CENTRAL AMERICA
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
HACKATHON

JANUARY 26-27, 2013 • ACROSS CENTRAL AMERICA AND IN WASHINGTON DC

Address the challenge of domestic violence by building technology solutions to assist agencies that work to support victims and advance efforts to bring perpetrators to justice.

www.vdhackathon.org
what is a hackathon?

- a unique forum for collaborative problem solving that results in concrete software solutions that can be implemented to address critical challenges.
- uses minimal resources and maximum brain power to create outside-the-box solution ("hacks") in response to interesting problems.
- more than marathon weekends, to ensure maximum impact, the hackathon must be part of a larger process of defining, building and implementing solutions.
the objectives

1. Convene key stakeholders in Guatemala, Panama, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica and Washington D.C. around the issue of domestic violence

2. Work with stakeholders and local communities to define specific challenges relating to domestic violence that can be addressed by technology

3. Raise awareness of domestic violence and its impact on society among a broader sector of the population

4. Work with experts and technologists in a hackathon format to prototype solutions with potential for future impact
The Domestic Violence Hackathon will take place simultaneously across Central America and in Washington DC on January 26/27, 2013.
sample outcomes

What kinds of prototypes can be built at a hackathon?

FamilyFIRST
Sheltr
R3 App
Ayiti SMS SOS
I’mOK
And many more…
FamilyFIRST

An application that allows domestic violence victims to silently summon the police or make contact with a crisis intervention worker via text message without actually making a phone call.

Developed for a local police department in Oklahoma.

Also assists victims in documenting incidents of abuse.
A web and mobile application that helps providers of services to the homeless track availability of shelter beds and food distribution sources in real time.

Enables improved communications among the homeless services community and enhancing their ability to more effectively support the local homeless population.

Sheltr was built at the Random Hacks of Kindness hackathon in Philadelphia. At subsequent Random Hacks of Kindness events it was also developed for Austin, TX and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, and other cities across the United States are interested in developing Sheltr for their local use.

http://sheltr.org/
A web and smartphone application designed for hospitals and clinics to assist healthcare professionals in identifying signs of domestic violence.

Designed by a victim’s services agency in Florida, the application also will identify local resources for victims so healthcare professionals can make appropriate referrals.
Ayiti SMS SOS

An application that allows individuals living in camps in Haiti to email, text message (SMS) or input direct reports on a website of gender-based violence incidents.

The messages are processed and mapped, allowing service providers to respond to immediate incidents as well as deliver services in high-need areas and track incidence of violence over time.

http://survivorsconnect.org/haitismshelpline/
An SMS application that allows people to send a text message to a pre-programmed network of individuals to let people know they are okay, with just the touch of one button.

http://imokapp.appspot.com/

Built at the Random Hacks of Kindness hackathon.

Similar projects have been worked on at other hackathons, including an IAmNotOK app.
Engage both technologists and experts in all stages.

Set expectations and provide examples: what is possible and what is not?

Foster collaboration rather than competition.

Embed sustainability planning into the process.
it starts with a good problem

At the workshop: Begin with broad brainstorming among stakeholders. Then experts and technologists work together to narrow down to a subset of strong problems. Following the workshops, experts work to obtain the data/support necessary to make the problems viable.

Involving experts and organizations who will ultimately use and promote the tools developed is essential in building their ownership of outcomes from the earliest stage.

A problem statement for a hackathon must be detailed and complete to ensure concrete progress towards a prototype during a short hackathon event.

The outcomes of the problem definition process directly impact the organization of the hackathon.

Workshops took place across Central America and in Washington DC the week of November 12, 2012. Problems proposed and currently being refined can be viewed at: http://vdhackathon.pbworks.com/
Local organizers collaborate with World Bank and SecondMuse on event hosting.

Experts set the stage—why this work will make a difference.

Technologists spend 2 days prototyping solutions to problems. Prototypes are more robust when experts are present and work hand in hand with programmers.

Most problems tackled will result in working demos by the end of the hackathon.

Individuals can sign up to participate in the hackathon events in each country at http://www.vdhackathon.org

Essentials of a hackathon:

• Fast wifi access
• Caffeine
• Snacks
• Good problems
sustainability

After the hackathon….

Ensure experts and programmers document their projects well before they leave the hackathon.

Identify the most promising projects.

Secure involvement from stakeholder experts and NGOs in identifying opportunities to implement prototypes.

Keep the hacker teams engaged and in the loop so they can continue to help.

Develop opportunities for support, incubation, mentorship, piloting and funding.
the timeline

**September 15 – November 15**
Phase 1: Stakeholder identification and partnership building

**November 15 – January 15**
Phase 2: Problem identification workshops and problem refinement process

**November 1 – January 30**
Phase 3: Hackathon logistics and execution

**January 30 and on...**
Phase 4: Sustainability and tracking