

SYSTEMS MAPPING

WHAT

Systems thinking tool that visually represents the system you are working in with nodes and connection between nodes. Can be complemented with causal loop diagrams.

WHEN TO USE

- **Stage(s):** Preparation & setup, prototyping, demonstration, commercialisation & scale-up
- **Goal:** Map & engage stakeholders/actors, interrogate existing knowledge, think ahead & find solutions to address challenges/problems
- **Type:** Systems thinking tool
- **Time & Effort:** 3 - 4 hrs



HOW TO USE

- Pre-work: actor map & identify stages of the process under study.
- Brainstorm on key forces and patterns in the system. These can be social, economic, technological, environmental and are represented as nodes. Use different colour for different stages or actors.
- Determine the variables of every node, what is changing?
- Determine links between nodes and what is exchanged between them. Money, goods, information? Do nodes influence each other in a positive or negative way?
- Identify key nodes based on their connectedness.
- Framing: determine what the boundaries are of the system you want to zoom in on.
- Are there delays? feedback loops?

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STRENGTHS

- Modular tool that you can build upon gradually.
- Helps to think dynamically and understand the system.
- Powerfull visualisation tool.
- Allows to build a shared vision of the system, its challenges and opportunities.

WEAKNESSES

- Requires some knowlegde on the concepts used.
- Experience with the tool is recommended.
- It is challenging to identify the correct links and relations between the nodes, some relations are indirect.

Source:

[Systems Mapping \(systemsinnovation.network\)](#), available on teams
Systems Mapping - YouTube