SYSTEMS MAPPING

☑ WHAT IT IS

A visual map of a system or interconnected network we are considering, which shows the connections and causal relationships between the different parts of the system.

☑ WHEN TO USE IT

Use it to analyse the effects of change on different parts of a system. Systems mapping is useful at any time, including when you are making a strategic plan or going through an organisational change.

☑ WHY USE IT

It gives a snapshot of broad perspectives from multiple parts of a system. This helps you to see what the future looks like for the system, and how changes to the system will affect other aspects of the organisation.

Tip

If you have limited time, focus on the transformation scenario. The facilitators can use the business-as-usual and incremental improvements scenarios to demonstrate how to complete the activity.

WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

World Health Organization. 2022. Foresight approaches in global public health: a practical guide for WHO staff, page 28.

Free to download at www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240048393

HOW TO DO IT

Time
60–90 minutes

No. of participants
Part 1 – 5 to 8 people
Part 2 – < 50 people

Facilitation
One lead facilitator

Material

Butchers paper

Sticky notes

Coloured marker pens

Blue tack

Virtual collaboration platform
i.e., Google Docs, Miro, Conceptboard etc. (if online)

Time & Activity	Step	Description
Part 1 — 15 minutes	1	**In a small group, decide on the system to be investigated.** Using the systems map template, get the group to brainstorm all the different elements of the system.
15 minutes	2	**Once all the different elements of the system have been identified, it is now time to organise the cards to form a systems map.** Once all the cards have been organised, ask the group to review the systems map and identify if anything is missing. Once the systems map is completed, you can then move to Part 2.
Part 2 — 15 minutes	3	**Invite stakeholders to participate in the systems map exercise.** Explain how the systems map was created. Ask participants if there is anything that needs to be added to the systems map.
30 minutes	4	**Provide an overview of the activity for the participants.** *For example, what does transformation look like in 2050 for each of the different areas of the system. Participants then have 30 minutes to add sticky notes to the different parts of the system.*
15 minutes	5	**Review the systems map as a group.**
Post-exercise	6	**Make the map available to all participants.** Provide participants with a summary of the findings.

CASE Study 4
MAPPING THE SPC SYSTEM IN THREE DIFFERENT SCENARIOS

Once we had completed the driver mapping exercise, we used system mapping to create a visual map of the SPC system under three different scenarios. About 40 SPC staff and leaders took part in this exercise.

WHAT WE DID

We used Conceptboard for this exercise. Over 90 minutes, we asked five small groups to reflect on what the future could be for SPC in three scenarios:

1. **Business as usual** – the world has changed but SPC has stayed the same

2. **Incremental improvements** – SPC has made continuous, incremental improvements

3. **Transformation** – SPC has been fundamentally transformed into a better version of itself

We gave the groups guiding questions, tailored to each scenario, to help focus their discussion and tell us what would need to change in each scenario.

These were the guiding questions we used for the transformation scenario:

o What would it look like if SPC was the best organisation at providing science for development?

o What changes, however radical, would it take to get there?

For each scenario they considered, participants added their comments to a system map. Afterwards, the whole group came together to share key insights and discuss next steps.
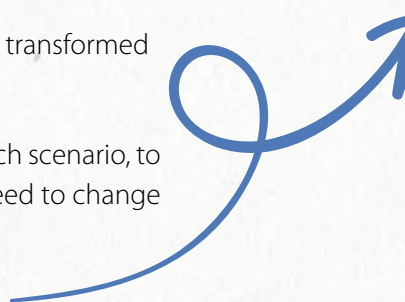
WHAT HAPPENED

The groups added comments to the system maps. These ranged from comments about the whole SPC system (such as the strategic direction and culture of the organisation) to specific technical comments (such as where staff work and which organisations SPC should work with). The comments also covered what SPC should retain, optimise or transform.

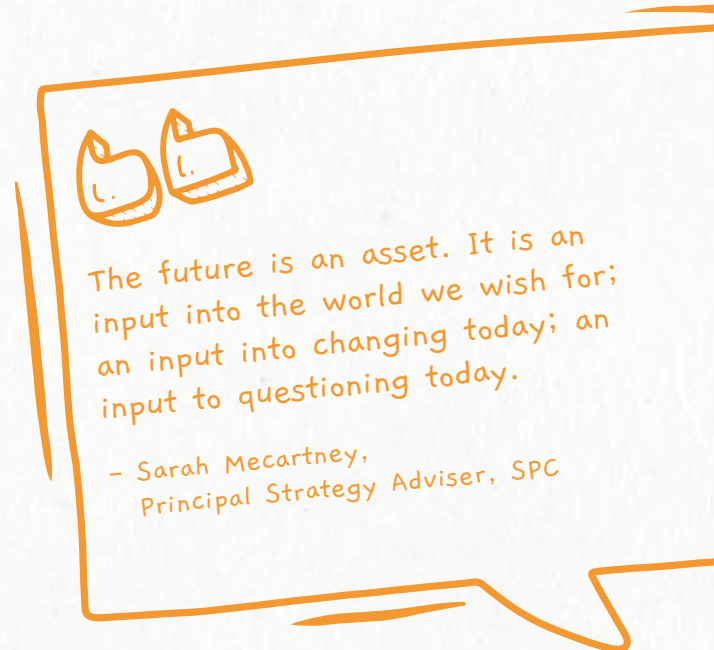**We synthesised the comments into 11 themes:**

1. SPC culture
1. Corporate activities
2. Integrated work across divisions
3. Capabilities and capacity building
4. Member relationships, engagement and governance
5. Outcomes for Pacific people, cultures and environments
6. Funding and international relations
7. Collaborative partnerships
8. External presence and identity
9. Centralised/decentralised workforce
10. Staff well-being

For each theme, we asked participants to identify the vision, challenges and potential solutions.

The systems map in Figure 4 was used by SPC staff to imagine what a transformed SPC in 2040 would look like in each of the different areas i.e. capabilities, capacity development, partner organisations and approaches, Pacific people, culture and places etc. It was developed specifically for this exercise by the University of Queensland Centre of Policy Futures in collaboration with SPC staff (see Figure 4).

The future is an asset. It is an input into the world we wish for; an input into changing today; an input to questioning today.

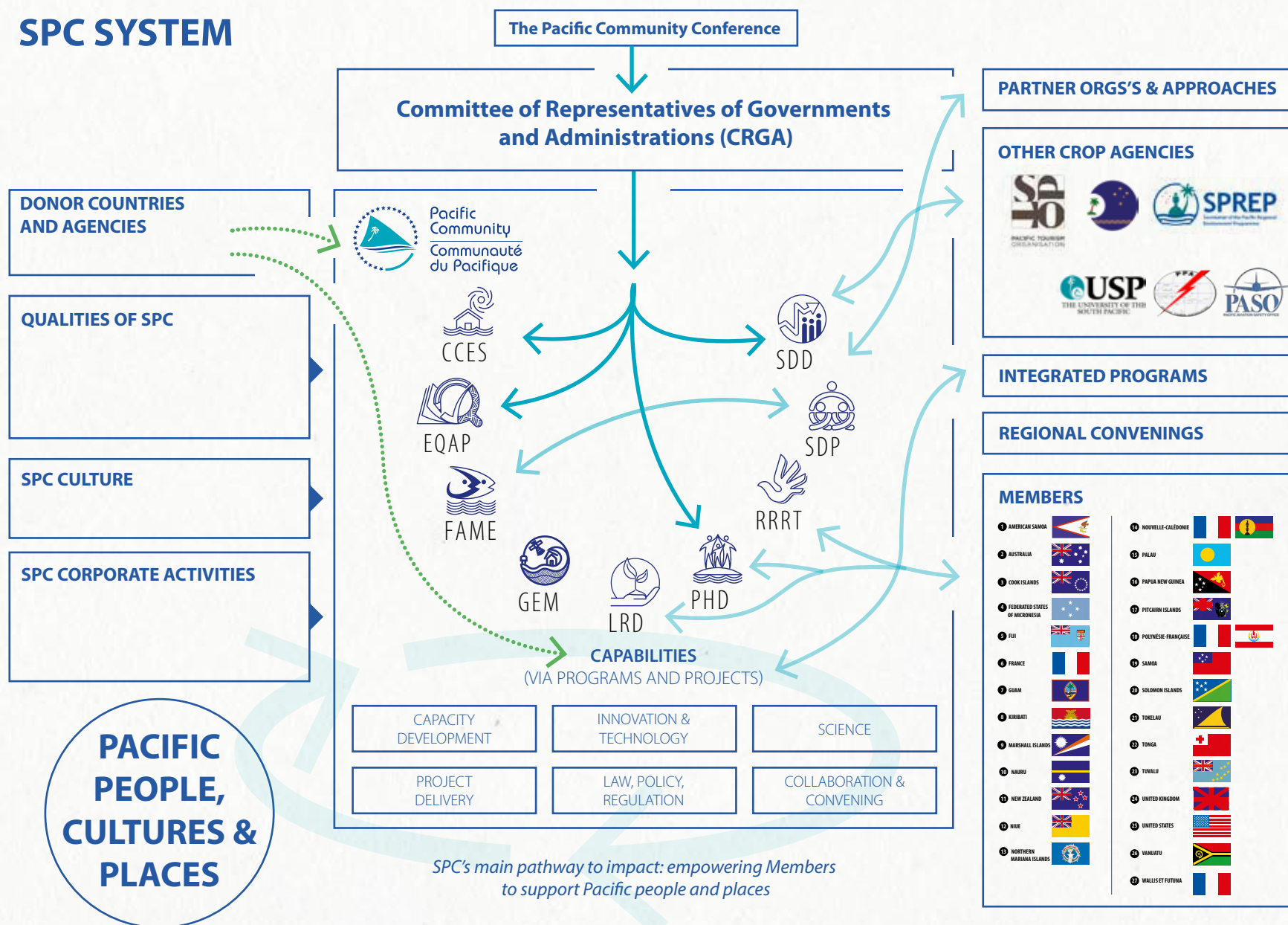– Sarah Mecartney,
Principal Strategy Adviser, SPC

WHAT WE LEARNT

Staff found this exercise exciting, as they could imagine a transformed SPC, and what it would look like in their area and in relation to other changes in the system. The system maps are useful resources that we can use when we talk to leaders about strategic direction.

Figure 4:
SPC systems map in 2020

SPC SYSTEM

The Pacific Community Conference

Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA)

PARTNER ORGS'S & APPROACHES

OTHER CROP AGENCIES

DONOR COUNTRIES AND AGENCIES

Pacific Community
Communauté du Pacifique

QUALITIES OF SPC

SPC CULTURE

SPC CORPORATE ACTIVITIES

CCES

EQAP

FAME

GEM

LRD

PHD

SDD

SDP

RRRT

INTEGRATED PROGRAMS

REGIONAL CONVENINGS

CAPABILITIES
(VIA PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS)

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY	SCIENCE
PROJECT DELIVERY	LAW, POLICY, REGULATION	COLLABORATION & CONVENING

PACIFIC PEOPLE, CULTURES & PLACES

SPC's main pathway to impact: empowering Members to support Pacific people and places

MEMBERS

1. AMERICAN SAMOA
2. AUSTRALIA
3. COOK ISLANDS
4. FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA
5. FIJI
6. FRANCE
7. GUAM
8. KIRIBATI
9. MARSHALL ISLANDS
10. NAURU
11. NEW ZEALAND
12. NIUE
13. NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
14. NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE
15. PALAU
16. PAPUA NEW GUINEA
17. PITCAIRN ISLANDS
18. POLYNÉSIE-FRANÇAISE
19. SAMOA
20. SOLOMON ISLANDS
21. TOKELAU
22. TONGA
23. TUVALU
24. UNITED KINGDOM
25. UNITED STATES
26. VANUATU
27. WALLIS ET FUTUNA

Source: SPC and University of Queensland Centre for Policy Futures