Embedding Learning in Systems Change:

A LEARNING FRAMEWORK FOR TESTING UNCERTAINTIES

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With

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Systems change strategies confront the causes of problems instead of treating their symptoms.[2] They recognize that many actors and factors interact in unpredictable and often invisible ways to create the problems we seek to address.[3] Systems change strategies are dynamic and profoundly affected by context rather than a series of predictable, replicable, or linear steps.

Learning and evaluation approaches that accompany systems change efforts need to fit with and support the emergent nature of this work, often through experimentation supported by robust learning.[4] They call for examining, with evidence, the hypotheses and assumptions that undergird the work and regularly adapting in response to what is learned. They require staff to be highly engaged in testing their ideas by gathering evidence, interpreting it, and then acting on its implications.

This brief presents a learning approach—referred to here as the Learning Framework—developed to support systems change strategies. It is intended for other learning and evaluation practitioners working on systems change. Because a wealth of conceptual work exists about why learning is critical to systems change but practical advice about how to do it is much less available, we describe the approach we took and how the Framework's core elements fit together in practice.

[1] We also received extremely helpful feedback on earlier versions of this brief from Andrea Azevedo, Alan Hudson, Subarna Mathes, and Gerry Power.

[2] Meadows, D., & Wright, D. (2008). Thinking in systems: A primer. Chelsea Green Publishing.

[3] Kania, J., Kramer, M., & Russell, P. (2014, summer). Strategic philanthropy for a complex world. Stanford Social Innovation Review, 26–37. https://ssir.org/articles/entry/strategic_philanthropy

[4] Lynn, J., & Coffman, J. (2024). Passing in the dark: Making visible philanthropy's hidden and conflicting mental models for systems change. The Foundation Review, 16(1), 142–160. https://doi.org/10.9707/1944-5660.1700

We incorporated a set of systems thinking principles.

This Learning Framework is grounded in several principles about systems thinking and systems change, drawing on available theory and literature as well as our own and others' experiences.

1. **Systems are constructed of *interconnections* among different elements.** These relationships might be physical and tangible, or they might be invisible. They often include factors in the flow of information. For example, in a country's election system, interconnections that affect participation could include the media landscape (how information is communicated), voting laws and rights, and public trust in elections. Focusing on these interconnections in our learning efforts ensures that we:

   - Recognize the complexity of systems
   - See relationships as multidirectional (e.g., information can flow in more than one direction)[5]
   - Avoid conceptualizing problems and solutions in overly simplistic, acontextual, and ahistorical ways[6,7]
   - Capture the entangled and dynamic nature of relationships and their power dynamics[8]

2. **We must draw *boundaries* in systems and define priorities.** Systems theorist Donella Meadows states: "There are no separate systems. The world is a continuum. Where to draw a boundary around the system depends on the purpose of the discussion."[9] For learning and evaluation, setting boundaries entails asking what is "in and out" or "important and less important."[10] Our approach to learning should encourage teams to set boundaries and prioritize their inquiry and evidence collection.

3. **People have *varying* perspectives on how they see and interact with systems.** Enabling dialogue that reflects these different perspectives can transform learning about a strategy or intervention and enable a richer, more holistic, and more equitable understanding of how it works and for whom. Our approach to learning needs to integrate diverse perspectives, particularly from those who are affected by problems and participating in the systems being addressed.

4. **We must acknowledge that systems work involves *uncertainty and ambiguity*.**[11] We cannot control a system or be completely certain upfront about the effectiveness of the causal pathways we choose. Rather, "we can expect surprises and learn from them."[12] In complex domains, there is no one right answer, and it may not be obvious, even to experts, how to achieve intended outcomes. Snowden and Boone, through their Cynefin Framework, outline a three-step process for making decisions in systems: probe, sense, and respond.[13] Their premise is that we cannot address a problem without experimenting, learning, and iterating.

5. **We must take deliberate steps to check our *cognitive biases*.** We cannot close ourselves off to evidence that tells a different story about systems change than the one we expected. Rather, we must ensure the mechanisms through which we collect evidence can capture and recognize both disconfirming and confirming evidence.

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5 Cabrera, D., Colosi, L., & Lobdell, C. (2008). Systems thinking. Evaluation and Program Planning 31, 299–310.

6 Miller, R. (2016). On messes, systems thinking, and evaluation: A response to Patton. American Journal of Evaluation, 37(2), 266–269. https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214015626294

7 Patton, M.Q. (2016). What is essential in developmental evaluation? On integrity, fidelity, adultery, abstinence, impotence, long-term commitment, integrity, and sensitivity in implementing evaluation models. American Journal of Evaluation, 37(2), 250–265. https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214015626295

8 Hargreaves, M., & Podems, D. (2012). Advancing systems thinking in evaluation: A review of four publications. American Journal of Evaluation, 33(3), 462–470. https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214011435409

9 Meadows, D. (2015). Thinking in systems: A primer. Chelsea Green Publishing.

10 Hummelbrunner, R. (2000). Applications of systems theory and systems thinking in evaluations [Conference presentation]. 4th European Evaluation Society Biennial Conference, October 12–13, Lausanne, Switzerland.

11 Woodhill, J., & Millican, J. (2023, February 3). Systems thinking and practice: A guide to concepts, principles and tools for FCDO and Partners. Institute of Development Studies. https://doi.org/10.19088/K4D.2023.002

12 Meadows, D. (2015). Thinking in systems: A primer. Chelsea Green Publishing.

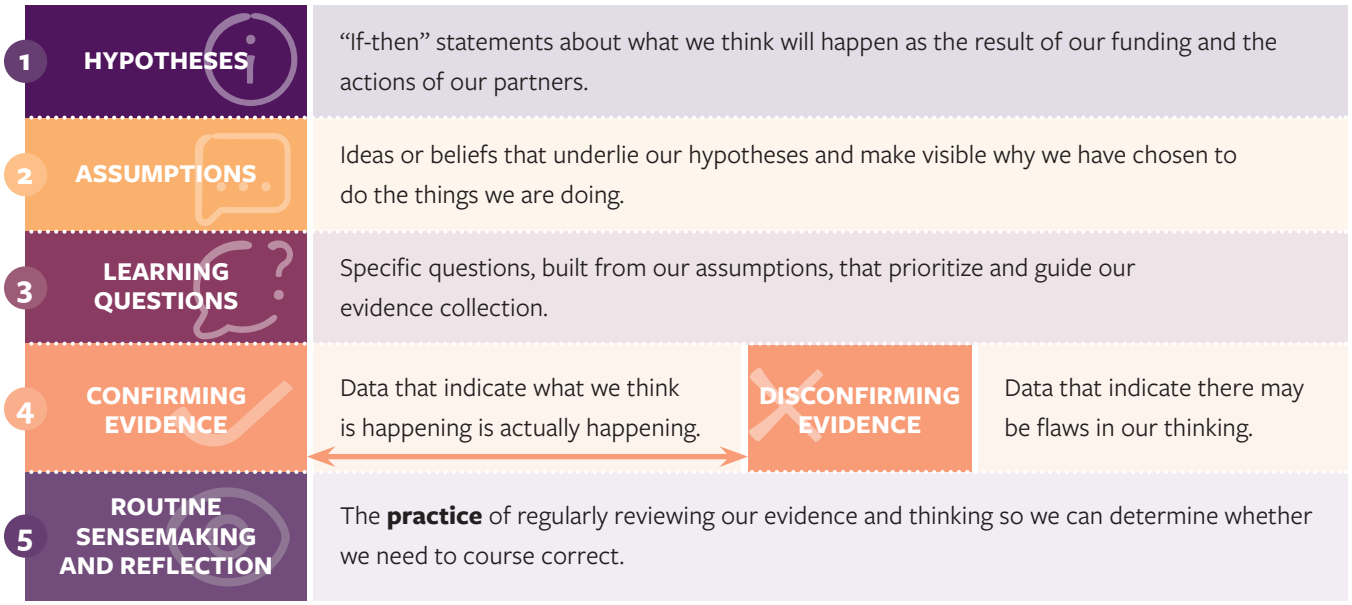
13 Snowden, D., & Boone, M. (2007). A leader's framework for decision making. Harvard Business Review, 85(11), 68–76. https://hbr.org/2007/11/a-leaders-framework-for-decision-making

The Learning Framework has five connected elements.

We developed the Learning Framework to help us test the uncertainties in systems change strategies. In this Framework, learning is decision-oriented and helps us reflect on the differences our choices and actions have (or have not) made to our desired outcomes. The contexts we work in can change rapidly due to major political events and other economic, environmental, or geographic factors, and we need robust evidence to help us make timely decisions. The Learning Framework helps us use evidence for decision-making rather than collecting evidence only to track outcomes or answer research questions (which may or may not help us to make decisions).

The Framework has five elements that relate to and build on each other (see Figure 1). These elements are designed to ensure inquiry and evidence collection is focused, while also embedding regular reflection and sensemaking.

Figure 1 | **The Learning Framework's Five Elements**



ELEMENT ONE

Identifying our **hypotheses** about cause and effect.

Hypotheses are the Learning Framework's starting point. They are "if-then" statements about what we think will happen as the result of our programming. They link planned actions to desired outcomes. For example, a hypothesis might be: If we engage policymakers in dialogue with community members from underrepresented groups, policy decisions will include recommendations from a wider constituency.

Our hypotheses are statements of beliefs, assumptions, and predictions, closely linked to our theories of change. In any theory of change, there are typically a number of "arrows" that show relationships among the theory's components. A well-framed hypothesis provides an opportunity to test the assumptions and rationale behind these relationships and helps us clarify the actions we need to take to realize our outcomes.

Hypotheses should:

- Help us answer fundamental questions: *What would it take to see the changes posed by our outcomes? What works for whom in what circumstances, and how?*
- Be a testable statement that can be interrogated with observable evidence

ELEMENT TWO

Making visible the **assumptions** that underlie our hypotheses.[14]

We detail the underlying assumptions for each hypothesis, which underpin and further explain our ideas about how change happens. An assumption is an idea or belief about what is true that has been accepted based on prior experience or limited evidence. It is an assertion about some characteristic of the future that is at the heart of why we chose to do the things we do. By outlining our assumptions, we make our implicit thinking explicit.

Assumptions are based on norms, values, and ideological perspectives about how the world works.[15] Typical assumptions include the idea that people believe, think, or need certain things; that something works because of certain rules or conditions; or that it is possible (or impossible) to do something, given variables such as time, capacity, and cost.[16]

Assumptions are often future-oriented statements we need to hold true for a hypothesis or strategy to work. An example is: *More funding for political minority movements will allow them to compete against consolidated elites.* We use prompting questions to help us identify our assumptions (see Figure 2) and focus on generating three types:

- Factors about the **context** (political, economic, cultural, environmental) that we cannot control but that could affect the outcomes of our work
- **Cause-and-effect** relationships
- What we think is required from ourselves and others during **implementation** of our strategies

Figure 2 | **Prompting Questions for Generating Assumptions**

CONTEXT	CAUSE AND EFFECT	IMPLEMENTATION
• What assumptions about the larger political and economic environment must hold true for this strategy to work? • How will key players react if the political or economic environment improves? Worsens? • What changes to the context (positive/negative) will force us to rethink our strategy?	• What are we assuming about the *causes of the problem* we're trying to address? • What do we believe will trigger people, organizations, or systems to act differently? • What has to occur *outside* our strategy for it to work (e.g., work by/support from others)? • What kinds of reactions are we expecting the strategy to trigger among other actors in the system?	• What are we assuming about the leverage or influence that key partners, stakeholders, etc., have and with whom? • What are we assuming other people/organizations will do that might contribute to this strategy? • What are we assuming about the resources, time, and skills we can bring to the table over the long term?

14 Adapted from Beer, T., & Coffman, J. (2021, November). Guidance on developing assumptions. Center for Evaluation Innovation. https://evaluationinnovation.org/publication/we-need-to-articulate-our-assumptions-so-that-we-can-test-them-heres-a-guide-to-help/

15 van Es, M., Guijt, I., & Vogel, I. (2013). Theory of change thinking in practice: A stepwise approach. Hivos. https://hivos.org/assets/2020/10/hivos_toc_guidelines.pdf

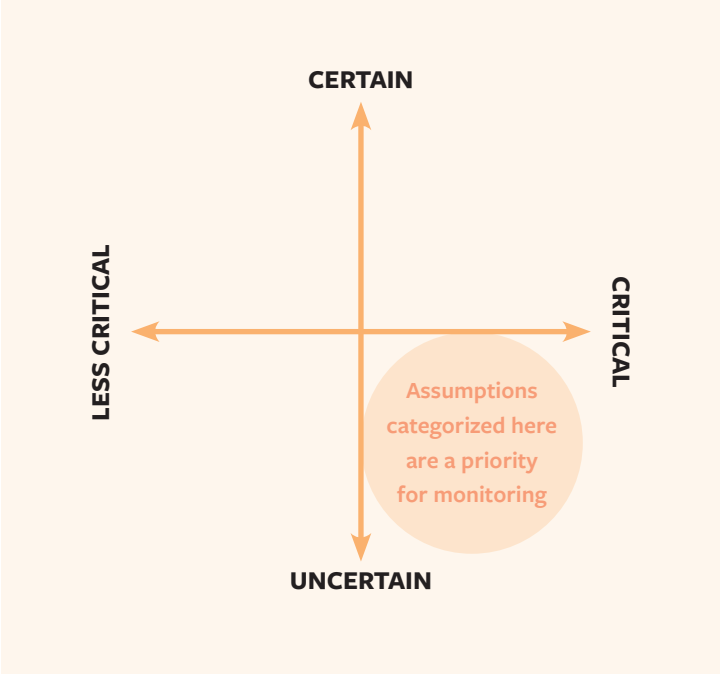
16 Dam, R. F., & Siang, T. Y. (2022). Learn how to use the challenge assumptions method. Interaction Design Foundation. https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/learn-how-to-use-the-best-ideation-methods-challenge-assumptions

Because context is critical, assumptions require regular monitoring to ensure they remain relevant and valid. Our assumptions are revisited at least annually to determine whether they need to be revised. To determine which assumptions are a particular priority for monitoring, staff categorize and prioritize them along two dimensions:

- *Certainty:* how certain we are that the assumption will hold up
- *Criticality:* how central the assumption is to our strategy (how much of an impact it would be if the assumption did not hold up)

The assumptions most critical to our strategies and where we have the most uncertainty become priorities for monitoring and testing (see Figure 3). They also become prompts for the development of our learning questions, the third element in the Learning Framework.

Figure 3 | **Categorizing Assumptions on Two Dimensions**



ELEMENT THREE

Setting boundaries with **learning questions.**

Learning questions are developed to interrogate our highest priority assumptions; they focus our evidence collection where our learning needs are greatest. They are specific and pointed questions that make evidence collection more efficient and targeted. Our learning questions are focused on our sphere of control in the system and what we can do. They aim to lead to answers that will directly influence our decisions and actions.

Learning questions are different from research questions. Research questions typically extend beyond our strategic boundaries and are often linked to theory. Learning questions are focused on our own programs and potential. They are action-oriented, linked to practice, and focus on actual or potential activities. Forward-looking in nature, they get us to think about what we are trying to accomplish, what we know already, what it is going to take to achieve our goals, and our current thinking and how we can test it. A research question might be: *Why do program participants drop out of training courses?* A learning question would be: *What would it take for us to ensure program participants stay enrolled through program completion?*

Powerful learning questions are:

- *Directly* relevant to the work
- *Specific* enough to direct our inquiry but spacious enough to allow for nuance and detail instead of binary or reductive responses
- *Impactful* and would really help to accelerate the work if answered
- *Appealing* to everyone on a team
- *Genuine*, meaning the answer is not already known
- *Forward-facing* and focused on possibilities for action, opening avenues for what can be done to achieve our desired outcomes[17]

17 Beer, T. (2019). How to ask powerful questions [Webinar]. Center for Evaluation Innovation. https://evaluationinnovation.org/presentation/asking-powerful-questions/

Powerful learning questions often start with "How can we...?" or "What would it take to...?" They are targeted so they are within our capacity to take action, and they are clear about what we are trying to understand about our assumptions. Table 1 offers hypothetical learning questions and the kinds of assumptions they might link to (see Annex A for more learning question examples).

Table 1 | **Relationship Between Learning Questions and Assumptions**

Learning question	Related assumptions
What would it take to create new narratives to shift public perception on discriminatory policies?	• Relevant media firms will help embed new narratives in popular media. • Support for discriminatory policies is not so polarized that it can't be shifted. • Narrative work will have an impact on public perception.

ELEMENT FOUR

Collecting confirming and disconfirming **evidence** linked to our learning questions.

Collecting evidence in rapidly shifting contexts is challenging but critical. Evidence enables us to understand whether our assumptions and hypotheses hold up or we need to course correct.

We see evidence as different from data. Data are quantitative or qualitative values for variables. Data can be numbers, symbols, text, images, or sound recordings, for example. Evidence is relevant data that helps to support or reject a proposition (i.e., hypothesis or assumption). For example, voter turnout rates are data; they become evidence when applied to hypotheses or assumptions about how to increase turnout.

Evidence is not synonymous with proof, especially when working in complex contexts. Proof is conclusive while evidence is more suggestive. Evidence helps in forming a conclusion, but there is still a possibility that additional evidence might emerge that suggests a different conclusion. For example, while an increase in voter turnout can be seen as support for a hypothesis that voter education increases turnout, alternative explanations for the increase are also plausible (e.g., good weather on election day or a change in how ballots are cast).

The evidence we collect helps us to respond to our learning questions, interrogate our assumptions, and revisit our hypotheses. This creates a feedback loop linked to the Learning Framework's core purpose—testing uncertainties in our strategies so we can more effectively support progress toward desired outcomes.

We aim to collect evidence from multiple perspectives. We want to provide a holistic picture of our work and the wider systems in which we are situated and ensure our evidence collection is inclusive, representative, and reflective of the diversity and complexity of our partner ecosystems.

The learning we do based on our evidence collection should help us to grapple with the perspectives of those who are affected by the problems we address and who are typically shut out of decision-making. It should help us to check our own power and privilege by looking closely at which evidence we collect and from whom, considering questions such as: *Who counts as an expert or as a credible purveyor of evidence?* This leads to more nuanced insights, identifies blind spots, and challenges our biases. Our learning also should help us to look at what the evidence says about specific populations in our work and who is benefiting from it and who is not.

We collect both confirming and disconfirming evidence. Confirming evidence indicates that what we think will happen is actually happening. Disconfirming evidence helps us to see where there may be flaws in our thinking.

Setting up this Learning Framework to capture a spectrum of evidence that ranges from confirming to disconfirming helps us remain open to uncertainty with the understanding that our hypotheses are non-static and may need to change as we gather and consider evidence. This means we strive to remain open to evidence that tells us our proposed approach is not working or that another approach might work better.

We have found that looking for disconfirming evidence helps us to better recognize and grapple with multiple and at times diverging perspectives. When we purposely seek evidence that demonstrates our thinking might be off track, we actively ask ourselves how others understand an issue and test our thinking by learning about their points of view. Disconfirming evidence helps us to check and not privilege our own positions or perspectives. Actively looking for disconfirming evidence also helps us challenge our cognitive biases (see the text box below).

Cognitive biases to check when collecting and evaluating evidence[18]

When collecting and evaluating evidence, we need to be aware of and combat several cognitive biases that can affect our judgment and perspective. These include:

- *Confirmation bias:* our tendency to emphasize evidence that fits with our existing beliefs
- *Cherry-picking:* choosing to look only at evidence that supports a stance while ignoring evidence that contradicts it
- *Availability heuristic:* our tendency to collect and use information that comes to mind quickly and easily
- *Anchoring bias:* relying heavily on the first piece of information we are given and then interpreting newer information from that initial reference point
- *Information aversion:* the tendency of individuals to avoid or ignore information that may be useful or relevant for decision-making, particularly when it is perceived as negative or threatening

We collect four types of evidence to inform our learning questions (see Figure 4).[19] Each type has benefits and limitations, but when taken in combination, evidence gathered across different types can support robust, although not always definitive, conclusions.

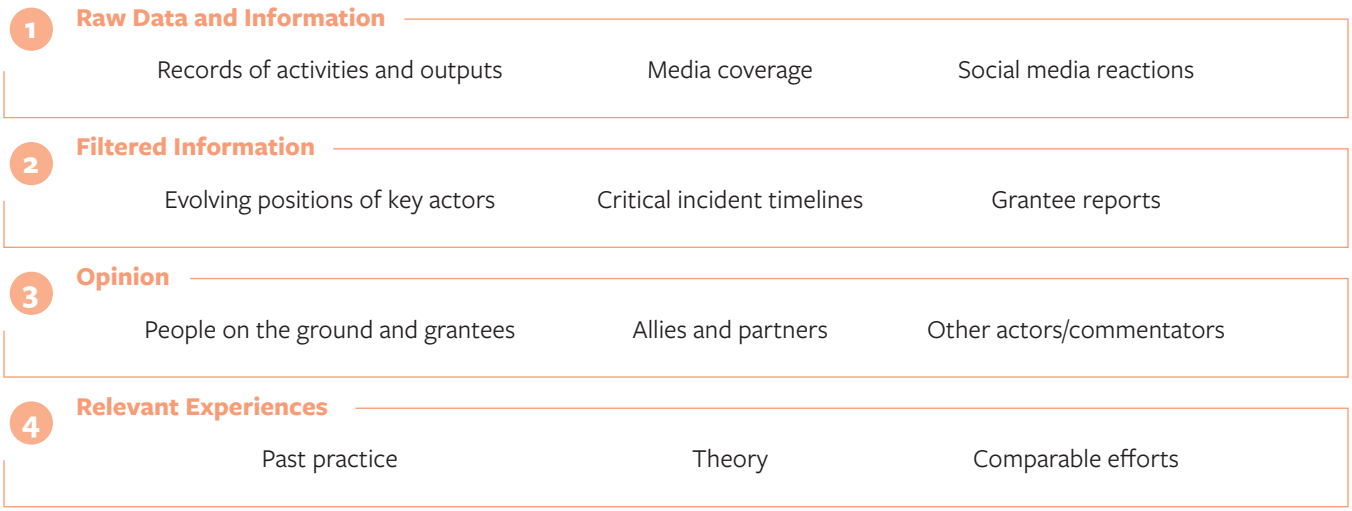
- *Raw data and information:* This type of evidence offers details about the activities and outputs of partners or others, relevant developments, or other information that can be verified. It illustrates the content and magnitude of activities (e.g., how many protests took place and how many people showed up to them) but does not in itself show if and how our programs influenced those activities.
- *Filtered information:* This evidence is often factual but filtered through the analytical frames or perspectives of those who report it. It may point to certain conclusions but, again, rarely definitively. It can also be reconstructed from multiple sources as part of evaluation processes. When it comes from people closest to the work, it can be highly valuable, but because this evidence is filtered through its originators, it can also be biased.

18 Definitions come from The Decision Lab (n.d.). Cognitive biases. https://thedecisionlab.com/biases; Smarter.Blog (n.d.). The additive cognitive bias. https://smarter.blog/additive-cognitive-bias/; Hreha, J. (n.d.). What is Information Aversion In Behavioral Economics? The Behavioral Scientist. https://www.thebehavioralscientist.com/glossary/information-aversion

19 Adapted from Coe, J., & Schlangen, R. (2019). No royal road: Finding and following the natural pathways in advocacy evaluation. Center for Evaluation Innovation.

- *Opinion:* This evidence represents informed views from different actors in a system based on their observation or participation about what happened and why. Opinions on their own are subjective, but when gathered from multiple sources they can provide a helpful composite picture.
- *Relevant practice:* This evidence comes from precedent, similar efforts in different places or at different times, or relevant theory. Comparing existing efforts to evidence of this sort can help with interpretation and support the robustness of results. Because it represents evidence from a different effort and context, however, it is more useful for supporting interpretation than understanding the influence of existing programs.

Figure 4 | **The Four Types of Evidence and Examples**



Evidence collection plans provide a starting point and a clear guide for collecting the data we need. Without them, learning as a process is static and unfocused. Program staff can develop their own collection plans with support from learning and impact staff. Plans are detailed spreadsheets that include several components:

- *Evidence sources:* where the evidence will come from. These might be written reports or articles, individuals or groups (partners or coalitions), print or online media, or other research or evaluation efforts. By determining the most available and appropriate sources, evidence collection becomes guided and focused. It gives us a place to start.
- *Data points:* the specific data points or variables we hope to collect. These provide clear reference points for evidence collection. Data points are measurable and directly related to the information we need.
- *Perspectives:* the unique perspectives or stakeholders who will be represented
- *Data collection method:* how evidence will be collected. For example, if our evidence source is a partner, the method might involve a semi-structured conversation or an interview. Surveys, case studies, interviews, peer conversations, and advisory groups are other common options.
- *Responsibilities:* which team members will be involved and how to ensure accountability and a smooth workflow
- *Timing:* when evidence data collection will occur so we can stay on track and ensure evidence is collected at critical junctures and within a reasonable time frame
- *Support required:* resources needed to carry out evidence collection. These may include financial resources, technical tools, expertise, or additional staff members.

Although premised on rigor and specificity, evidence collection is adaptive to the dynamic and sometimes volatile contexts in which we work. Plans should be revisited periodically. Evidence sources may become less relevant or new ones may become available, a diverse perspective may emerge as vital to include, or different data points may be identified as more pressing.

ELEMENT FIVE

Supporting **sensemaking and reflection** on the "so what?" and"now what?"of the evidence.

We encourage engagement in regular sensemaking and reflection, reviewing our evidence against our learning questions so we can determine whether we are on a promising path or need to course correct. A critical aspect of maintaining a grounded learning culture is providing both routinely scheduled and ad hoc learning opportunities, promoting inquiry and dialogue, encouraging collaboration and team learning, and empowering staff toward a collective vision.[20]

The Learning Framework calls for checkpoints for staff to pause and reflect on what their evidence says about their hypotheses, assumptions, and progress and any intended or unintended consequences. Staff explore causal pathways and reflect candidly about what they are seeing and hearing in response to their learning questions so they can rethink or adjust if necessary. These checkpoints occur in the form of facilitated *learning conversations*, ideally conducted at least twice a year, when staff discuss their observations based on evidence about what is shifting in systems either as a result of our actions or the actions of partners, while also accounting for alternative explanations. We look at the role of headwinds and tailwinds and facilitators and detractors toward our desired changes.

What about external evaluations?

The Learning Framework takes a targeted approach to the use of external evaluations. We commission them when a specific learning question calls for the use of an external evaluator and a particular evaluation design or approach. For example, there may be instances when a causal assumption or pathway should be rigorously tested with a particular methodology, such as contribution analysis or process tracing.

Teams need to think about and make sense of the story that the evidence as a whole tells them and explore where conflicts exist and why (see Figure 5). Evidence gathered by teams provides helpful guidance, but because learning questions typically return a range of confirming and disconfirming evidence, it does not always point to an obvious direction forward. When considering whether to adapt, the strength of the evidence depends on the "why?" behind it.

Figure 5 | **Questions to Support Sensemaking on Differing Evidence**

WHAT?	SO WHAT?	NOW WHAT?
• Where does the evidence point to a different or conflicting picture? • Is it an anomaly? Or do we need to explore it more to see if it signals a larger trend?	• What is the relative importance of disconfirming evidence? • Why does that evidence not fit other patterns observed? • How does context matter?	• How should we revise our hypothesis and assumptions? • What should we do to learn more about the disconfirming evidence? • What does this mean for our grantmaking?

A sense of what we are learning on a "big picture" level is produced by laddering learning question insights back up to our hypotheses. Although we collect evidence to answer specific learning questions, the nature of the Framework ensures that each learning question is linked to an assumption or set of assumptions, which in turn link to a hypothesis. In this way, we can aggregate our evidence to provide a picture of whether and how systems are shifting in the hypothesized direction.

20 Yang, B., Watkins, K., & Marsick, V. (2004). The construct of the learning organization: Dimensions, measurement, and validation. Human Resource Development Quarterly, 15, 31–55.

The Learning Framework's structure and implementation link directly to our foundational principles.

At the brief's beginning, we laid out five fundamental principles about working in systems that we wanted to be sure the Learning Framework reflected. Table 2 details how the Framework's elements operationalize those principles in both structure and practice.

Table 2 | **How the Learning Framework Links to Our Foundational Principles**

Principles	Related element	Explanation
1 Systems are constructed of interrelationships and interconnections among different elements.	**HYPOTHESES AND ASSUMPTIONS**	Hypotheses and their related assumptions are the causal linchpins of the Learning Framework. They ultimately drive our evidence collection. They are also the element that ensures we capture the interrelationships and interconnections between our different workstreams, geographies, and programs. They ensure that the evidence we collect reveals the "big picture."
2 We must draw boundaries in systems and define priorities.	**LEARNING QUESTIONS**	Learning questions set our scope of inquiry. Through them we determine which inquiries are "in" and "out" of bounds. Learning questions may change as evidence is collected or once we feel confident we have answered them satisfactorily.
3 People have varying perspectives on how they see and interact with systems.	**EVIDENCE COLLECTION**	We identify which perspectives we need to capture to get a holistic understanding of our learning questions and then build evidence collection mechanisms to ensure diverse voices are integrated. We aim for a comprehensive evidence base through which to make conclusions.
4 We must acknowledge that systems work involves uncertainty and ambiguity.	**ALL ELEMENTS**	Uncertainty testing is the Framework's core purpose. All inquiry flows from hypotheses and assumptions that identify our best guesses while also pointing to what we do not know. Evidence collection helps to test these uncertainties. We account for ambiguity through the structured collection of both confirming and disconfirming evidence and the routine sensemaking we do in teams.
5 We must take deliberate steps to check our cognitive biases.	**CONFIRMING AND DISCONFIRMING EVIDENCE**	Collecting a full range of confirming and disconfirming evidence dissuades us from falling into cognitive traps of confirmation bias, cherry-picking, the availability heuristic, and anchoring bias.

The focus on testing our uncertainties is central to this approach.

The Learning Framework offers ideas for applying systems principles to strategic learning. We recognize that each organization is unique, with internal structures, expectations, and cultures that affect all aspects of how we approach learning and evaluation. As such, we imagine that some organizations might find this overall approach useful, and others might resonate with certain aspects of it.

The core takeaway from this approach is that its primary purpose is to interrogate our strategic uncertainties. This approach to learning is different from the dominant approach to learning and evaluation in philanthropy that primarily looks for evidence (often static metrics) that expected outcomes have been achieved (an approach that is more suitable for linear and predictable change strategies). This Learning Framework is driven by hypotheses and assumptions. This is especially important for systems change efforts where the path forward cannot be determined with complete certainty, but where robust evidence collection and regular sensemaking can increase our confidence in chosen directions and ultimately increase our chances of success.

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Annex

Problematic Versus Useful Learning Questions

Original learning question	Problem	Revised question
How can we make sure marginalized groups have more training?	Big, abstract questions tend to lead to big, abstract, and unfocused conversations.	How can we enroll marginalized groups in remote communities in training where we do not have existing relationships or partners?
How do we build stakeholder alignment?	This is fuzzy, vague language—people may be talking about very different things.	How can we facilitate agreement between advocacy organizations and government agencies on a common goal for diversity and inclusion in political candidacies?
Why do journalists drop out of training courses?	Useful as a research question, but not a good learning question because it is not action-oriented or forward-looking or about what could be done.	What would it take for civil society organizations to keep up participation among journalist participants until the training's completion?
What does it take to create a good policy brief?	Assumes a brief is the right approach to policymaker influence. The question is too narrow.	How can we effectively engage the most influential advocates and policymakers in a way that ensures they are more likely to support Indigenous women's rights?