SVA Social Ventures Australia

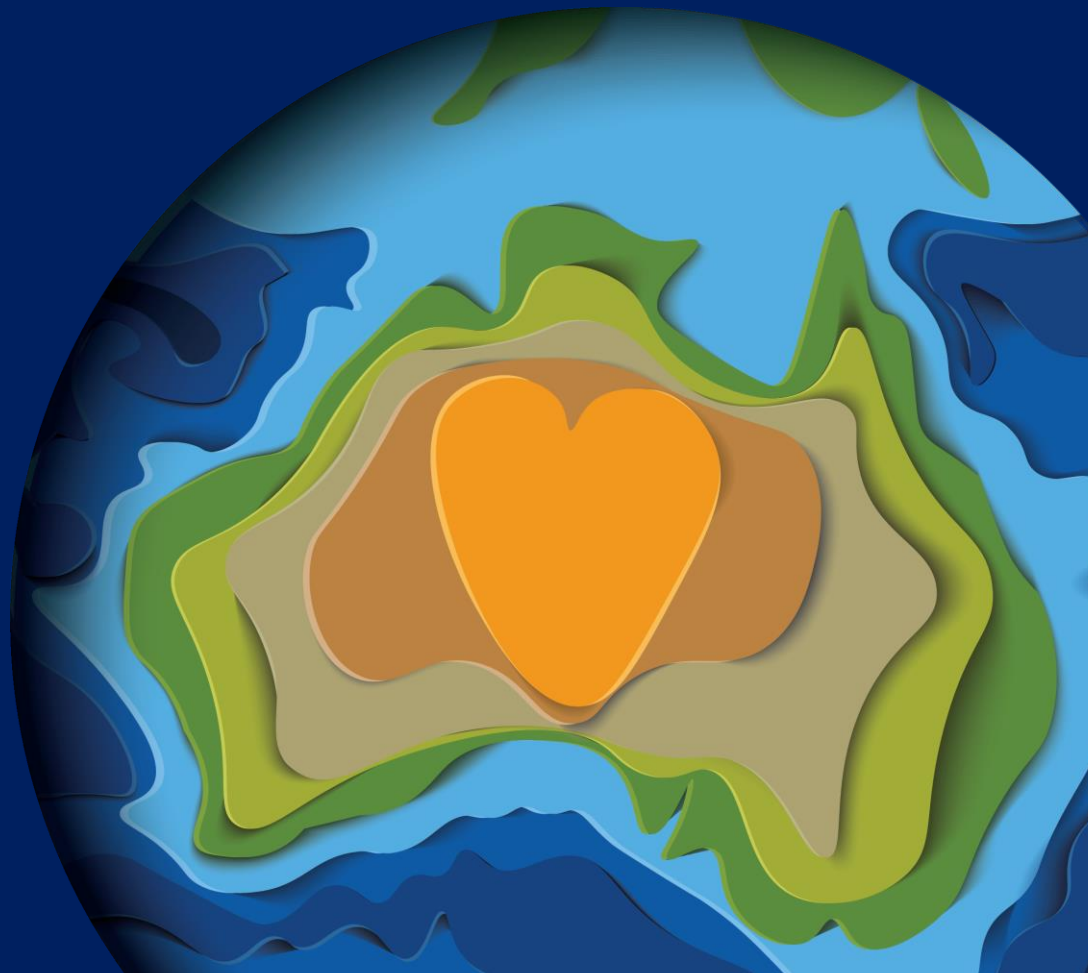
SVA Summit

Impact at scale

Help make the leap from local solution to wide-spread impact

Keynote

Dr Neela Saldanha



What does impact at scale mean to you?

93% adopting the behaviour

Vietnam’s helmet law

Image credit: Long Nguyen/DufferLong LLC

60 million children, 13+ countries, 2 continents

Teaching at the Right Level

Image credit: GPE/Kelley Lynch.

Delivering a holistic set of interventions

BRAC Ultra-Poor Graduation Initiative

Changing systems

Thailand’s universal health coverage

Image credit: World Bank - East Asia and Pacific

Being global…

…and highly local

Image credit: counterclockwise, flickr

Scaling the organisation?

Scaling the solution?

Image credit: May Fleming

Scaling the solution isn’t easy

Countering seasonal poverty and hunger in rural Bangladesh

Bryan et al. 2014

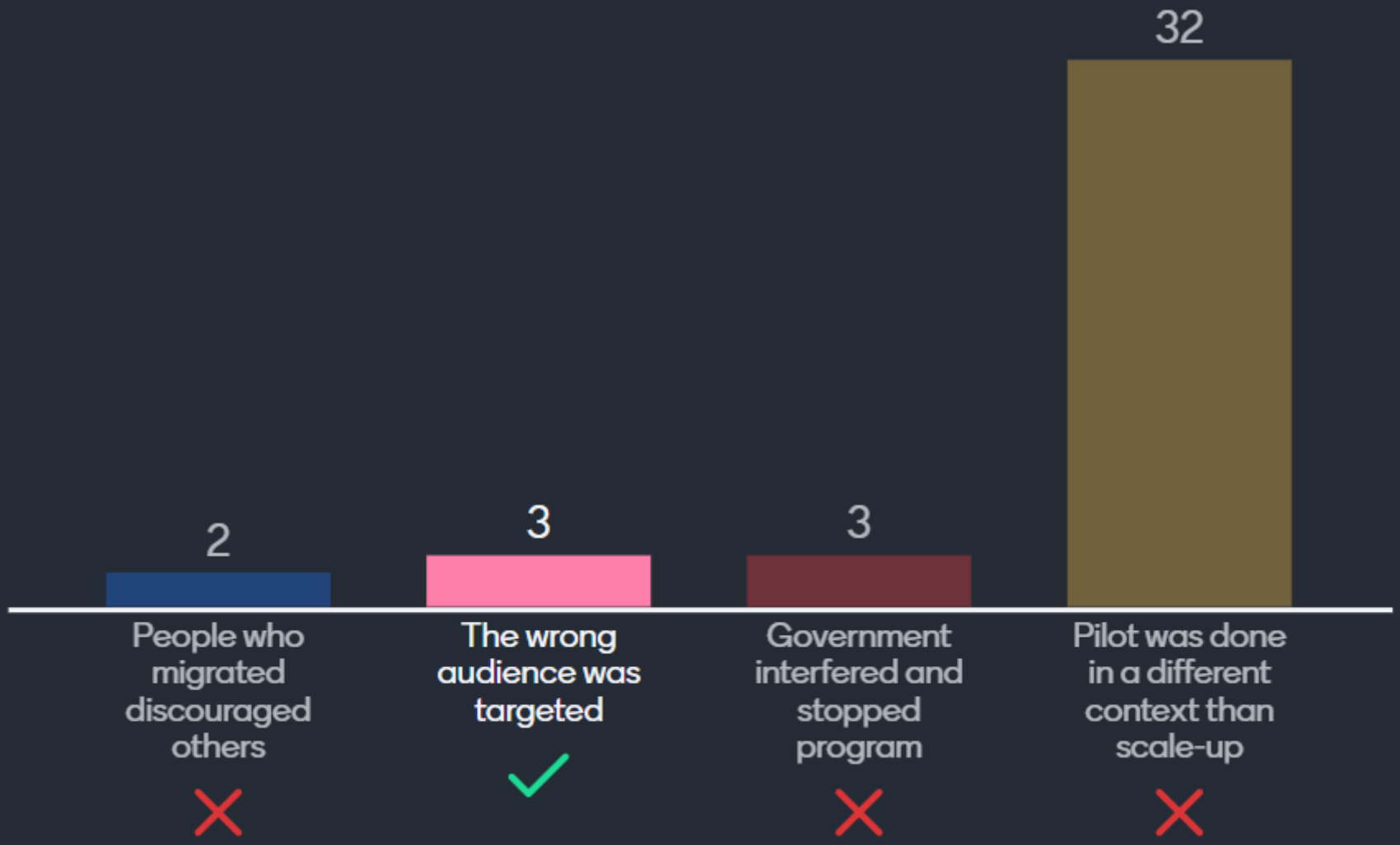
Intervention scales… up to a point

22 pp increase in migration

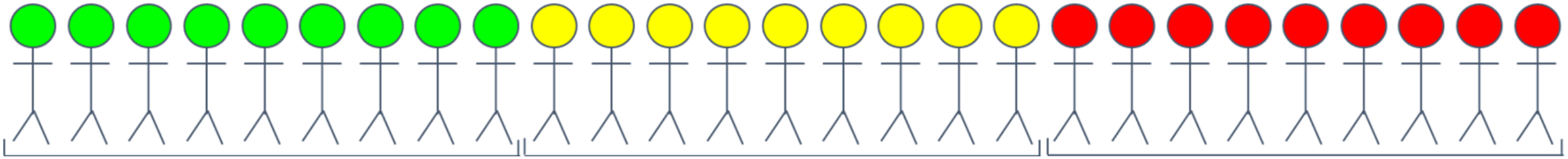
500 calories per person per day: families

Max. 12 pp increase in migration

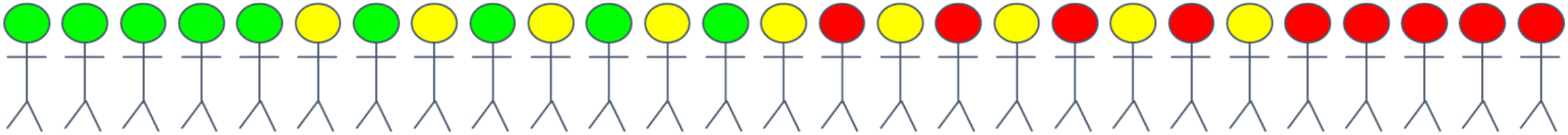
What went wrong in the scale up?



What researchers want to see



What implementers see: level of interest



Five questions

1. **It worked elsewhere, will it work here?**
2. **What could be unintended consequences?**
3. **What is the political calculus here?**
4. **What if everyone does it?**
5. **What could be implementation issues?**

It worked elsewhere, will it work here?

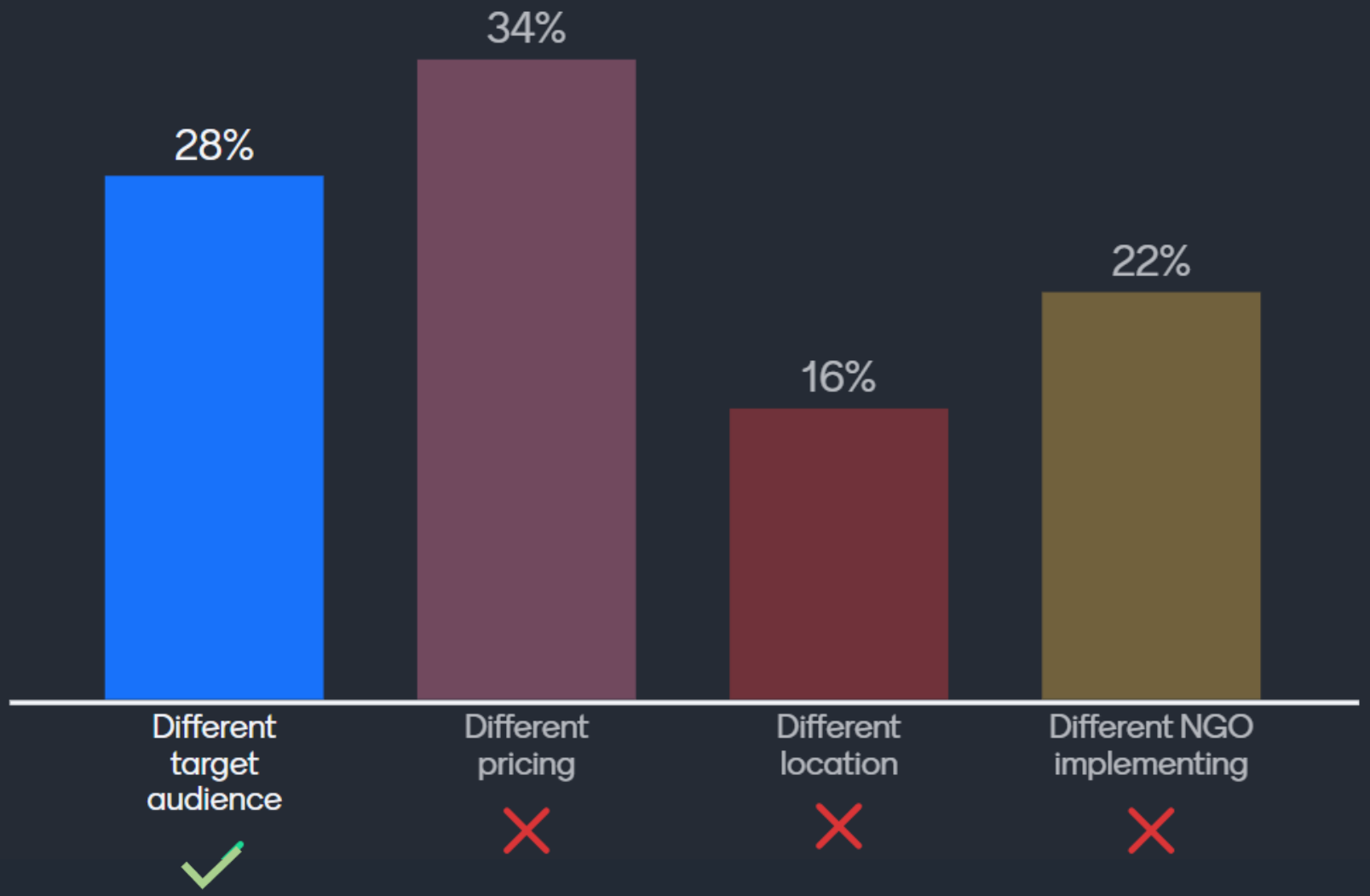
External validity

Salt fortification in India

Successful pilot, no effects at scale

Banerjee, Barnhardt and Duflo 2018

What was different between pilot and scale up?



What could be unintended consequences?

Spillovers

Positive

Image credit: Michael Appleton

Negative

Image credit: Rhododendrites

What is the political calculus here?

Political economy

Image credit: GPE/Kelley Lynch.

Kenya contract teachers

Contract teachers hired either by:

- **NGO (World Vision)**
- **Government**

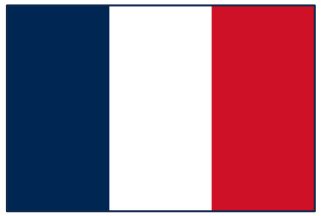
NGO: significant effect
Govt: no effect

Bold et al. 2022

Why didn’t it work when government implemented?

What if everyone does it?

General equilibrium & macro



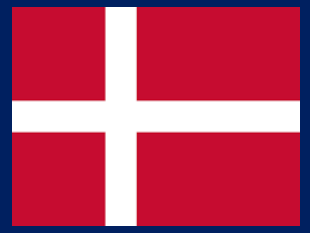
Job services in France

When scaled to the entire district – benefitted those it served BUT negative effects on others (displacement)

Image credit: Stephen Rohl, CC by SA 4.0

What could be implementation issues?

Implementation fidelity



Parent reading program

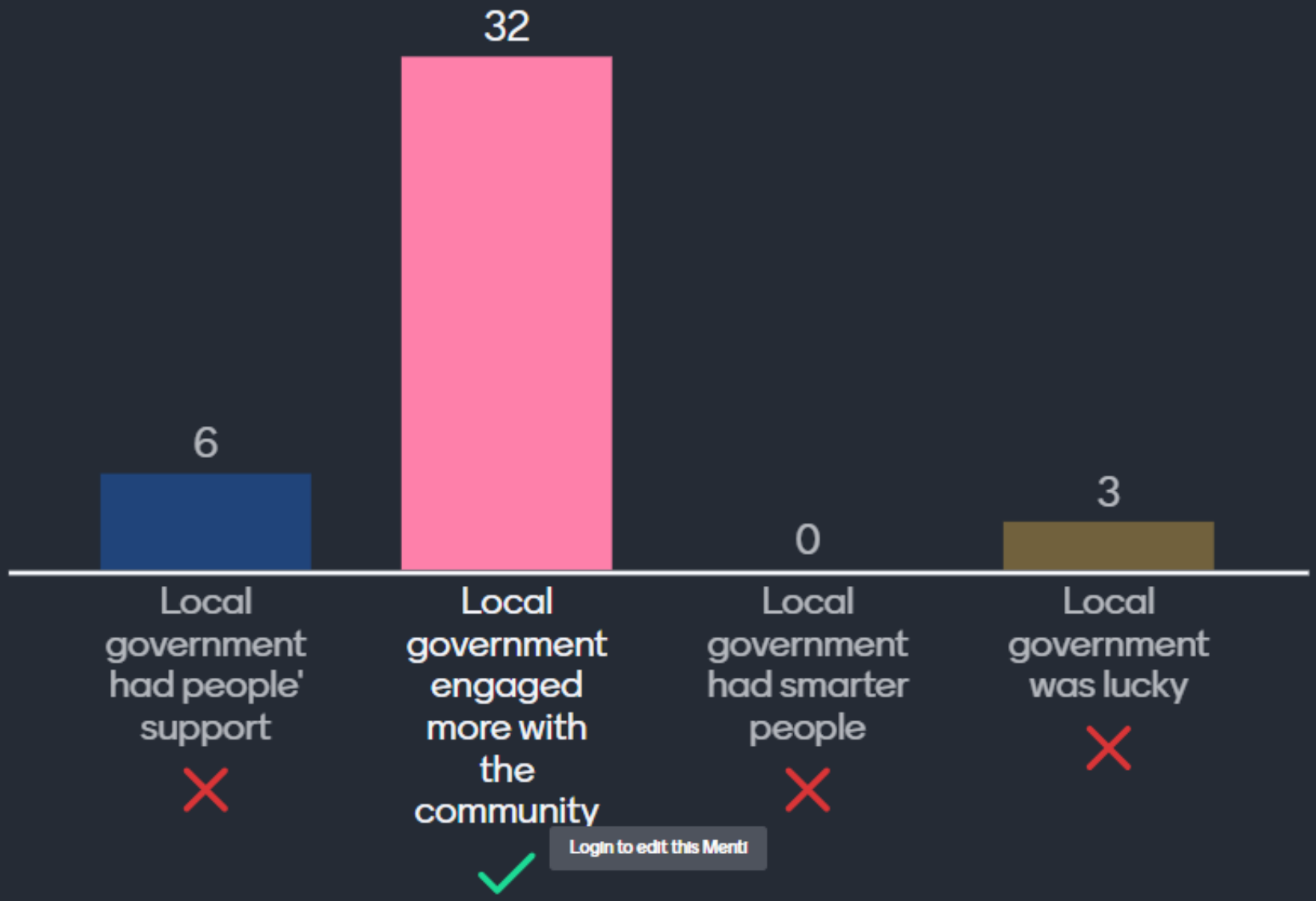
When implemented by local government - success

No effect when scaled up by national government

Anderson and Hvidman 2020

Image credit: Defense Visual Information Distribution Service

Why did local government do so much better than national?



To reflect on…

What sort of impact at scale? Reach, borders, place, generations?

Are we invested in scaling the solution or the organization?

What could be complexities at scale?

- **Will it work here?**
- **Unintended consequences?**
- **Political calculus?**
- **If everyone did it?**
- **Implementation?**

“What works at scale may be different from scaling what works”

– Rohini Nilekani