Digital Transformation for Inclusive Business Development Project:
## Impact Evaluation and Knowledge Sharing Report

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Digital Transformation for Inclusive Business Development is a project supported by JPMorgan Chase Foundation. It aims to design, develop and test a methodology that promotes technology adoption among small business owners. The project combines fieldwork (pilot project) and academic research. Beneficiaries in this project are a clear example of the current situation of small business owners in developed countries, which demonstrate a persistent gap in the use of digital technologies and in digital skills.
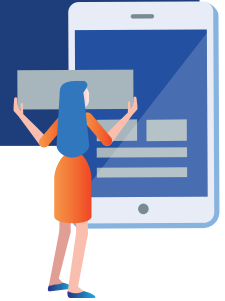
PHASES OF THE PROJECT

1. **Identification of small business owners that meet requirements:**
   • Main requirements: Low/Middle Income, products suitable for selling online, strong interest in using online tools to advance their businesses.
   • Ten small business owners assigned as "beneficiaries" and seven small business owners assigned to the control group.

2. **Creation of online shops and online marketing strategies for beneficiaries**

3. **Training and mentoring of beneficiaries**

4. **Knowledge dissemination among other small business owners (74 small business owners in 3 workshops)**

The project combines the efforts of several partners who contribute with critical expertise during the different phases of the project:

1. Project management and research: IE Foundation

2. Initial pro bono consulting for beneficiaries: IE's Master in Visual and Digital Media

3. Online shops development, training and mentoring on the use of specific tools: Te Veo Online

4. Identification of beneficiaries and support to control group: Puentes Global Foundation

LESSONS LEARNED

1. **Identification and Selection of Beneficiaries (and Control Group)**
- Our construction of a self-selection process was critical to the project's success. As a result, small business owners who were willing and capable of implementing the necessary changes got to take full advantage of the opportunity.
- Lack of a common vocabulary generates communication barriers in conveying the content and value of the project.
- Outstanding participation of women in the project (80%): Due to a combination of focus on retail and a "friendly" identification process.

2. **Online Shop and Online Marketing Strategy Creation**
- Intensive personalized support is critical to help them overcome fears and attitudes.
- Setting clear expectations of time commitments for beneficiaries helps them focus on the project in the midst of their daily work.
- Creating intermediate milestones and quick wins were of great importance in terms of showing the impact of their efforts.
- Understanding the real needs and capabilities of each beneficiary to create the appropriate online shop/marketing strategy is more important than creating an over complicated/expensive strategy.

3. **Training and Mentoring of Beneficiaries**
- Training became very relevant once the online shops were launched and online strategies were implemented.
- It was critical to organize them around their opening hours and make them practical, including exercises and examples of their own shops.

4. **Knowledge Dissemination Among Small Business Owners**
- Appropriate channels to reach participants include merchants associations, city councils and grassroots organizations.
- It is very important to know their opening hours and work schedules to make it easy for them to attend.

5. **Project Evaluation**
- Qualitative assessment enabled us to identify unexpected effects.
- It was fundamental to keep a close relationship with the control group.
- Questionnaires need to be phrased as clearly as possible.
- Face-to-face administration was more effective than telephone calls when it came to completing questionnaires.