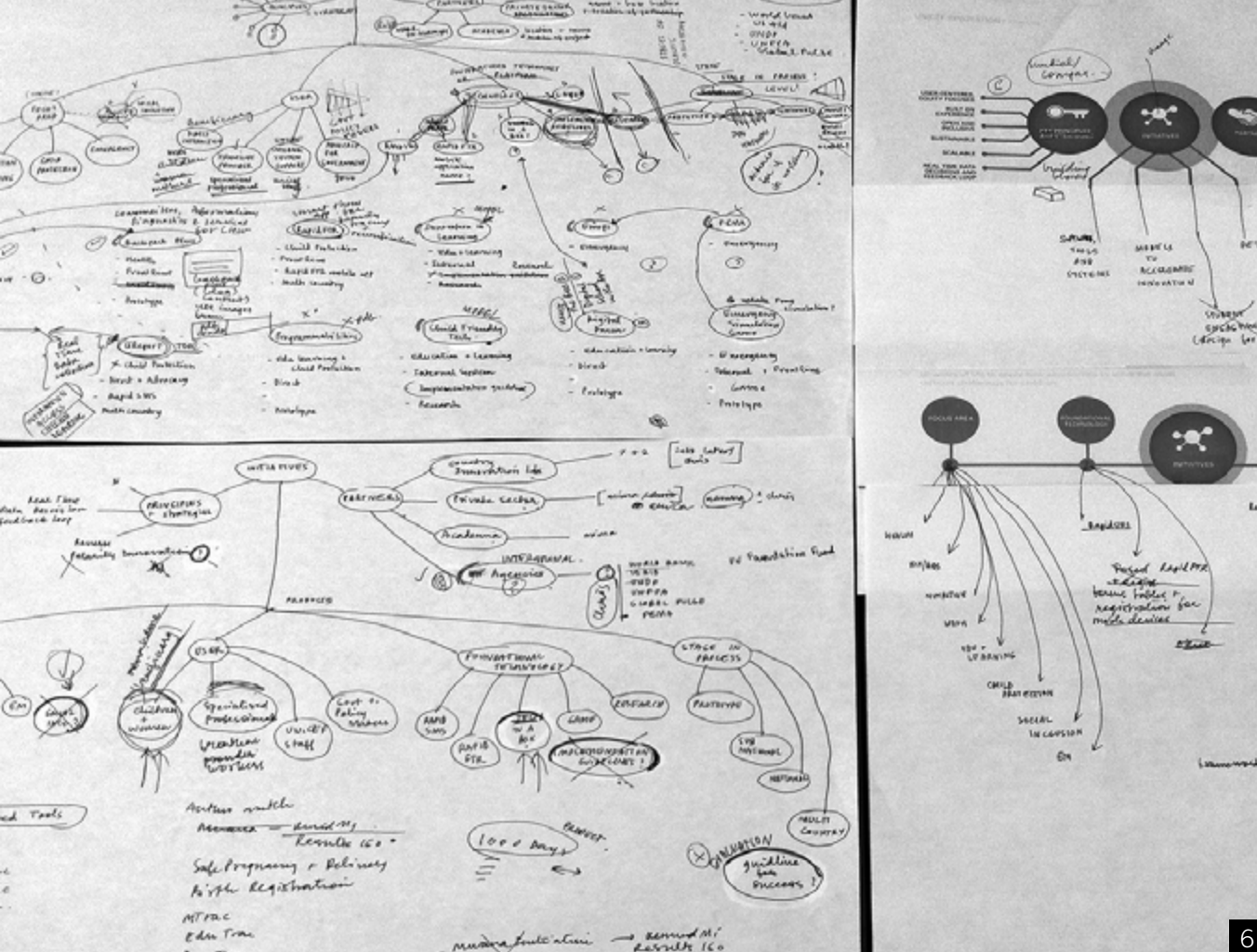
Day One

4.

WIN, FAIL stamps

5.

The workspace going through restructuring



6



7

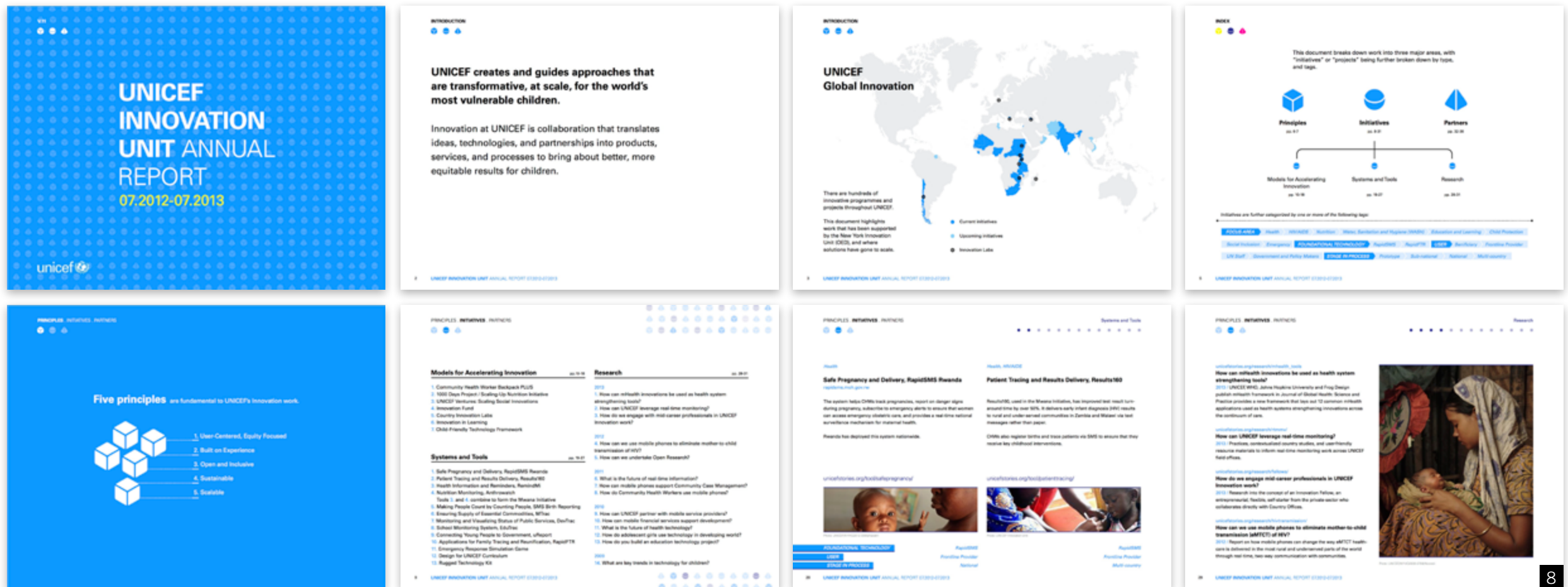
UNICEF Innovation Unit: Storytelling through Reorganization

As an introduction to UNICEF and the Innovation Unit, their method of working and values, reach, past projects and collaborations, my first task was to create an updated document and website (unicefstories) on the unit. This involved hunting down content, understanding, mapping, organizing and expressing a massive network of projects, people, successes and failures across varying timelines.

The Unit is unique in supporting projects across a wide timeline, some that have an immediate impact, and others that are more research and development oriented that plan and develop for the future based on insights from the field.

6.
Taking in and reorganizing the Units work, values, history and past achievements to be documented

7.
Work in progress: version of the new report



UNICEF Innovation Unit Annual Report

This extensive document grew into the Annual Report 7.2012-7.2013

The report reflects and restructures the past and present to plan for the future.

The unit, and UNICEF as whole had been reexamining themselves to plan for the next few years, as reflected by the mid-term strategic plan (MTSP) 2014-2017 that was in the process of being drafted. This included evolving areas of focus, as well as method of affecting change.

The Innovation Unit report reflects this restructuring to helped define the direction the unit was moving towards and to bring to light gaps in areas that had been missed out. It did so by turning information into stories that fed into a larger narrative.

8.

The UNICEF
Innovation Unit Annual
Report 7.2012-7.2013
launched on 30 July

It was used to update
www.unicefstories.org

Mapping Innovation projects - ESARO

Please fill out the responses for all the questions listed below.
To view a sample response sheet, please copy and paste the following link in your browser's address bar.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VeV0KyHfzNhSskiU_UN1g2mue1T1r3l0SqbyAbSvpw/edit?usp=sharing

1. Name of Project *

2. Country *

3.(A) Sector *

Please select the primary sector.

3.(B) Sector

Please select any additional sector (s), if applicable.

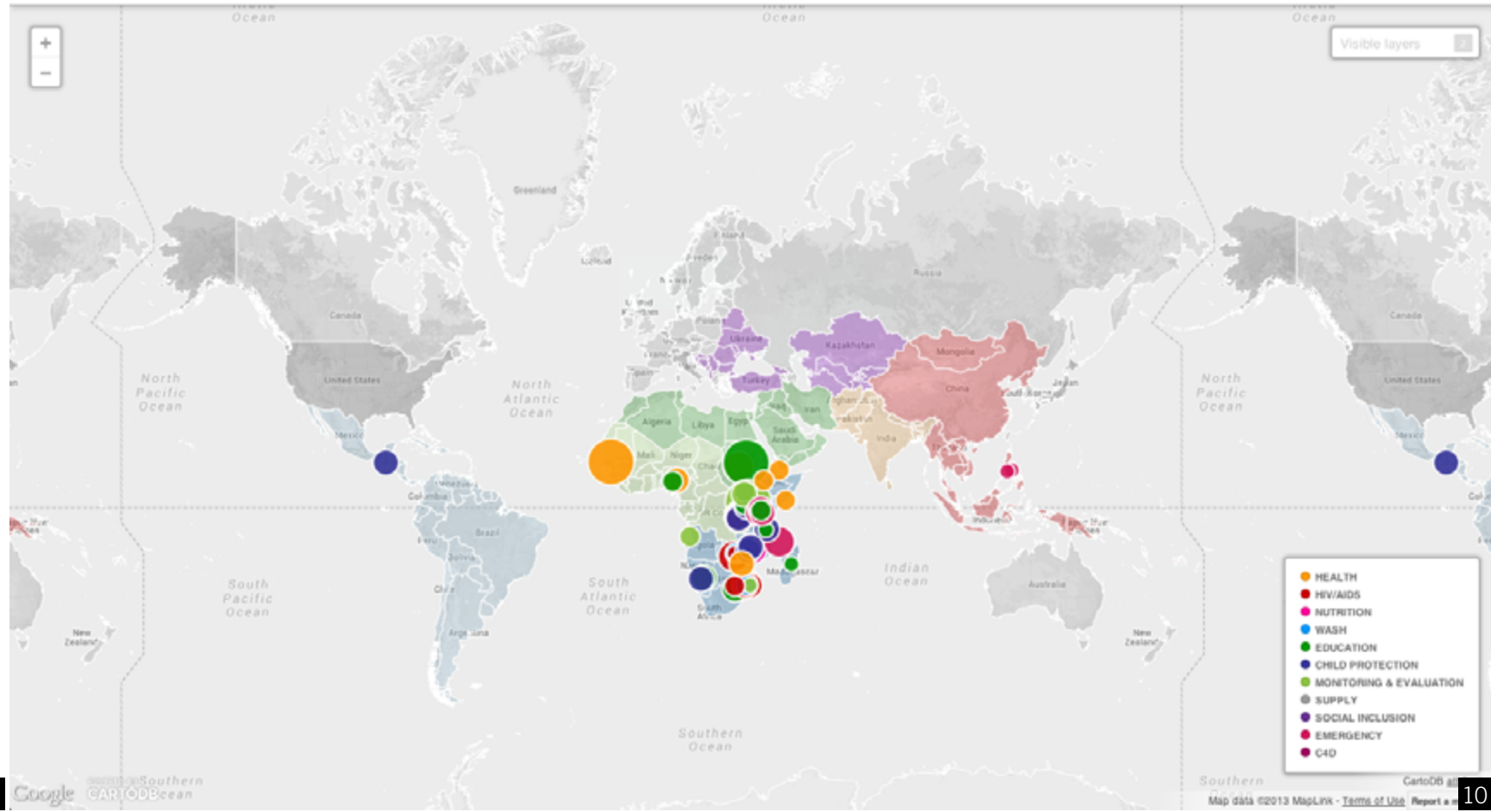
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Health
- ☐ Nutrition
- ☐ HIV
- ☐ Child Protection
- ☐ WASH
- ☐ Social Policy
- ☐ Supply
- ☐ Monitoring and Evaluation

4. What was the issue being addressed? *

Response limit: 50 to 100 words

UNICEF_Innovation_Global

This map lets UNICEF offices update innovation projects and see what's happening in other offices. To add your own project, please visit <http://goo.gl/t5F82U>



9

UNICEF Innovation Labs: Mapping the ESARO Region

Simultaneously, there was work being done on mapping projects in the field across the world, away from NYC HQ. The UNICEF Innovation country labs had evolved into autonomous units. They were all connected via the HQ, and were keen on having their own platform to share projects, insights and resources with each other directly.

I helped link their data collection format and language to that being used at the Innovation unit and UNICEF. We teased out a brief based on emails and realised it was necessary to format a method of data collection simple enough to update by individuals in the field, that could visualise the information in a way that was malleable and dynamic enough to analyse the data versus simply archiving it. This was done as support to researcher Dhvani Bafna and designer Rae Millne.

9.

Google Form to submit projects created by Dhvani Bafna

10.

Visual map on CartoDB created by Rae Millne

10



CHW Backpack PLUS workshop

The Backpack PLUS Toolkit is a model aimed at empowering and supporting Community Health Worker's (CHWs). It includes key drugs and supplies used by CHWs as well as plans for “soft” elements, such as training. Partners involved include Save the Children, MDG Health Alliance, UNICEF, frog and One Million Community Health Workers Campaigne.

I attended a workshop held at Frog Design that brought to close one phase of the project and planned the next steps with the partners involved. It was exciting to see the evolution of this project from an idea into a framework that extended beyond a product. Each group discussed different aspects of the next steps from branding approach to financial organization.

Talking about the future is not science fiction. Talking about a possible future, especially in a social context is often ignored. It was impressive to see a project being strategised at this scale, reach and timeline.

11.

Backpack Plus
workshop at Frog
Design, NYC



12

The Tile Game

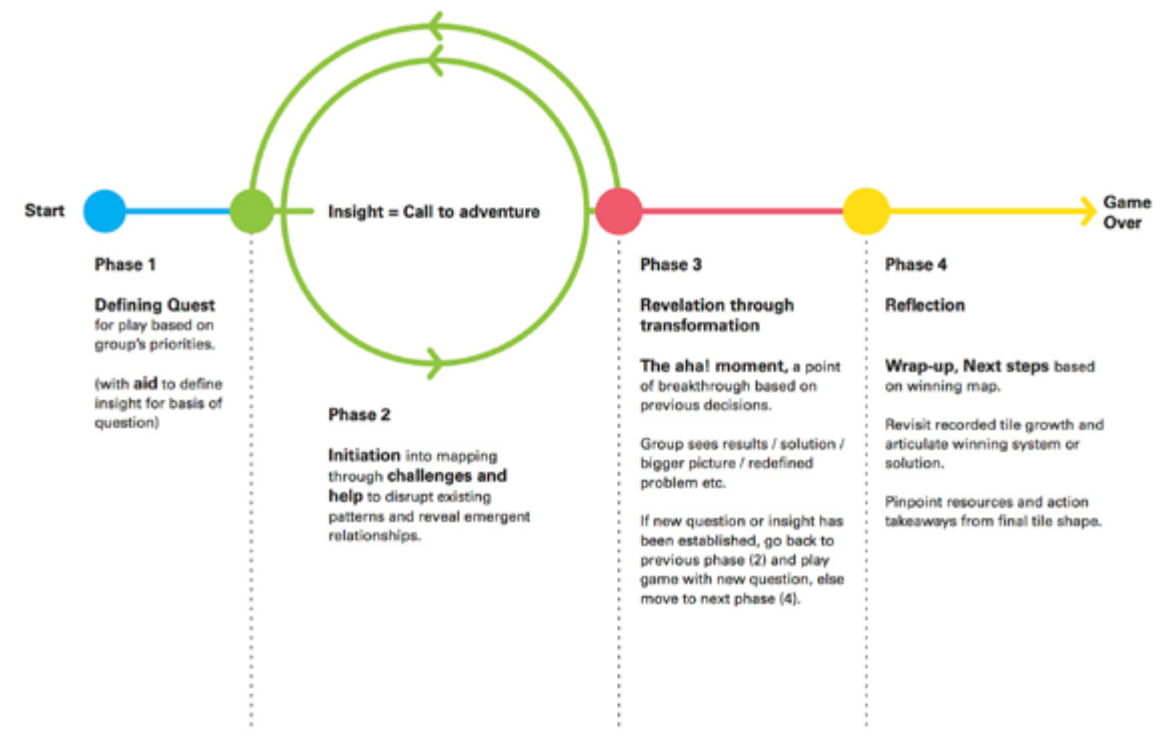
The tile game devised at frog is a collaborative mind mapping and planning tool/ game. It was being reinvented for UNICEF to be used in Country offices and within the organization to plan a project effectively and bringing problems or resources to light.

Values that the unit holds dear were reflected in this game by making each player a user thereby forcing players to have a user centric approach to problem solving and planning.

The Gameplay was being developed by designer Norah Maki. I worked on another version of the game involving smart tiles.

STRUCTURE

The game is divided into four Phases separated by Thresholds.



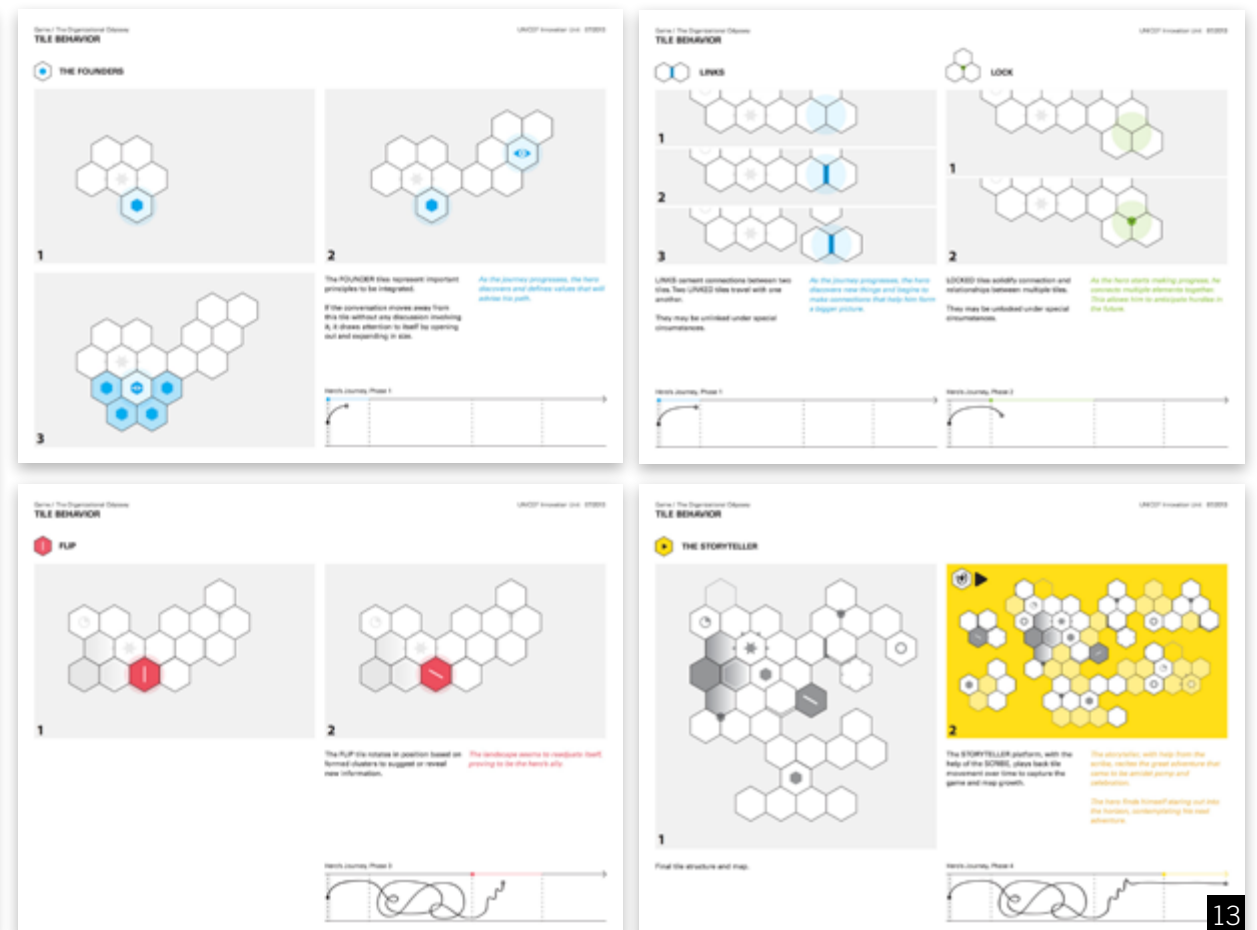
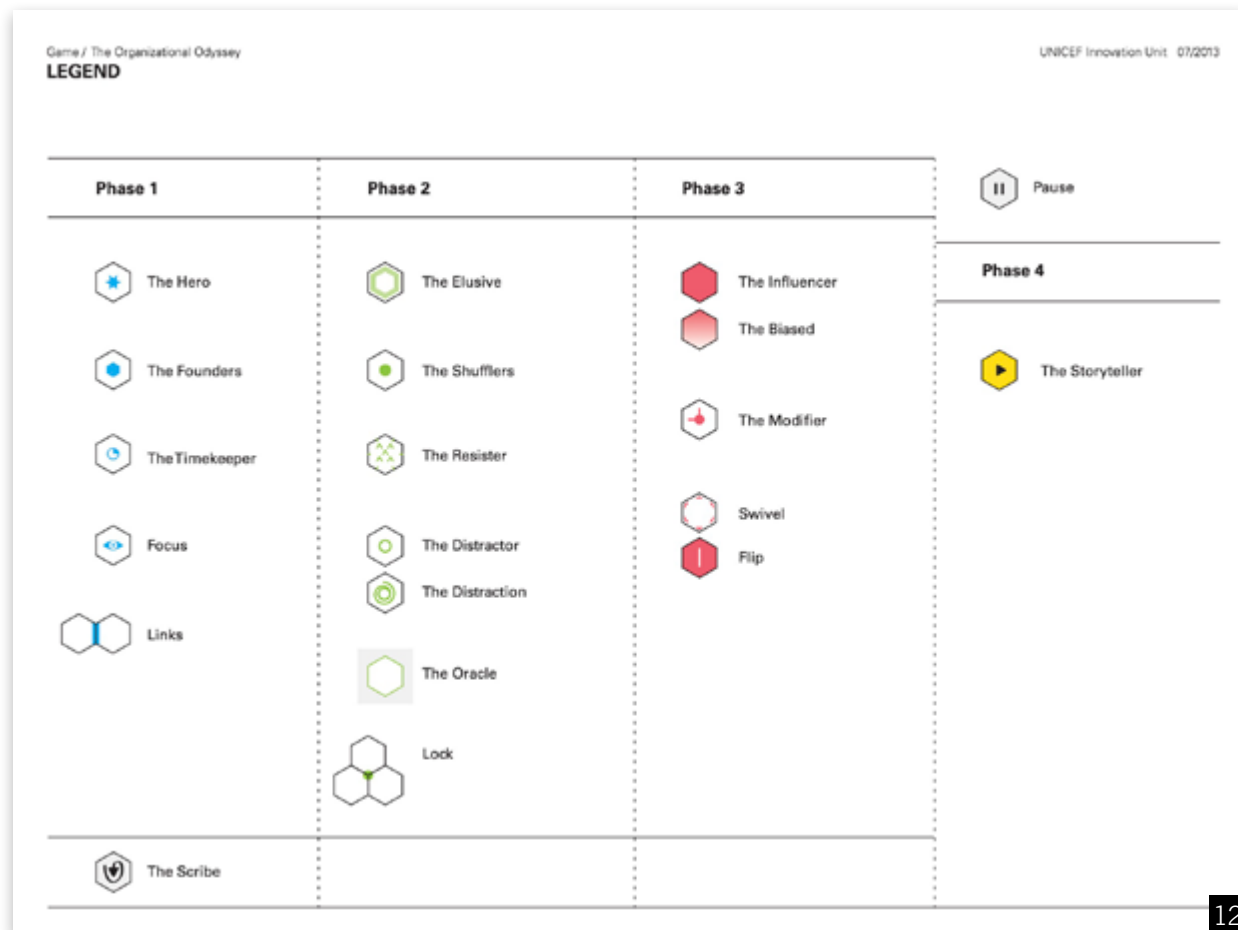
13

12.

Designer Norah Maki
prototyping game

13.

Gameplay I devised
based on Campbell's
Hero's Journey
in the context of
an organizational
structure



I devised the tile game referncing Tony Salvador's (Intel Corp.) paper *Heroic Complexity in Strategic Innovation*.

Organizational Odyssey

The Organizational Odyssey brings together the mythical archetypes of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey and makes them confront organizational structure and behavior.

This confrontation, clash, and battle will be played out through a tile game to destroy existing patterns and reveal emergent system behaviors. Tile characteristics and their resultant relationships may be used to reflect behaviors of individuals in an team or as elements of a system to build a responsive system map.

The game will follow the stages of a hero's journey: departure launched by a call to adventure, initiation into mapping through play and return to change the system by pinpointing supporting resources. The resultant is a plan for strategic innovation.

The game will be played at:

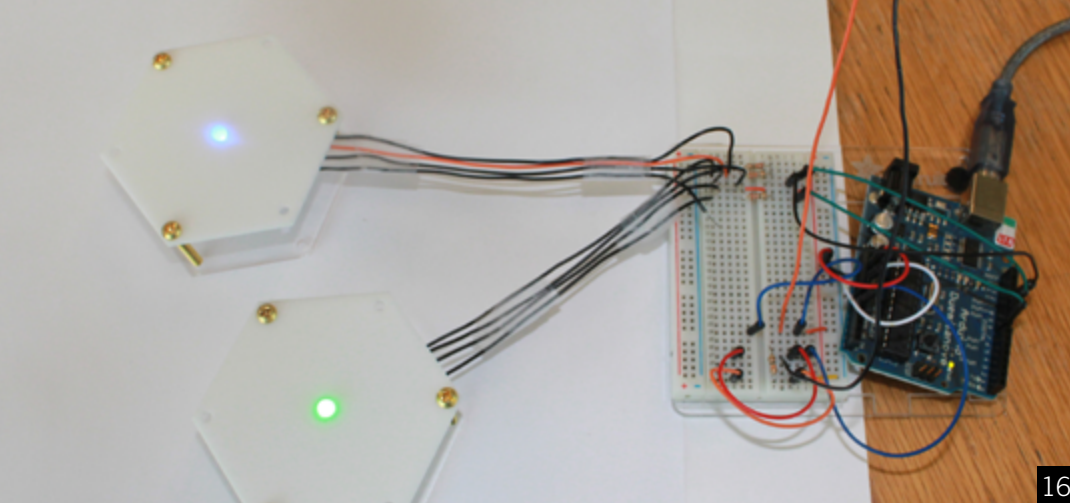
1. UNICEF Country Offices to plot strategic innovations, plan for resources, and anticipate bottlenecks around initiatives
2. UNICEF Innovation Unit, NY Headquarter to locate gaps for development in systems and thematic areas
3. UNICEF to support organizational change
4. Other partners.

14.

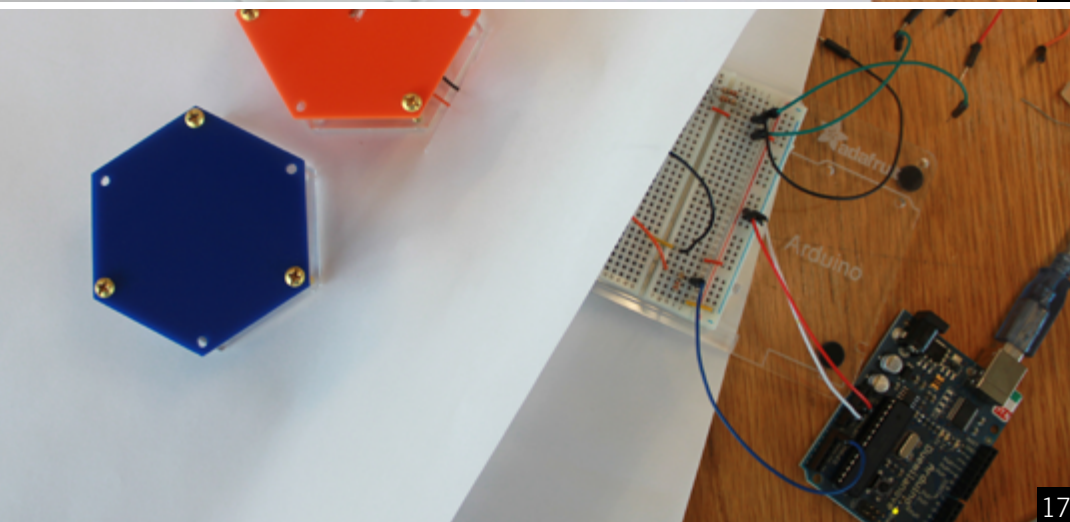
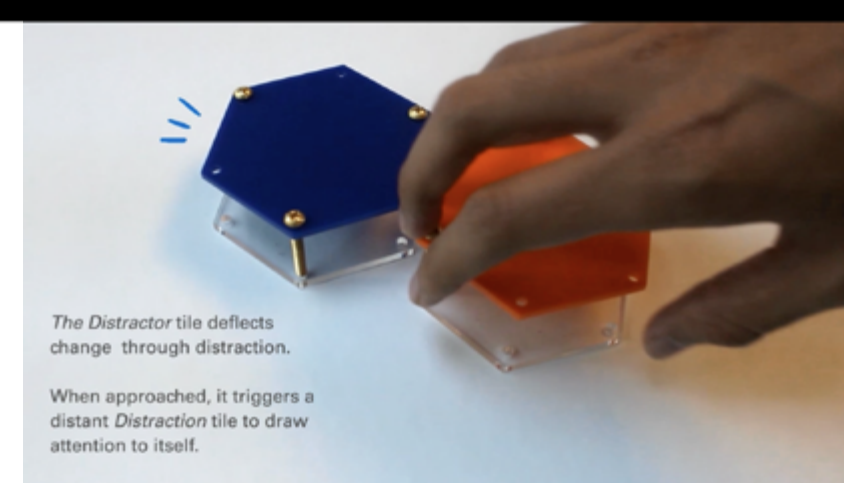
Set of smart tile behaviours as characters based on organizational behaviour representing elements or individuals within a system

15.

Storyboard illustrating smart tile behaviour in gameplay



16



17



18

Organizational Odyssey

Some of the smart tiles evolved into rough working prototypes.

I got to work outside of the UNICEF office when building these. They were made at the lab at SVA.

16. 17.

Prototyping Smart Tile
behaviour - Scramble
and Disrupt

18.

An animation

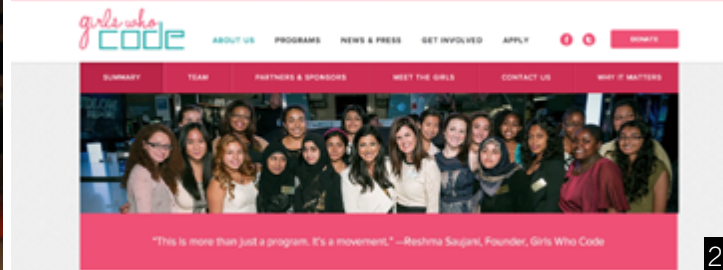


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INNOVATIONS IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS
DEADLINE 10 JUNE 2013

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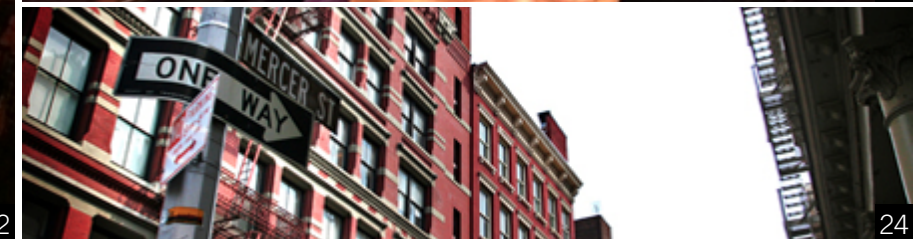
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Conversations and Events

Over summer, I had the chance to meet and work with a large array of individuals and groups in different capacity. Each led to a different way of looking at the world, design and myself.

I learned to talk about what I do to a non design audience which though seemingly simple takes some practice. It involves listening to people and understanding how what you have to say is relevant to them.

19.
UNICEF mid-term
strategic plan meeting
at the Secretariat

20.
ITP / UNICEF
Emergency Innovation
Grant - I reviewed
proposals for the grant
with Jorge Just and
Christopher Fabian

21.
Girls who Code -
Spoke about my work
at UNICEF to a class of
girls at Girls who Code

23.
Talking to team
(partial) and other
design students from
SVA and ITP led to new
perspectives on design

23.
Datashow at Hyperakt
where I spoke about
my work done at Art
Center at a show and
tell

24.
Studio visits: IDEO
Hush where I shared
some work done at
UNICEF
Image from IDEO, NY
website.

Congratulations, you are on your way to saving the world!!!!

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From the summer:

Define your values

What values does your practice reflect?

The innovation unit has a strong set of values they stand by, and it reflects into everything they do. It made me think of the values I wanted to define for myself.

Fail fast and move on

The importance of failing is common advice often, but failing the right way and moving on takes practice.

Do things that scare you

Do things that scare you and see them through.

Thinking in scale

Thinking in scale changes the way at which you speak about things. It forces you to be more thorough and systematic.

Tell a story

Everybody speaks a different language based on their understanding of the world. As a designer and an individual of society, it is important to reach out outside of yourself and tell a great story.

Build relationships

Be nice.

There are many other stories, adventures and learning the summer brought but these few stayed as a reminder on the human in design and being in dialogue with the worlds outside of the one you are comfortable in.

25.

Found object.

It made me think of how easy it is for me as a designer to think of my work in a grand way. Sustainable design is more about facilitating change than enforcing it.



THANK YOU

Designmatters
Art Center College of Design

Mariana Amatullo
Elisa Ruffino
Stephanie Sigg
Helen Cahng

UNICEF
UNICEF Innovation Unit

Christopher Fabian
Erica Kochi
Mima Stojanovic and the
UNICEF Innovation Team

26.
It was a great summer

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Designmatters online:
www.designmattersatartcenter.org

UNICEF Innovation Unit online:
www.unicefstories.org

Me online:
www.divyagaitonde.com