THE WICKED7 PROJECT GUIDELINES

INEQUALITY

THE DEATH of NATURE

POPULATION & MIGRATION

HEALTH & LIVELIHOOD

WORK & TECH

POWER & CORRUPTION

HATE & CONFLICT

INEQUALITY

W7
As the world faces a growing number of existential challenges, our governments and institutions are failing us precisely at the moment we need them most.

But what if we could come together to map the causes of the world’s most urgent problems? The Wicked7 Project is an extension of the ecosystem of wicked problems developed by Christian Sarkar and Philip Kotler.

Participants will be introduced to a new wicked problem discovery tool, and asked to create their own cause and effect maps for the problem or problems they choose.

All maps submitted will be judged by peers as well as a team of judges. Those selected will be acknowledged as contributors to the “wicked-pedia” – a reference map which integrates all seven wicked problems and the underlying causes.

Get Started
1. Read the rest of this guideline.
2. Start research and the mapping process.
4. Make changes; submit your revised map.
5. Stay connected – if any part or the whole of your map is selected, you will be invited to participate further.

Rewards

More info: www.wicked7.org
MAPPING THE CAUSES & EFFECTS

Begin with the problem. Try to define it clearly – in this case it’s Inequality.

Break down the problem into smaller, component problems. List them all.

Start asking **WHY** for each of the component problems: Ask why is this happening? What are the root causes? Keep asking **why** (remember the 5whys?). This process should give you the technical reasons why a problem is happening.

Now let’s look at **systemic** reasons. Ask what possible systemic reasons could have caused the problem – going back in time. History often holds the key to how and why a problem started as a chain of events and actions.

Ask: what happens next if we do nothing? This will give you some sense of the future, especially when you examine the systemic effects one by one.

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**WICKED PROBLEM #2 (W2) INEQUALITY**

Submission phase starts on May 1st, and will be open until May 31st, so be sure to sign up, and get involved!

*Mr. Peanut, by Clark Fox*
Begin by defining the problem based on observable and verifiable facts. Describe what the problem is and who or what it affects. How often?

Ask “why did this happen?” to go backwards in time – what are the sources of the problem? What evidence is there to show that this is a cause? Cite the articles, reports, or observations which support your premise.

Once you have identified the symptomatic or technical causes for a problem, begin exploring the possibility of underlying systemic causes. Are there economic reasons why this is happening? Social reasons? Historical reasons? By un-entangling the threads of events that led us to the present, it is possible to uncover the root-causes of our present-day problem. Again, cite the data or evidence to back up your claims.

Consider “what next” if the problem is not addressed. Consider the “impact chain” from individual to community to nation to planet. Use personas for convenience.

If a wicked problem is ignored, its impact multiplies across many systemic dimensions. What happens to the economic system (and all other underlying systems) for the individual in a specified community? Country? Planet?
**SYMPTOMS AND SYSTEMS**
The distinction between the two types of sources cannot be stressed enough. It is the systems-root-cause analysis which will likely un-entangle the causes we are looking for.

**CITE YOUR FINDINGS**
As you begin to research the causes and effects of specific problems, make sure to cite your sources of information.

**EXAMPLE**
**DOWNLOAD PDF**
**GENDER INEQUALITY + CLIMATE CHANGE**

![Image of a complex diagram illustrating the relationship between gender inequality and climate change, labeled with various symptoms and systems. The diagram includes labels such as "population inequality," "gender roles," "gender-based violence," and "climate change." A note at the bottom of the diagram states: "80% of people displaced by climate change are women."