

# PLAYING GAMES TO SAVE LIVES

Bringing Serious Gaming to  
Behavior Change

2018 Global Digital Health Forum  
December 10, 2018







**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



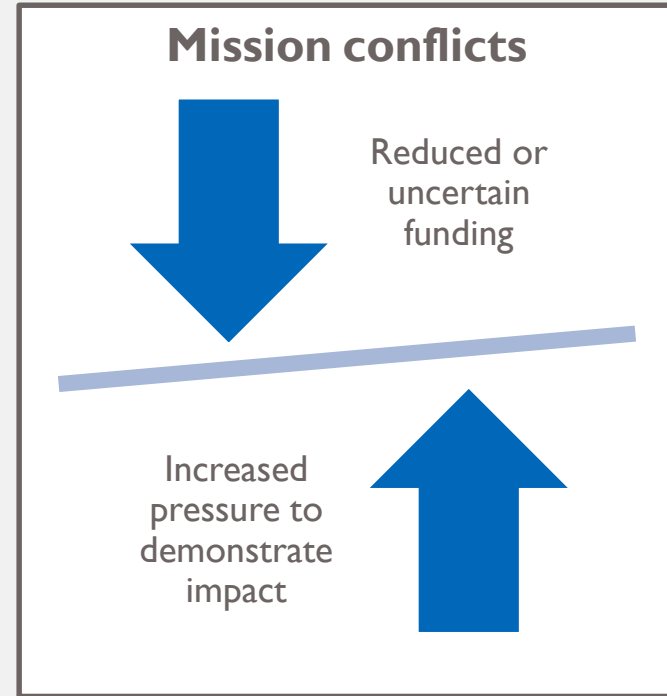
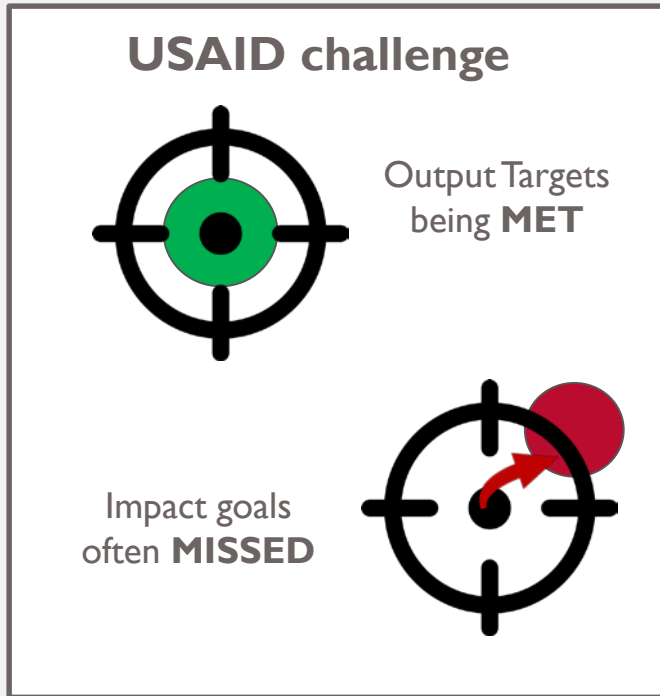
# The ACCELERATE Project

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Guidance to help USAID Missions  
maximize investments and achieve  
results in maternal and child survival



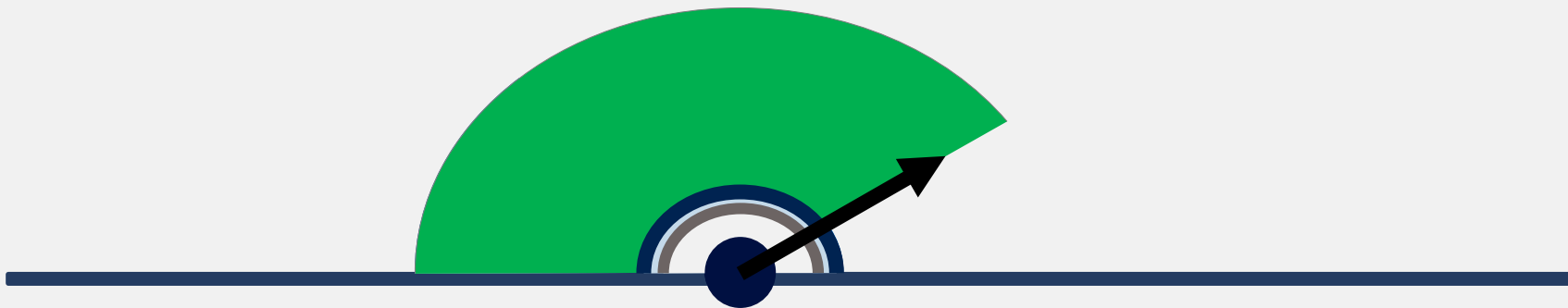
# What problem was ACCELERATE created to solve?





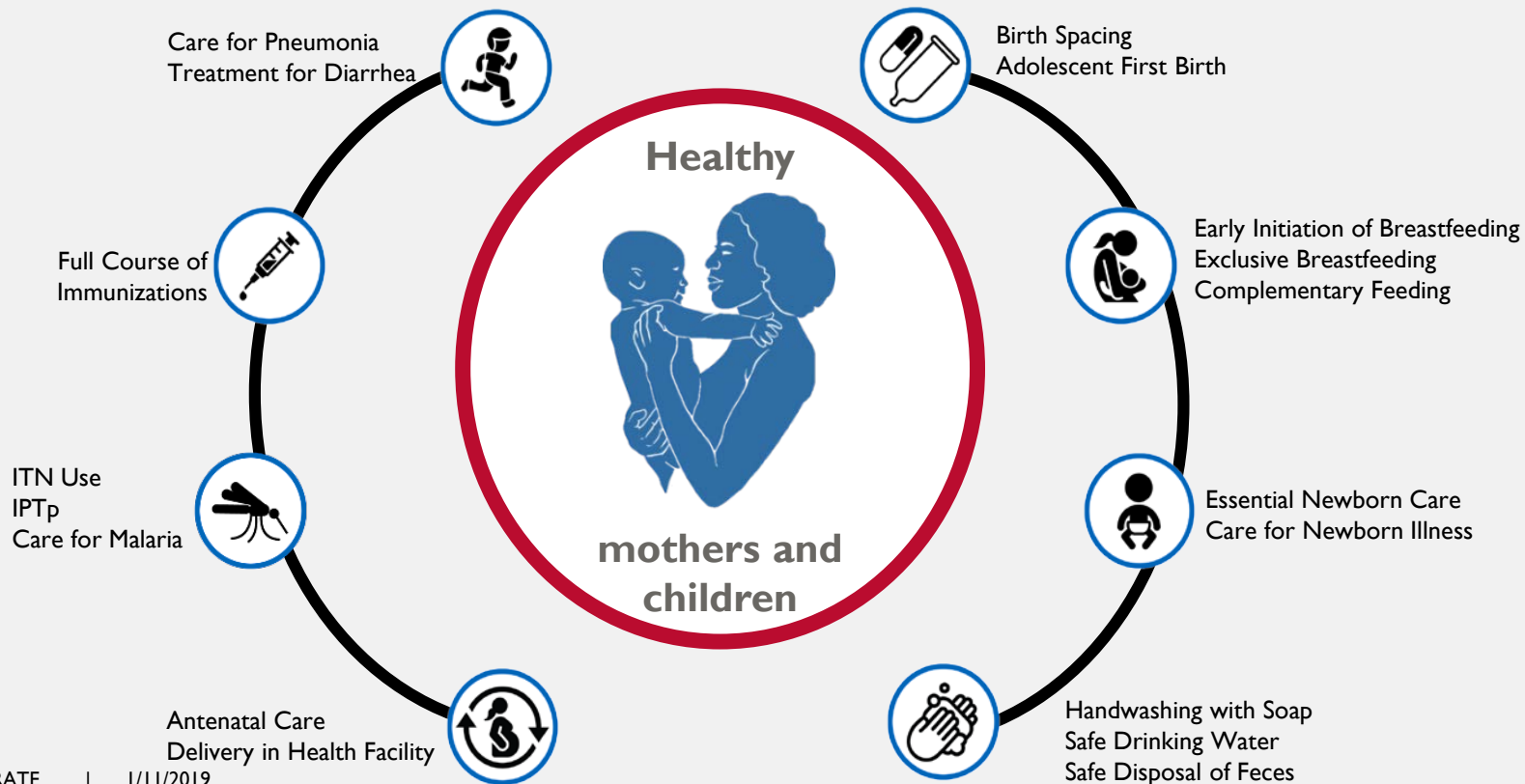
# We can move the needle faster

by providing a **behavioral lens** that focuses program efforts on changing behavioral outcomes to improve health results and save lives





# Targeting behaviors works because they are the element closest to outcomes that we can change





# ACCELERATE works

**USAID/Senegal** assessed past project outcomes to better **manage** current activities and **guide** future activity work planning

**USAID/Democratic Republic of the Congo** developed a Behavioral Framework to **identify strategies** for new procurements

**USAID/Ghana** developed a behaviorally-focused health sub-strategy to **contribute to the CDCS** and **guide future programming**

**USAID/Kenya** developed a Behavioral Framework to **manage and coordinate** health activities



# Think | BIG Game

## Goals

1. Introduce Think | BIG and behavioral thinking in a fun and non-intimidating way
2. Initiate the mental shift necessary to Think | BIG by letting USAID staff walk in the shoes of their intended beneficiaries





A game can help us illustrate why focusing on behaviors works

## Features of Games:

1. Allows the player to experience the health decision journey through the eyes of the caregiver.
2. Allows the player to experience the caregivers' journey through a behavioral lens.



# Now the fun part!

Please go to

[www.acceleratorbehaviors.usaid.gov](http://www.acceleratorbehaviors.usaid.gov)

## Explore

What works? What doesn't?

Applications in your own work?

Limitations of the approach?





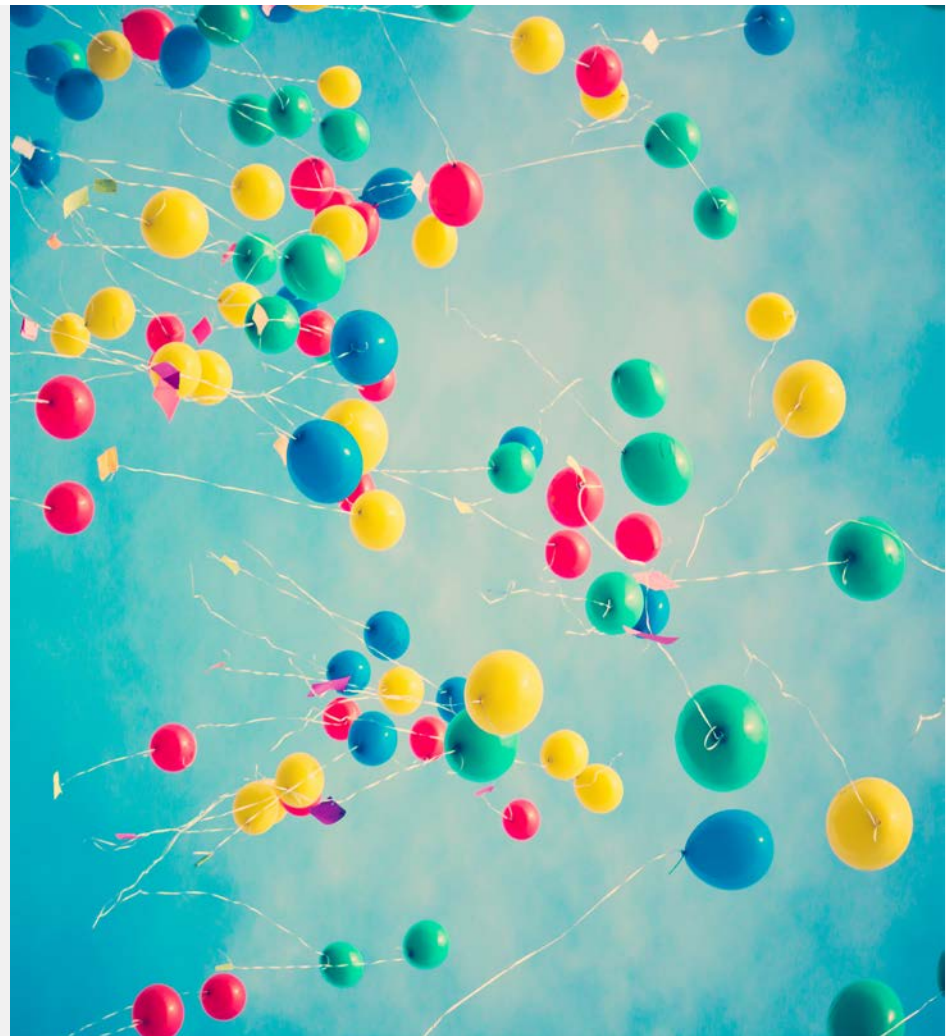
THINK | BIG

# THE THEORY AND STRATEGY BEHIND THE GAME



# Reflect on your experience

1. Was it fun? Did you experience behavioral thinking in a new and non-intimidating manner?
2. What was it like 'experiencing' the journey of the care-giver, Adama? Did it shift your thinking about behaviors? How so?





# The theory behind game-based learning

Games are a subset of play and fun.

- Play is our brain's favorite way of learning things
- Fun increases motivation for learners





# Characteristics of games that enable learning

- Games begin with **challenges**.
- Games that introduce conflicting choices and consequences make the challenge more **engaging**.
- An engaged player **explores and discovers** the costs and benefits of each choice.
- **Feedback** on their choices helps them to reflect on their choices and guides them in their decisions.
- Games are won or lost based how well the player **applies** the information gained through exploration, discovery, and feedback in overcoming the challenges set by the game.



# Our strategic process

- **Why** develop a game?
- **Who** is playing? [player typologies]
- **What** do we want our players to do? What skills do we want our players to learn?
- **How** will we know that we've succeeded?



# Defining game design and mechanics that align with our strategic objectives

- How the game is played [Race, rescue, explore, outwit]
- The rules/game mechanics. [Start, progress, resolve]
- The resources/game objects that have value for players. [Time, social, health, financial currency]
- The conflict.
- The win and loss states.

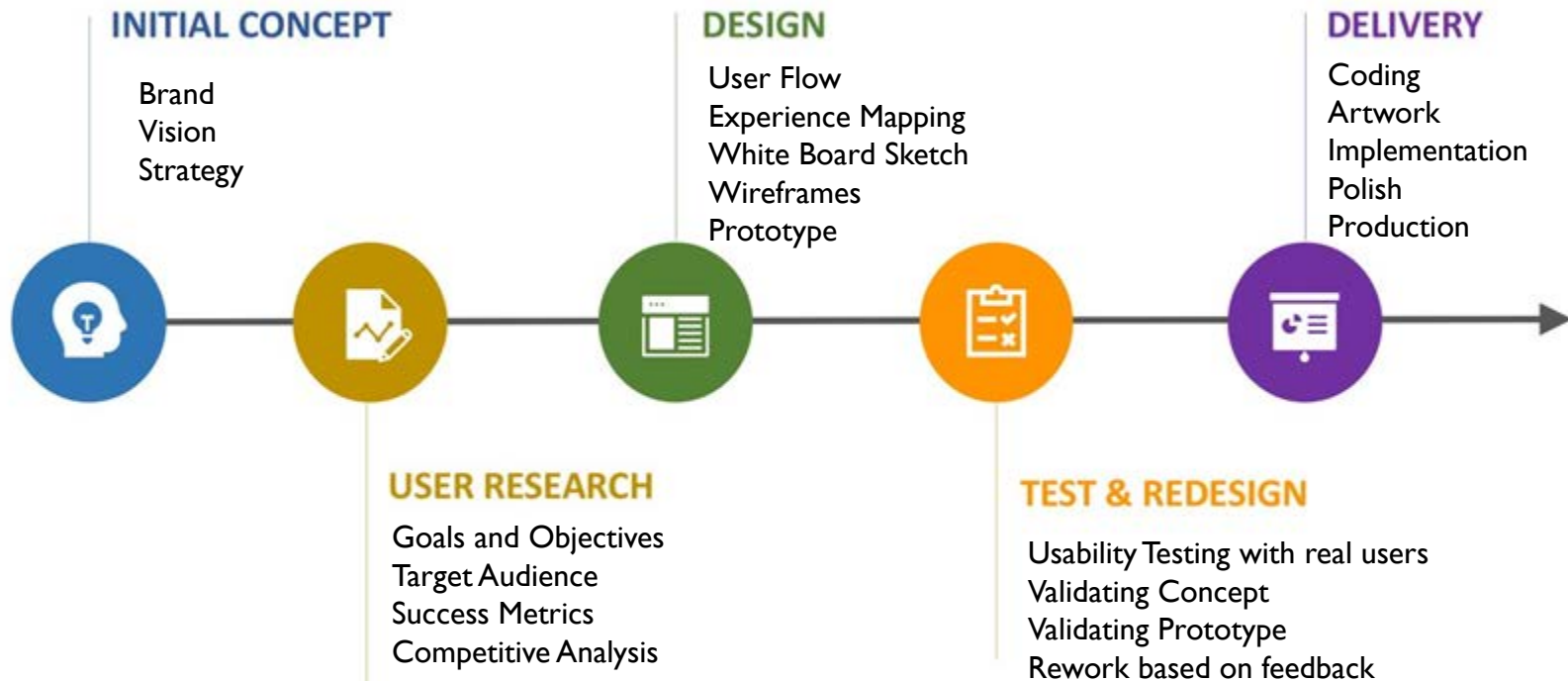


THINK | BIG

TECHNICAL DEVLEOPMENT

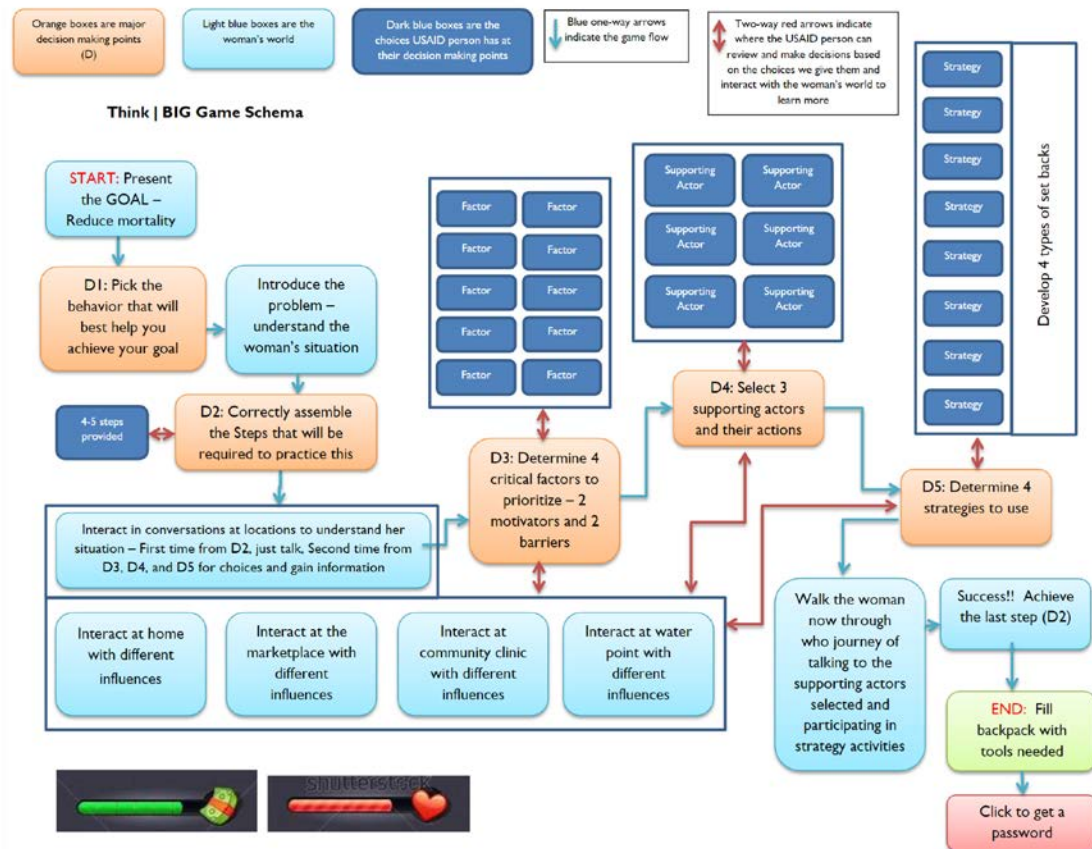








# Version 1.0 – Story Flow





# Initial artwork conceptualization





# User Testing during Regional Training in Accra, Ghana – September 2018



USAID Madagascar  
Malaria



USAID Washington DC  
Democracy & Governance



USAID Senegal  
Democracy & Governance



USAID West Africa  
Regional Director

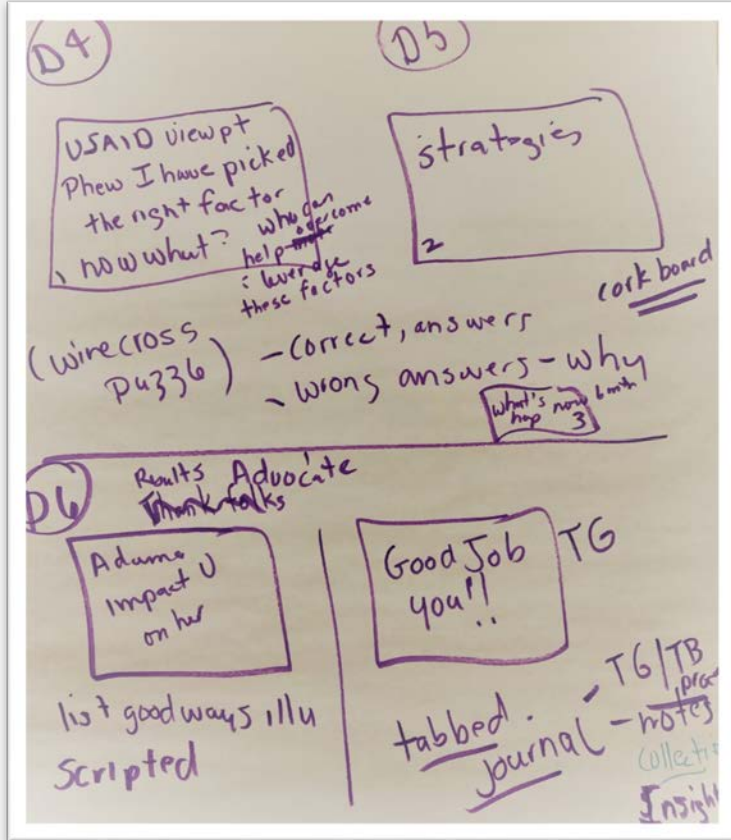


# User Testing in Ghana





# Revisions

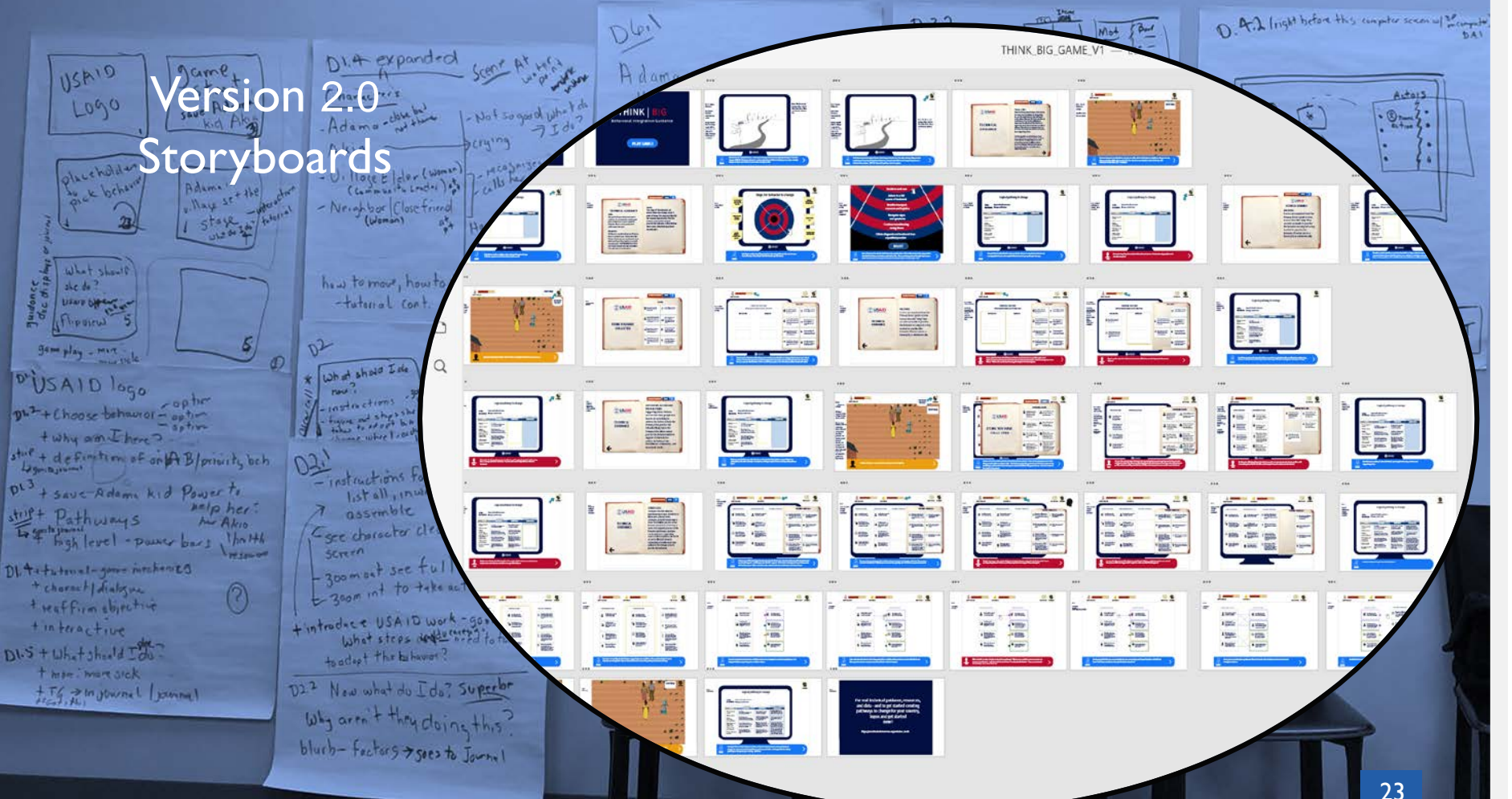


- 15 script revisions
- Numerous art do-overs
- 6 builds

**AND COUNTING!**

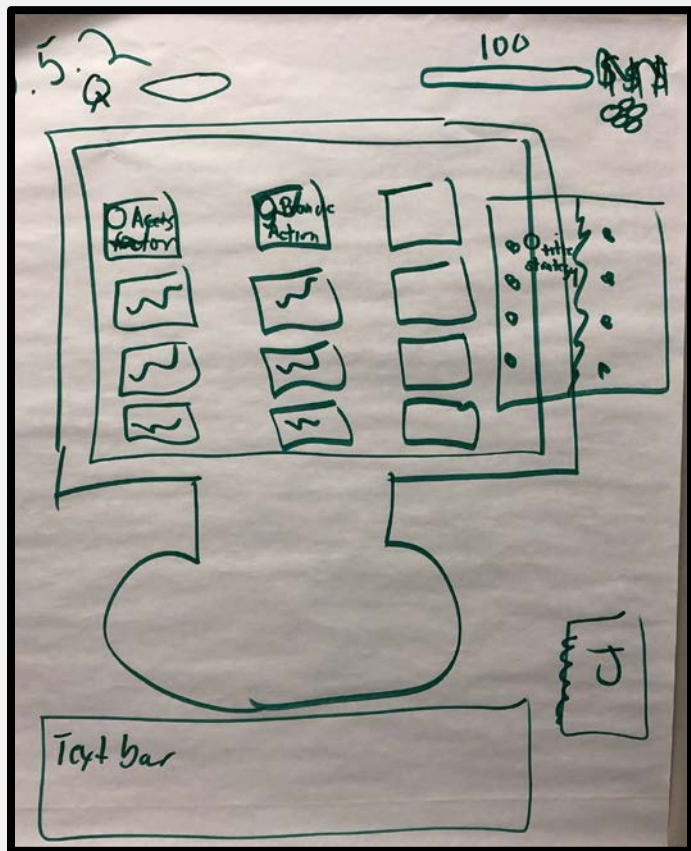


# Version 2.0 Storyboards



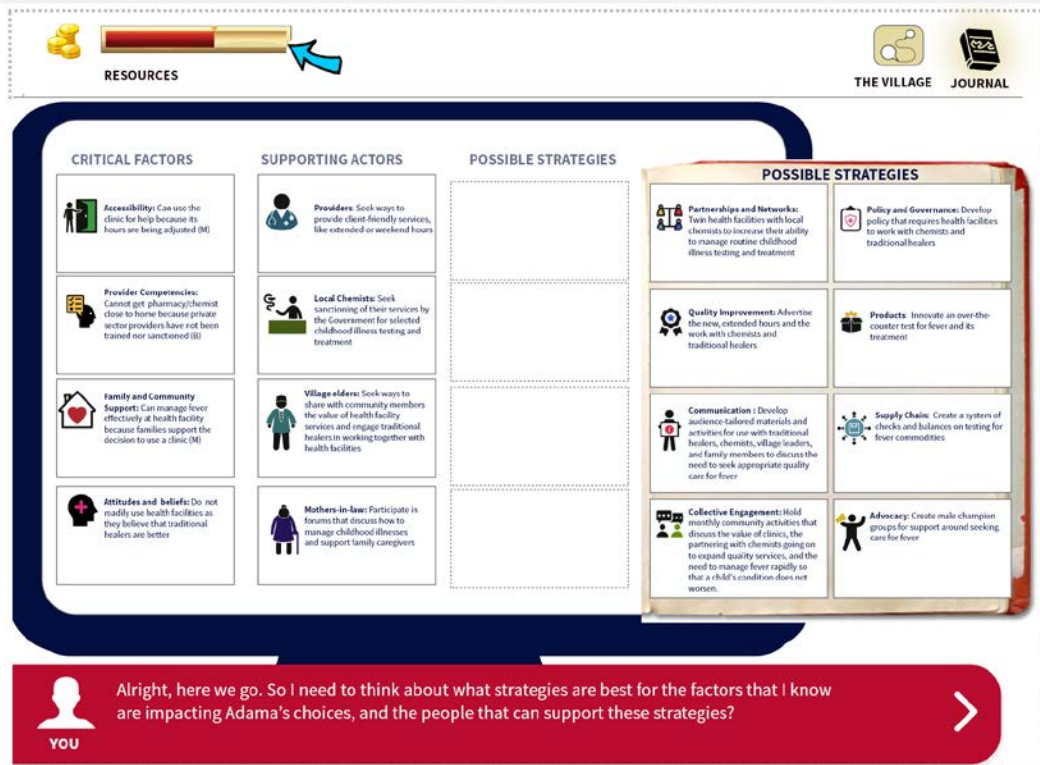


# Storyboards - paper-based & digital



D.5.2

Select Possible  
Strategy  
Activity  
continued





# Implementation Lessons Learned

- User Testing – where all your design expectations come to die
- Test early and often
- Failing is Learning
- It takes a multiple skills sets - strategic thinking, clear vision, script writing, art, translating vision into user interface, game programming, quality assurance
- The Project Management 80/20 Rule – Standing up a game takes your developers 80% of their time, the last 20% of fit and finish/polish also take 80% of their time. Plan accordingly



# For more information

Visit the **ACCELERATE** website at  
<https://acceleratorbehaviors.usaid.gov>

Contact us at  
<https://acceleratorbehaviors.org/contact>









