



TOOL | THE SYSTEMS CHANGE EVALUATION CANVAS

TIME REQUIRED: 2-4 HOURS

How can you evaluate a systems change initiative? The diversity of methods and approaches available can be overwhelming, but ultimately what is most important is what is appropriate for your context and your community. This canvas will help you explore some of the critical considerations and navigate the resources available when designing a systems change evaluation.

USING THIS TOOL WILL HELP YOU:

- Prepare an evaluation scope of work for a systems change effort
- Understand key considerations when designing an evaluation for a systems change effort
- Make decisions about evaluation design that reflect the needs of your context and community
- Know where to go more to learn about systems change evaluation

OVERVIEW

This 'canvas' is a tool for reflection and organizing your thoughts as you prepare to evaluate a systems change effort. By filling out each step, evaluators and changemakers can explore key decisions that need to be made when planning a systems change evaluation and reflect upon what methods, principles, and approaches to evaluation might be most important in your context and your community. Each section may also highlight an uncertainty or a knowledge gap, which provides an opportunity for further exploration and reflection. To use the tool, simply write your responses to each prompt question in the box provided.

PRINCIPLES FOR USING THIS TOOL

- Focus on capturing initial thoughts, not getting every question 'right.' This is a thinking and reflection tool.
- Treat uncertainties and gaps in your knowledge as opportunities to explore further.

THE TOOL IN PRACTICE (EXCERPT)

Below is an example of the tool in practice. You can find the full tool at the end of this document.

SYSTEM

What are the most important features of your system, the strategy that will be employed, and the outcomes you are hoping for?

Our system includes all the agencies, people, and systems that support high school youth. These include parents and care providers, faith groups, after-school programs, drop in centres, teachers, youth and peers, etc.

The desired outcomes are that youth aged 13-18 in our community experience:

- Improved senses of belonging, hope, and confidence
- Improved high school graduation rates

Our strategy is emergent and our evaluation approach will need to support that approach. Evaluation will be needed to help us understand where to focus our efforts

USERS

Who are your primary users and who will you speak with to fill out the user profile for each user?

- 3 school principals
- Our funder
- Parent-Teach Association (speak with leads)
- The Director of our local drop-in centre
- Youth themselves (may be difficult to access so we may need to work through parents and teachers)

DIVING DEEPER

There are many supporting resources referenced in the canvas. You can check them out here:

¹[Developing a User Profile Aid for Action](#)

²[What We Know So Far About Evaluating Progress in Policy Change](#)

³[What We Know So Far About Evaluating Efforts to Scale Social Innovations](#)

⁴[What We Know So Far About Principles for Evaluating Efforts to Change Systems](#)

⁵[Planning a Prototype Test](#)

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CANVAS: Designing Your Systems Change Evaluation

This planning tool will help you work through the main considerations you need when planning a systems change evaluation. Use this first page to capture the most important summary content and additional handouts to expand your thinking.

Your name

SYSTEM

What are the most important features of your system, the strategy that will be employed, and the outcomes you are hoping for?

USERS

Who are your primary users and who will you speak with to fill out the user profile for each user?

RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Does your initiative have a results framework?

If not, how do you want to proceed? (e.g., adopt, adapt, start from scratch, other)

Where do you want to go to get more?

SEE HANDOUTS
**What We Know So Far About:
Evaluating Progress in Policy Change
Evaluating Efforts to Scale Social Innovations**

CONTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

What is the desire and capacity for contribution analysis in your context (locate yourself on the matrix below)?



What are your next steps?

PRINCIPLES

Which systems change evaluation challenges do you need a principle for?

Which principles are most important to honour in your work?

SEE HANDOUT
**What We Know So Far About:
Principles for Evaluating Efforts to Change Systems**

METHODS

Which methods are most interesting to explore?

What are the most important design criteria for your context?

PROTOTYPES

What questions will you explore with prototypes, and how will you explore them?

What are your next steps?

SEE HANDOUT
Planning a Prototype Test

Planning Your Next Steps

Once you have worked through all of the sections in the Systems Change Evaluation Canvas take a moment to plan your next steps

QUESTIONS

I need to answer the following questions...

LEARNING

I will need to learn more about...

PEOPLE

I will need to connect with...

OTHER

I will...