

The questions in this worksheet are designed to help program staff who believe they are supporting field-building as part of their philanthropic approach, to **think through key assumptions and elements of the work, build team alignment, and strengthen their ability to measure, learn about, and communicate progress.** Questions are designed to prompt reflection; while answers to some questions could certainly be more specifically informed by evaluation and data, surfacing

current understandings within program teams should generate sufficient answers for the purposes identified.

The brief on [Going Deeper: Building a Field](#) (a supplement to [Not Always Movements: Multiple Strategies to Advance Large-Scale Social Change](#)) provides additional resources and related content that might be helpful to teams as they work through the following questions.

▶ What is the field meant to accomplish?

1. What will be different in 5-10 years if your field building work is successful? Who or what will be changed, and in what ways?
2. When you think about these anticipated outcomes or benefits, how are you thinking about equity and power relative to these results? Who benefits and in what ways? Are there possible adverse impacts to anticipate?



▶ How do you understand the current state of the field?

3. Fields have certain defining characteristics. How would you describe the current state of the field of interest, and what are the ways you want to see the field’s characteristics change over time?

Characteristic

Current State

Desired State (in x years)

Knowledge base (i.e., the body of academic and practical research that informs or propels the field)

Actors (i.e., those who actively identify as part of the field, including leaders and other participants)

Field-level agenda (i.e., critical approaches to addressing barriers and challenges in the field and/or developing and pursuing solutions)

Infrastructure (i.e., connections, entities, or defined roles that support the range of field activities, including technical assistance, pooling funds, hosting convenings, etc.)

Resources (e.g., financial and non-financial supports that enable or enhance the work of the field)

► How do you understand the current state of the field? (cont)

4. No choices about field building are absent implications about power and equity. How, for any areas of focus that you have identified, are you considering, for example: the diversity of the participants, the inclusivity of processes, and the ways in which power is held, used, and/or shared?
5. Based on answers to other questions, how are you thinking about the boundaries of the field of interest? These could be geographic boundaries, boundaries reflective of a particular discipline, or other criteria for determining who/what actors are within the field (or should be) and who/what actors are not. Given reflections about boundaries, consider: who is included? Who is left out? What fields are adjacent to the one that is of primary interest?



▶ How do you understand the current state of the field? (cont)

6. Reflecting on stages described in the table to the right, how would you rate the maturity of the field of interest? What level of maturity can you foresee given the timeframe and investments you anticipate? How is the field's level of maturity reflected in your previous notes about field characteristics?

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Characteristic</i>
Framing	Conceptual framing of the field and isolated practice examples.
Networking	Networking of innovators and the proliferation of practices; practices are fragmented and often considered proprietary.
Maturation	Maturation of practices. Convergence around common methods and tools. Integration of previously differentiated practices. Development of a professional implementation support network.
Standardization	Practices become highly standardized and incorporated into formal training, credentialing and certification systems. Reward systems reinforce desired behaviors.

Thinking ahead to measurement

7. Given your reflections on the previous page, who or what, specifically, is changing in the next one to three years? What will be different for them?

8. How will you know who is benefiting? How can you watch for unintended consequences or potential harms?

Changes among field actors (includes individuals, groups, and organizations)

- Greater awareness of and access to relevant data and research
- Increased technical skills
- Increased commitment to do/sustain what's needed to ensure the strength of a field
- Greater agreement among field actors regarding a shared agenda and goals
- Increased coordination and alignment—for example, regular and/or strategic information sharing among field actors, cross-fertilization of field actors' insights and knowledge, aligned/mutually reinforcing actions or practices across actors in the field
- Increased number and diversity of stakeholders who participate in or contribute to the field, including those affected by the field's issue(s)
- Increased utility of the knowledge base
- Established field leadership that includes representation of communities most affected by issue

Field-level changes

- Norms, standards, and practices are increasingly adopted, upheld, and adapted by relevant actors/sectors
- Increased/maintained nimbleness of a field to usefully evolve and adapt over time
- Enhanced/maintained field support structures—for example, information clearinghouses, professional development organizations
- Increased effectiveness of a field in advancing ultimate aims

System-level changes

- Adoption/implementation of policies that support a field's operating environment
- Sustained public/private supports that ensure the field's ongoing strength and the effectiveness of a field—for example, resource commitments, defenders/champions