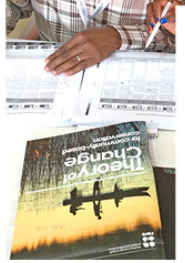

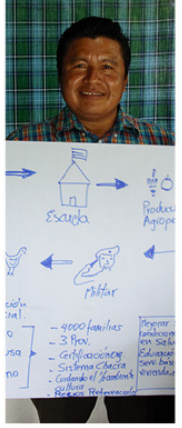

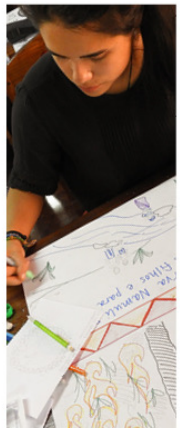

Framing the challenge: Systems thinking & behavior change

December 7, 2022

CENTER FOR BEHAVIOR & THE ENVIRONMENT

The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations

Behavior Change & Climate Philanthropy Series

December 7

- 10:00-11:30am ET: Behavior-Centered Design & climate philanthropy
- 2:00-3:30pm ET: Framing the challenge: Systems thinking & behavior change

December 8

- 10:00-11:30am ET: Evaluating behavior change programs
- 2:00-3:00pm ET: Making the case for behavior change

March 2023

- Funders' Roundtable

Session Objectives

- Describe **why framing** your environmental challenge is important
- Differentiate **beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors**
- Explain how **systems thinking principles** can help us frame climate challenges
- Gain experience with **tools to identify core behaviors and actors** in behavior change work
- Collaborate with a **network of funders**

Some Virtual Training Norms…

Virtual Training Norms

- Turn your video on (or add a photo)
- Display your name (and pronouns)
- Limit multi-tasking
- Mute your microphone when not speaking
- Use the chat and hand-raising functions if you have questions
- Be patient and compassionate

Agenda

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Framing the challenge: Systems thinking & behavior change
3. Exploring Frame tools
4. Discussion
5. Closing & next steps

Rare inspires change so people and nature thrive.

Rare has run nearly 500 behavior change campaigns in more than 60 countries

Rare's behavior change campaigns, on average, increase adoption by 18 percentage points

rare

CENTER FOR BEHAVIOR & THE ENVIRONMENT

Transform the environmental field by equipping environmentalists everywhere with the science of human behavior

Today you would never find a conservation organization that doesn't have a deep bench around ecological or biological sciences, **but you really don't see the same thing when it comes to behavioral and social science."**

– **Aileen Lee**, Chief Program Officer
The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

< 2%

of global philanthropic giving ($5 to $9 billion) was dedicated to climate change mitigation as of 2019.

0.12%

of all research funding on climate-related grants was spent on the social science of climate mitigation from 1950 to 2021.

Behavior Change and Climate Investment Opportunities

Driving consumer/end-user behavior change	→	Behavior Adoption Programs
Driving behaviorally informed technology	→	Innovation tournaments and platforms
Building evidence	→	Hypothesis testing
Building demand and capacity	→	Policy design support
Influencing environment	→	Corporate engagement

THE
KRESGE
FOUNDATION

MacArthur
Foundation

THE
McKNIGHT
FOUNDATION

MULAGO

climateworks
FOUNDATION

skoll
FOUNDATION

WILLIAM + FLORA
Hewlett
Foundation

WALTON FAMILY
FOUNDATION

THE
GEORGE
GUND
FOUNDATION

Grantham Foundation
for the Protection of the Environment

GORDON AND BETTY
MOORE
FOUNDATION

DORIS DUKE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

The Arthur
Vining Davis
Foundations

Barr
Foundation

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Framing the Challenge: Systems Thinking & Behavior Change

Fact or Fiction: Behavior change cannot address systems change.

Stanford SOCIAL INNOVATION Review
Informing and inspiring leaders of social change
SOCIAL ISSUES
SECTORS
SOLUTIONS
MAGAZINE
GLOBAL EDITION
Scaling
We're Beating Systems Change to Death
Systems change is more a destination than a journey. "Scalable solutions" might be a better way to make the trip.
CITE
SHARE
COMMENT
PRINT
ORDER REPRINTS
By Kevin Starr | Apr. 8, 2021

Types of Problem-Solving Lenses

Ecological lens

Helps us identify the connections within ecosystems that contribute to environmental problems and solutions

Behavioral lens

Helps us identify where human behavior contributes to environmental problems and solutions

Systems thinking lens

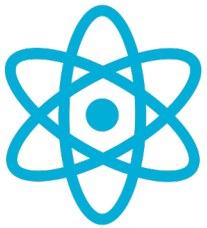
Helps us identify the relationships and feedback loops in a system that contribute to environmental problems and solutions

So, what is a system? A system is a set of things—**people, cells, molecules, or whatever—interconnected in such a way that they produce their own pattern of behavior over time**."

- **Donella Meadows,** author of *Thinking in Systems*

Photo Credit: The Donella Meadows Project

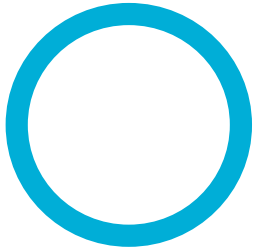
Principles of Systems Thinking



Interconnectedness

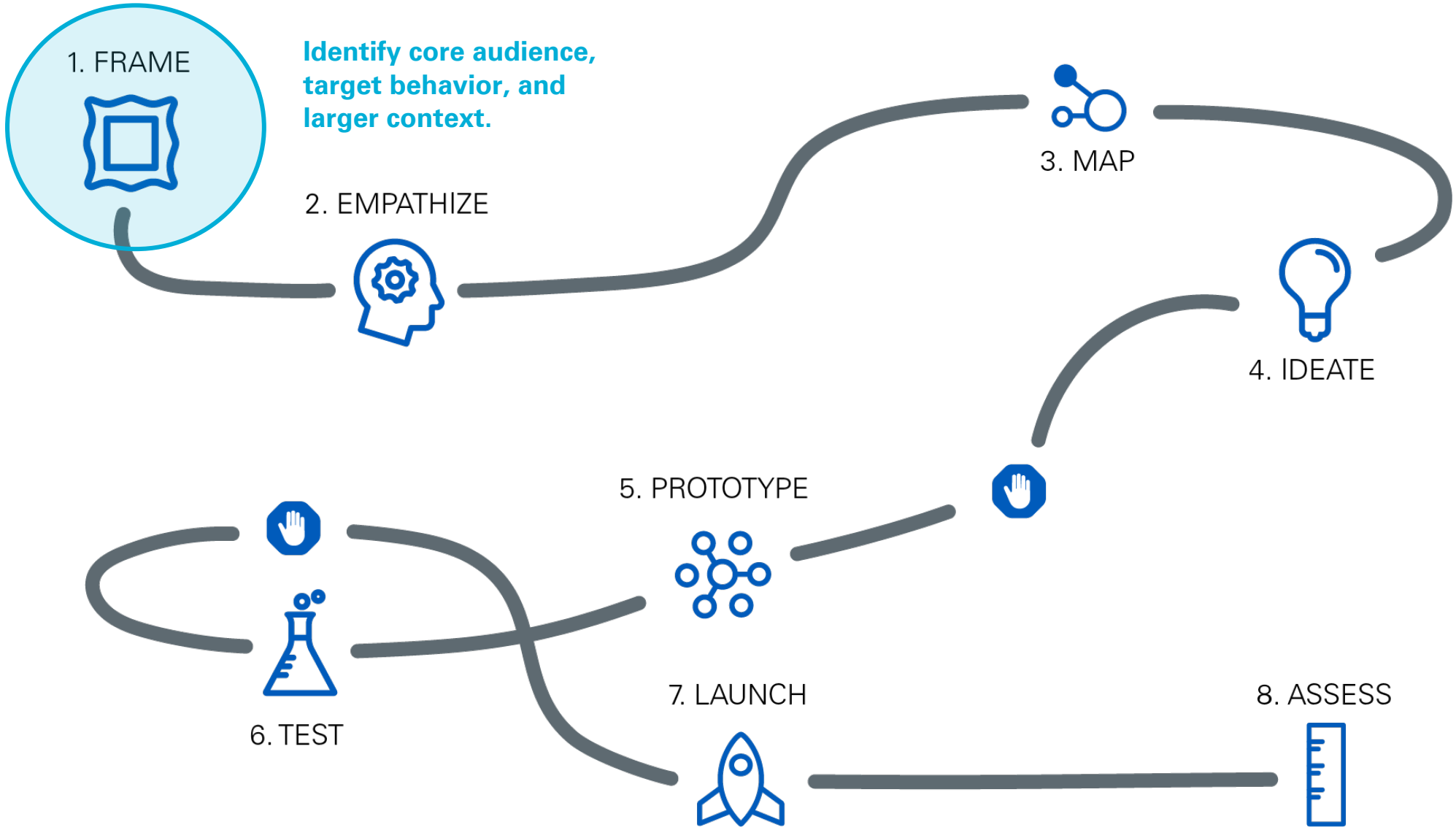
Leverage Points

Causality



Wholeness

The Behavior-Centered Design Journey



Frame

What? Identify the target behavior, actors, and context for your environmental challenge.

How? Background research, problem-behavior-actor mapping, stakeholder-actor mapping, observation

Key Principles:

- It's important to identify the 'who' and 'what' of behavior change
- Behaviors operate within larger systems
- Beliefs, attitudes, intentions ≠ behaviors

DEI Considerations:

- What are the power dynamics among actors in the larger system?

What Does it Mean to Focus on *Behavior?*

Behaviors
What you do
“I recycle.”

Beliefs
What you know or accept to be true
“Recycling is important.”

Attitudes
What you think is good or bad
“Recycling is good.”

Intentions
What you plan or intend to do
“I want to recycle.”

Context
The environment for the behavior
“There are recycling bins on campus.”

Instead of this:		Try this:
Care about the environment	→	Stop using single-use items

Instead of this:		Try this:
Care about the environment	→	Stop using single-use items
Know more about the impacts of climate change	→	Adopt a plant-rich diet

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Don’t throw away textiles	→	Recycle textiles

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Stop illegal wildlife trade	→	Do not purchase exotic pets

Instead of this:		Try this:
Care about the environment	→	Stop using single-use items
Know more about the impacts of climate change	→	Adopt a plant-rich diet
Don’t throw away textiles	→	Recycle textiles
Stop illegal wildlife trade	→	Do not purchase exotic pets
Increase sustainable fishing practices	→	Fish outside the marine reserve

Today's Case Study: Meat Consumption in NYC

Systems Thinking & Behavior Change Questions

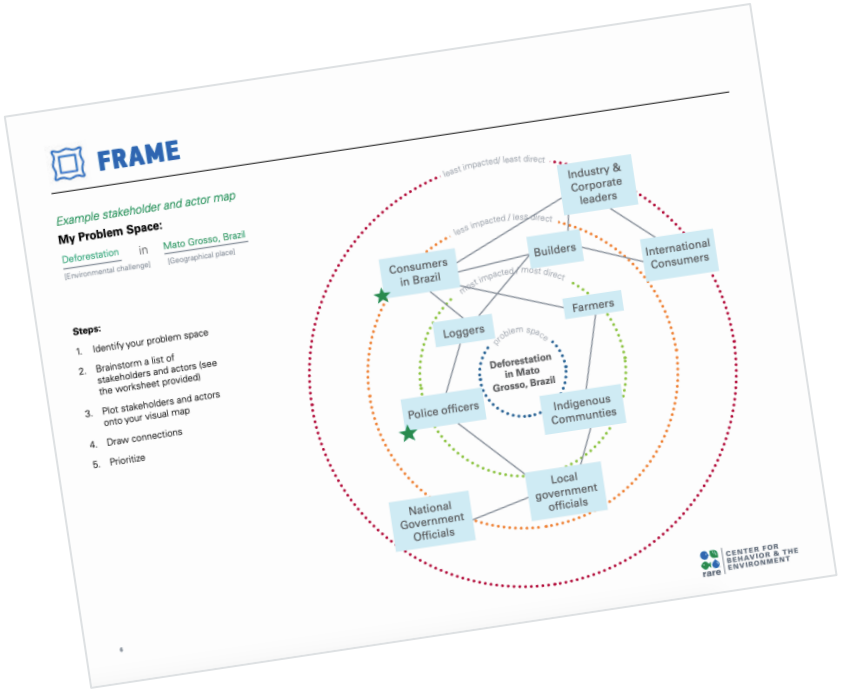
- Where are the biggest leverage points around meat consumption?
- Whose behavior can make the biggest difference on overall meat consumption?
- Which actors have the strongest ties to and influences on one another?
- What stories can I tell when I see all these actors and behaviors in one place?
- Which changes in behavior could lead to behavior change elsewhere in the system?

Exploring Frame Tools

Frame Tools

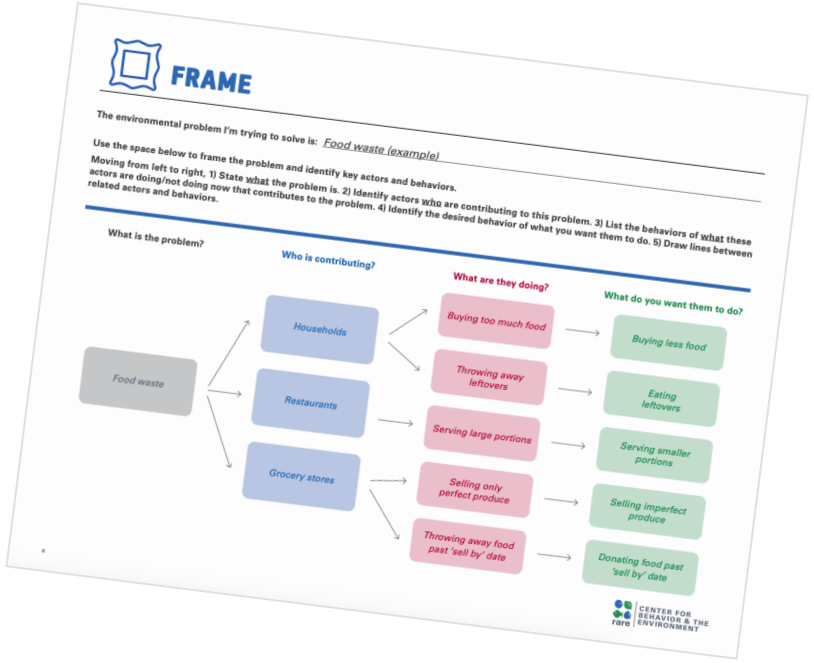
Stakeholder-actor map:

Diagram actors and stakeholders and their connections to the environmental problem



Problem-behavior-actor map:

Diagram the problem, actors, and behaviors relevant for your behavior change problem



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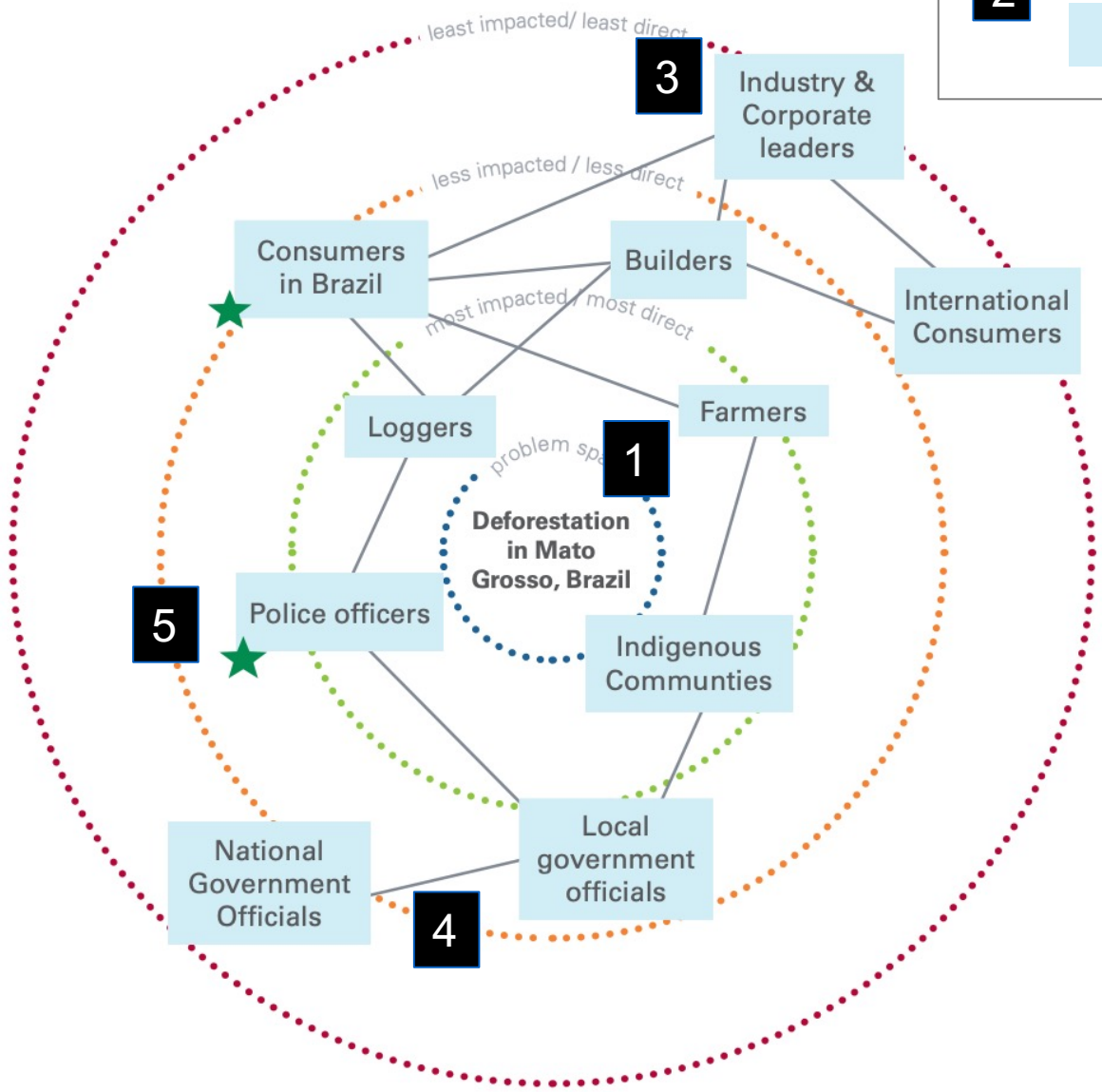
Example: Stakeholder-Actor Map

Steps:

1. Identify your problem space
2. Brainstorm a list of stakeholders and actors
3. Plot stakeholders and actor onto your visual map
4. Draw connections (lines/arrows)
5. Prioritize actors (stars).



Activity 1: Stakeholder-Actor Map

2	NYC mayor	Residents
	?	?

Steps:

1. Identify your problem space
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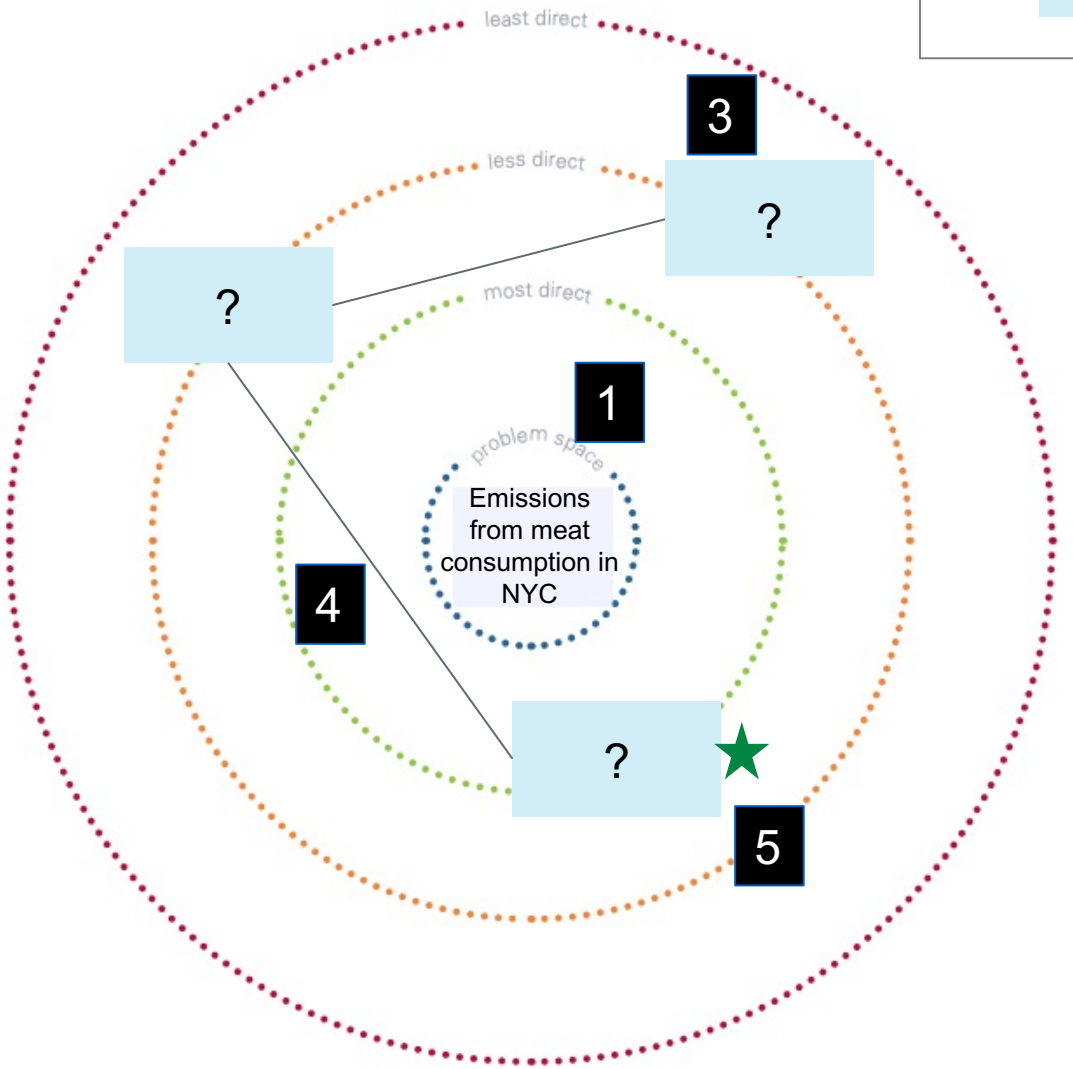
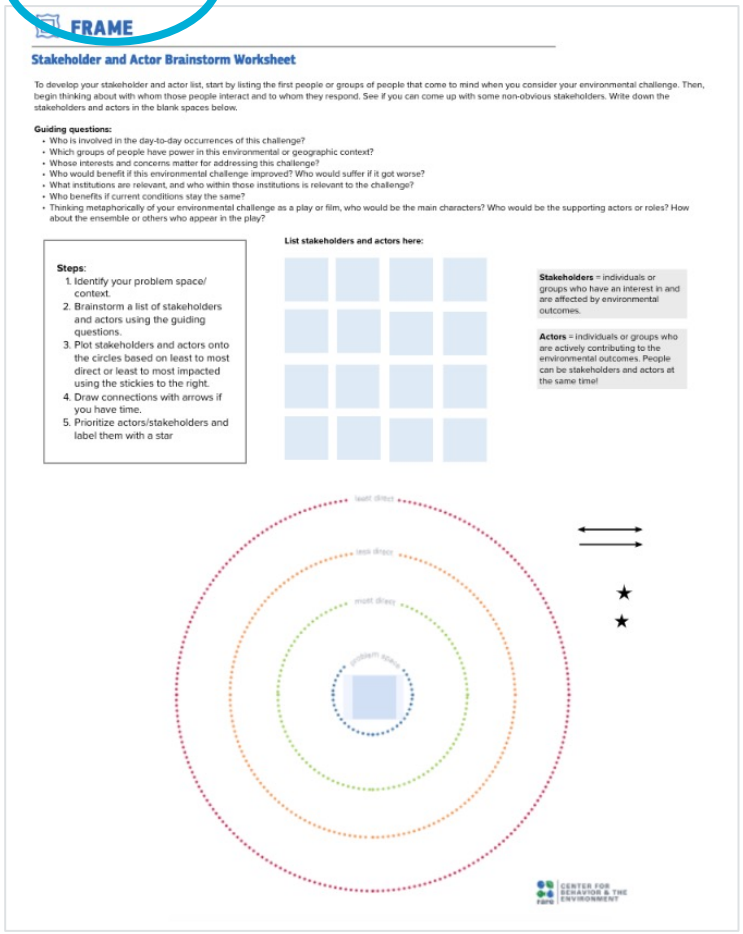


Key Questions

- Who is involved in the day-to-day occurrences of this challenge?
- Which groups of people have power in this environmental or geographic context?
- Whose interests and concerns matter for addressing this challenge?
- Who would benefit if this environmental challenge improved? Who would suffer if it got worse?
- What institutions are relevant, and who within those institutions is relevant to the challenge?
- Who benefits if current conditions stay the same?
- Thinking metaphorically of your environmental challenge as a play or film, who would be the main characters? Who would be the supporting actors or roles? How about the ensemble or others who appear in the play?

Break outs: Tips

Team 1



FRAME

Stakeholder and Actor Brainstorm Worksheet

To develop your stakeholder and actor list, start by listing the first people or groups of people that come to mind when you consider your environmental challenge. Then, begin thinking about with whom those people interact and to whom they respond. See if you can come up with some non-obvious stakeholders. Write down the stakeholders and actors in the blank spaces below.

Guiding questions:

- Who is involved in the day-to-day occurrences of this challenge?
- Which groups of people have power in this environmental or geographic context?
- Whose interests and concerns matter for addressing this challenge?
- Who would benefit if this environmental challenge improved? Who would suffer if it got worse?
- What institutions are relevant, and who within those institutions is relevant to the challenge?
- Who benefits if current conditions stay the same?
- Thinking metaphorically of your environmental challenge as a play or film, who would be the main characters? Who would be the supporting actors or roles? How about the ensemble or others who appear in the play?

Steps:

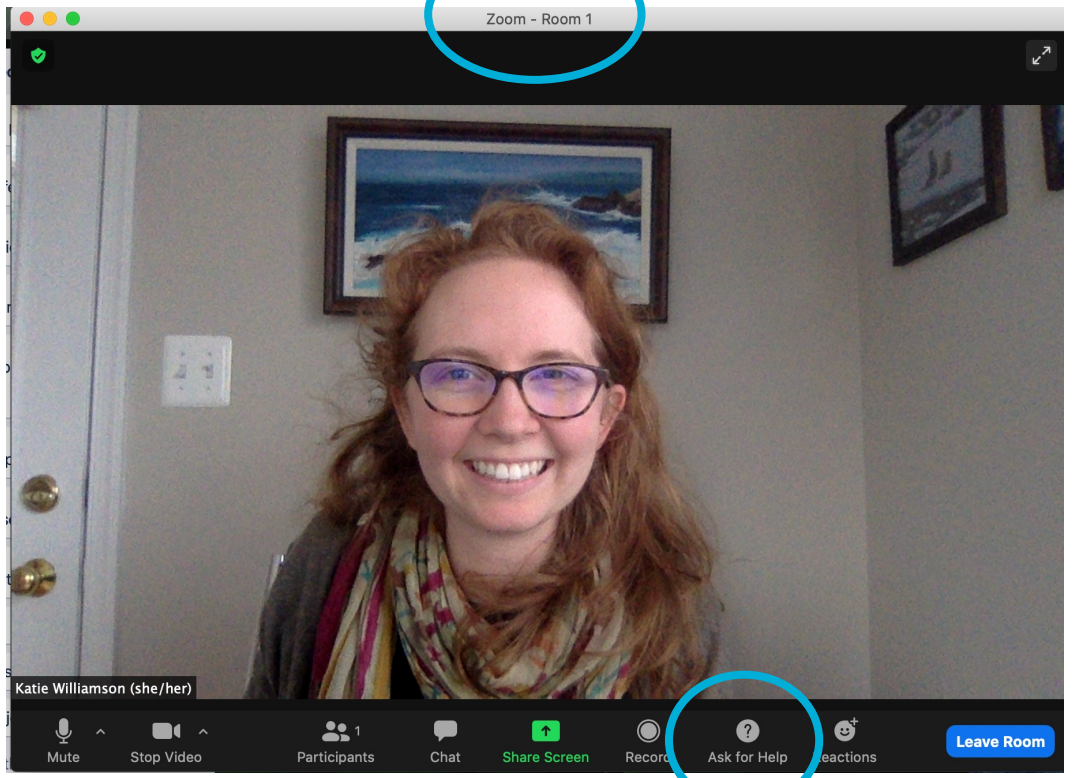
1. Identify your problem space/ context.
2. Brainstorm a list of stakeholders and actors using the guiding questions.
3. Plot stakeholders and actors onto the circles based on least to most direct or least to most impacted using the stickies to the right.
4. Draw connections with arrows if you have time.
5. Prioritize actors/stakeholders and label them with a star

List stakeholders and actors here:

Stakeholders = individuals or groups who have an interest in and are affected by environmental outcomes.

Actors = individuals or groups who are actively contributing to the environmental outcomes. People can be stakeholders and actors at the same time!

Team 1



Activity 1: Stakeholder-Actor Map

2	NYC Mayor	Residents
	?	?

Steps:

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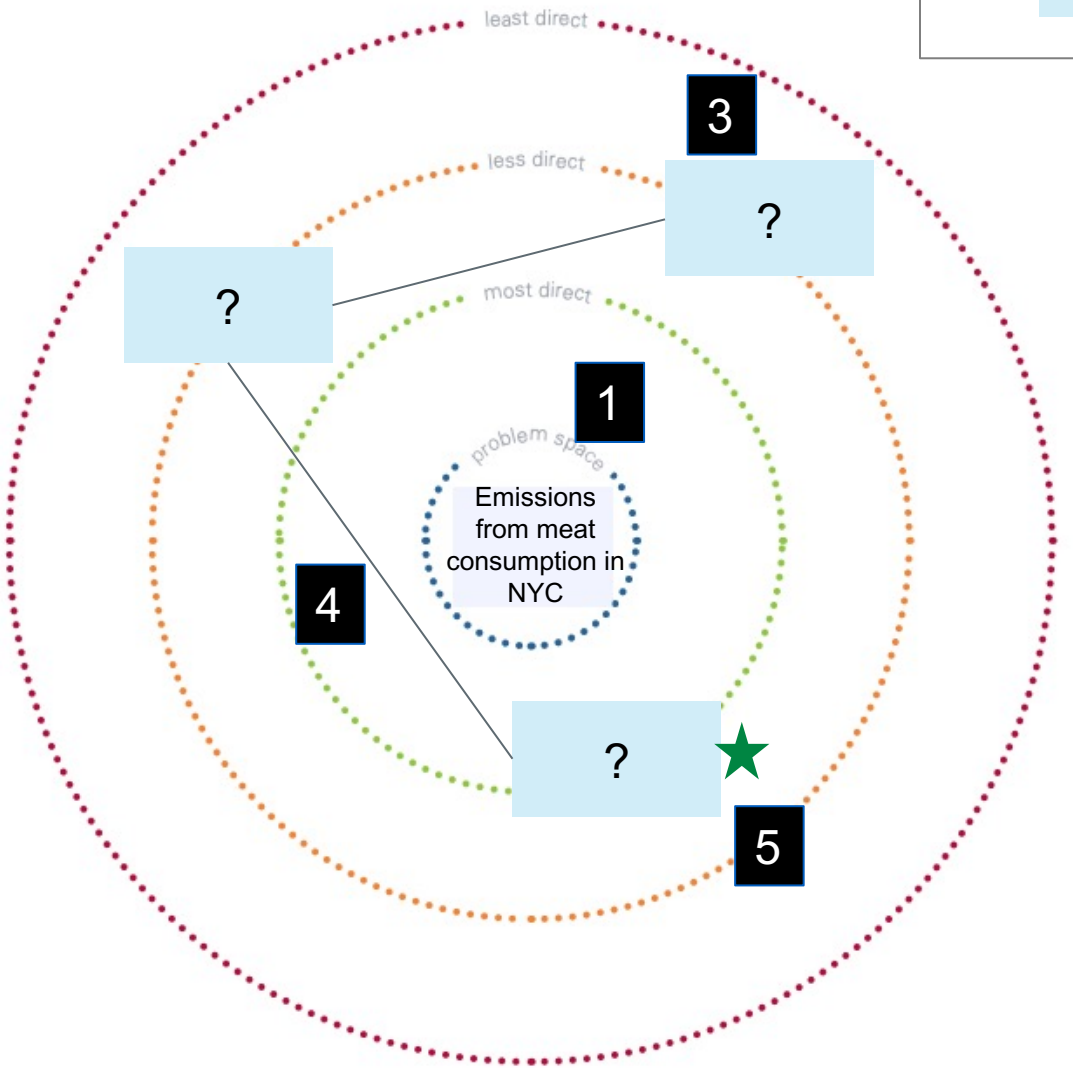
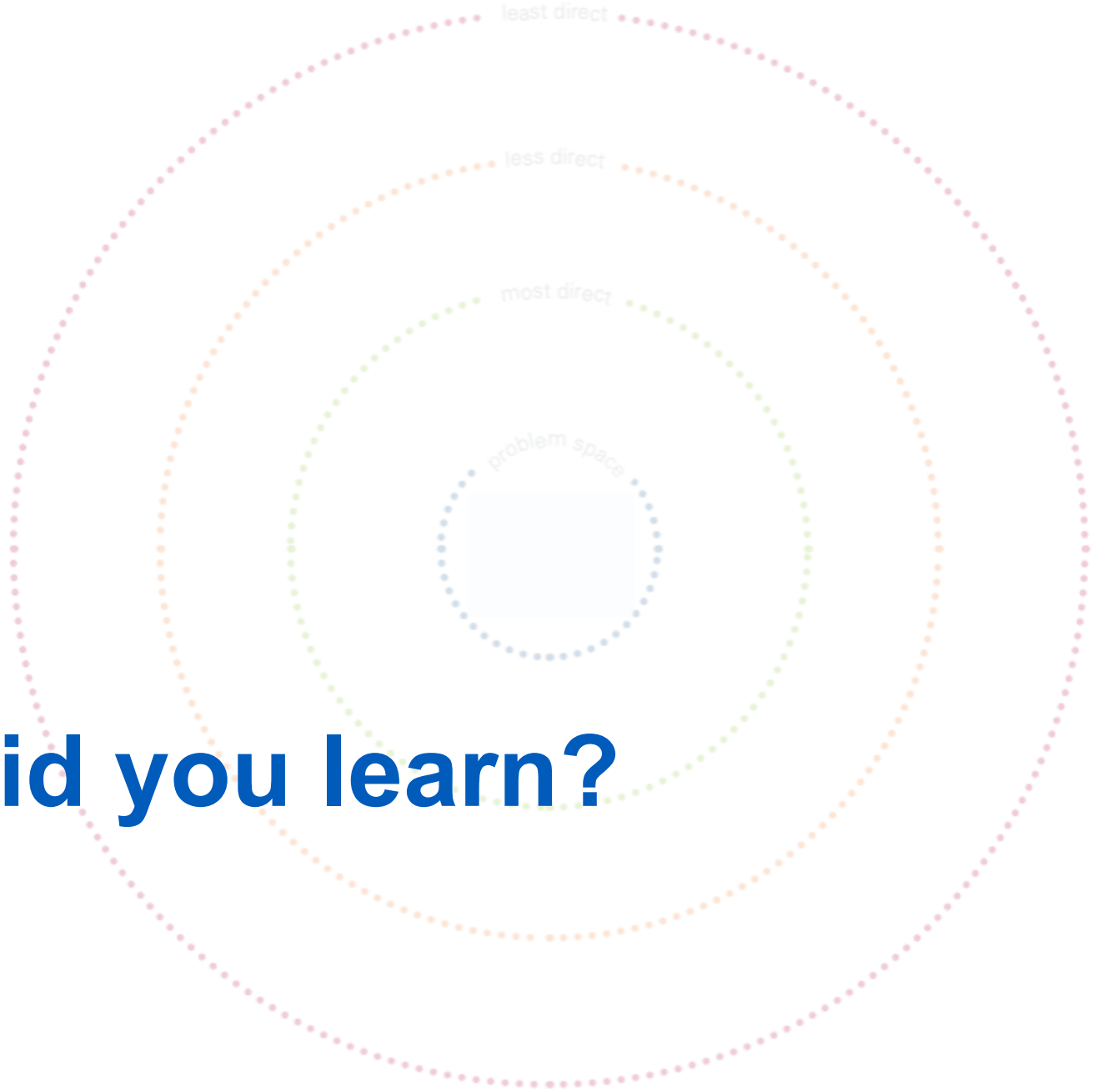




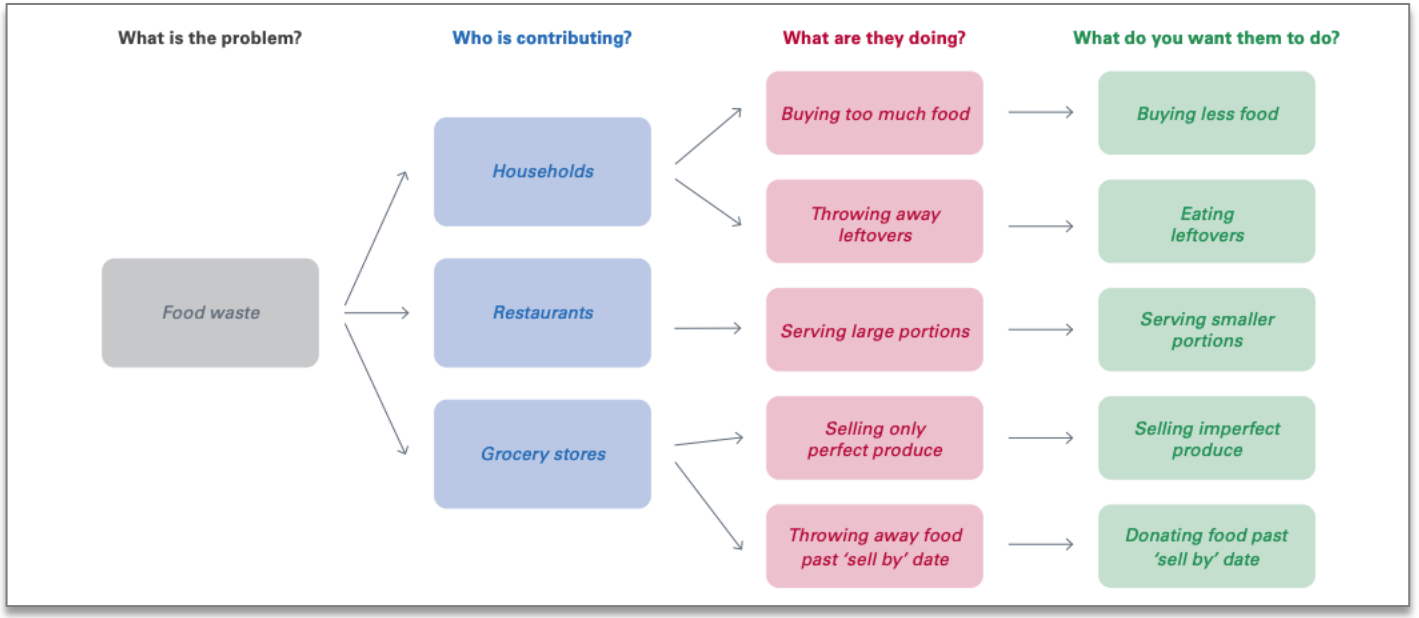
What did you learn?

Movement Break

Example: Problem-Behavior-Actor Map

Steps:

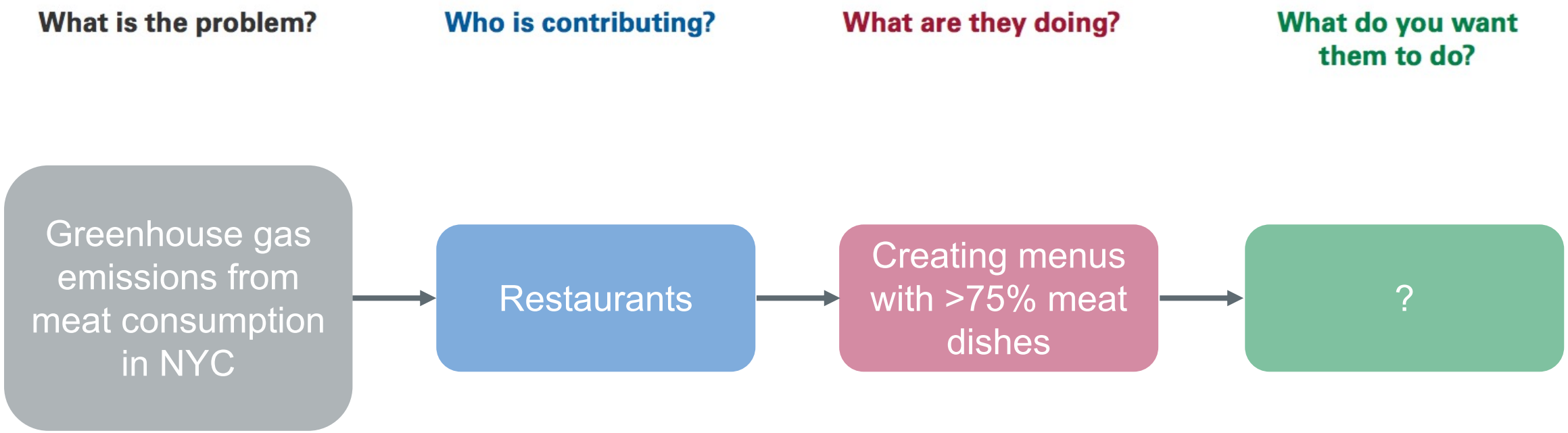
1. State the problem.
2. Identify actors who are contributing to the problem.
3. List the behaviors of what these actors are doing or not doing.
4. Identify the desired behavior or what you want them to do.
5. Draw lines between related actors and behaviors.



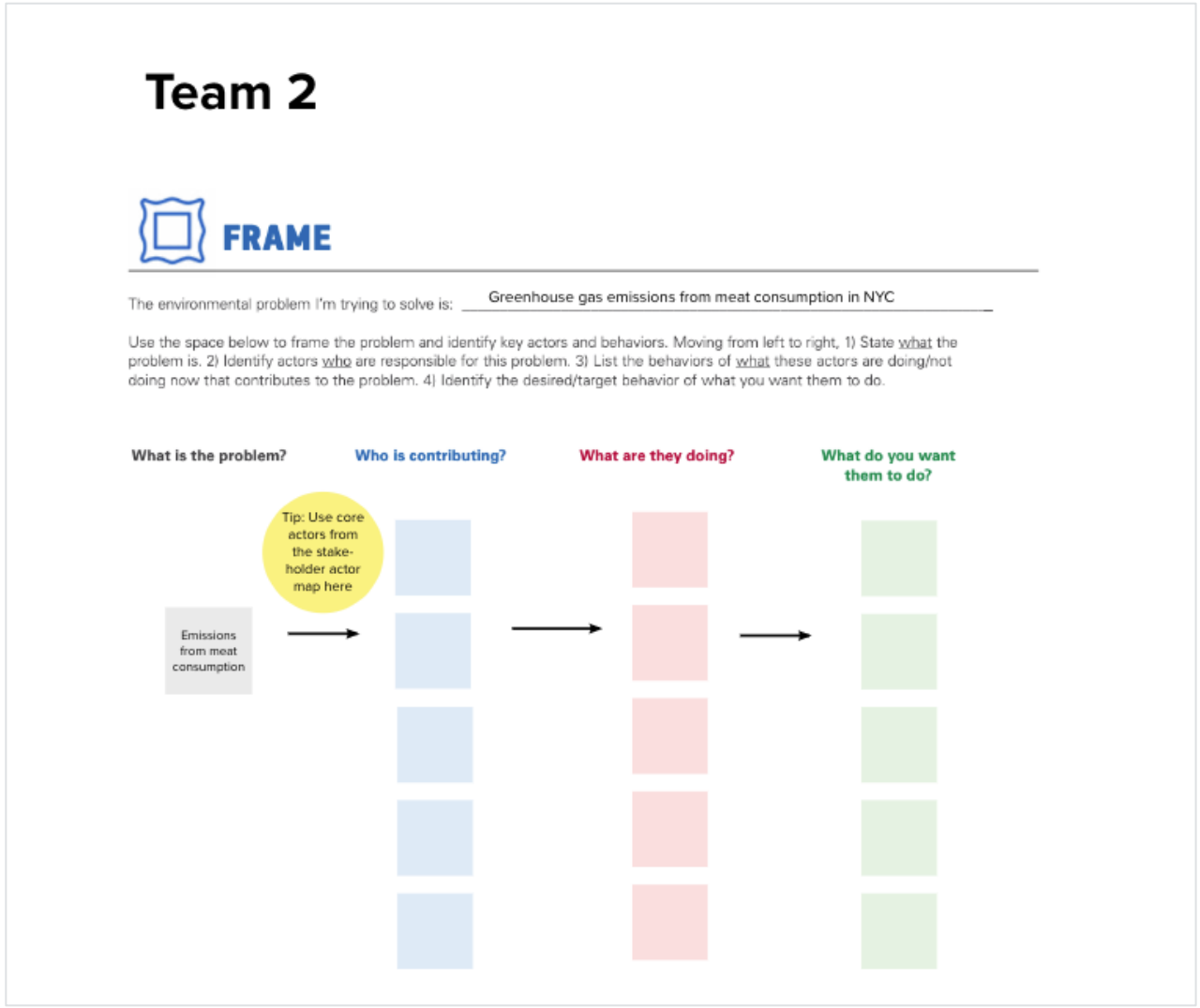
Key Questions

- What is most feasible for you/your team to address in terms of time, skills, and resources?
- Where do you/your team have momentum, existing partnerships, and/or expertise?
- Where are other groups already working and where are there gaps?
- What behaviors are most impactful for addressing the larger environmental problem?
- Where are there synergies between your set of behaviors or actors?

Activity 2: Problem-Behavior-Actor Map



Break outs: Tips



Team 2

FRAME

The environmental problem I'm trying to solve is: Greenhouse gas emissions from meat consumption in NYC

Use the space below to frame the problem and identify key actors and behaviors. Moving from left to right, 1) State what the problem is. 2) Identify actors who are responsible for this problem. 3) List the behaviors of what these actors are doing/not doing now that contributes to the problem. 4) Identify the desired/target behavior of what you want them to do.

Activity 2: Problem-Behavior-Actor Map

Steps:

1. State the problem.
2. Identify actors who are contributing to the problem.
3. List the behaviors of what these actors are doing or not doing.
4. Identify the desired behavior or what you want them to do.
5. Draw lines between related actors and behaviors.

What did you learn?

Closing & Next Steps

Ideas for Next Steps

- Share these tools with your grantees to help them define their behavior change challenges at the start of their programs
- Use these tools to clearly define or narrow the behaviors that connect to your foundation's story of impact
- Discuss key questions on where you could fill gaps in the system, support important actors or stakeholders, or collaborate with partners
- What other ideas come to mind?

Behavior Change & Climate Philanthropy Series

December 8 (tomorrow)

- 10:00-11:30am ET: Evaluating behavior change programs
- 2:00-3:00pm ET: Making the case for behavior change

March 2023

- Funders' Roundtable

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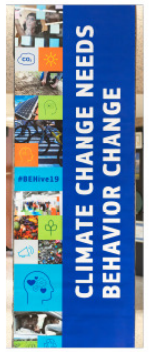
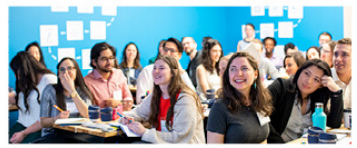

CLIMATE CHANGE NEEDS
BEHAVIOR CHANGE
#BEHive19



¡NOSOTROS
INNOVAMOS!

climate
change
needs
behavior
change
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