

Systemic Investing Ecosystem Role Map

Map Introduction

This map visualizes roles and functions in the emerging ecosystem for financing systemic transformation, positioned along a resource↔change spectrum. One organization often plays multiple roles, and one role may be shared by many. Position is indicative, not fixed.

The living tree metaphor distinguishes three interdependent levels. When actors across all levels align, their combined efforts produce combinatorial effects far greater than any single intervention alone. This is a tool for collective sense-making, not definitive territory.

System Boundary

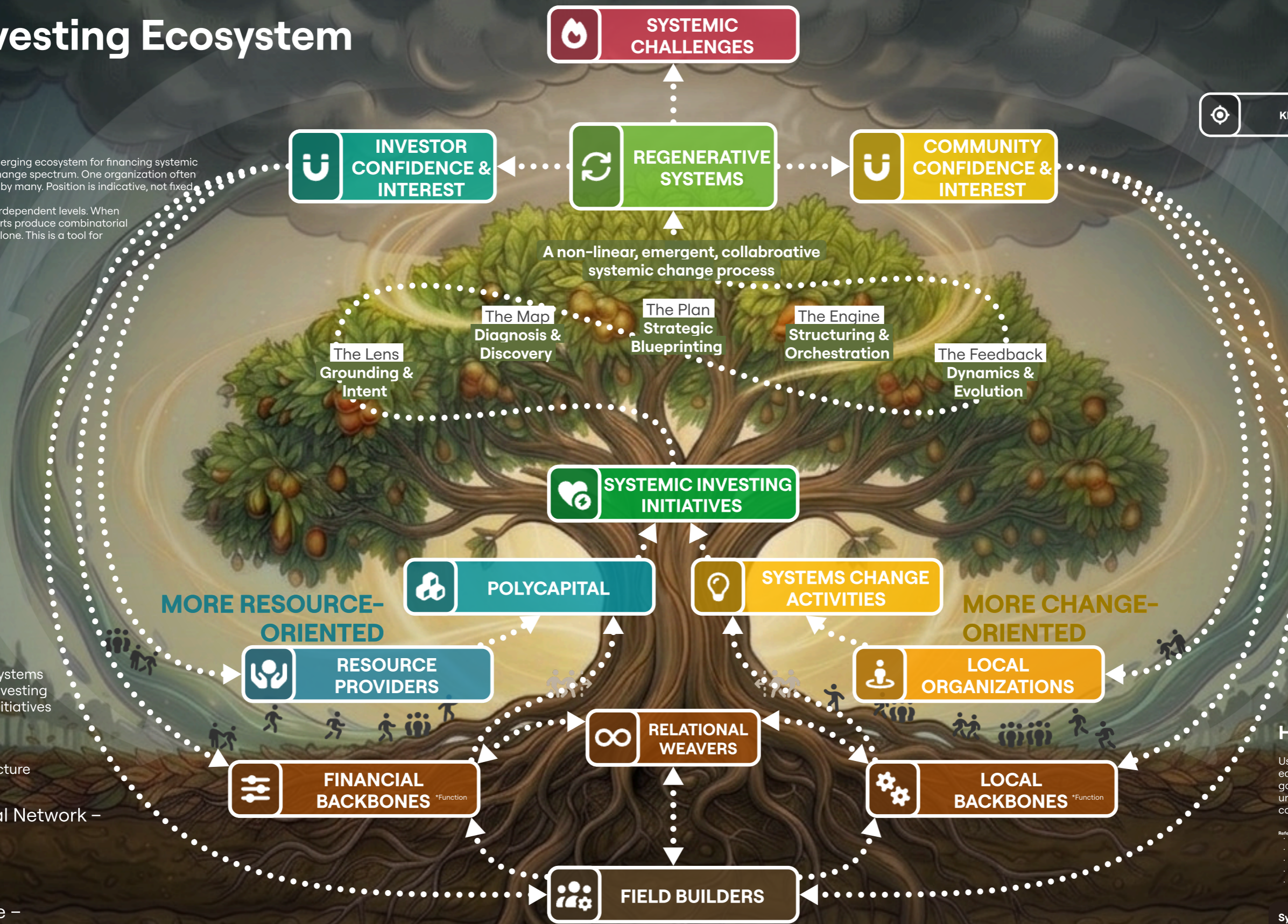
This map covers actors who intentionally deploy or coordinate capital to transform real-economy systems (food, energy, housing, etc.) using systems thinking approaches — spanning Resource Providers, Polycapital, Financial Backbones, Local Backbones, Systems Change Activities, Local Organizations, and Field Builders across the Resource Side and Change Side.

Not included: conventional investing without a systems lens, standard ESG or company-level impact investing, and sector-specific system maps (e.g., a food system or energy system map). Some actors practicing systemic approaches without being identified as such may not yet appear.

MICRO | Systems investing initiatives
— Trees & Fruits —

MESO | Infrastructure support
— Root System & Mycelial Network —

MACRO | Field building
— Soil, Water, Air, & Sunshine —



Legend

- Challenge
- Vision
- Change Side
- Resource Side
- Infrastructure

The Transformation Stages

.....▶ Nutrient Flow

Glossary

- Systemic Investing** — An approach to capital deployment designed for transforming real-economy systems (food, energy, housing, etc.) by leveraging systems thinking to analyze root causes and act on leverage points, typically across multiple asset classes through multi-stakeholder coalitions.
- Polycapital** — The combined use of diverse capital forms — economic (grants, debt, equity), social (networks, trust), cultural (narratives, knowledge), and symbolic (legitimacy, reputation) — rather than financial capital alone.
- Financial Backbone** — An entity dedicated to strategically mobilizing, coordinating, and deploying financial capital for catalyzing systems transformation — filling the gap between generic systems orchestration and purpose-driven capital deployment.
- Local Backbone** — A place-based organization providing coordination infrastructure and stewardship within a local ecosystem, connecting community needs with incoming resources.
- Capital Orchestrator** — A role within financial backbones responsible for mobilizing, coordinating, and deploying financial capital for systems transformation.
- System Steward** — A role within local backbones that nurtures and supports the evolution of the local ecosystem through relational coordination rather than top-down control.

How to Use This Map

Use this map to locate yourself within the ecosystem and examine your current initiatives for gaps — missing voices, underrepresented roles, or unsupported functions at any level — to build more complete coalitions for systemic change.

Reference

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