VIVO Technology Facet: Orientation Feedback and ITAV Assessment
Jan 2020

Background: Below is VIVO technology related feedback from the Orientation Exercise conducted Summer 2019 (OE) and the ITAV Assessment Conducted Fall 2019 (ITAV). They fall into four main categories.

Lack of Clear Direction

- Challenge: 2 visions – modular, decoupled system vs. VIVO monolith (ITAV)
- If the development efforts are going in separate directions, we risk a "fork" in project development (OE)
- There is divergence between big institutions who want ecosystem, and small institutions (with no tech capacity to do more) who want single, easy to install app (ITAV)
- VIVO has different role depending on institution; for some VIVO is CRIS system; for others VIVO is part of system; depending on role, advocate for different things (ITAV)
- Mix: for half stakeholder, VIVO does what they want; not prepared for when it doesn't; haven't been planning for that (their needs met); once old system no longer meets needs, hard to evolve then (ITAV)
- Whether functional requirements are accurate representation of community is an open question; some segments have stronger voices than others (ITAV)

Functionality

- We need an easier way to load data into VIVO and harvest data from public sources (OE)
- VIVO needs improved data ingests and advanced role management to make it a better a "stand-alone" software solution (OE)
- Existing VIVO institutions are looking for ways to refresh and upgrade their VIVO implementations, and we need to give them options (OE)
- Very strong feedback on user interface; hard to customize; current architecture often requires deeper changes in the stack to make a seemingly simple UI change; tech somewhat old (ITAV)
- No formalized approach on revisiting new features in last release; there would be value in hearing how features are playing out (ITAV)

Technical Resources

- Modularity approach has brought energy, opened doors to contribution (monolith version intimidates); modularity is evolutionary, makes it easier for developers to contribute (ITAV)
- Needs to evolve in terms of accessibility to developers and to continue to meet different needs; not positioned now to evolve (ITAV)

Technical Debt

- VIVO's current technology stack is built on legacy technology and requires too much developer effort to implement (OE)
- The VIVO front-end is too difficult for developers to work with and customize (OE)
- Difficult to find areas for people to work on; touch code in one area, ripple effect; no integration testing; VIVO not designed for automated test frameworks (ITAV)
- VIVO is definition of technical debt; 1 person in world who completely understands VIVO core codebase (ITAV)