The Systems-Level Building Blocks include driving forces and conditions that are in larger systems outside the direct control of individual rural communities or regions. People and organizations that design, guide, and implement these systems must act to change them — and rural places and people can (and must) act together to influence them. These include a wide range of public and private systems, from regional and multi-state financial institutions, to state and federal policy and programs, to issue advocacy organizations, to information hubs and national media — and more. Each Building Block (1-10) is necessary because it has an impact on being able to achieve more widespread and equitable rural prosperity.

Use these Systems-Level Building Blocks to take stock, target action, and measure progress on the status of systems. Those who lead and work in systems can change them directly; rural people and organizations can exercise influence to guide that change. In either case, for each Building Block (1-10), ask:

- How “true” is this Building Block statement?
- What discriminatory practices or policies exist within the system that hinder progress?
- In the context of our work — locally or at the systems level — which of these Building Blocks are priorities for our action?
- What can we do to strengthen those priority Building Blocks?
- What would indicate progress in strengthening these Building Blocks? What would that progress look like over the next year?