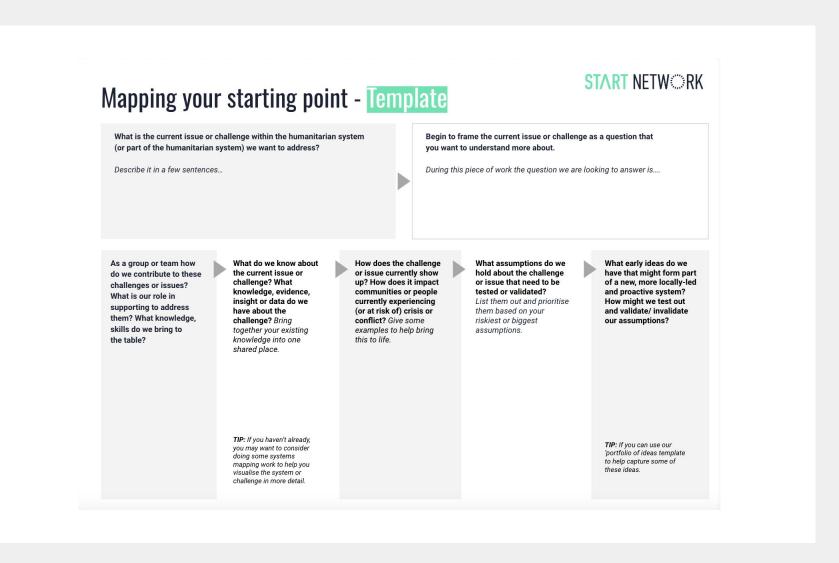# Mapping your starting point - Guidance

## About this tool

'Mapping your starting point' is a simple set of questions that you can work through as a group to help start your systems change work or project. It is there to help make sure that everyone in the team/ group has a shared understanding of the problems you're trying to address and what you're hoping to achieve from the work.

We suggest working through these questions as group or team in a workshop setting and you leave with a clear 'starting question' that you're looking to answer.

## How to use this tool

### Step 1

- Based on the early question or problem you are looking to address, bring together a cross-discipline, cross-team group of people into a workshop.
- Consider whose voices might be missing and find ways to meaningfully include these people or groups in your work. Map your starting point, making sure to have a diverse range of experiences, knowledge and wisdom in the group.

### Step 2

- Allow the group a couple of hours to work through the questions included on this template.
- You may want to consider bringing in other tools or frameworks to help you answer some of the questions. For example using a systems mapping approach to better understand your problem or challenge.

### Step 3

- Once you've worked through all of the questions, try to end on a single question that you are trying to answer or explore further. You will use this to revisit throughout your work.

### Step 4

- Capture any actions or gaps that come from your discussions.
- Where you have gaps in knowledge, insight or wisdom, think about how you will address them, and what your plan for the work will look like.

# Mapping your starting point - Template

**What is the current issue or challenge within the humanitarian system (or part of the humanitarian system) we want to address?**

*Describe it in a few sentences…*

**Begin to frame the current issue or challenge as a question that you want to understand more about.**

*During this piece of work the question we are looking to answer is….*

**As a group or team how do we contribute to these challenges or issues? What is our role in supporting to address them? What knowledge, skills do we bring to the table?**

**What do we know about the current issue or challenge? What knowledge, evidence, insight or data do we have about the challenge?** *Bring together your existing knowledge into one shared place.*

**TIP:** *If you haven't already, you may want to consider doing some systems mapping work to help you visualise the system or challenge in more detail.*

**How does the challenge or issue currently show up? How does it impact communities or people currently experiencing (or at risk of) crisis or conflict?** *Give some examples to help bring this to life.*

**What assumptions do we hold about the challenge or issue that need to be tested or validated?** *List them out and prioritise them based on your riskiest or biggest assumptions.*

**What early ideas do we have that might form part of a new, more locally-led and proactive system? How might we test out and validate/ invalidate our assumptions?**

**TIP:** *If you can use our 'portfolio of ideas template to help capture some of these ideas.*