Scale, power, and shifting the status quo

Understanding how social movements are different from other social change efforts
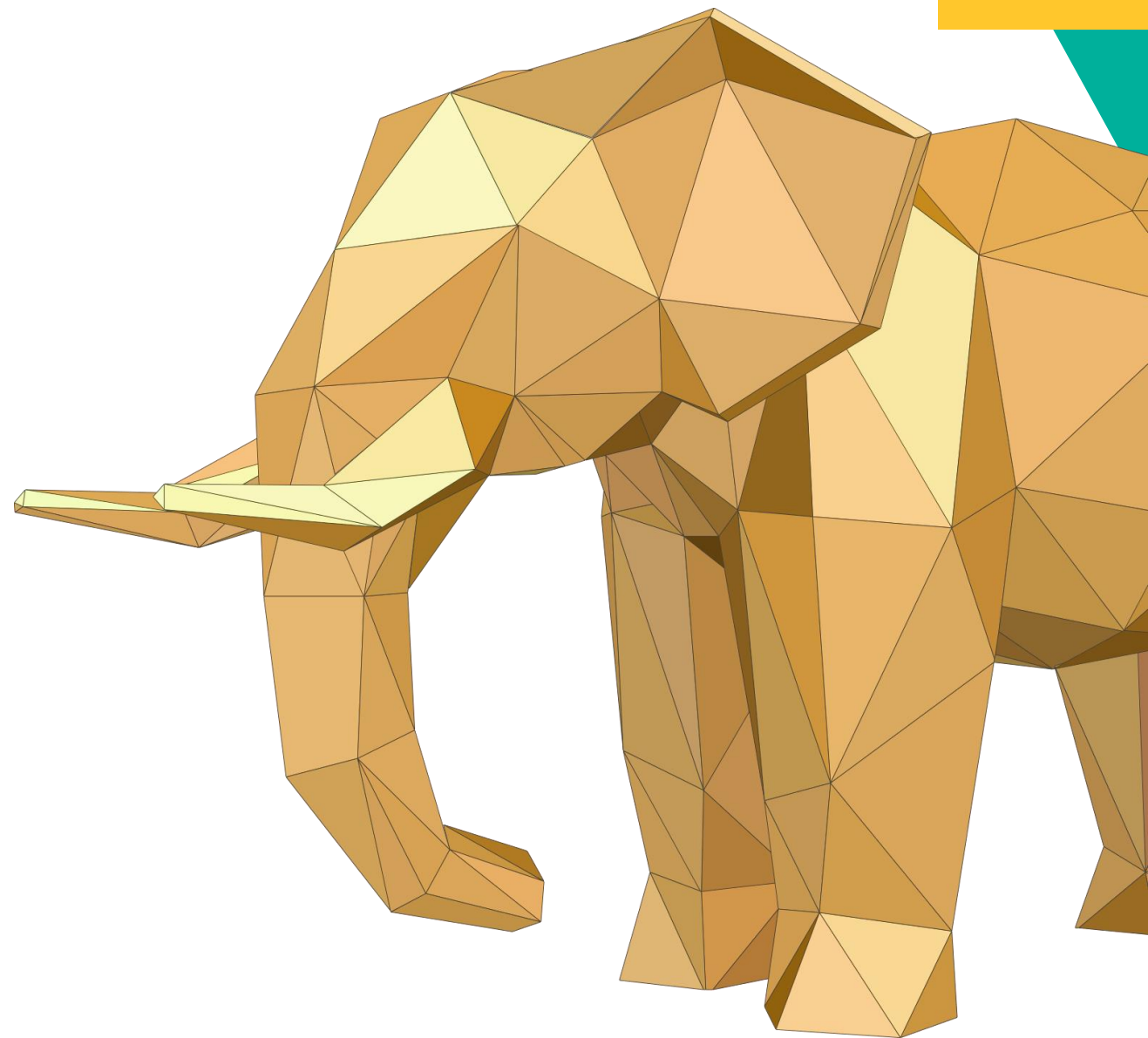
AEA
November 14, 2019

Social change

Session Roadmap

Look at two complementary sets of ideas about social change types, one organized around **power building concepts** and the other around other kinds of **social change approaches**.

- Clarify what **movements are and are not**, and if its not a movement, give you some ideas for **other types of social change**.

- Share ideas about **how to use these ideas** in your work, with social change makers, and funders.

- **Collect your feedback** to strengthen these frameworks as they are works in progress.

Power Concepts for Transformative Social Change

Social Movement Learning Project

Social Movement Learning Project

- Goal: Develop knowledge about *how social movements build power* in order to design *more appropriate planning and learning* approaches to *support movement building*

- Research Process: Over *50 conversations*, a literature review of *80 articles*, and vetting with movement builders from *6 movements*
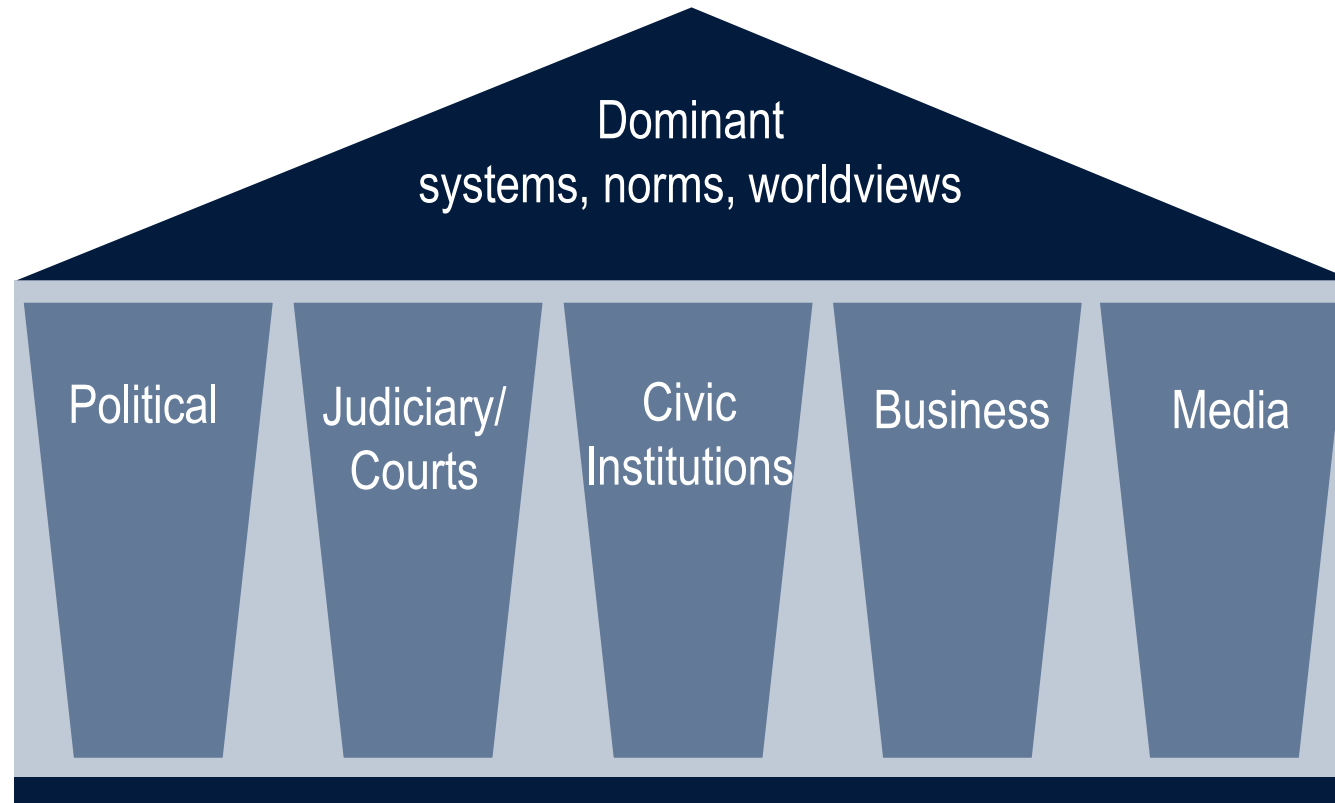
Why power?

Social Movement Theory of Change

Movements seek to topple, transform, and/or absorb the institutional, cultural, and social pillars that prop up the status quo.

Social Movement Theory of Change
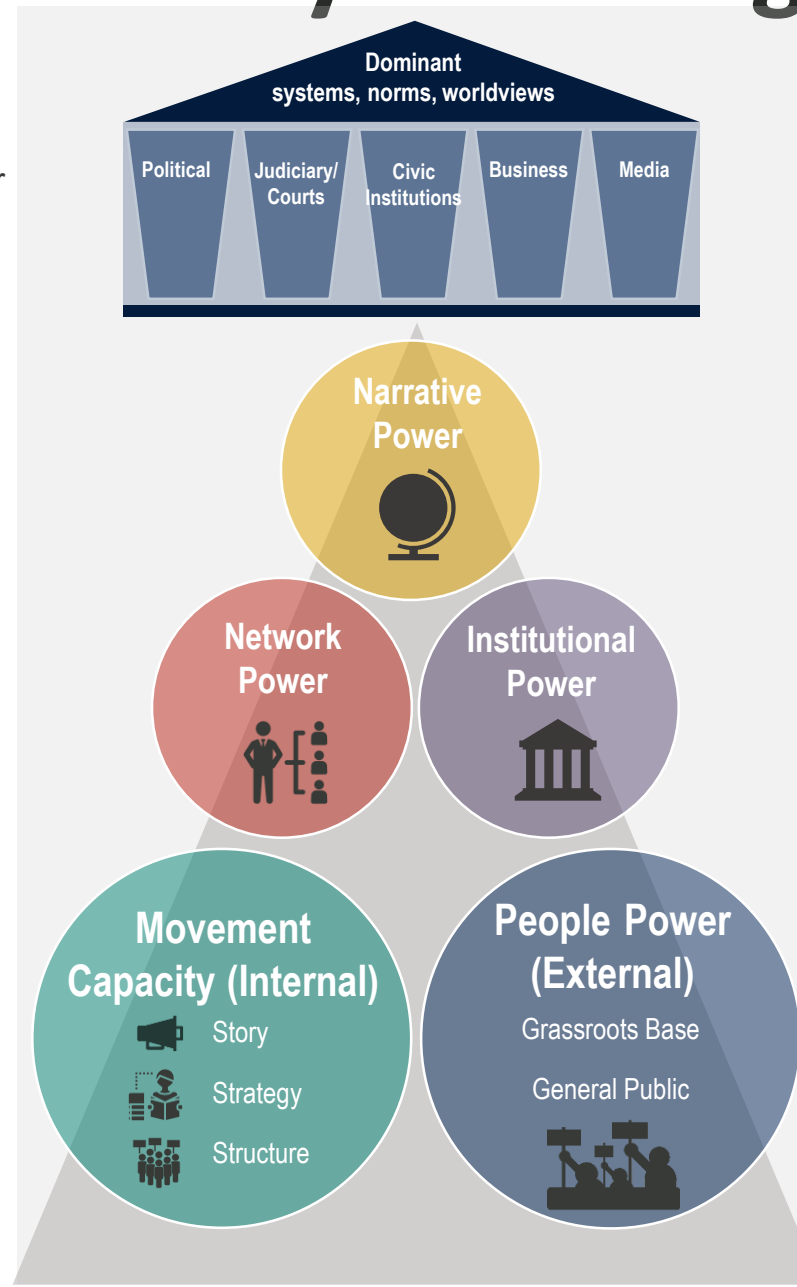
Movement Vision

Toppling, transforming, and/or absorbing the **institutional, cultural, and social pillars** that prop up the status quo.

Movement Impact

Putting **Movement Power Base** into action.

Movement Power Base

Building a **foundation of power** for social movements.

Dominant systems, norms, worldviews

Political | Judiciary/Courts | Civic Institutions | Business | Media

Narrative Power

Network Power

Institutional Power

Movement Capacity (Internal)
- Story
- Strategy
- Structure

People Power (External)
Grassroots Base
General Public

Laying the Foundation

Movement Capacity

Laying the foundation for a healthy movement.

Story
- Vision, frames, and messaging
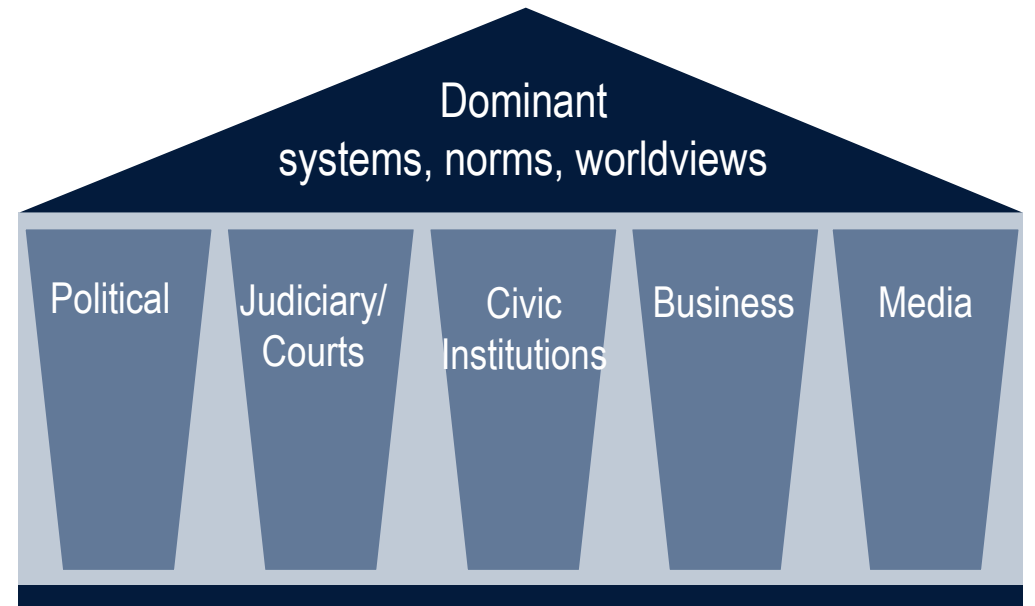- Narrative infrastructure including multiple pathways for dissemination

Strategy
- Organizing
- Mass protest
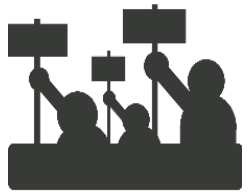- Direct action/civil disobedience
- Advocacy

Structure
- Grassroots base
- Leadership pipeline
- Networks/alliances

Movement Vision

Toppling, transforming, and/or **absorbing** the institutional, cultural, and social pillars that prop up the status quo.

Dominant systems, norms, worldviews

| Political | Judiciary/ Courts | Civic Institutions | Business | Media |

People Power

Power to build, mobilize, and sustain a grassroots base and large-scale public support.

How is the movement shifting public support for the movement goals?

Active Grassroots Support	Active Public Support*	Passive Public Support*
Grassroots base is engaging in and leading the movement cause.	**General public** takes action on behalf of the movement cause.	**General public** is supportive of the movement cause but not taking action.

Engler, Paul & Sophie Lasoff. 2017. Resistance Guide: how to sustain the movement to win.

Network Power

Power with network of organizational allies, that work together in service of a shared movement vision and goal.

How is the movement building alignment and power with a network of diverse organizations?

Connectivity	Alignment

Organizations are connected to and communicating with one another.
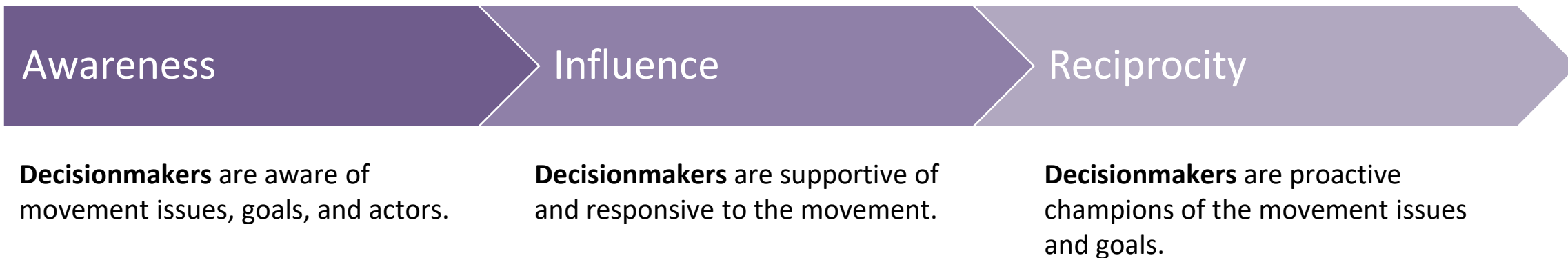
**Organizations** are aligned around movement goals and vision.

Institutional Power

Power to influence and change the who, how, and what of visible decisionmaking.

How is the movement impacting or shifting visible decisionmaking?

Awareness	Influence	Reciprocity
Decisionmakers are aware of movement issues, goals, and actors.	**Decisionmakers** are supportive of and responsive to the movement.	**Decisionmakers** are proactive champions of the movement issues and goals.

*Visible decisionmaking: Contests over interests that are "visibly negotiated in public spaces with established rules." (Just Associates)
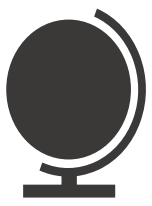
Narrative Power

Power to transform and hold public narratives and limit the influence of opposing narratives.*

How is the movement shifting dominant public narratives?

Visibility	Alignment	Adoption
Movement issues are **increasingly visible** (not necessarily positive) in the media, popular culture, and among the public.	**Increasing narrative alignment** in the media, popular culture, and among the public, indicating an increase in issue salience and support.	**Movement narrative become dominant**

*Public narrative: "A story that, when told in many different ways, can shift public consciousness and change what is possible." (Grassroots Policy Project)

Social Movement Theory of Change
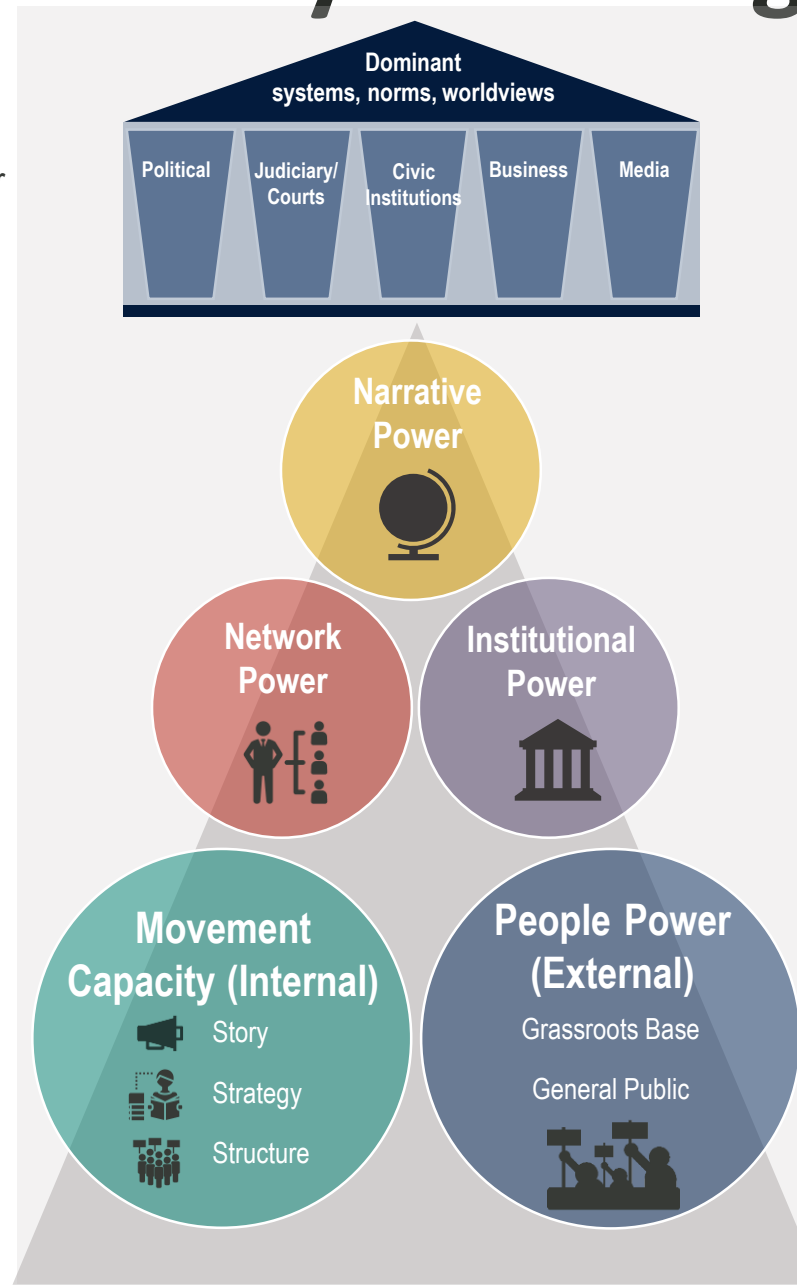
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So, are you funding or evaluating a movement…or something else?

THE MIS(USE) OF MOVEMENT LANGUAGE

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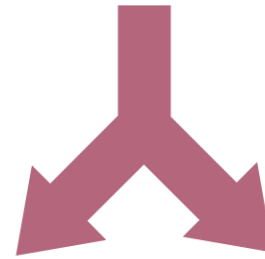
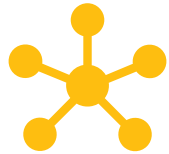DANGER
NO SELFIE ZONE

BY ORDER
Dept. of Tourism
Goa

DRISHTI

FIELD BUILDING

WHAT IS A FIELD?

"A community of organizations and individuals working together to solve a common set of problems, develop a common body of theory and knowledge, or advance and apply common practices."

ORSIMPACT

WHAT IS A FIELD?

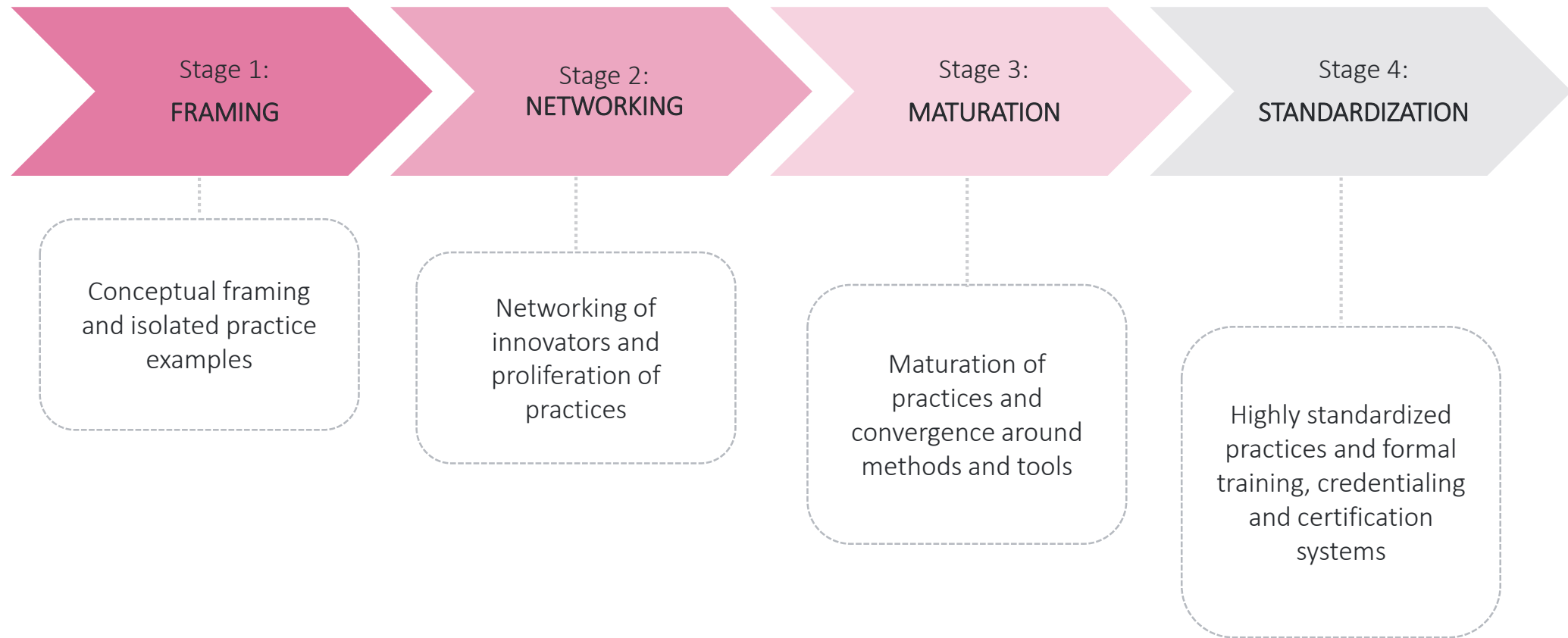## FIELD BUILDING INCLUDES:

- Generating a relevant body of research and evidence

- Strengthening organizational and professional development systems

- Establishing a set of shared standards and best practices

- Increasing the alignment of a wide spectrum of actors to facilitate complementary and coordinated action.

"A community of organizations and individuals working together to solve a common set of problems, develop a common body of theory and knowledge, or advance and apply common practices."

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USEFUL FRAMEWORKS: STRONG FIELD FRAMEWORK

COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION
Shared identity	Alignment of stakeholders around a common purpose and set of core values.
Standards of practice	Codified practices, exemplary models, and credentialing for practitioners.
Knowledge base	Credible body of evidence and a community of researchers working to advance practice.
Leadership and grassroots support	Influential leadership and exemplary organizations, with a broad base of support from major constituencies.
Funding and policy support	An enabling policy environment and dedicated funding streams.

Source: The Bridgespan Group (2009) The Strong Field Framework

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USEFUL FRAMEWORKS: MATURATION OF A FIELD

Stage 1:
FRAMING

Stage 2:
NETWORKING

Stage 3:
MATURATION

Stage 4:
STANDARDIZATION

Conceptual framing and isolated practice examples

Networking of innovators and proliferation of practices

Maturation of practices and convergence around methods and tools

Highly standardized practices and formal training, credentialing and certification systems

Source: Innovation Network for Communities. "Fields, Innovations and Places: Three Different Strategies for Social Innovators" (2009)

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WHY THE CONFUSION?

SHARED ELEMENTS

- Requires multiple actors engaging in coordinated work across different areas

- Multidisciplinary effort

- Intended to be catalytic– take on a 'life of its own'

- Outcomes tend to be broad, ambitious, aimed at transformative social change

- May show up as *part of* a social movement strategy
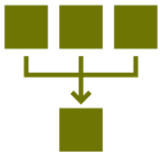
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IMPLICATIONS FOR MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

Is there clarity about the most strategic or impactful entry points to support field development?

How are investments or efforts toward field building playing out?

What outcomes could result from particular strategies and investments?

What is the evidence of progress on expected or hoped-for outcomes?

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Movement Capacity Resources

These resources provide guidance for assessing the health and capacity of social movements.

- American Jewish World Service. **Mapping Social Movements.**

- Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice. 2009. **Movement Building Indicators.**

- Engler, Paul, Sophie Lasoff, Carlos Saavedra. 2018. **Funding Social Movements.**

- Global Fund for Women. 2018. **Measuring the Capacity of Social Movements.**

- Management Assistance Group. 2018. **Tool for Mapping Successful Movements.**

- Pastor, Manuel, Jennifer Ito, Rachel Rosner. 2011. **Metrics that Matter for Building, Scaling, and funding social movements.**