Accountability and Learning for Action:

Applying Theory of Change to CFS Hub Projects-Resources

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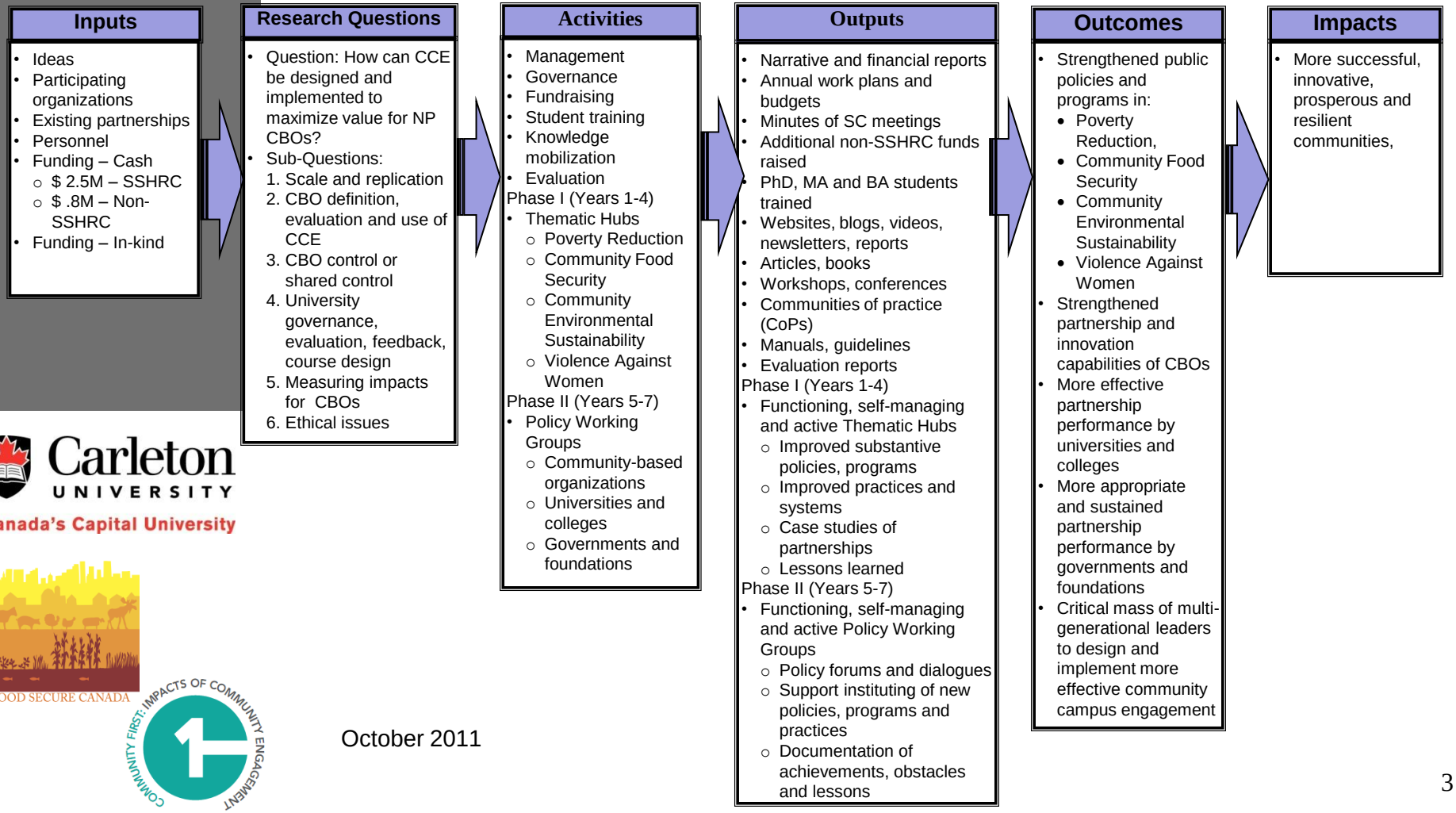
January 17, 2013

PART 1:

CFICE AND THE CFS HUB

CFICE Logic Model



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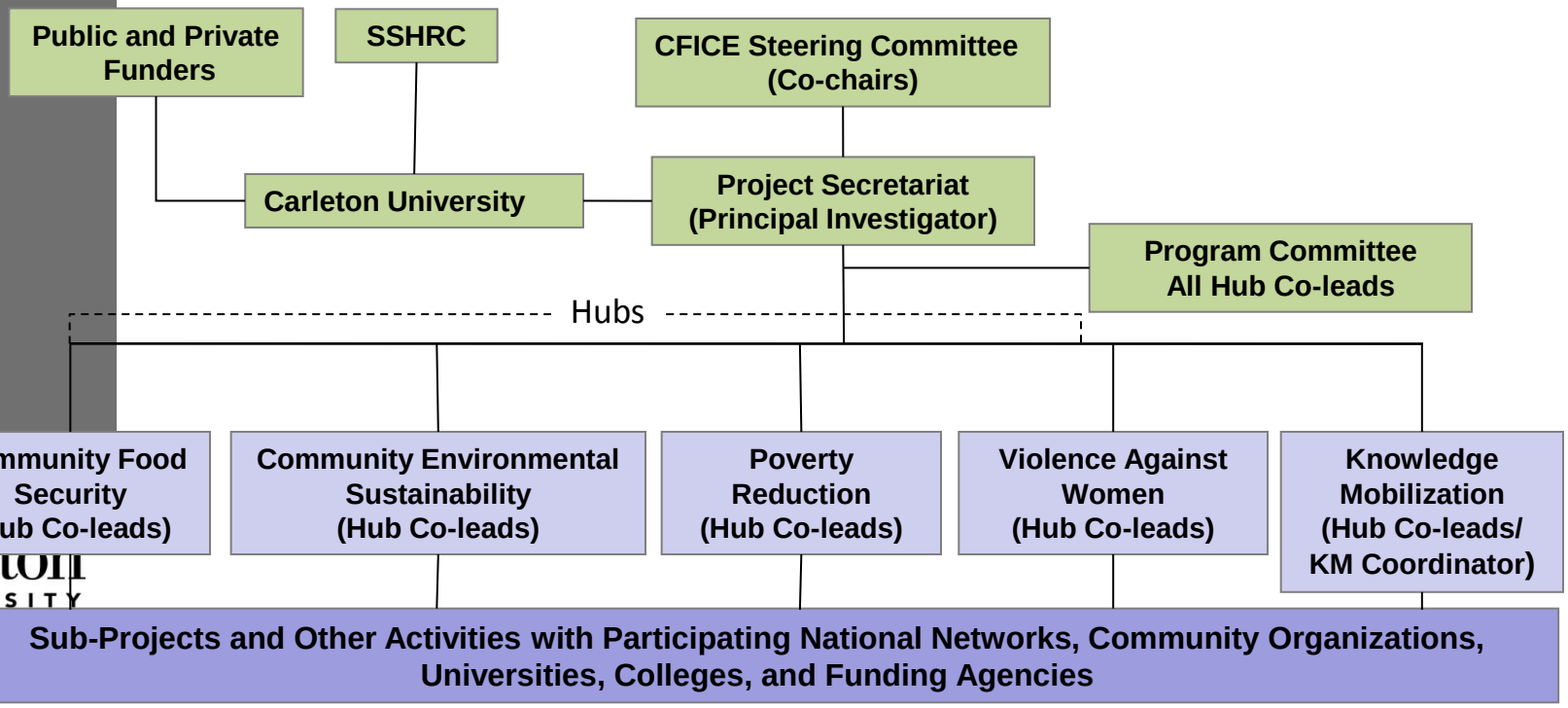
October 2011

CFICE Organizational Structure



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Applications of Evaluation and Theory of Change Approaches

- Level 1:To the *overall non-profit intervention, organization or network* within which the community-campus partnership has been formed
- Level 2: To the *community-campus partnership* itself
- Interaction between L1 and L2: To the *contribution* of the partnership to the goals of the non-profit organization and other features of that *relationship*

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PART II:

EVALUATION

What is Evaluation?

- "the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy or program"
- "as systematic and as objective as possible, of a planned, ongoing or completed intervention"

(OECD, 2000)

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What Types of Evaluations Can Be Undertaken?

- *Formative:* Undertaken during an intervention, to improve performance and learning
- *Summative:* Undertaken at the end of an intervention or phase, to determine the extent to which outcomes were produced
- *Participatory:* Engages stakeholders in planning, implementing and taking action on the evaluation
- *Impact:* Assesses the long-term results, positive and negative, intended and unintended, of an intervention
- *Developmental:* Collaborative process supporting innovation and learning in emerging and complex interventions (Morra-Imas and Rist, 2009; Jackson, 2005; Quinn Patton, 2011)

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What Do Evaluations Evaluate?

- *Relevance:* The extent to which an intervention is relevant to the needs of its primary stakeholders and its context
- *Effectiveness:* The extent to which an intervention attains its objectives
- *Efficiency:* The ratio of outputs (immediate results) in relation to inputs (costs), comparing alternative approaches
- *Impact:* The long-term changes produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, positive or negative, intended or unintended
- *Sustainability:* The extent to which the net benefits of an intervention are likely to continue after the intervention is completed, and their resilience to risk (Morra-Imas and Rist, 2009)

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A Basic Tool: The Evaluation Matrix

Main Evaluation Issue: *Relevance*

			Data Collection Sources							
Questions	Sub-Question	Measure/Indicator	Document Review	Key-Person Interviews	Focus Groups	Organizational Assessments	Industry Scan	TOC Analysis	Other	Team Member Responsible
1. TWE* is the Initiative based on a sound rationale?		• Quality of contextual analysis • Clear theory of change	✔	✔	–	–	✔	✔	–	TJ/KH
2. TWE does II have a clear role and comparative advantage?		• Investment industry gaps • Development finance gaps • Uniqueness of II products and services	✔	✔	–	–	✔	✔	-	TJ/KH/AG
3. What is II's value proposition?		• Types of value offered by range of II services and Products	✔	✔	–	–	✔	✔	–	KH/TJ
a) Is II adding value to development?		• Solutions • Innovations • Funding/ Resources • Partners • Reputation	✔	✔	–	✔	✔	✔	–	KH/TJ/AG
b) Is II adding value to the work of the Foundation?		• Solutions • Innovations • Funding/ Resources • Partners • Reputation	✔	✔	–	✔	✔	✔	–	TJ/AG

* TWE: To What Extent

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Mixed Methods: Data Collection and Analysis

Qualitative Methods

- Document, file and literature review
- Open-ended qualitative interviews with key persons
- Focus groups/community meetings
- Participant observation/ethnography
- Case studies
- Organizational assessments/self-assessments
- Network and stakeholder analysis
- Policy influence analysis
- Social media analysis
- Outcome mapping
- Most significant change
- Social analysis system (SAS) tools
- Participatory rapid appraisal
- Stakeholder task forces/working groups
- Appreciative inquiry
- Gender-sensitive tools

Quantitative Methods

- Randomized clinical trials
- Closed-ended quantitative (online) surveys
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Econometric studies
- Social return on investment

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Balancing Accountability and Learning

- Negotiating *shared outcomes* among stakeholders
- Sharing new *evaluation knowledge* as a public good
- Embedding processes that are *transparent, ethical and culturally-informed*
- Amplifying *voice and choice* by the least powerful actors
- Empowering *communities of practice* to share findings and dialogue on joint action (Rodin and MacPherson, 2012)

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Elements of an Evaluation Plan

- Purposes of the evaluation
- Background and context for the study
- Key information requirements
- Deliverables expected (work plan and methodology, draft and final reports)
- Schedule of activities and milestones
- Table of contents of report
- Roles and responsibilities (evaluators, sponsors, stakeholders)
- Budget and payment schedule (Adapted from Hawkins, in Morra-Imas and Rist, 2009)

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PART III

THEORY OF CHANGE

What is Theory of Change?

- *A model that specifies (usually visually) the underlying logic, assumptions, influences, causal linkages and expected outcomes of an intervention (policy, program, project)*
- Through the collection and analysis of performance data, this model can be tested against the actual process experienced, and results attained, by the intervention
- "Blueprint of the building blocks needed to achieve the long-term goals of a social change initiative"
- Also known as "program theory" (Funnell and Rogers, 2011; Rogers, 2008, Weiss, 1998)

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Interrogating the Theory of Change in Evaluations: Key Questions

- Is the theory of change valid, appropriate, relevant and accurate?
- Does change actually occur in the ways the intervention proponents expected?
- Are there other change dynamics or pathways at work?
- Are there unforeseen actors and factors that promote or constrain change?
- Are there obstacles that stymie—that render ineffective—the theory of change?
- How can those obstacles be minimized or eliminated altogether?

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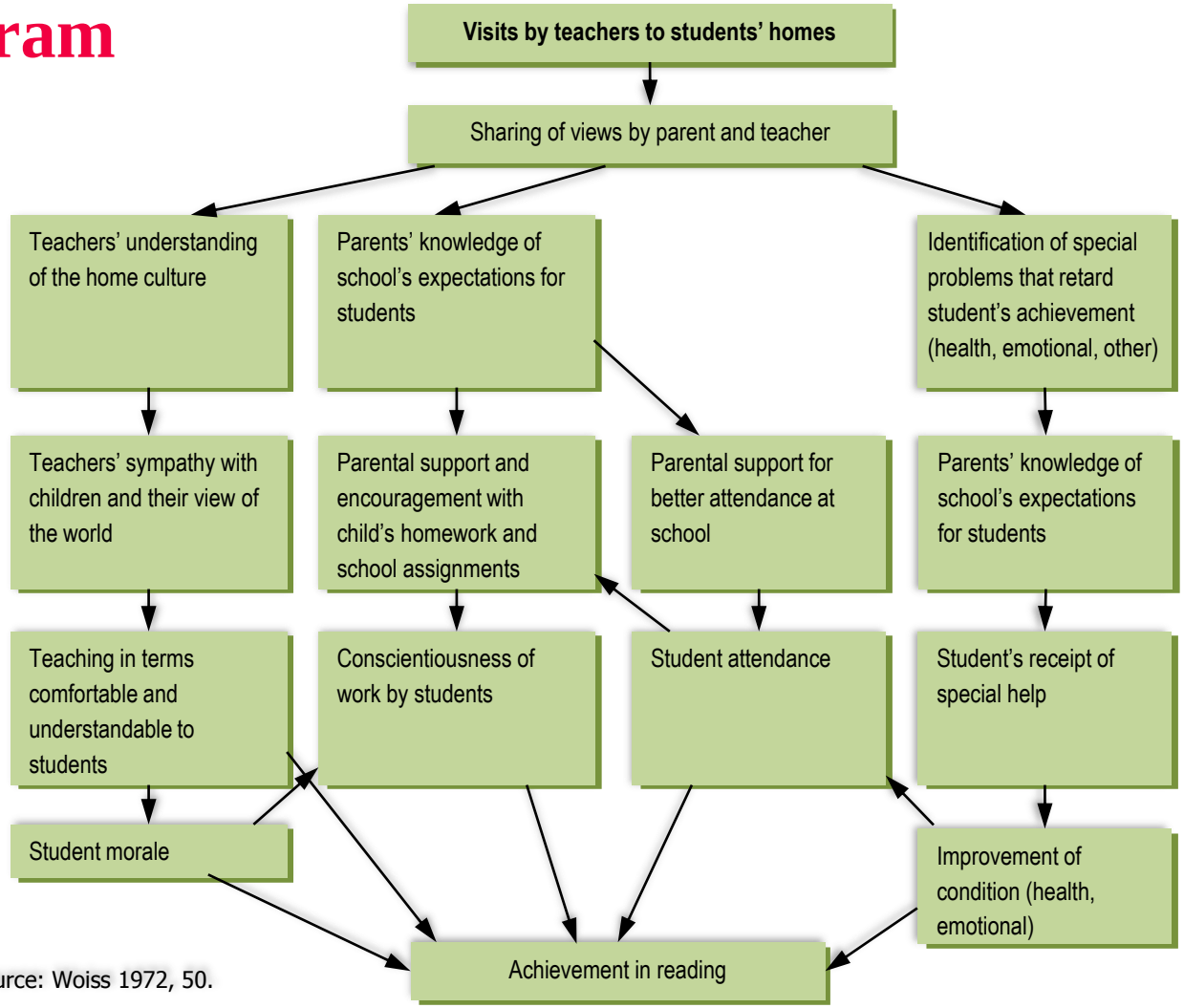
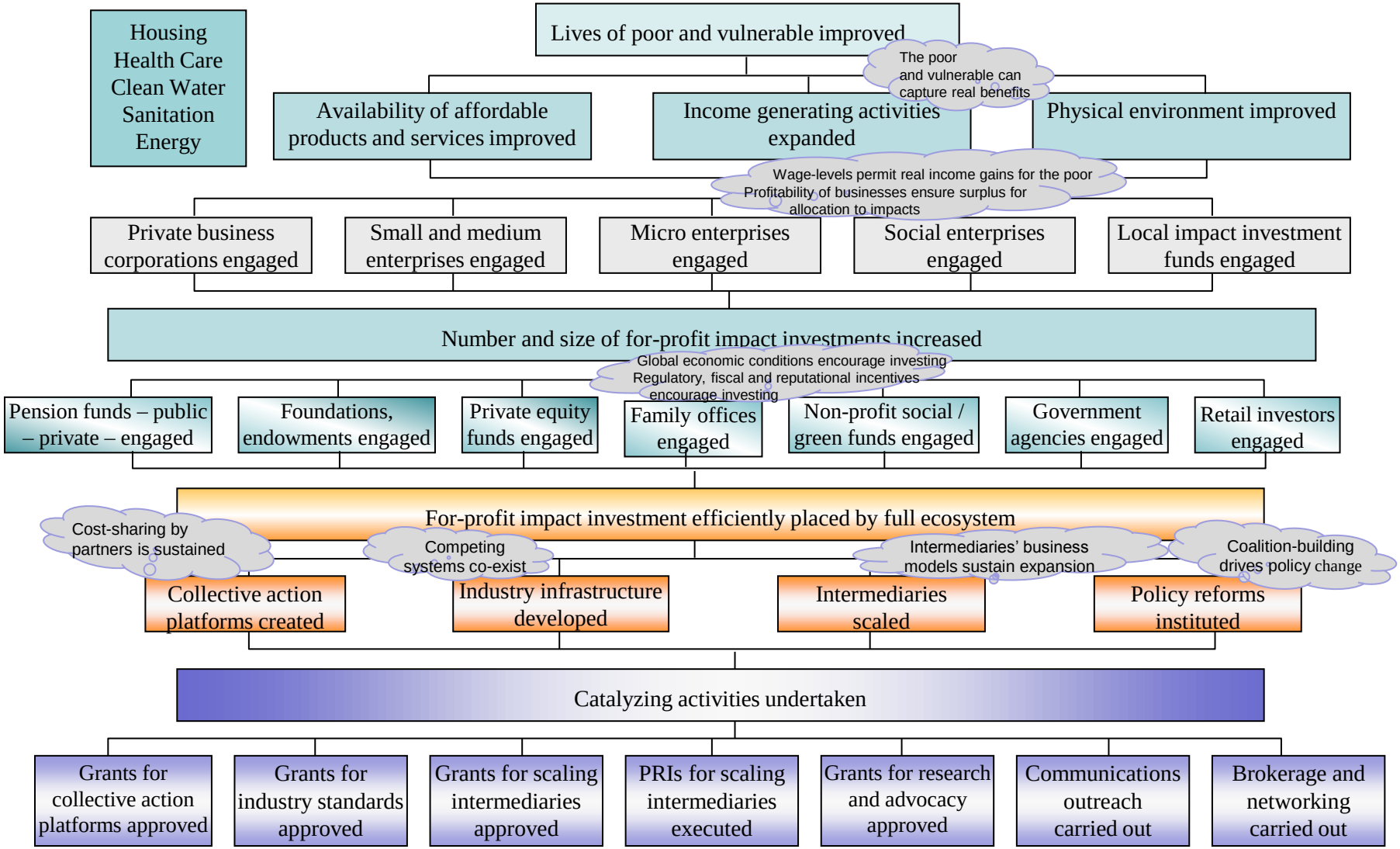
Theory of Change for a Student Reading Program



Source: Woiss 1972, 50.

An Example of a Theory of Change for a Global

Program on Impact Investing



Theory of Change Worksheet

Source: Kellogg Foundation 2004

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Checklist of CFICE Research Questions

- *Overall:* How can community-campus engagement (CCE) be designed and implemented to maximize value for NP CBOs?
- *Sub-Questions:*

  -Scale and replication

  -CBO definition, evaluation and use of CCE

  -CBO control or shared control of the process

  -University governance, evaluation, feedback, course design

  -Measuring impacts for CBOs

  -Ethical issues

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Interrogating the Theory of Change at Two Levels

- Level 1: For the organization/network as a whole
- Level 2: For the community-campus engagement (within, across cases)
- Interaction between L1 and L2: Contributions, relationship

Key Questions

- Was there an explicit/implicit ToC?
- Was the ToC valid, appropriate, relevant, accurate?
- How did the partners judge success – what were their indicators?
- Did change occur in the ways proponents/partners expected?
- Were there other change dynamics/pathways?
- Were there unforeseen actors and factors?
- Were there obstacles that rendered the ToC ineffective?
- How could those obstacles have been minimized or eliminated altogether?
- What other lessons, insights or issues arose from this partnership?

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Conclusion

Theory of change is a concept and a tool that enables the researcher / evaluator to assess the performance of an intervention in terms of its:

- relevance
- effectiveness
- efficiency
- impacts and
- sustainability .

Theory of change is used in the evaluation process for both learning and accountability: it is also a tool for co-creating new knowledge that can inform and strengthen future action.

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Resources

- Better Evaluation Website www.betterevaluation.org
- Canadian Evaluation Society www.evaluationcanada.ca

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