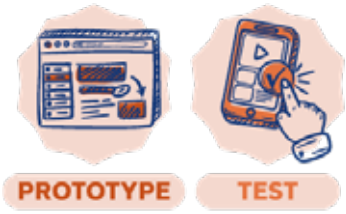


## The Design Process

# Prototype and Test

The Prototype and Test phase focuses on learning before implementing. Prototyping is not about building a final product, but rather creating early versions that allow you to validate assumptions, detect risks, and improve the design before scaling up.

In crisis contexts, this phase allows you to discover challenges and opportunities that were not evident during the research. When people interact with something tangible, their feedback becomes more concrete and actionable.

## 1. Objective

Develop initial versions of the solution (prototypes) and gather meaningful feedback to:

- Validate assumptions.
- Improve usability, language, and experience.
- Detect unforeseen risks.
- Adjust the design before investing more resources.

This phase reduces technical, social, and budgetary risks.

## 2. Introduction for the facilitator

In this phase, the facilitator will find tools to turn ideas into concrete tests. It is time to test the assumptions made in previous stages and allow reality to refine the design.

Prototype and Test is not a symbolic validation; it is a critical learning stage. In crisis contexts, it is especially important to ensure that people can test solutions in a safe environment, without pressure and with full clarity about the purpose of the exercise.

The usefulness of this phase lies in the fact that it allows solutions to be adjusted, simplified, or even discarded before they cause damage or waste resources.

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## 3. How to use this phase

| Use this phase when: | Do not use this phase to: |
| --- | --- |
| * Ideas have been prioritized and evaluated.<br>* Preliminary risks have been identified.<br>* There is clarity about the problem to be solved. | * Launch a definitive solution.<br>* Conduct tests without clear consent.<br>* Validate a tool that has already been institutionally compromised. |

## 4. Pre-Activity Checklist

**Before starting prototyping and testing:**

- [ ] Essential functionalities have been clearly defined.
- [ ] Assumptions to be validated have been documented.
- [ ] Ethical and protection risks have been reviewed.
- [ ] Applicable data protection policies have been identified.
- [ ] Compensation has been planned, if relevant.
- [ ] A secure and private testing environment has been designed.
- [ ] A plan for integrating feedback has been established.

## 5. Activities

### Scope the Product or Service

**Purpose**
Define which features are essential and which are desirable.

**Facilitator Guidance**

* Prioritize features that improve actual assistance.
* Avoid overloading the initial product.
* Validate priorities with the community and staff.

**How to facilitate in a crisis**

* Consider different technological levels (no-, low-, high-tech).

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- Assess whether a single solution excludes groups.
- Explore phased inclusion strategies.

**Suggested methods**

- Feature prioritization matrix.
- MoSCoW method (Must / Should / Could / Won't).
- Structured discussion with the community.

**Specific checklist**

- [ ] Essential functions were defined.
- [ ] Impact on different groups was evaluated.
- [ ] Accessibility was considered from the outset.
- [ ] Over-design was avoided.

## Iterative Prototyping

**Purpose**
Create early versions for rapid learning.

**Facilitator Guidance**

- Start with simple mock-ups.
- Iterate quickly.
- Document learnings.

**How to facilitate in a crisis**

- Use low-cost prototypes.
- Ensure clear understanding of the exercise.
- Adapt according to digital literacy.

**Suggested methods**

- Paper prototypes.
- Wireframes.
- Basic interactive prototypes.

**Specific checklist**

- [ ] A minimal version was created.

- [ ] Iterations were planned.
- [ ] Assumptions were documented.

## User Testing

**Purpose**
Gather concrete feedback on usability, language, and experience.

**Facilitator Guidance**

Ensure that participants:
- Have a safe space.
- Understand that they are not being evaluated.
- Receive clear instructions.
- Know that their access to help does not depend on the test.

**How to facilitate in a crisis**

- Allow for flexible schedules and conditions.
- Offer compensation if appropriate.
- Include community champions if appropriate.
- Ensure participation on their own terms.

**Suggested methods**

- Guided testing.
- Think-aloud protocol.
- Structured observation.

**Specific checklist**

- [ ] Privacy was ensured.
- [ ] Purpose was clearly explained.
- [ ] Feedback was guaranteed not to affect access to help.
- [ ] Structured feedback was recorded.

## Integrate Feedback

**Purpose**
Refine design based on results.

**Facilitator Guidance**

- Prioritize critical changes.
- Differentiate between individual preference and recurring pattern.
- Document decisions.

**How to facilitate in a crisis**

- Communicate which changes will and will not be made.
- Explain reasons.
- Maintain transparency.

**Suggested methods**

- Feedback clustering.
- Prioritization matrix.
- Iteration log.

**Specific checklist**

- [ ] Patterns were identified.
- [ ] Decisions were documented.
- [ ] Next steps were communicated.

## Ethical Considerations

**Purpose**
Ensure consent and transparency.

**Facilitator Guidance**

- Explain data use.
- Build consent within the process.
- Assess emerging risks.

**How to facilitate in a crisis**

- Verbal consent if necessary.
- Clear and local language.
- Validate understanding.

**Specific checklist**

- [ ] Data use was explained.

- [ ] Informed consent was ensured.
- [ ] Additional risks were reviewed.

## 6. Specific considerations in emergencies

**Technological inclusion**

- Real diversity in sessions.
- Private spaces.
- Separate sessions if necessary.

**Testing assumptions**

- This phase validates hypotheses.
- It allows ideas to be discarded.

**Progressive inclusion**

- Phased strategies.
- Preparation for groups with greater barriers.

**Community champions**

- Advanced users as support.
- Avoid excessive dependence.

**Protection and well-being**

- Adequate compensation.
- Safe spaces.
- Guarantees of access to help.

**Post-test transparency**

- Communicate changes made.
- Explain decisions.

## 7. Expected outcome

At the end of this phase, the team should have:

- A refined prototype.
- Assumptions validated or discarded.

- Risks identified and mitigated.
- Documented feedback.
- Clarity to decide whether to scale, iterate, or stop.

*"Prototyping in crisis is about learning safely and iterating responsibly—never about launching quickly at the expense of people's wellbeing."*

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