

Ecosystem Mapping

This is an exercise to start exploring the context around our target audience or user, and how that might enable or inhibit their behaviour.

There are many stakeholders and dynamics at play in the community around a user, the services available to them, and the institutions that govern their lives. Exploring these dynamics can help us identify the shifts or changes that need to happen, and where our design efforts are most needed. In the process we'll also identify any constraints that could limit our ability to achieve impact in a project.

How to Use It

Starting with the user, follow the question prompts to explore the behaviour that you ideally want your user to adopt. From there, work through the questions under community, services, and institutions.

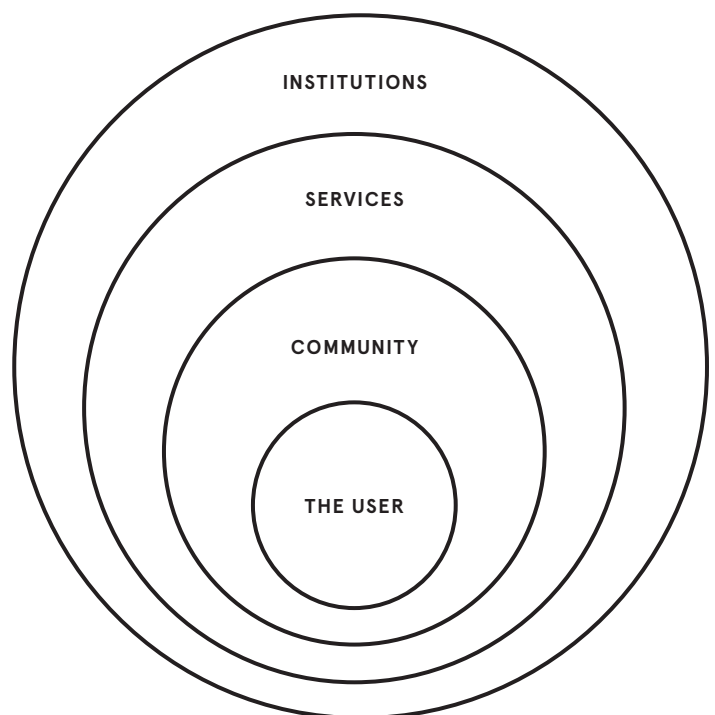
The questions in each category lead you to define shifts, or changes, that might be needed. These are an important final output from the exercise, so capture these in an organized way.

The categories and questions here are intended to get you started. Feel free to adapt these categories or add in stakeholder groups as you need.

You'll need plenty of Post-its and wall space to map out potential influences, as well as collaborators who have good knowledge of the challenge.

What Next?

Check back on the steps in the Define Your Audience method card for next steps in your design process, and how to use this information.



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THE USER (START HERE!)

Think about the behaviour or outcome you want to help your user achieve:

To achieve that goal, what does our user need to know? to feel? to do?

And where is our user right now with knowing? feeling? doing what is needed?

Based on the above, what shifts might we need to support?

These are changes that the user needs to achieve.

Try writing out each of the shifts as a From/To statement.

Example: FROM not knowing what health services exist, TO being aware of services that are appropriate for her and how to access them.

Who or what might play a role in supporting or preventing those shifts?

These will be barriers or enablers created by others.

Write them down and place them under the category or sphere that is most relevant below to explore further.



COMMUNITY

The household and social networks around our user

Which individuals or groups play an important role in the user's life?

For each group consider:

Is this a group a fan or a skeptic, with regard to what we want our user to achieve?

In what ways does they support or block the user?

What is the power dynamic between this group and the user—who has influence or control?

Finally:

Based on the above, what kinds of shifts might be needed within this group?



SERVICES

The services & resources available to our user

Which services does the user need to achieve their goal?

For each service consider:

What kind of access does the user have to this service

Is it good quality?

What challenges does the user face accessing the services?

What challenges do the service providers face in delivering the service?

Is this service, or its providers, something we might need to design for?

Finally:

Based on the above, what kinds of shifts might be needed with this service?



INSTITUTIONS

The systems & policies that influence our user's rights and freedoms

What are the rights and freedoms that the user needs to achieve their goal?

For each right or freedom consider:

Does the user experience barriers or unequal access to this right or freedom?

Which systems and policies support the user with regards to this right or freedom? Which ones discriminate?

Finally:

What should we consider as constraints or levers as we tackle this challenge?

{NOTE: Program funders, governments and other influencing bodies might sit in this category too} thing we might need to design for?