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# UNDP Support to Innovation

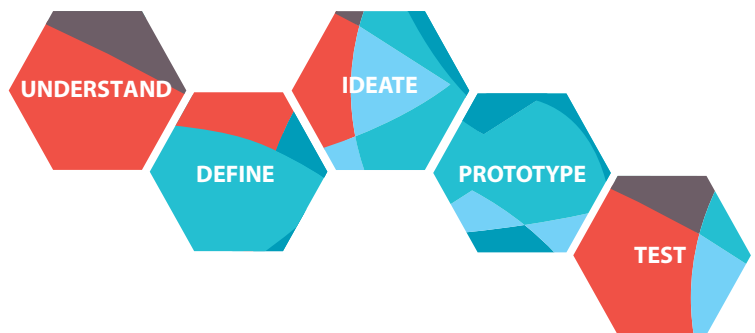
## Prototyping for rapid results

### Design Thinking and User-Centered Research to Improve Public Services

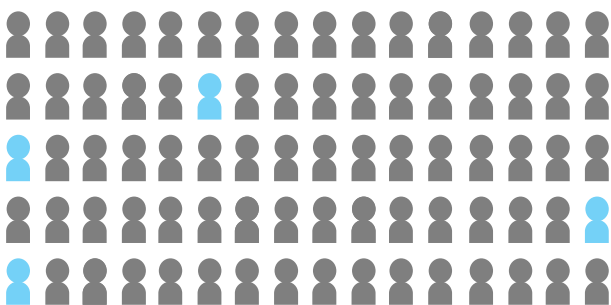
UNDP's aspiration as of recently is to become a more innovative organization. Innovation in the context of UNDP Albania's intervention areas is geared towards social and economic empowerment, local development, resilient delivery systems, and citizens' role in designing public services.

UNDP Albania is using a wide range of approaches, methodologies and tools to better understand the bottlenecks, tap into alternative and best available ideas, voices and technologies, supporting rapid testing of innovative solutions through **prototypes**, scaling up what is proven to work and learning from experience.

#### The design thinking approach



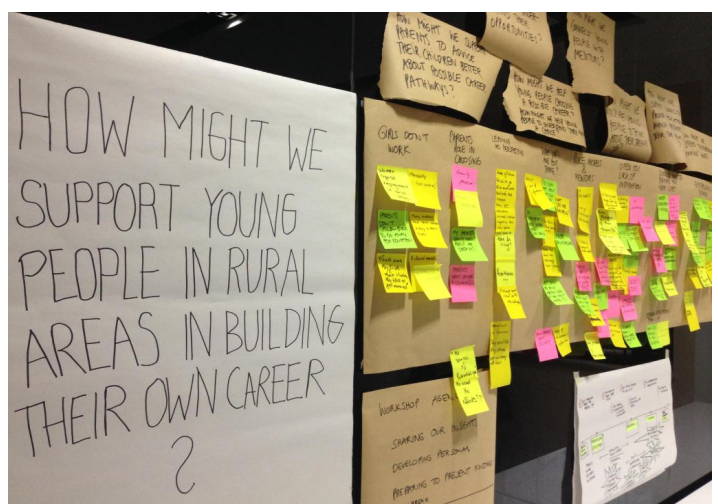
#### For great ideas go deep, not wide



Design thinking is one of the approaches we have been using. It follows a process of deeper understanding, co-creating, scaling, prototyping, experimenting and testing. As such, we are placing the "end-users" at the heart of the process, and engaging them in identifying the challenges and in **co-creating** solutions.

UNDP Albania has tested design thinking in the area of **youth employment**. In 2014, field work was conducted in two regions to identify rural employment challenges that youth face, and capture from a user perspective their needs for employment services.

The field work served as a basis for the subsequent analyses, problem definition and prototype development. At the end of a week-long collaboration between the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, the National Employment Service and FutureGov, the team identified one prototype to address one of the identified challenges, namely the development of an online platform that could inform youth on their career options, labour market information, prospects and youth role models.





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The working digital prototype includes realistic information on employment prospects, entry wages and labour market trends on selected occupations. UNDP is currently proceeding towards product development and testing.

## Innovation in Eco-tourism

In the frame of UNDP's ongoing work on employment, self-employment and rural employment, a joint intervention with GIZ has been designed whereby 13 youth (urban planners, architects, designers, environmental engineers, food industry specialists, etc.) are being activated and trained to identify tourism related promotional interventions in Shengjergj. While remote and largely unexplored, the potential of Shengjergj for the development of eco-tourism is promising due to the abundance of numerous natural attractions, different landscapes, unique elements of tradition and culture and several other attributes that are essential elements for an attractive and successful ecotourism industry.

The group of young students are currently working on the identification of touristic resources and authentic local products / producers, trail marking and mapping, guesthouse up-gradation, development of a marketing plan and promotion of Shengjergj as an eco-tourism destination,

### Exploring Shengjergj



### Trail Marking



### Eco-friendly guesthouse facilities



### Promoting the trail online

