SYSTEM MAP
Preparation & Instructions

Description

System maps (also referred to as stakeholder maps) are schematic representations of the main actors of a given (service) system, from the point of view of the main service-providing organization. The actors are made up of those surrounding and those internal to the organization, including users, staff, departments, and external providers. Typically, the maps make use of pictograms or other visual representations, and lines and arrows connect the different actors representing the different relationships and flows among the various actors.

Stakeholder map and system maps are useful for identifying the boundaries of service systems, core service performances, and the different kinds of flows, both existing and aspirational.

Systems maps come in many shapes and forms; what you will be using it for, and the questions you want to answer with it will determine which type of systems map to use. It's important to strike a balance between mapping the detailed complexity and making it simple enough to be useful, at the right time to use it. Remember, it's a living map (not a static one) and will change over time.

The activity is best done with stakeholders who have a close proximity or lived experience relative to part of the system. Each stakeholder can inform the system mapping process to enable the system map to more accurately reflect the dynamics, interactions, and relations with other actors.

How to conduct

Duration: Sessions of 45 - 90 min,
The time commitment of System Mapping depends on the degree to which it is planned to be participatory and/or iterative. If it is planned to be both, it can take approximately a 1-2 months to plan, invite, coordinate, execute, and iteratively repeat the process.

Resources:
- Statement of a challenge or a restricted context or environment of intervention

Material: Pens, post-its

Participants per team: 3-10

Instructions:
1. Write down the challenge statement for your complex problem in the centre of a worksheet/flipchart. Try to be concise, but not too narrow in your description (defining the right problem scope is important in not going too broad or too narrow).
2. You can refer to the 'Challenge Statements' section to assist you with this process.
3. Identify key issues Brainstorm and describe the key issues that affect/contribute to that challenge. Make it concise.
4. Identify potential drivers Discuss what the drivers are behind each key issue. Write each driver down on the map.
5. Team discussion Discuss the relationships between key issues and drivers with your team, by drawing lines and linkages between them. Drivers can be linked to multiple issues. Identify any possible sub-issues that contribute to your problem but are not on the map yet. Write them down on the map and connect them with key issues and/or drivers. Try to be clear on how certain you are about the relationships and linkages, how strong (and resistant to change) they are.

SYSTEM MAP
Template

Information flow →

Monetary flow →

Material flow →

SECONDARY
STAKEHOLDERS

**MAIN
STAKEHOLDERS**

SOCIAL INNOVATION TOOLKIT

NET ZERO CITIES