

Theories of change stories of services, stories for people

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Good Things
Foundation

What is a Theory of Change?

Something that can capture and communicate the relationship between:

1. **Audiences** – the people who need your support or service and why
2. **Inputs** – the ‘stuff’ you have in place to engage and support people
3. **Activities** – the journey people take through your service
4. **Outputs** – what people now do or can do as a result
5. **Outcomes and final goal** – the change in people’s lives

Why would you want a theory of change?

- For funding applications
- For evaluation reports
- To explain what you do to partners or external organisations
- To communicate your impact
- To refine your model or service
- To understand what works

...to tell the story of the people you work with and for

What do they look like?

They're *variable* so they can be...

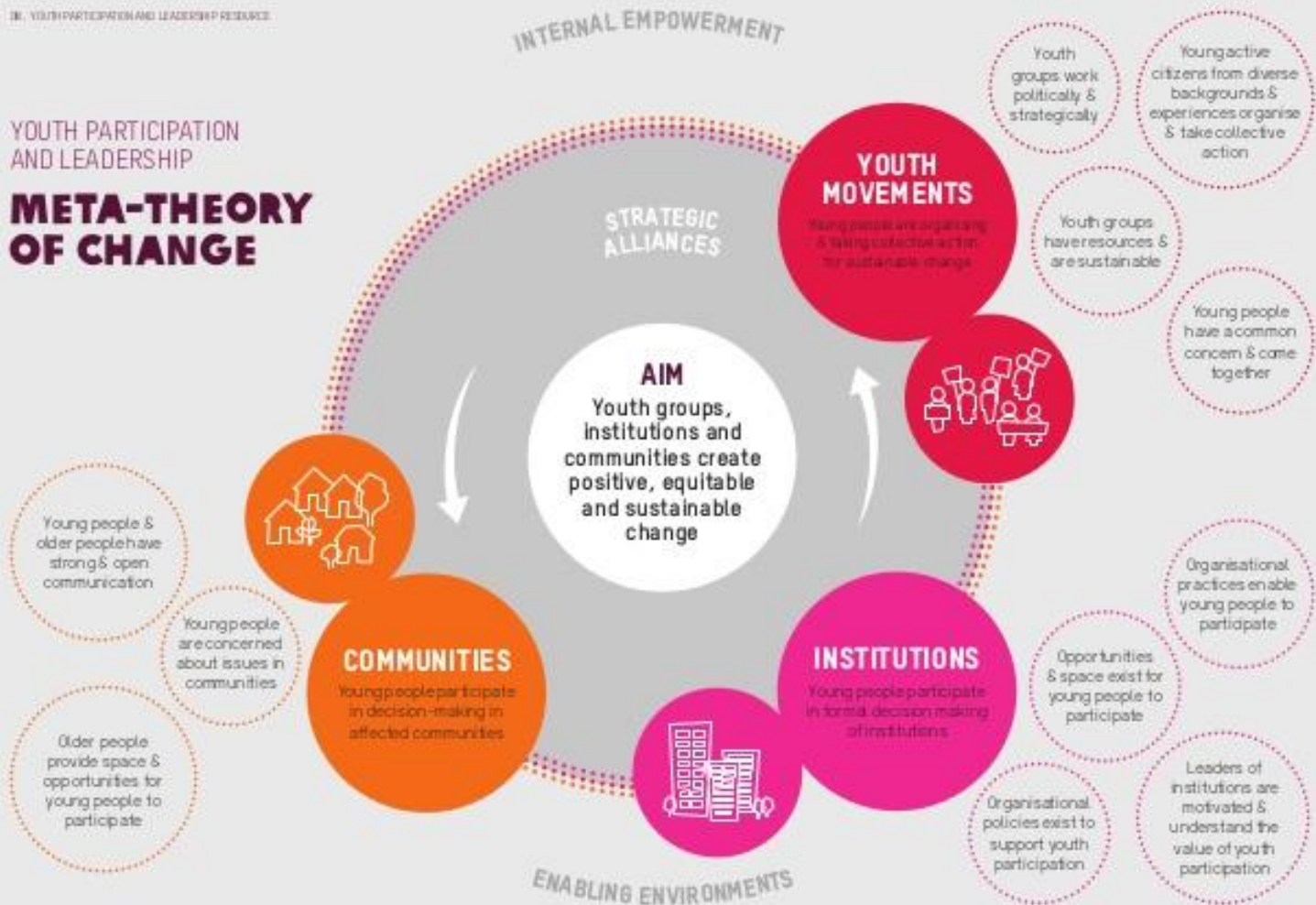
- A table
- A diagram or drawing
- A written paper or description
- A spoken narrative
- A film...

...most importantly they should be simple and easy to understand so people can and do use them

Oxfam Youth Participation and Leadership

YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP

META-THEORY OF CHANGE



Fairtrade

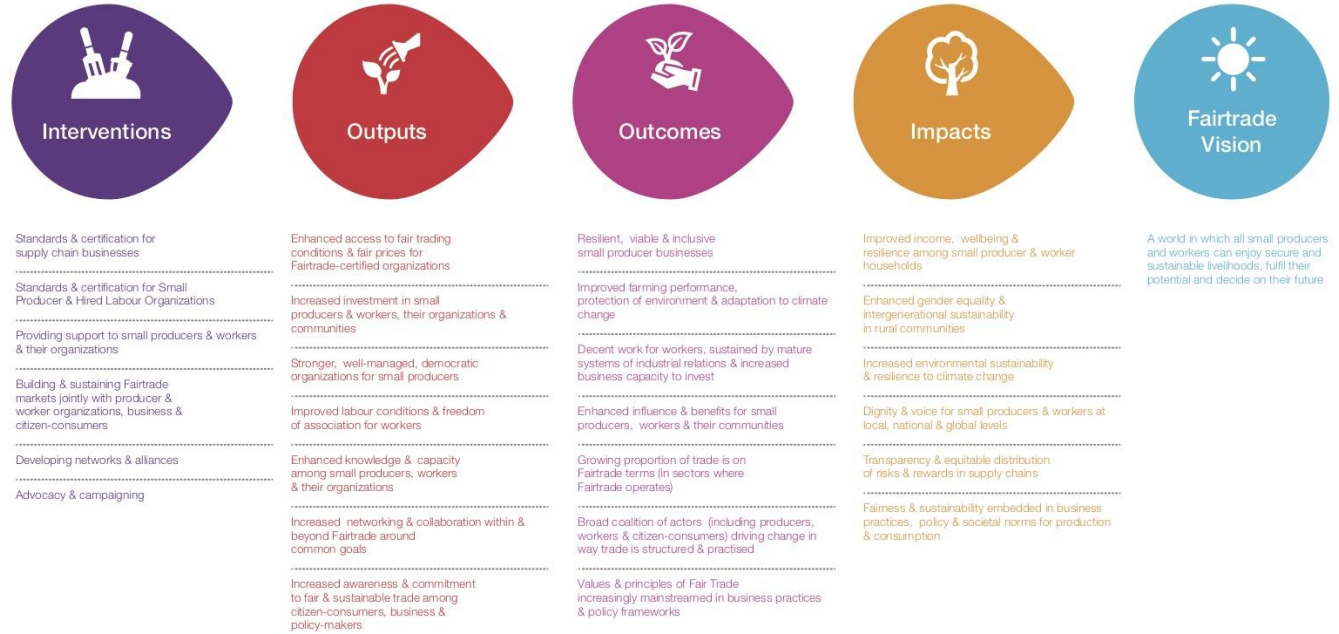
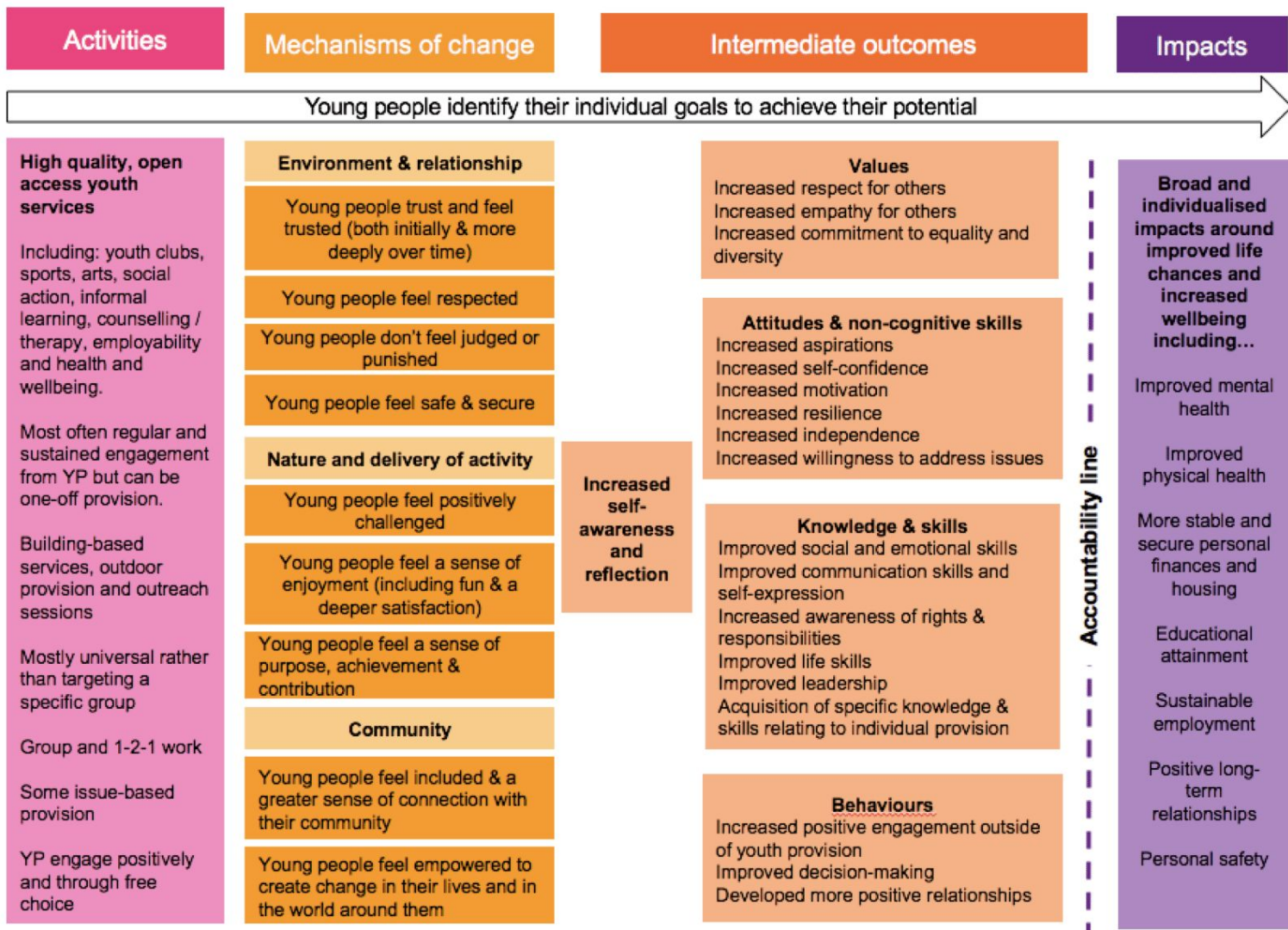


Figure 8

Fairtrade's Theory of Change

Increasing influence of contextual factors
Decreasing influence of Fairtrade

Youth Investment Fund



Developing our Theory of Change

- It needed to be human-centred
- It needed to be flexible i.e. not about one project
- It needed to be future proof (as far as possible)
- It needed to be accessible (in communication)
- It needed to explain the importance of people *and* networks

...I needed to convince our CEO that we needed one!

How we change the world

Good Things Foundation's Social Impact Theory of Change



How we change the world

We make change happen in three key ways. It involves individual behaviours and social change.

It starts with a long term goal: to change the world through digital technology.

Through our work we take individuals, communities and society from a position where they feel disempowered, isolated and uninspired to a point where a future is possible.

We have an impact in three different ways:

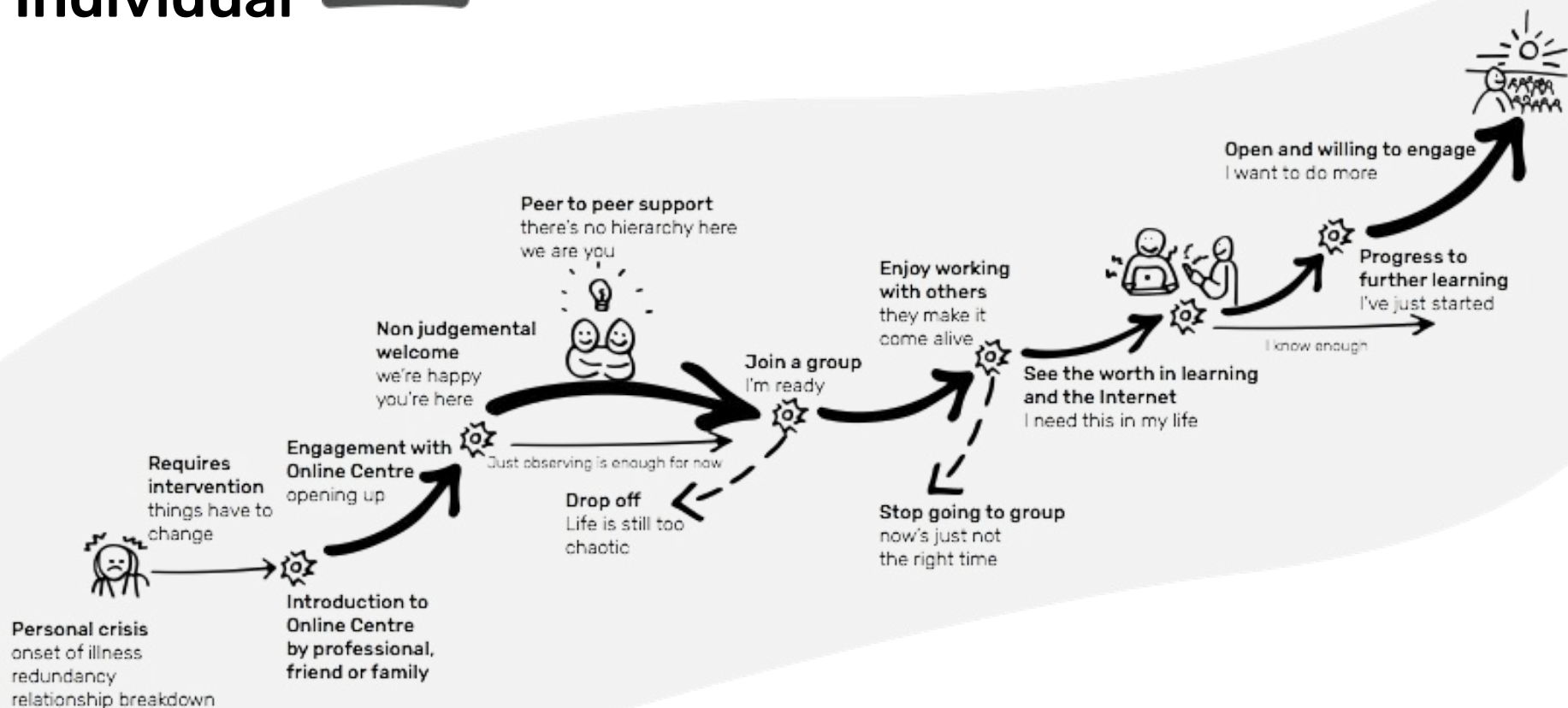
- At an individual level: having a positive impact on people
- At a community level: having a positive impact on groups, networks and institutions
- At a societal level: having a positive impact on public attitudes, behaviours and policy.

We design with, not for people which allows us to understand underlying behaviour and focus on their relationships. This allows us to see their challenges not just as problems, but the way everyone can play a role and take responsibility so society evolves, becomes stronger, more creative and more resilient.

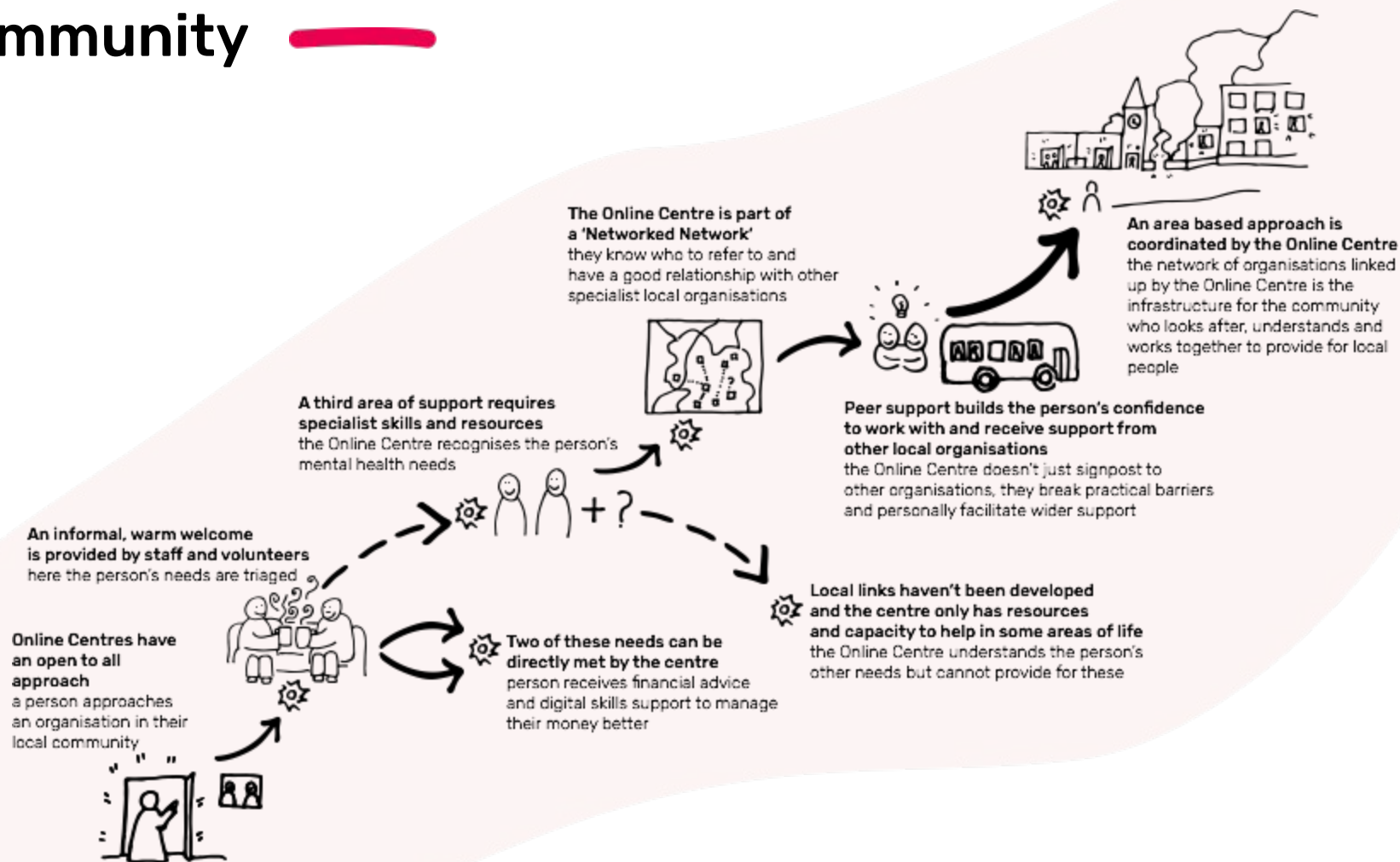
Our big ambitions are rooted in the reality of people's everyday lives and this is where our theory of change comes into play.



Individual —



Community



Society

The relationship between Good Things Foundation and Online Centres is flexible

Good Things Foundation has an individual relationship with centres as local contexts and issues require different inputs to help drive change

They work in partnership with other community organisations to take a holistic approach

there is mutual understanding of the interdependencies that exist to facilitate or prevent positive change for people

How Online Centres structure support is complex because people's needs are complex

Good Things Foundation works to understand these needs and evolves its strategy and support in response

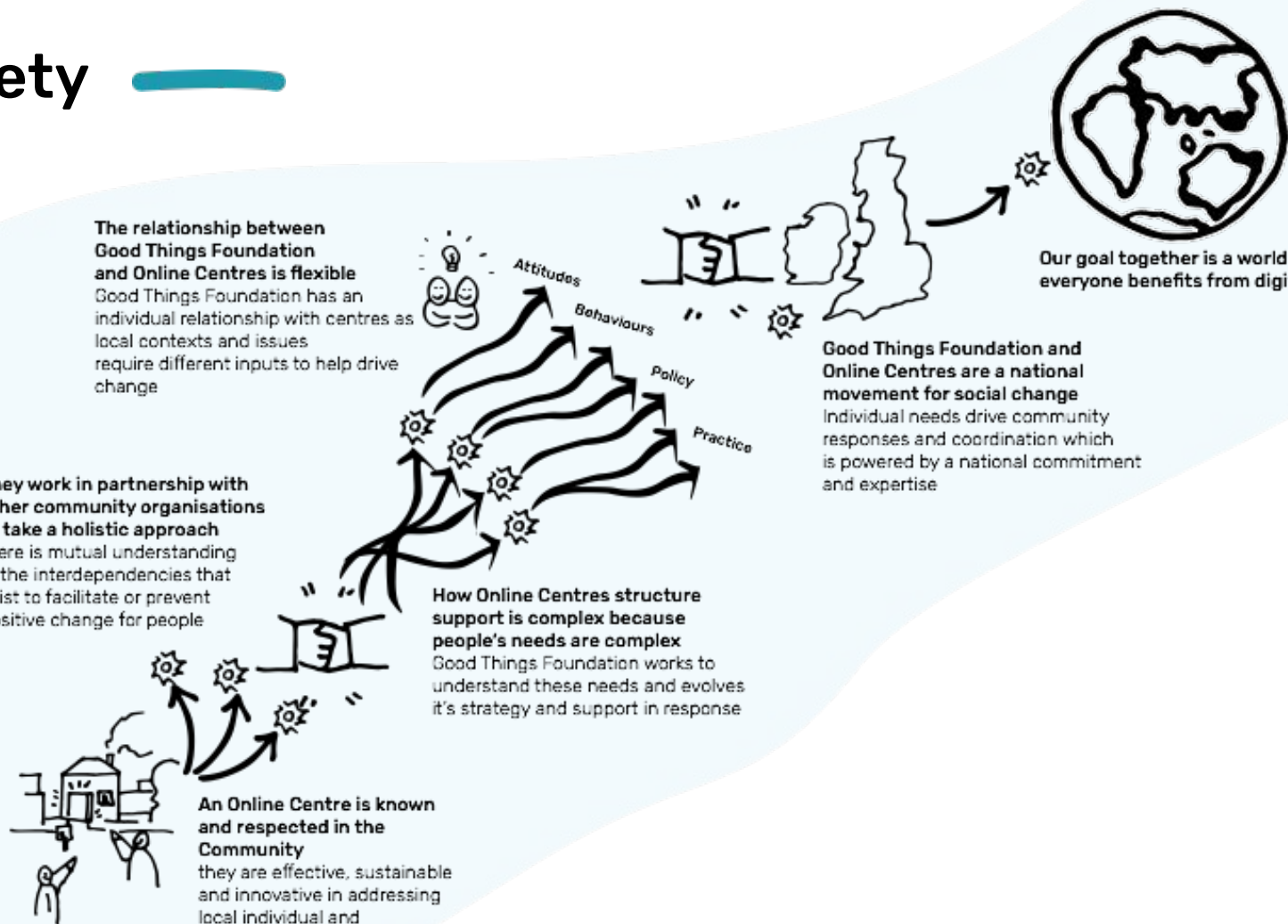
An Online Centre is known and respected in the Community

they are effective, sustainable and innovative in addressing local individual and community problems

Good Things Foundation and Online Centres are a national movement for social change

Individual needs drive community responses and coordination which is powered by a national commitment and expertise

Our goal together is a world where everyone benefits from digital



since then we've developed other
**Theories of Change to tell different
stories...**

What does change look like for Reboot UK?

A journey to where digital can play a part

The journey to digital working with homeless people



The journey to digital working with homeless people



Limited User

Aware

Open to Use

Willing to Engage

Works With Others to Develop Digital Skills

Uses digital to meet their personal goals

The journey to digital

1. Change is hard - for sectors and people
2. People's lives are complex
3. We need to understand the journey *before* digital
4. Learning new digital skills only becomes possible when people have their basic needs met
5. The more vulnerable the person, the more focus we need to put on partnership working and getting the journey right

Useful sources for Theories of Change

- [New Philanthropy Capital *Creating Your Theory of Change*](#)
- [New Economics Foundation *Creating A Theory of Change*](#)
(open training course)

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How We Change the World

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Starting your Theory of Change

A Day in the Life Workshop

- Organise into pairs finding someone who is not from your organisation
- Introduce yourself and your organisation and who you support
- Choose roles:
 - One member of the pair to act as scribe
 - One member of the pair to be the storyteller

A Day in the Life Workshop

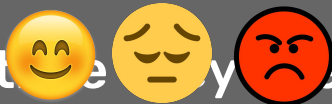
- On the flip chart paper provided draw out a timeline for a day (marking on hourly intervals across 12 or 24 hours)
- We're going to focus on:
 - What it feels like for someone across that day, including key points where they are happy, sad, engaged, vulnerable, confident etc.
 - How your support or service helps them at these key points
 - What they feel like and do as a result

A Day in the Life Workshop

Task 1

The storyteller to describe (and the scribe to record on the timeline) a Day in the Life of someone who comes to your organisation thinking about :

- What happens from when they wake up to when they go to sleep
- How they feel across the day, write this down from their perspective
- Identify the things they like, dislike and hate about their day with you



06:00

08:00

10:30

11:30

12:00

13:00

15:00

16:00



I need help!

I'm trying to find somewhere to stay, food, advice...



I need something nearby... could this be it?



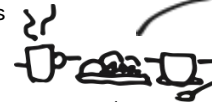
I'm here...but what can they do for me?

Arrives at Homeless Day Centre



Staff triage each person's needs

There's no pressure or expectation

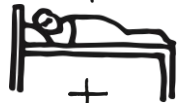


The Day Centre meets immediate needs



I'm no longer hungry - I've had a hot meal

I'm back in touch - My phone is charged



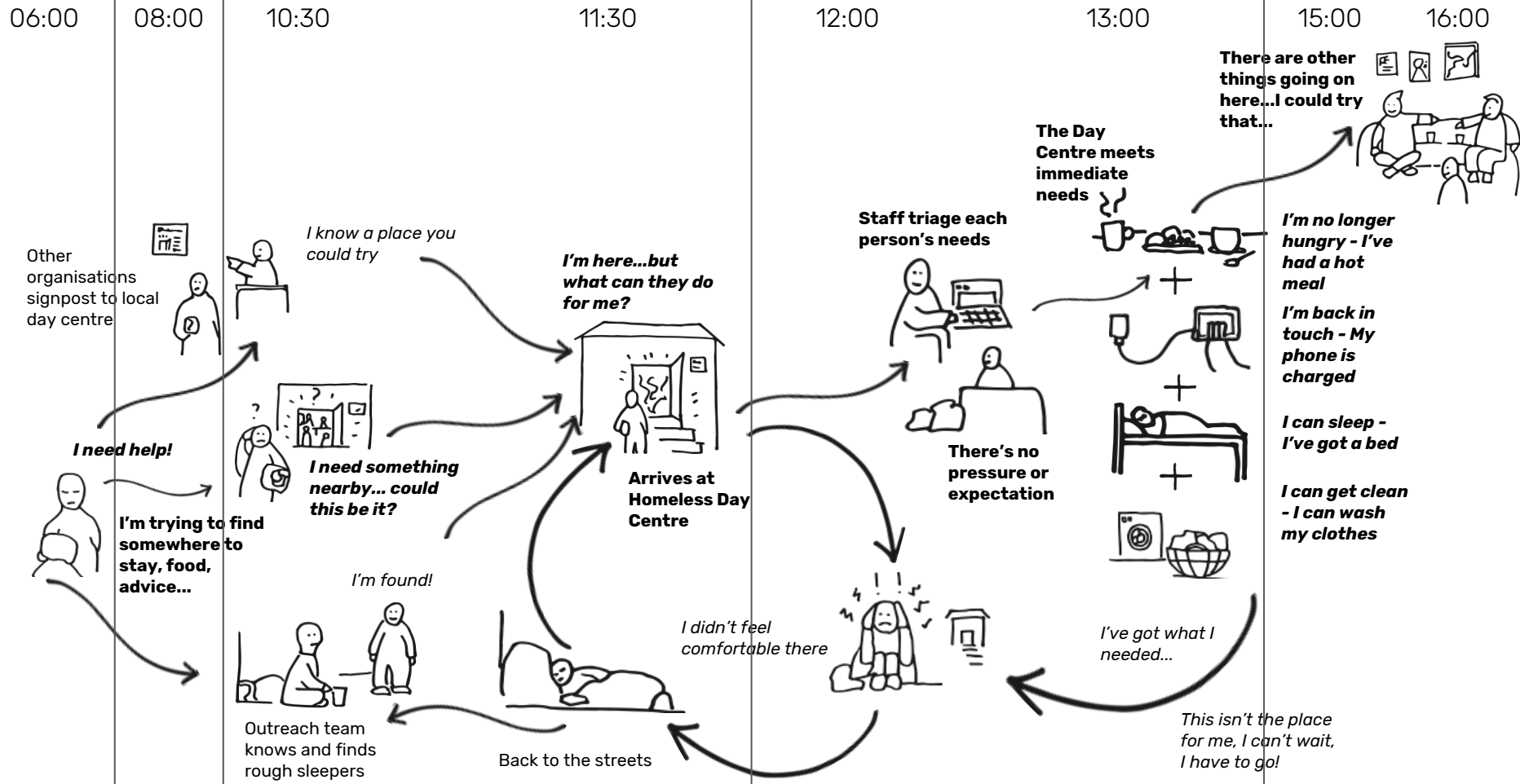
I can sleep - I've got a bed



I can get clean - I can wash my clothes

There are other things going on here...I could try that...





06:00

08:00

10:30

11:30

12:00

13:00

15:00

16:00

Other organisations signpost to local day centre

I need help!

I'm trying to find somewhere to stay, food, advice...

I know a place you could try

I need something nearby... could this be it?

I'm found!

Outreach team knows and finds rough sleepers

I'm here...but what can they do for me?

Arrives at Homeless Day Centre

Staff triage each person's needs

There's no pressure or expectation

The Day Centre meets immediate needs

I've got what I needed...

There are other things going on here...I could try that...

I'm no longer hungry - I've had a hot meal

I'm back in touch - My phone is charged

I can sleep - I've got a bed

I can get clean - I can wash my clothes

I didn't feel comfortable there

Back to the streets

This isn't the place for me, I can't wait, I have to go!

A Day in the Life Workshop

Task 2 (15mins) - **in a second colour**

The scribe to ask what the storyteller and their organisation do in response, thinking about :

- What happens when someone arrives
- The activities they engage in (formal and informal)
- What they do because of your activities
- How they feel as a result



Workshop Feedback

- Each pair to describe from your timeline:
 - **Your Audience** - the person you chose and why they need your support or service
 - **Your Activities** - the person's Day in the Life with your service
 - **Outputs** - what the person does as a result
 - **Outcomes** - the change in the person