Evaluating Ecosystem Investments

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FSG REIMAGINING SOCIAL CHANGE

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BACKGROUND

History and Evolution of Ecosystem Investment Strategy

Omidyar Network is a philanthropic investment firm founded in 2004 by Pierre and Pam Omidyar. Rooted in the belief that people are inherently good and capable, Omidyar Network invests in entrepreneurs and their visionary ideas that create opportunities for people to improve their lives, their communities, and the world around them.

In 2011, Omidyar Network started to shift a portion of its investments from a focus on scaling individual organizations to a focus on influencing systems or sector-level change so that innovative firms can address social problems at scale. These systems or sector-level investments have been referred to broadly as "ecosystem investments."

As Omidyar Network's support for ecosystem investments grew, the organization began to think about the implications of making this shift, including how to assess the impact of ecosystem investments. Historically, Omidyar Network had largely relied on custom operational indicators and data captured through investee reports to understand the effects of ecosystem investments, rather than a systematic process to measure progress, learn from them, and refine strategy. The Learning and Impact team recognized that a more nuanced framework was needed to evaluate ecosystem investments.

FSG was engaged to: 1) develop a taxonomy for the different ways that Omidyar Network approaches ecosystem investments, 2) identify best practices in the field for evaluating ecosystem investments, and 3) recommend how these practices might be applied to Omidyar Network's investment, strategy development, and learning processes.

This report focuses on what was learned about best practices for evaluating the effects of ecosystem investments along with examples of how others are using these practices in their work.

Methodology

Three research questions guided this engagement:

1. What are the new / best practices in evaluating the effects of ecosystem investments?

2. Which organizations are evaluating these investments well? What can they teach us?

3. What relevant outcomes and indicators could Omidyar Network use to evaluate its ecosystem investments?

To answer these questions, FSG conducted the following activities, in addition to drawing on our experience supporting strategic learning and evaluation in complex environments. Appendix A includes a complete list of grants reviewed and interviewees.

1. **Grants analysis:** FSG analyzed Omidyar Network's Initiative Results Architecture frameworks and 23 grants within its ecosystem investment portfolio. These documents helped ground our research in an understanding of the different types of ecosystem investments Omidyar Network is making, as well as how the organization currently evaluates the impact of its ecosystem investments.

2. **Literature review:** FSG reviewed more than 60 publications to identify best practices in evaluating ecosystem investments—these publications included both peer-reviewed journal articles and "grey literature" (conference presentations, blog posts) by organizations employing advocacy-type strategies.

3. **Interviews:** FSG conducted interviews with nine external experts (listed in Appendix A) to more deeply understand effective practices in evaluating the effects of ecosystem investments and to identify leading organizations in this area. Interviewees were identified to glean best practices from both within and outside the traditional social sector.

WHAT ARE ECOSYSTEM INVESTMENTS?

Characteristics of Ecosystem Investments

Ecosystem investments currently represent approximately 30 percent of Omidyar Network's portfolio and reflect an emphasis on going beyond scaling organizations to achieve initiative, or sector-building, goals. In the context of Omidyar Network's portfolio, ecosystem investments:

- Are defined by their primary focus on creating system-level change by influencing specific stakeholder groups such as policymakers, high net-worth individuals, business leaders, entrepreneurs, and the general population
- Primarily support non-profit organizations
- Take the form of both general operating support and project-based support

Taxonomy of Ecosystem Investments

Based on our grants analysis, Omidyar Network's ecosystem investments seem to fall into the four primary approaches described in Table 1.

When applying this taxonomy, it is important to bear in mind that these approaches are not mutually exclusive as ecosystem investments frequently use more than one approach to achieve their goals.

TABLE 1: ECOSYSTEM INVESTMENT TAXONOMY

APPROACH	DESCRIPTION	ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES
Create and disseminate **research**	Support the creation and dissemination of research to inform and educate key audiences concerning effective solutions to priority issues	**New America Foundation** to publish a primer that introduces the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in the context of the development community, with a focus on property rights
Host **convenings**	Bring stakeholders together at critical junctures to discuss strategies to address priority issues	**Brookings Institution** to convene 55 leading policymakers to discuss innovative approaches to addressing global poverty through digitization
Develop multi-stakeholder **partnerships and networks**	Bring stakeholders together to develop and implement collective solutions through institutions, systems, platforms, and establishing standards that help sectors or fields function more effectively	**Open Government Partnership** to support 38 countries in generating action plans for "open government" reforms, and to sustain civil society participation in this process
Lead **advocacy** efforts	Inform policymakers so that they take actions to create favorable policy environments and build the base of support for priority issues	**Global Witness** to organize a campaign on land seizures in Myanmar in order to create transparency and pressure for the country's government to reform land resource policies

BEST PRACTICES IN EVALUATING ECOSYSTEM INVESTMENTS

Key Findings

As we attempted to distill our findings into a cogent set of "best practices," we quickly realized that there is no single set of "best practices" when it comes to evaluating the effects of ecosystem investments. What constitutes "best practice" varies depending on the context and application of a practice. Evaluation expert Michael Quinn Patton urges practitioners and evaluators to exercise humility when using the term "best practice":

"'Best' is inevitably a matter of perspective and criteria. Like beauty, what is best will reside in the eye and mind of the beholder and criteria, comparisons, and evidence that the beholder finds credible."[1]

As a result, we capture and describe "effective practices" instead of "best practices" in this report.

Our research revealed that the field, for the most part, continues to depend on traditional program evaluation practices for evaluating ecosystem investments. This orientation does not fully account for the complexity and pace of change in today's global context. This practice is characterized by:

- A **linear understanding** of how an effort will effect change (e.g., development log-frames)
- Measurement of **outputs** (e.g., reach or conversions) or long-term outcomes (e.g., policy change)
- **Scattershot data** to measure outcomes (e.g., anecdotes)
- Using data for **accountability** purposes rather than organizational or strategic learning

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1 Michael Q. Patton. *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*. Sage Publications (2014).

FIGURE 1: CAMPAIGNS AND ADVOCACY VALUE ICEBERG

In advocacy evaluation, in particular, there is a tendency to focus the measurement of "impact" on more visible, measurable, and attributable changes associated with advocacy efforts. As a result, less visible changes, such as shifts in power, behavior change, or quality policy implementation, are often not measured or evaluated systematically. The metaphor of the iceberg reflects this (Figure 1).[2]

But our research revealed patterns and themes in what practitioners and evaluators recognized as effective practice in evaluating ecosystem investments. We believe there is an opportunity for Omidyar Network to learn from these effective practices to develop a more systematic process for assessing the impact of such efforts.

The effective practices we identified are not wildly distinct from what is considered effective practice in the field of evaluating complexity more broadly.[3,4] However, their

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2 Rhonda Schlangen and Jim Coe. *The Value Iceberg: Weighing the Benefits of Advocacy and Campaigning*. Better Evaluation (2014).

3 Hallie Preskill and Srik Gopal. *Evaluating Complexity: Propositions for Improving Practice*. FSG (2014).

4 Patricia Patrizi, Elizabeth Heid Thompson, Julia Coffman, and Tanya Beer. "Eyes Wide Open: Learning as Strategy Under Conditions of Complexity and Uncertainty." *The Foundation Review* 5 (2013).

Nature of ecosystem investments

Because…

The changes associated with ecosystem investments are often **non-linear**, and there are **multiple potential pathways** to impact
A **diverse and diffuse set of complementary influence approaches** is often needed to create change
The **timeframe** for achieving **long-term outcomes is unpredictable** and **outputs are poor proxies** for impact
Actual outcomes **may be different from expected**, and looking only at expected outcomes narrows your vision
Ecosystem strategies need to be **adapted to unpredictable changes** in the political, economic, and social environment

Effective practice

It is important to…

Articulate a best **hypothesis** for how change is expected to happen
Develop a focused set of **learning questions** that help identify evaluation priorities
Be intentional about identifying and tracking **interim outcomes** at the outset
Use methods that enable **ongoing sensing** from multiple perspectives to gather data on emerging **intended and unintended** outcomes
Use the evaluation process and findings to **build the adaptive capacity** of practitioners

implementation is nuanced. Figure 2 describes how the unique nature of ecosystem investments shapes effective evaluation practices for these approaches.

The following sections elaborate on each of the effective practices.

Practice 1: Articulate a Best Hypothesis for How Change is Expected to Happen

*"It's an obvious point which needs to be made that your metrics and sense of success depend on **articulating a theory of change**." Rakesh Rajani, Ford Foundation*

Too often organizations aim to effect change in ecosystems without a clear sense of which levers or pathways will be most effective and how the chosen approach supports progress toward a broader goal. In some cases, organizations jump right to developing a logic model or log-frame without fully considering the fundamental basis or rationale for how and why change might occur. Because the changes associated with ecosystem efforts are often non-linear and there are multiple potential pathways to impact, it is

important to situate ecosystem efforts within a broader context of how change happens.

To do this, organizations are:

1. Articulating a best hypothesis for how the desired change is expected to happen at the outset of an investment, drawing upon relevant research and existing knowledge

2. Making explicit the assumptions embedded in the hypothesis and the external factors that might help or hinder progress toward the desired change

3. Using non-linear methods of mapping change, which consider the systemic and complex nature of ecosystem strategies

ARTICULATING A BEST HYPOTHESIS FOR HOW THE DESIRED CHANGE IS EXPECTED TO HAPPEN

*"Change happens in different ways and **depends on lots of different variables**. A change related to immigration might have different leverage points than a change in marriage equality. […] **I don't see change as linear**." Lindsay Green-Barber, Center for Investigative Reporting*
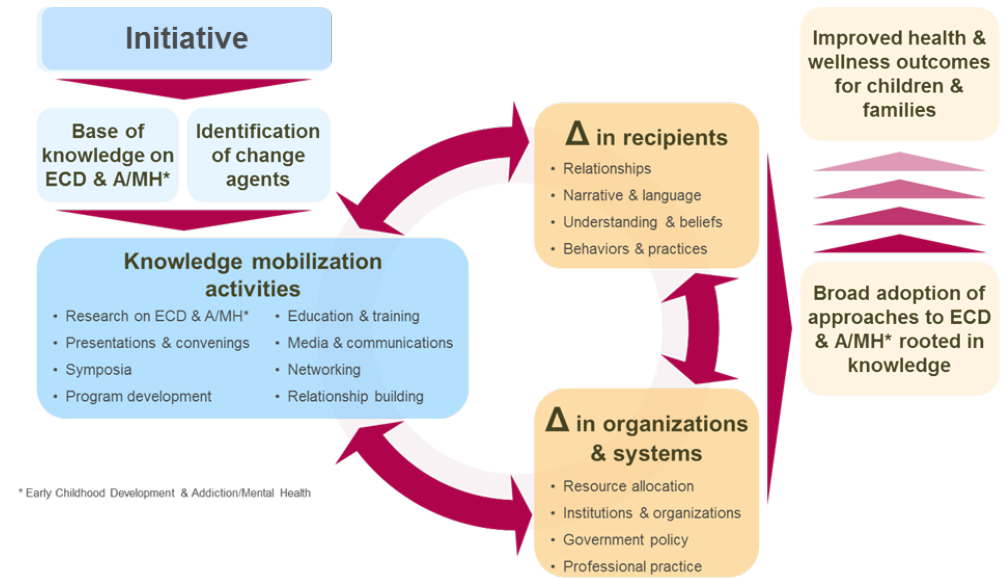
Our research suggests that *the process of* articulating a theory of change is often worthwhile in order to get clarity about the best hypothesis for how an ecosystem investment will lead to the desired change. The theory of change process was initially developed to better explain the assumptions of complex systems change strategies. Yet organizations tend to use theories of change to describe a linear and predictable approach to change, when in reality there are multiple potential pathways.[5]

Developing a hypothesis regarding ecosystem approaches often means drawing on existing knowledge and theories about how change happens in a field; for example, advocacy evaluation literature describes several theories for how organizations may influence policy.[6] In the area of research and convening, organizations can also draw on a number of theories such as knowledge transfer theory and diffusion of innovation to understand how and why change might happen by taking these approaches. For example, in 2009, the Palix Foundation launched an ambitious influence effort to improve the health and wellness of children and families in Alberta, Canada, by sharing and promoting the application of research concerning early childhood development.

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5 Patrizi, et al. "Eyes Wide Open."

6 Sarah Stachowiak. *Pathways to Change: 10 Theories to Inform Policy and Advocacy Efforts.* Center for Evaluation Innovation and ORS Impact (2013).

FIGURE 3: ALBERTA FAMILY WELLNESS INITIATIVE REFINED THEORY OF CHANGE

In 2014, the foundation commissioned FSG to conduct a developmental evaluation to evaluate the effects of the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative. As part of the evaluation, foundation staff and key stakeholders reviewed and refined the theory behind how the initiative intended to effect change, drawing on a broad research base that included knowledge transfer theory. This resulted in a shift from a more linear articulation of their knowledge mobilization strategy to a more dynamic and iterative one (Figure 3).[7]

With support from the evaluation team, foundation staff were able to articulate several assumptions of how change was expected to happen. Two of the assumptions were:

1. Understanding how the brain works and develops will overcome existing misperceptions and underlying beliefs and will support changes in individual behavior and systems related to early childhood development and addiction and mental health.

2. Recipients identified by the initiative will drive systems change by spreading knowledge throughout organizations and systems.

How did unearthing these assumptions and shifting to a more iterative articulation of strategy lead to better results?

Leading practice in evaluating ecosystem efforts also means going one step beyond articulating a best hypothesis to also identifying competing or alternate hypotheses for how change might occur. This is valuable because existing theories of change and the

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7 Preskill and Gopal. *Evaluating Complexity.*

research that underlies them might not account for shifts in the political, economic, or social environment in which an organization or network operates. A "best hypothesis" is just one of several possible explanations for how to bring about a desired outcome. Take, for example, the fundamental shifts in the US political environment that have taken hold in the last decade. According to leading advocacy evaluators, "[Our] theories may fail to account for contemporary political polarization and hyper-partisanship that creates dysfunction in Congress and in many state legislatures. Once-effective tactics like bipartisan relationship building or media advocacy may not have the same impact they once did."[8] The nature of the problems that ecosystem investments address will change. Identifying competing or alternate hypotheses can be a valuable practice to help organizations learn and refine their strategies over time.

MAKING EXPLICIT THE ASSUMPTIONS EMBEDDED IN THE BEST HYPOTHESIS AND THE EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT MIGHT HELP OR HINDER PROGRESS TOWARDS THE DESIRED CHANGE

In addition to drawing on existing knowledge and theory to develop the "best hypothesis," organizations articulate the assumptions behind their influence strategy and the external factors that could help or hinder success.

"By introducing 'assumptions' into strategic thinking, the [theory of change] was developed as a tool to drive home the point that strategy in complex settings is a highly conditional proposition. For instance, many foundations 'assume' that there will be a ready demand for the supply of whatever a strategy might produce—models, knowledge, data, or collaboration; through the articulation of 'assumptions,' the [theory of change] would allow examination of the barriers to adoption and thereby encourage consideration of how a strategy should address these barriers." Patricia Patrizi, et al.[9]

Assumptions reflect questions such as, "Why do we think these strategies are the ones that will result in the changes we hope to see?"

In addition to laying out key assumptions underlying an ecosystem effort, organizations identify the external factors (sometimes referred to as "context" or "variables") that may either help or impede their progress. These external factors may be related to:

- Political climate
- Economic climate

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8 David Devlin-Foltz, Julia Coffman, Tanya Beer, and Susanna Dilliplane. *Advocacy Evaluation: The State of the Field*. Aspen Planning and Evaluation Program and Center for Evaluation Innovation (not yet published).

9 Patrizi, et al. "Eyes Wide Open."

Investment X
that will achieve Y

_Taxonomy of
approaches_

	Hypothesis	Assumptions & Context
Initiative	Which initiative markers do we hope to influence?	Why do we believe this could happen?
Investment	What changes do we expect to see?	What is needed to make this happen?

- Social climate

- Prior experience with issue

- Issue competition

- Potential partners, competitors, and opponents

Information on external factors is needed to effectively adapt influence strategies over time, and is vital to understanding how or why outcomes may or may not have been achieved. In addition, assumptions and external factors provide a starting point for identifying learning questions (described further in Practice 2).

Omidyar Network has developed the above framework (Figure 4) for articulating the best hypothesis for its ecosystem investments. The framework lays out questions that internal staff can answer to consider vital components of the best hypothesis—the changes that are expected to occur because of the investment, as well as the assumptions and external context that underlie why an investment will have the desired effect. It recognizes that investments seek to effect change at two levels. First, it seeks to further the goals of the broader initiative, whether they are financial inclusion, education, property rights, or another investment area. Second, it seeks to create investment-specific outcomes that carry a separate set of assumptions of how and why change happens.

USING NON-LINEAR METHODS FOR MAPPING CHANGE

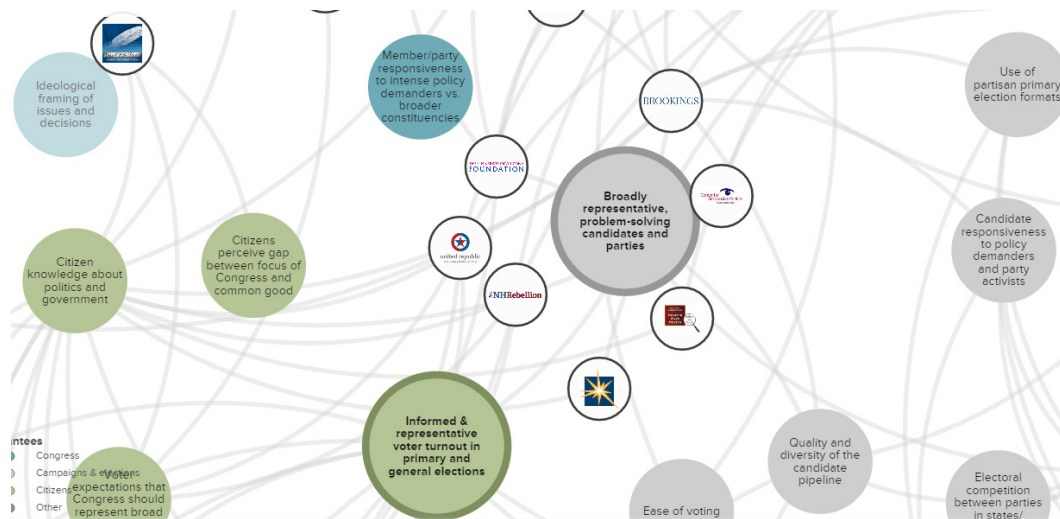We also learned that theories of change are not the only way to map the pathways of change. For example, system mapping can be a useful complementary activity or even alternative to a traditional "theory of change" approach. System maps visually depict the components in a system and the relationships between them. These maps are often used to show how the components and relationships are expected to change in order

to identify ways of measuring whether those changes have occurred.[10] Organizations are using system maps during strategic planning and in the early stages of implementation to understand the relationships between different actors (individuals, organizations, institutions). In some cases, system mapping has been used to develop an initial (i.e., baseline) visualization of the system, and then later to evaluate how the system has changed.

*"We don't think of theories of change and system mapping as mutually exclusive, nor do we think one tool is better than the other. But different circumstances call for different tools. **We chose system mapping because it's particularly well suited for thinking through possibilities for change in a complex and uncertain environment like democracy reform.** It helps us to see how cause-and-effect relationships are entangled and mutually reinforcing, rather than one-way and linear." Julia Coffman and Tanya Beer, Center for Evaluation Innovation*

System mapping has been used as a critical tool in the developmental evaluation of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation's Madison Initiative, which aims to improve the ability of the US Congress to deliberate, negotiate, and compromise.[11] During the Initiative's first three-year phase, the Foundation is making a series of "spread bets" in

FIGURE 5: MADISON INITIATIVE SELECTION FROM SYSTEM MAP

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10 Julia Coffman. *A Framework for Evaluating Systems Change Initiatives*. Build Initiative (2007).

11 Julia Coffman and Tanya Beer. "Guest Post: Systems Mapping and Evaluation." Work in Progress: The Hewlett Foundation Blog. December 2, 2014. **http://www.hewlett.org/blog/posts/guest-post-systems-mapping-and-evaluation**.

various parts of the broader system of representative democracy to see where grantees might get traction in changing the conditions and dynamics that currently drive congressional dysfunction, and it's using system mapping to support both decision making and evaluation on the placement of those bets. An excerpt from the Initiative's system map is shown in Figure 5.[12]

When done well, systems maps can help identify leverage points for intervention, which then anchor the investment strategy and theory of change. Once the opportunities for impact emerge, we then formulate a best hypothesis for how to affect that particular system dynamic.

Practice 2: Develop a Focused Set of Learning Questions that Help Identify Evaluation Priorities

Because ecosystem investments frequently employ a diverse and diffuse set of complementary approaches to create change, there are multiple questions one could ask about the impact of the chosen approach. Developing a set of learning questions helps to prioritize what is most important to learn about the impact of ecosystem investments. Learning questions are the guideposts for understanding what an organization is achieving and in what ways, and can be useful for examining assumptions related to the investment hypothesis (described in Practice 1).[13,14] These are not evaluation questions per se but rather reflect the high-level, overarching strategic questions that an organization's staff or leadership is asking.

Through our research, we identified the following practices that support the development of excellent learning questions:

1. Use a framework that helps to identify and prioritize a range of possible question types based on the investment hypothesis of how change is expected to happen.

2. Phrase learning questions in a way that is appropriate to the stage of an influence investment.

3. Tailor questions to reflect the influence approach.

4. Identify how learning questions will be used to inform decision making or action.

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12 Kumu. "Hewlett Foundation Madison Initiative Systems Map" (last modified November 13, 2014). Kumu (2014).

13 Patrizi, et al. "Eyes Wide Open."

14 Hallie Preskill and Katelyn Mack. *Building a Strategic Learning and Evaluation System for Your Organization*. FSG (2013).

USE A FRAMEWORK TO IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE LEARNING QUESTIONS BASED ON THE INVESTMENT HYPOTHESIS

Some organizations use frameworks to develop consistent and useful learning questions. For example, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (Hewlett Foundation) uses a five-part framework to develop learning questions: context, overall strategy and theory of change, implementation, outcomes, and impact. This framework has helped the Hewlett Foundation "draft clear and specific questions that generated insight about different steps of initiatives' causal chains," and "give evaluators more direction about the Foundation's areas of interest."[15]

While our research did not surface a universal framework, organizations that are evaluating the effects of their influence efforts ask questions that reflect their best-understood hypothesis (described in Practice 1). This means that their learning questions tend to fall in one of the following categories:

- **Outcomes**—Focuses on understanding what changes occurred, how and why; interim outcomes or long-term outcomes may get explored by these learning questions

- **Strategy**—Explores the extent to which and how an influence effort's activities (alone or in combination) are being implemented and contributing to outcomes

- **Assumptions**—Tests underlying beliefs about why and how an influence effort will effect change

- **Context**—Seeks to understand changes in the environment in which an influence effort operates, and the contextual factors may help or hinder the influence effort

PHRASE LEARNING QUESTIONS APPROPRIATELY TO THE STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

Learning questions can and should differ by the stage of maturity of an investment. For example, ecosystem investments that seek to develop networks with strong connections between partnering institutions may want to know early on who is participating in the network, whether participating organizations are perceived as influencers or leaders, and whether participating individuals have authority within those organizations to make decisions as they pertain to the issue or challenge.

As a network matures, it may become more appropriate to ask questions about the extent to which and how the network is contributing to stronger relationships between

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15 Fay Twersky and Karen Lindblom. *Evaluation Principles and Practices: An Internal Working Paper.* William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (2012).

its members or the extent to which and how the network is contributing to progress toward specific outcomes.[16]

TAILOR QUESTIONS TO REFLECT THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

Learning questions could be further tailored to reflect the ecosystem approach, including the theory behind why that approach is expected to contribute to the intended outcomes. Learning questions related to networks may focus on network connectivity and network health, when these are seen as critical to how a network will achieve its goals.[17] Research and convening investments may focus evaluation questions on learning transfer (e.g., learner readiness, learning transfer design) or the spread of ideas through a system. Advocacy evaluation may explore how well organizations are taking advantage of policy windows, indications of movement building, or other elements of advocacy strategy.[18,19]

IDENTIFY HOW LEARNING QUESTIONS WILL BE USED TO INFORM DECISION MAKING OR ACTION

Organizations we researched are using learning questions to identify the specific evaluation questions that will help them develop or improve their activities, determine whether to renew grants, and inform future funding priorities. According to Michael Quinn Patton, an expert on "utilization-focused evaluation," an organization's evaluation questions should seek to gather information that will inform a critical decision or action of one or more stakeholders.[20] This begins by identifying what the end users of evaluation think is most important to learn about and developing evaluation questions with that specific end-use in mind. Asking these five questions[21] can determine intended evaluation use:

1. Whom is the evaluation of this influence effort for?
2. What do we need to find out?
3. Why do we want to find that out?
4. When will we need the answer?
5. How will the answer be used?

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16 Network Impact and the Center for Evaluation Innovation. *Framing Paper: The State of Network Evaluation*.(2014).

17 Ibid.

18 Stachowiak. *Pathways to Change: 10 Theories to Inform Policy and Advocacy Efforts.*

19 Barbara Masters and Torie Osborn. "Social Movements and Philanthropy: How Foundations Can Support Movement Building." *Foundation Review* Volume 2:2 (2010).

20 Michael Q. Patton. *Utilization-Focused Evaluation Checklist.* Sage Publications (2013).

21 Adapted from Michael Q. Patton. *Utilization-Focused Evaluation. Edition 3.* Sage Publications (1997).

Practice 3: Intentionally Identify and Track Interim Outcomes from the Outset

Results of ecosystem approaches can be measured through 1) outputs, which reflect level of effort and, sometimes, quality of activities; 2) interim outcomes, which reflect changes on the path to long-term impact; and 3) long-term impact, which often refers to the sustained social and environmental change that results from a set of influence outcomes. Understanding the effects of ecosystem investments requires going beyond measuring outputs.

"My favorite 'mistake' that I see clients, causes, and campaigns make is confusing 'access' with 'influence.' We often hear groups brag about the ease of getting meetings with key officials and policymakers. That shouldn't be confused with the ability to influence decision makers." Bill Wasserman, M+R Strategic Services

Similarly, focusing on the long-term effects of ecosystem approaches is problematic because change often happens in an unpredictable timeframe. As a result, such data does not provide insight into what strategic or tactical shifts may be needed along the way to achieve the long-term impact.

Effectively evaluating the results of ecosystem investments requires paying attention to interim outcomes. In practice, this means:

- Equipping stakeholders (staff or grantees) with the tools for identifying, tracking, and reporting on these interim outcomes throughout the duration of an investment
- Developing quantitative and qualitative indicators for outcomes that specifically name target audiences and how they are expected to change as a result of the effort

To effectively monitor and evaluate progress toward long-term impact, organizations identify interim outcomes early on and track progress against them longitudinally. Because strategies and tactics may change over time as new information comes in about what's working well or not, interim outcomes may need to change as well.

Be as specific as possible about who and what you want to change. For example, strengthening political champions among "members of Congress" will be more difficult to measure than strengthening political champions among members of the Senate subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection. This level of specificity not only aids monitoring and evaluation, it also clarifies the investment hypothesis (described in Practice 1).

These practices are exemplified in the evaluation of media influence. Media organizations are increasingly looking at interim outcomes to evaluate their ecosystem-type goals, such as raising the profile of an issue or shifting attitudes and behaviors of certain target groups. In the past, media organizations relied primarily on online reach and engagement metrics to understand their "impact." However, some organizations, including Grist, Chalkbeat, ProPublica, and the Center for Investigative Reporting, have started to identify interim outcomes related to offline behavior change, and are using a variety of tools (e.g., website surveys, audience interviews, public polling) to track progress against them.[22,23,24]

The Center for Investigative Reporting (CIR), a nonprofit investigative news outlet, for example, uses a consistent framework to monitor interim outcomes associated with its reporting (see the **Offline Impact Indicators Glossary**). CIR organizes interim outcomes into four categories: micro (individual-level change), meso (group/societal change), macro (institutional/political change), and media. News staff track the outcomes spurred by their reporting on an issue using the "Offline Impact Indicators Glossary" as a framework. For example, soon after CIR produced the documentary film "Rape in the Fields," news staff began tracking interim outcomes, such as citizen action, related to its reporting. They could enter data into a web form based on the glossary. CIR staff started to see mounting evidence that the documentary film spurred numerous citizen actions (as captured in the tracking form). As a result, CIR decided to fund a more comprehensive study of their impact. The case study's findings ultimately led to new insights about how CIR can more effectively disseminate its stories to spur citizen action in ways that could eventually lead to policy change.[25]

Notably, the richest type of data collected in the CIR example was qualitative. It wasn't about how many citizens got engaged, but who they were and how they acted after seeing the story. This example and many others underscore the importance of gathering qualitative as well as quantitative data on outcomes. Advocacy evaluation literature consistently makes the point that both quantitative and qualitative data are needed to evaluate efforts seeking to change policy.

"[Public] policy evaluations tend to rely on measures of quantity: the numbers of leaders trained, members at a direct action, reports published, policymakers

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22 Chip Giller and Katherine Worth. "Can We Measure Media Impact? Reading Between the Lines." *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Fall 2015).

23 Elizabeth Green, Philissa Cramer, and Anika Anand. *What We Talk About When We Talk About Impact: One News Organization's Approach to Practicing Journalism with a Purpose.* Chalkbeat (2014).
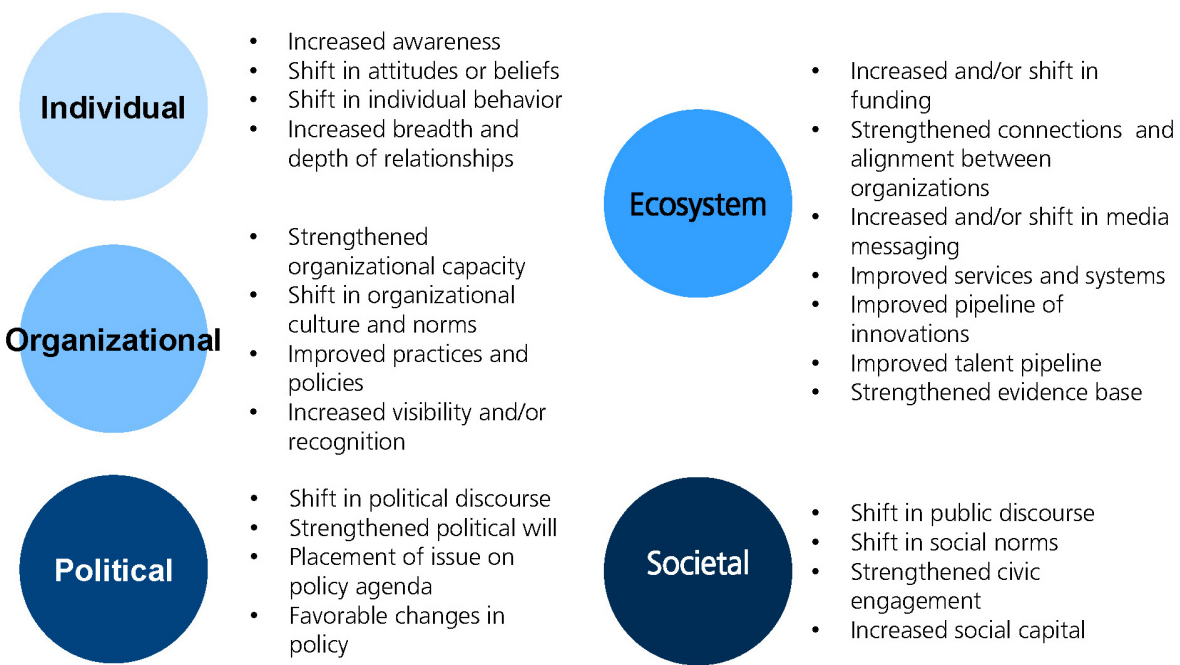
24 Richard J. Tofel. *Non-profit Journalism: Issues around impact.* ProPublica (no date).

25 Lindsay Green-Barber. *Waves of Change: The Case of Rape in the Fields.* The Center for Investigative Reporting (2014).

contacted, coalition members [recruited]. But while the size of the organization's efforts is important, information about the quantity of activities does not tell the complete story. Evaluators also need to grasp the quality of the efforts to get a complete sense of grantee performance." Ashley Snowdon.[26]

Although there are many competing frameworks for classifying interim outcomes of influence efforts, the literature points to five overarching "spheres of influence" with a unique set of outcomes associated with each sphere (Figure 6). The five spheres are individual, organizational, ecosystem, political, and societal. Appendix B provides a list of potential outcomes and indicators of ecosystem investments within each sphere of influence. Many of these outcomes are drawn from the literature on evaluating advocacy, networks, and collaboration.[27,28,29,30]

FIGURE 6: OUTCOMES BY SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

Individual
- Increased awareness
- Shift in attitudes or beliefs
- Shift in individual behavior
- Increased breadth and depth of relationships

Organizational
- Strengthened organizational capacity
- Shift in organizational culture and norms
- Improved practices and policies
- Increased visibility and/or recognition

Political
- Shift in political discourse
- Strengthened political will
- Placement of issue on policy agenda
- Favorable changes in policy

Ecosystem
- Increased and/or shift in funding
- Strengthened connections and alignment between organizations
- Increased and/or shift in media messaging
- Improved services and systems
- Improved pipeline of innovations
- Improved talent pipeline
- Strengthened evidence base

Societal
- Shift in public discourse
- Shift in social norms
- Strengthened civic engagement
- Increased social capital

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26 Ashley Snowdon. *Evaluating Public Policy Grantmaking: A Resource for Funders.* (2004).

27 Jane Reisman, Anne Gienapp, and Sarah Stachowiak. *A Guide to Measuring Advocacy and Policy.* Annie E. Casey Foundation (2007).

28 Harvard Family Research Project. *A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning.* Harvard Graduate School of Education (2009).

29 Hallie Preskill, Marcie Parkhurst, and Jennifer Splansky Juster. *Guide to Evaluating Collective Impact: Supplement #3.* FSG (2013).

30 *Innovations for Scaling Impact and Keystone Accountability.* Next Generation Network Evaluation (2010).

Practice 4: Use Methods that Enable Ongoing Sensing from Multiple Perspectives in a System

One of the pitfalls of relying solely on the use of "metrics" for evaluating ecosystem investments is that such tools can create blinders in evaluating the impact of these efforts. Most measurement frameworks assume that you can predict at the outset all of the outcomes you want to see, and are developed in ways that only capture outcomes that are seen as easy to measure. However, the nature of ecosystem investments is that the actual outcome may differ from the outcome expected at the outset. As a result, looking only at expected outcomes narrows your vision and may lead organizations to miss important learning opportunities. For example, in lobbying, it is not uncommon to be pitching for an ambitious policy change outcome that may not come to fruition, but may pave the way for "lesser," yet still substantial, policy "wins," such as contributing to the political will that results in blocking unfavorable policies.

Effective organizations use data collection and analysis methods to weave together multiple perspectives in order to make sense of what is changing. These methods are used to answer an organization's learning questions (discussed in Practice 2). Effective methods used to evaluate ecosystem efforts fall into four general categories: 1) grantee (investee) reporting; 2) internal monitoring; 3) collaborative techniques, and 4) external evaluation. A selected set of relevant methods from our research is listed in Appendix D, and a few examples are highlighted below.

GRANTEE REPORTING

Though a form of "internal monitoring," grantee reporting deserves its own category given the primacy of this approach for many funders. Funders, such as the Hewlett Foundation, the Packard Foundation, and units within the Ford Foundation, which use grantee reporting for gathering data on interim outcomes of influence efforts, provide guidance to their grantees about a) what outcomes to report on; b) how to measure outcomes; c) how to collect data; and d) how data should be used.[31,32] For example, an advocacy initiative at the Ford Foundation asks grantees to report annually on a set of prioritized interim outcomes that are related to the initiative's learning questions. Program officers and grantees jointly identify a set of tailored indicators based on the shared outcomes that can be analyzed by program officers or research partners. To capture unexpected changes, grantees also submit narratives describing the outcomes of

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31 William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. *Outcome Focused Grantmaking: A Hard-Headed Approach to Soft-Hearted Goals.* (2012).

32 Snowdon. *Evaluating Public Policy Grantmaking: A Resource for Funders.*

their efforts, what is working well, and what challenges they face. This provides foundation staff with context for the results of grantees' work and information about intended and unexpected outcomes.

Some funders are going one step further to make sure that data generated through grantee reports supports team, organizational, and even field learning. They achieve this primarily through commissioning systematic reviews of grantee reports at regular intervals and through discussing findings from grantee reports at staff meetings, grantee learning convenings, and in state-of-the-field reports.

While grantees can be expected to provide data on activities and associated outputs, funders must recognize that the organizations they fund may not have the knowledge, skills, or resources to collect data on interim outcomes or long-term impact that are less within their direct control. Foundations that are exemplary in this regard invest in strengthening grantees' capacity to do this type of data collection.

INTERNAL MONITORING

Internal monitoring methods are useful for gathering perspectives about what and where change is happening from a wider range of perspectives. These methods can be employed by grantees in the context of their work, commissioned as an independent study, or incorporated as part of an evaluation. Common internal monitoring methods that were repeatedly mentioned in our literature search are featured in Table 2.

However, any single method is unlikely to generate sufficient information for strategic learning and action. For example, we see media organizations and corporations becoming increasingly skilled at triangulating data across multiple digital platforms and using surveys and interviews to understand how their efforts are leading to change in "the real world" (i.e., not online). Participant Media gauges organization-wide impact using The Participant Index (TPI), which collects and blends information across platforms and data sources. Campaigns track specific goals through online analytics, audience surveys, focus groups, and public polling. Similarly, the Media Impact Project aggregates data across online analytics platforms and uses surveys and other evaluation methods to assess the impact of a news story or media campaign.[33]

Ultimately, these examples underscore that a single method that relies on a single point of view (e.g., grantee reporting) is insufficient to gather information on the effects of ecosystem approaches and to learn from them.

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33 Giller and Worth. *Can We Measure Media Impact? Reading Between the Lines.*

TABLE 2: INTERNAL MONITORING METHODS (SELECTION)

METHOD	WHAT IT IS	WHEN TO USE IT
Bellwether interviews[34]	Interview technique used to determine an issue's position on the policy agenda and shifts in political will	Used as part of a broader evaluation study focused on how influence efforts are resulting in changes in political will and agenda setting (interim outcomes) that are expected to result in policy change
Intense period debriefs[35,36]	A form of evaluative inquiry conducted shortly after a policy window or intense period of action occurs to understand context, what happened, what was achieved (or not), and what might have been done differently in hindsight	Often used as part of a broader evaluation study when there are high intensity levels of activity and key informants (e.g., advocates) have little time to pause for data collection
Media content analysis[37]	Qualitative analysis of how the media write about and frame issues of interest	Used to gather information about the media context of an influence strategy and to monitor shifts in media messaging and framing of the issue
Network mapping[38]	A tool to measure the strength of networks of individuals and institutions that results in a visual map detailing the strength and direction of the connections	Used at the start or mid-point of an ecosystem effort with a strong emphasis on collaboration, where understanding the relationships and relative positioning of different actors is important to effective functioning
Policymaker ratings[39]	Survey tool that uses advocates to gauge the extent to which policymakers support an issue and whether that support is changing over time	As part of an organization's routine self-assessment, which can then be incorporated into grantee reporting
Public opinion polling	Interviews with a random sample of advocacy stakeholders to gather data on their knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors	Often commissioned by funders on behalf of a field to gather information on context around an issue, as well as to gauge progress on societal change

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34 Julia Coffman and Ehren Reed. *Unique Methods in Advocacy Evaluation* (2009).

35 Ibid.

36 Harvard Family Research Project. *A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning.* Harvard Graduate School of Education (2009).

37 Provalis Research. "What Is Media Framing Analysis?" Available at: **http://provalisresearch.com/solutions/applications/what-is-media-framing-analysis/**.

38 *Innovations for Scaling Impact and Keystone Accountability.* Next Generation Network Evaluation (2010).

39 Coffman and Reed. *Unique Methods in Advocacy Evaluation.*

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Because multiple actors probably contributed to the outcomes associated with eco-system investments, effective practice includes using methods that bring multiple stakeholders together to identify what is changing (or has changed) to engage in collaborative sensemaking. Organizations are using a variety of collaborative methods and techniques, such as outcome mapping, outcome harvesting, and ripple effect mapping, to engage diverse stakeholders in conversation about what changes are being seen or experienced and how that relates back to the influence effort. Table 3 provides an overview of these practices.
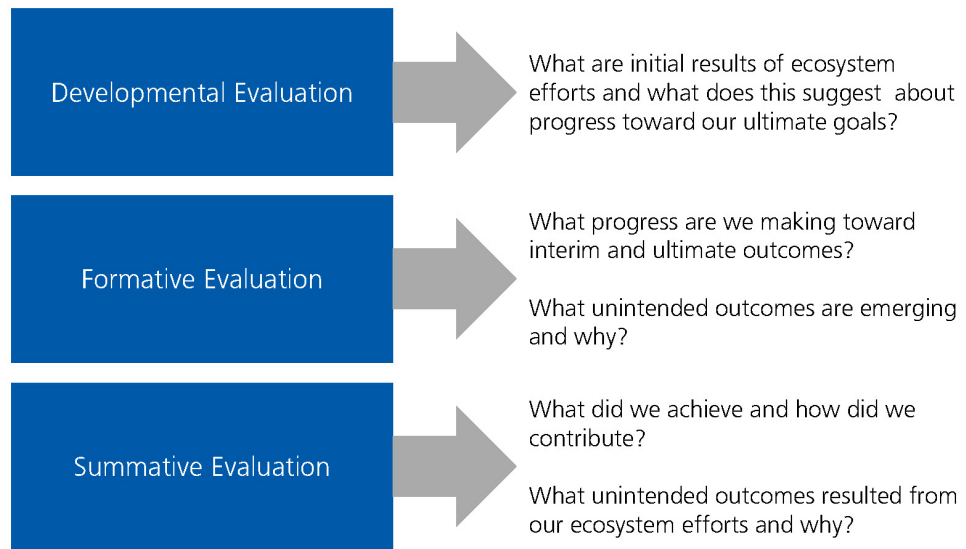
TABLE 3: COLLABORATIVE TECHNIQUES

METHOD	WHAT IT IS	WHEN TO USE IT
Outcome mapping[40]	A methodology based on non-linear, multiple pathways to impact that is used to plan and assess outcomes through participatory workshops	Can be used as a stand-alone activity or part of a broader evaluation when you want to understand what outcomes have been achieved (focused on those that are within an organization or network's sphere of influence)
Outcome harvesting[41]	A highly participatory methodology that collects evidence of what has changed from beneficiaries or other informants, and then works backwards to determine whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes	Often used as part of a broader evaluation study to understand intended and unintended outcomes, direct and indirect of a program or initiative that can plausibly be connected back to ecosystem activities; validating data by triangulating findings with other sources
Ripple effect mapping[42]	A method for conducting impact evaluation that engages program and community stakeholders to retrospectively and visually map outcomes resulting from a program or complex collaboration	Completed as part of a "look back" evaluation study to understand intended and unintended results of a program, intervention, or collaborative effort

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40 Sarah Earl, Fred Carden, and Terry Smutylo. *Outcome Mapping: Building learning and reflection into development programs.* International Development Research Centre (2001).

41 Ricardo Wilson-Grau. *Outcome Harvesting. Better Evaluation* (2015).

42 Scott Chazdon. "Ripple Effect Mapping: A Participatory Strategy for Measuring Program Impacts." *Journal of Extension* (2012).

Developmental Evaluation	→	What are initial results of ecosystem efforts and what does this suggest about progress toward our ultimate goals?
Formative Evaluation	→	What progress are we making toward interim and ultimate outcomes? What unintended outcomes are emerging and why?
Summative Evaluation	→	What did we achieve and how did we contribute? What unintended outcomes resulted from our ecosystem efforts and why?

EXTERNAL EVALUATION

Any of the common evaluation designs—developmental, formative, and summative— can be used to assess the effects of ecosystem approaches. Specific evaluation questions will vary depending on the desired use and users, the stage of development of the influence investment, and the overarching learning question(s) that an evaluation seeks to answer. Organizations that are effectively evaluating ecosystem approaches match the type of evaluation study (developmental, formative, or summative) to the evaluation questions being asked. As shown in Figure 7, developmental evaluation tends to assess what types of outcomes are emerging and how the emerging changes vary. Formative and summative evaluations tend to measure progress toward or achievement of a prede- termined set of outcomes. Good evaluations collect data from multiple perspectives using the types of data collection methods and techniques described above.

A report by FSG and the Center for Evaluation Innovation provides guidance on when a developmental, formative, or summative evaluation is appropriate in the lifecycle of a social innovation.[43] For example, the authors point out that conducting a formative or summative evaluation of an ecosystem investment too early can stifle innovation and reduce an organization, collaborative, or network's overall effectiveness.

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43 Hallie Preskill and Tanya Beer. *Evaluating Social Innovation.* FSG and Center for Evaluation Innovation (2012).

Organizations are also using specific approaches to summative evaluations, sometimes referred to as an "impact evaluation," to evaluate the effects of their ecosystem efforts once there is evidence of having achieved a specific outcome, such as a policy win.

"Sometimes you can't see the difference you're making in the moment, and you need to look back." Bill Wasserman, M+R Strategic Services

Nearly all organizations we researched are using case studies to retrospectively assess the effects of ecosystem strategies. These retrospectives employ rigorous qualitative methodologies, such as process tracing, contribution analysis, or general elimination method (sometimes referred to as "GEM"), to make the case for the extent to which and how influence efforts contributed to a particular outcome—often in the policy arena.[44,45]

For example, Oxfam Great Britain supported a collaborative advocacy effort to promote free access to universal health care in Ghana through a combination of lobbying, organizing, media, and research. Process tracing, which included key informant interviews, document analysis, and media analysis, was used to determine whether and how campaign elements contributed to a number of distinct outcomes, such as persuading key stakeholders that the current National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) is an ineffective vehicle to deliver free universal health care in Ghana.[46]

In a seminal advocacy evaluation study, Michael Quinn Patton used GEM to assess the extent to which a nine-month judicial advocacy campaign successfully influenced a Supreme Court decision.[47] The evaluation methods included a review of campaign activities, interviews with key informants, and thorough analysis of the Supreme Court decision. Evaluators carefully considered competing explanations before concluding that the campaign did indeed contribute to the Court's decision.

Ultimately, the learning questions and interim outcomes will likely drive which methods (investee reporting, internal monitoring, collaborative techniques, and external evaluation) are most appropriate to use to gather data on outcomes. Table 4 provides an overview of which method categories might be most appropriate based on the type of learning question. In addition, Appendix C provides an overview of evaluation methods that might be appropriate for collecting data on certain interim outcomes by ecosystem approach (i.e., research, convening, partnerships/networks, and advocacy).

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44 Melanie Punton and Katharina Welle. *Applying Process Tracing in Five Steps.* Center for Development Impact Practice Paper. Number 10, 2015b Annex.

45 Michael Q. Patton. "Advocacy Impact Evaluation." *Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation* Volume 5, Number 9 (2008).

46 Melanie Punton and Katharina Welle. *Straws-in-the-wind, Hoops and Smoking Guns: What Can Process Tracing Offer to Impact Evaluation?* Center for Development Impact Practice Paper. Number 10, 2015a.

47 Patton. *Advocacy Impact Evaluation.*

TABLE 4: METHODS BY TYPE OF LEARNING QUESTION

	INVESTEE REPORTING	INTERNAL MONITORING	COLLABORATIVE TECHNIQUES	EXTERNAL EVALUATION
OUTCOMES				
What evidence do we have that we are on track to achieve our goals?	X	X	X	X
To what extent and how is/has our work contributing/ contributed to achieving the intended or unintended outcomes?		X	X	X
Looking back, what aspects of our work had the greatest impact on our success (or failure)?				X
STRATEGY				
Which of our strategies seem to be more or less effective in creating the change we expect to see?	X		X	X
To what extent and in what ways are we evolving our strategies in response to progress or challenges in achieving outcomes? Why are we responding and adapting in specific ways?	X		X	X
How well are we taking advantage of opportunities that emerge?	X			X
ASSUMPTIONS				
Is change happening in the way we expected? Why or why not?	X	X	X	X
Are there new or different levers that we have not intervened on that may be important to achieve our goals? What are they and why do we think they are important?	X		X	X
CONTEXT				
What cultural, socioeconomic, and political factors are affecting implementation and in what ways?	X	X	X	X
How are changes in our external context affecting our ability to make progress toward our goals? What can be done to address external factors moving forward?	X		X	X
In what ways have we had to adjust due to changes in the external environment?	X		X	X
What resources, capacity, or information is needed to help us better adapt?	X		X	X

Practice 5: Use the Evaluation Process and Findings to Build the Adaptive Capacity of Practitioners

"If monitoring could integrate deeper questions and reflection, and involve intentional, collaborative learning by both the funder and grantees, monitoring data would likely feed decisions about strategy and tactics, and facilitate effective responses to emergent opportunities." ORS Impact[48]

Organizations implementing ecosystem efforts often have to shift their strategies to effectively address the challenges and opportunities that emerge. As a result, practitioners need to be able to sense, learn, and adapt strategies to achieve their goals. The advocacy field has started using the term "adaptive capacity" to refer to advocacy organizations' ability to tailor and shift strategies and tactics based on changes in the political, economic, and social environment.[49] To do this well, organizations are:

- Making time to reflect on and use data
- Fostering an environment of trust between funders and grantees

MAKE TIME TO REFLECT ON AND USE DATA WITH OTHERS

Organizations make time to reflect on and use data for decision making and action in concert with key partners. It sounds easy, but few organizations intentionally make the time to learn, and even fewer bring data into those conversations.

Twaweza, an NGO engaged in open government and citizen engagement work in East Africa, provides an example of how organizations can do this well. In 2013, Twaweza convened a diverse set of stakeholders, including evaluation experts. Because of the convening, Twaweza leadership learned how it could strengthen its approach to learning and evaluation in order to be more effective in reaching its goals regarding citizen engagement.[50]

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48 ORS Impact. *Findings from a Summative Evaluation – William and Flora Hewlett Foundation's Nuclear Security Initiative.* William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (2015).

49 Jared Raynor, Peter York, and Shao-Chee Sim. *What Makes an Effective Advocacy Organization? A framework for determining advocacy capacity.* TCC Group and The California Endowment (2009).

50 Duncan Greene. "Twaweza, one of the world's cutting edge accountability NGOs." From Poverty to Power (October 8, 2013). Available at: **http://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/a-fascinating-conversation-with-twaweza-one-of-the-worlds-cutting-edge-accountability-ngos/**.

FOSTER TRUST BETWEEN FUNDERS AND GRANTEES

Another key practice associated with strengthening the adaptive capacity of grantees is to create an environment that enables organizations to be vulnerable with what is working and what is not.

"An important lesson from early evaluation experiences is that it is critical to establish an open line of communication with grantees from the beginning. A successful evaluation must be meaningful for both the funder and the grantee, and it must meet each of their needs and goals. Ideally, both should feel a sense of ownership." Barbara Masters[51]

Practically, foundations such as the Hewlett Foundation, The California Endowment, and others are taking the following strides to increase communication and build trust regarding evaluation with grantees by:

1. Providing principles and guidelines to grantees about how the evaluation will be used by the foundation and the role of grantees;

2. Convening practitioners to understand and use innovative tools for monitoring and evaluation; and

3. Facilitating learning conversations among practitioners where information is shared, reflected upon, and discussed to strengthen organizations' ability to achieve their goals.

Funders are also strengthening their own adaptive capacity to be better partners to grantees. For its part, Omidyar Network is building a culture that is grounded in experimentation and responsive to a changing environment. As an example, systems mapping to understand key dynamics, context, and leverage points within a system is now a key part of new strategy development at the firm. Given that its grantees are on the front lines, Omidyar Network relies on input from its portfolio to inform strategic funding decisions. This paper is part of the greater effort to ensure that all the data grantees are asked to share is meaningful and directly informs a decision

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51 Barbara Masters. *Evaluating Policy Change and Advocacy: A funder's perspective.* Center for Evaluation Innovation (2009).

CONCLUSION

Through our research, we identified five effective practices that we believe can help Omidyar Network and other organizations more effectively evaluate the effects of their ecosystem investments. The organizations employing these practices also see themselves as being on a journey toward better understanding the effects of their influence efforts, rather than having the answers. Our research reinforced that there is no single formula or recipe to follow to evaluate ecosystem investments well.

Institutionalizing these practices will require several shifts in many organizations' current approaches to measurement and evaluation.

1. **Hypothesis:** A shift from varying ways of describing the intended effects of ecosystem investments to a more consistent process of hypothesis development that identifies critical assumptions and external factors

2. **Learning Questions:** A shift from ad hoc learning to more systematic questioning that tests mental models of how to do the work

3. **Interim Outcomes:** A shift from a focus on quantifiable output metrics to a fuller suite of indicators that includes qualitative and quantitative indicators of interim outcomes

4. **Methods:** A shift from a reliance on investee reporting to using a broader toolkit of methods that brings in multiple perspectives on what outcomes are being achieved, as well as how and why

5. **Collaborative Learning:** A shift from internal uses of evaluation findings to also using evaluation to strengthen the adaptive capacity of investees

Putting these ideas into practice will require organizations to embrace strategic learning, systems thinking, and complexity. The practices highlighted in this report are just a starting point for continued dialogue on how to effectively evaluate the effects of ecosystem investments.

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Appendix A

Research Methods and Sources

CONSUMER INTERNET MOBILE	EDUCATION	GOVERNANCE AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT
• PEERS • New America Foundation	• Impact Evaluation of Bridge International Academies • Ilifa Labantwana • IPA • Western Cape Government	• Center for Global Development • Open Contracting Partnership • Open Government Partnership • Stiftung Neue Verantwortung • Transparency International

FINANCIAL INCLUSION	PROPERTY RIGHTS	IMPACT INVESTING
• Alliance for Financial Inclusion • Better Than Cash Alliance • Center for Financial Services Innovation • CGAP	• Namati Myanmar • Rights and Resources Group • Global Witness	• Brookings Institution (Blum Roundtable) • Dasra • Global Impact Investing Network • Toniic

OTHER ECOSYSTEM INVESTMENTS
• Endeavor Mexico

INTERVIEWEES

1. Amy Arbreton, Evaluation Officer, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

2. Tanya Beer, Associate Director, Center for Evaluation Innovation

3. Julia Coffman, Director and Founder, Center for Evaluation Innovation

4. Lindsay Green-Barber, Center for Investigative Reporting

5. Kate Krontiris, independent consultant, Civic Tech

6. Katherine (Katie) Douglas Martel, Consultant, Center for Global Development

7. Michael Quinn Patton, Utilization-Focused Evaluation

8. Rakesh Rajani, Director, Ford Foundation

9. Bill Wasserman, CEO, M+R Strategic Services

Appendix B

Interim Outcomes and Indicators

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE	INTERIM OUTCOME	SAMPLE INDICATORS	RELEVANT APPROACHES
Individual	Increased awareness	Number of targeted influencers who are aware of the severity of the issue Number of targeted decision makers who understand potential actions to take	All
	Shift in attitudes or beliefs	Number of targeted individuals who believe they are equipped to take action on an issue	All
	Shift in individual behavior	Number of people taking action on an issue	All
	Increased breadth and depth of relationships	Number of new relationships formed among participants Level of depth of new and existing relationships among participants	Convening Partnerships
Organizational	Strengthened organizational capacity	Level of capacity demonstrated by organizations in key areas (e.g., communications, reaching key constituencies)	Convening Partnerships Advocacy
	Shift in organizational culture and norms	Type of language used to frame the issue Level of importance of issue among leadership of targeted organizations	Partnerships
	Improved organizational practices and policies	An institution takes an action in response to influence effort Targeted organizations adopt new standards and principles Frequency and quality of information sharing Structures and policies in place that enable people to take action to address the issue	All
	Increased visibility and/or recognition	Recognition of organizations as thought leaders and influencers on an issue by media and/or key decision makers	Partnerships Advocacy

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE	INTERIM OUTCOME	SAMPLE INDICATORS	RELEVANT APPROACHES
Ecosystem	Increase and/or shift in funding	Diversification of funding sources Number of new donors	Convening Partnerships Advocacy
	Strengthened connections and alignment between organizations	Number and types of new partnerships Level of collaboration among organizations in an alliance Quality and configuration of network ties	Convening Partnerships Advocacy
	Increase and/or shift in media messaging	Number of favorable media messages Shifts in framing or reframing of issue in the media	Research Advocacy
	Improved services and systems	Type and level of resources available for collaborative activity Quality of collaborative infrastructure	Partnerships
	Improved pipeline of innovations	Number and types of innovations	Research Partnerships
	Improved talent pipeline	Number and types of new talent	Partnerships
	Strengthened evidence base	Number of publications, presentations, and other forums that discuss the issue Level of evidence recognized by key influencers	Research
Political	Shift in political discourse	Content or framing of issue among policymakers	All
	Strengthened political will	Number of targeted policymakers willing to take action on an issue Level and types of action among policy champions	Partnerships Advocacy
	Placement of issue on policy agenda	Number and types of issues that are on the policy agenda	Partnerships Advocacy
	Favorable changes in policy	A new policy is proposed A policy is changed A proposed policy is blocked An institution changes or makes rule(s) Judge reverses a legal decision	Partnerships Advocacy

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE	INTERIM OUTCOME	SAMPLE INDICATORS	RELEVANT APPROACHES
Societal	Shift in public discourse	Content or framing of issue among the targeted population group	Research
			Advocacy
	Shift in social norms	Percentage of target population that has favorable attitudes toward a policy issue	All
	Strengthened civic engagement	Frequency and quality of meetings by targeted group to discuss or take action on issue	Advocacy
		Number and types of partners who attend convening or meeting held by advocacy organizations	
		Number and types of actions taken by group or network to pressure elected officials or other key influencers related to issue	
	Increased social capital	Number and diversity of partners supporting an issue	Partnerships
		Level of trust with new or existing groups	

Appendix C

Sample Internal Monitoring Methods by Sphere of Influence and Taxonomy

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE	RESEARCH	CONVENING	PARTNERSHIPS/ NETWORKS	ADVOCACY
Individual	Website/audience surveys	Audience surveys Post-event interviews (2-3 months)	Member surveys	Interviews or focus groups with targeted groups as part of a campaign
Organizational	Surveys Interviews	Surveys Interviews	Surveys Interviews	Surveys (including self-assessment) Interviews
Ecosystem	Media tracking Media content analysis	Post-event interviews (2-3 months) Media tracking Network mapping	Outcome mapping Member survey Network health survey Network mapping System mapping	Outcome mapping Media tracking Media content analysis Network mapping System mapping
Political	Policy tracking	Policy tracking	Champion scorecard / policymaker ratings Bellwether interviews Policy tracking	Champion scorecard / policymaker ratings Bellwether interviews Intense period debriefs Policy tracking Legal records analysis
Societal	Public polling Media content analysis	Public polling Media content analysis Post-event interviews (6+ months)	Public polling Media content analysis	Public polling Media content analysis

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