Disrupting Disadvantage: Lessons from Practice

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Queensland, Australia

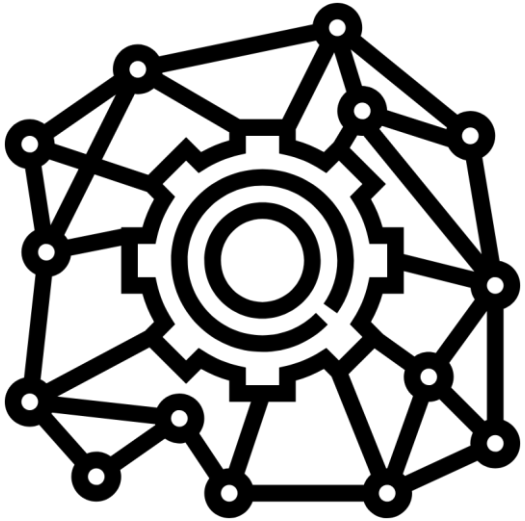
Learning from working with people from 20 places over the last decade where ‘entrenched disadvantage’ continues to shape people’s lives.

Reasonable evidence exists about what works at a big picture level

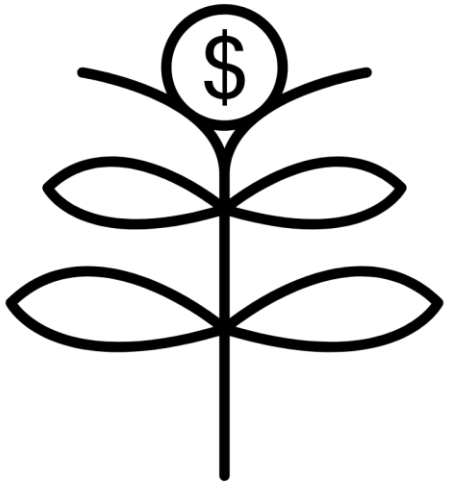
Approaches that are holistic but reflect diversity + flexibility (for person + place)

Investment that focusses on outcomes + is timed accordingly

Good ‘data’ that is cumulative, predictive, big, thick and deep



Support that recognises strengths + responds with more than ‘more services’



Can data + evidence be built into a viable business case for **investing** in what works + is it palatable to swing political + popular will to shift resources towards what works?

Mobilising Data: Literacy, Opportunity, Know-How

The purpose of Data needs to be to Know What is happening AND to learn the Know How of changing outcomes

Big Data

Population + Individual

often Quantitative

Focus on ‘what’, ‘where’ and ‘who’ is experiencing various indicators of disadvantage

+

Service Data

Programs + Services

Quantitative + Qualitative

Focus on outputs, clusters of outputs + outcomes as a result of particular services and overall programs indicating what is working + how it is working to shift outcomes

+

Lived Experience Data

People + Communities + Frontline

often Qualitative

Focus on ‘why’ and ‘how’ people experience disadvantage, and what can help to shift outcomes via service + non-service support

More data will not automatically lead to better outcomes.
We need to grow data literacy + community ownership of data
+ data that helps us learn towards real, lasting outcomes

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~150

published reports p.a.

What we know about disadvantage in Australia

~18%

increase p.a
over the past 5 years

What we spend on addressing disadvantage, particularly in place

5 to 9 localities

in each state remaining in the bottom 12 consistently for 20 years

Shifts in addressing place-based disadvantage

Highest LGA Unemployment rate in Victoria (10.2%) & pockets of very high unemployment (eg. Dandenong 17.3%, Doveton 18.3%)

27% of the working age population are in receipt of a Centrelink benefit (Victoria -17%).

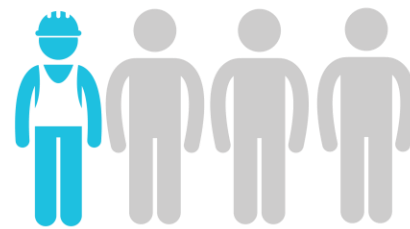
21% of families with children under 15 years are jobless - (10.4% for Victoria).

This rises to 58% joblessness for lone parent families

The median individual weekly gross income is $476 – lowest level in Melbourne. This has remained at 70% of metropolitan levels over the last decade.

40% of people aged 25-44 have no post-school qualification (Victoria = 26.3%)

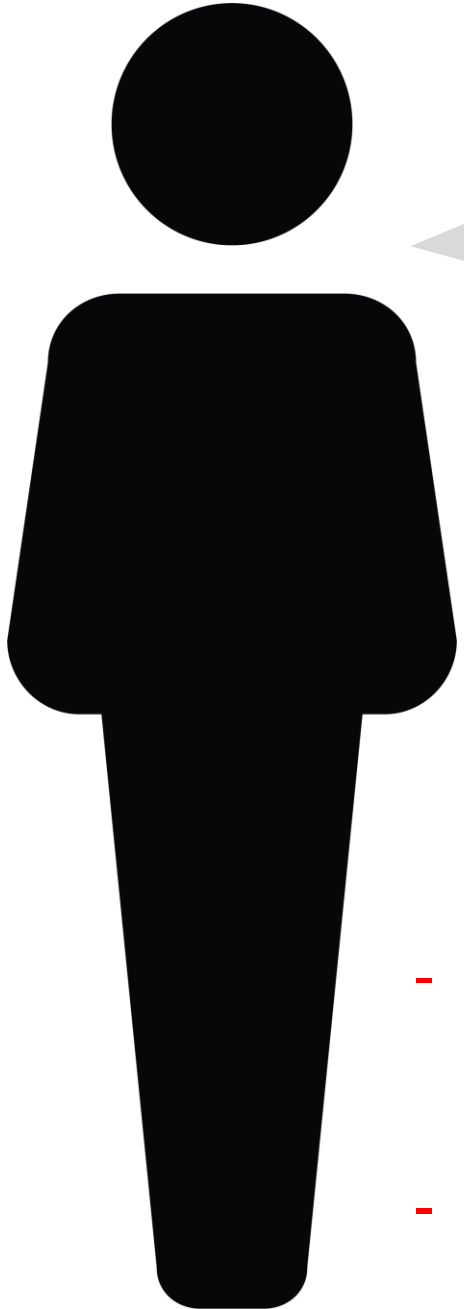
2nd highest rates of youth disengagement for 20-24yr olds in Victoria - 16% of 20-24 year olds neither in paid employment nor training (Avg 12% in Metro Melbourne)



17% of residents are employed in Manufacturing;
29% of residents are employed as Labourers or Machinery Operators

The City of Greater Dandenong hosts 38,000 more jobs than the number of its residents in paid employment

Sources: ABS, 2016 ; SEIFA, 2016; DOE, 2018; SALM, 2018; DHHS, 2018



”Stop telling us what’s wrong with us, and start ‘seeing’ and listening to what’s working here – and build data around that with us – then work with us to grow that. We don’t need another report about what’s wrong around here – we know it, we live it but we are sick of being just seen as that. There’s more to us than disadvantage. If you can’t see that, you can’t see us”.

- **Work with people to visualize data so it reflects a picture that shows strengths and opportunities, that people themselves can use and relate to**
- **Look at and for data that showcases assets not just deficits**

What if we looked for Entrepreneurship + grew this strength?

In the SEIFA Decile 1 Areas:
1113 Businesses, 95% Sole Traders

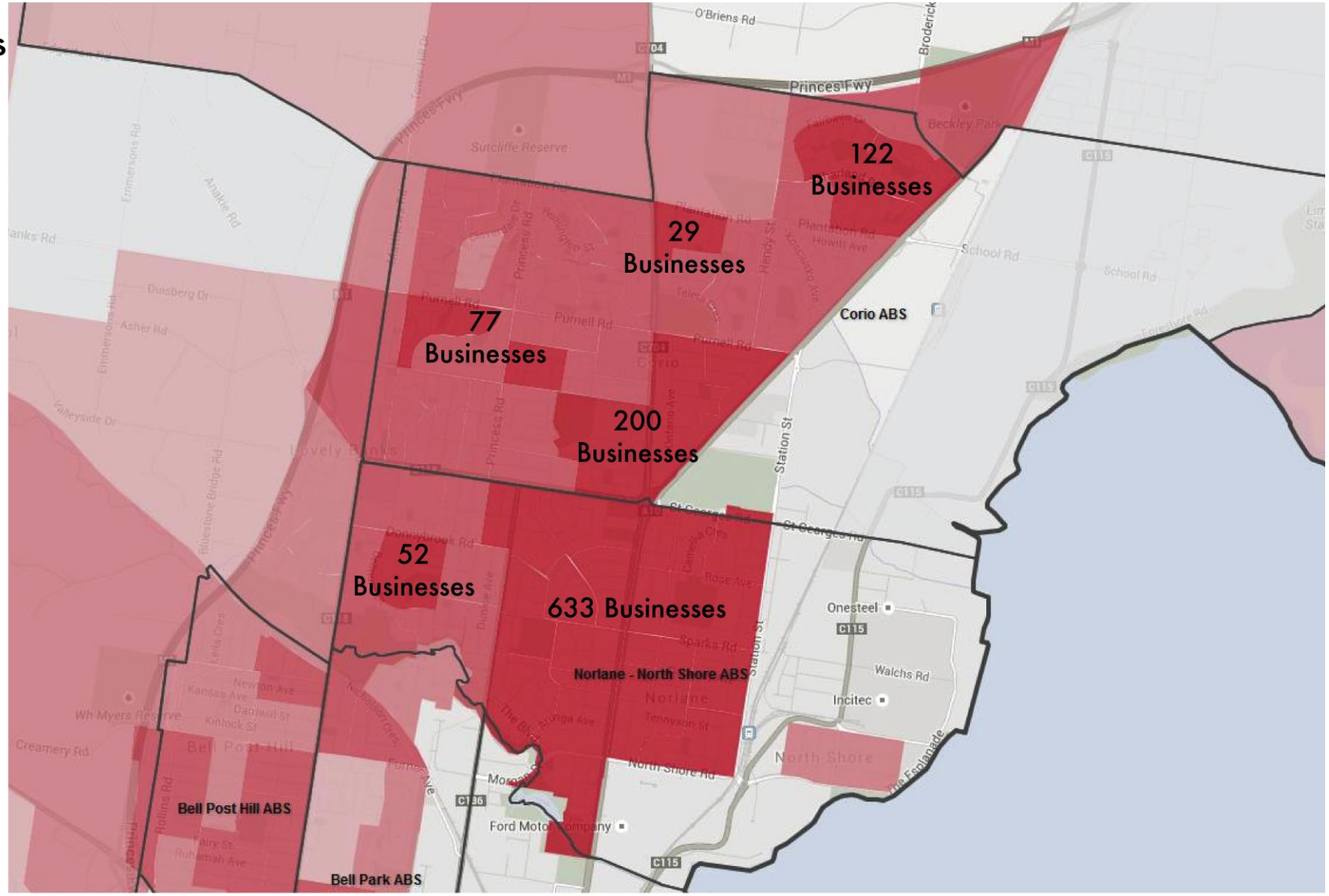
- 180 Unable to Obtain Industry Details

- 222 Construction Services
The Top 5 of which are:
1. Plastering & Ceiling (43)
2. Painting / Decorating (31)
3. Concreting Services (25)
4. Other Construction Services (21)
5. Bricklaying Services (18)

- 129 Transport, Postal & Warehousing
of which:
47 are Road Freight Transport
34 are Other Transport Support Services
32 are Courier & Other Delivery
13 are Taxi and Other Road Transport

- 113 Administrative & Support Services
of which:
80 are Building & Other Industrial Cleaning Services
18 are Gardening Services

- 94 Other Services
of which:
46 are Repair, Maintenance and Other Services; and
48 are Personal Services (including hairdressing & beauty; laundry; other personal services).



Reframing Data

Of young people (from a particular cultural group) in this community are disengaged from education and work

From probability to possibility

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36 Young People

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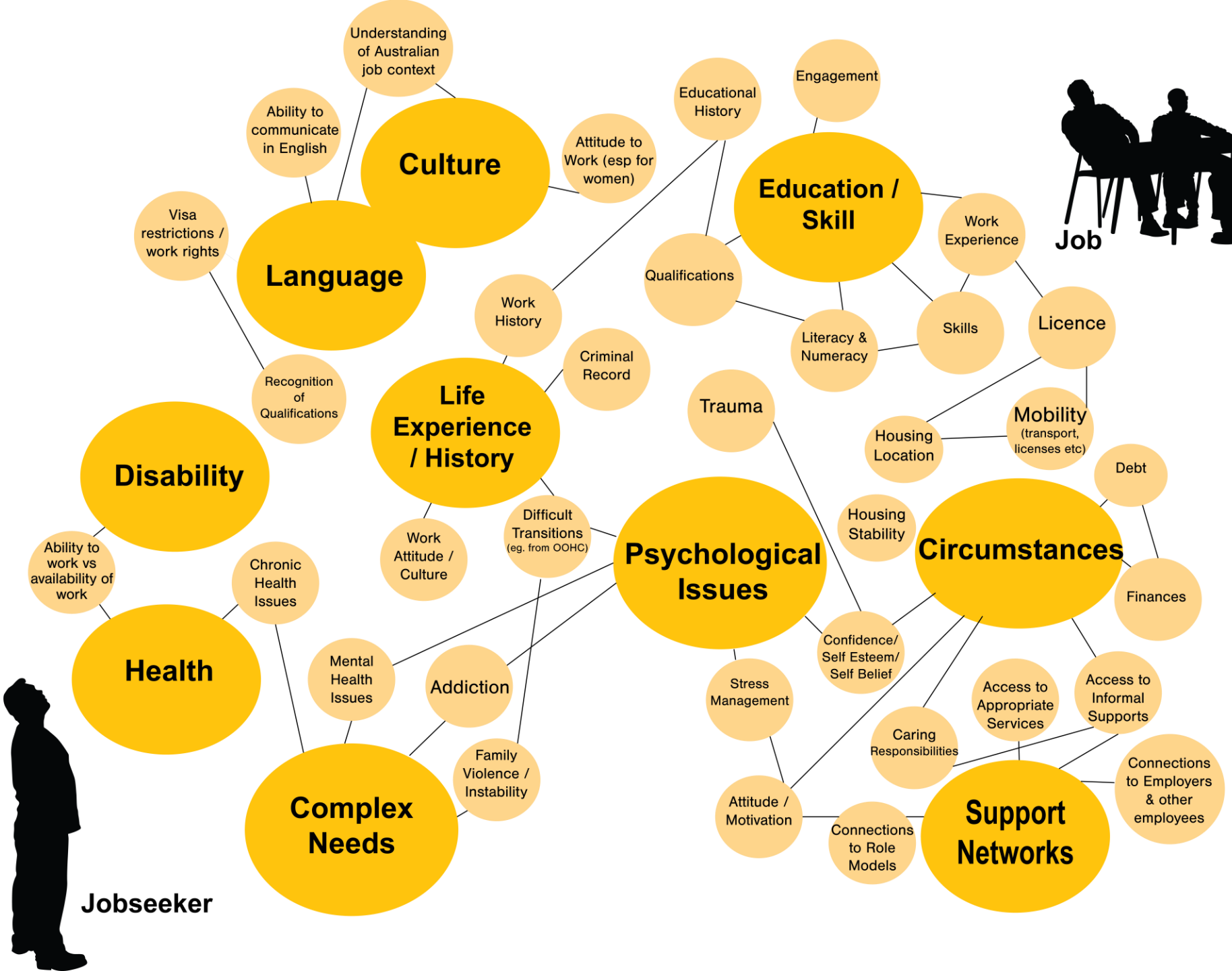
Navigation: Where is the destination?



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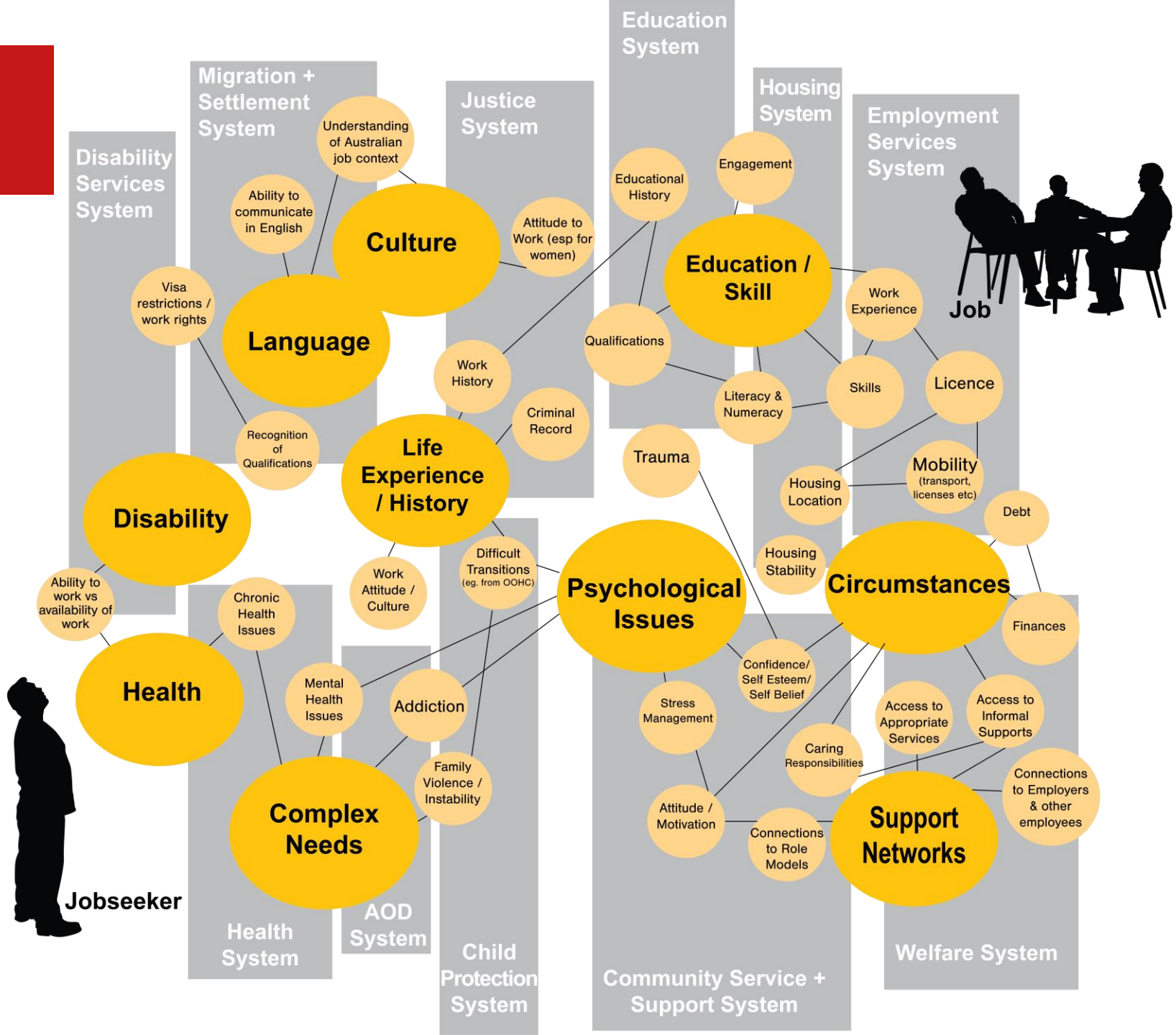
Navigation or Knitting

"We have one staff member whose full-time job is working out who is doing what, just keeping up with interagency meetings and new programs, navigating the system not for the clients but for us, so we can keep up with all the agencies" (Manager of a Youth Service)



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Long + Hard Journeys

Current service systems for people with most complex needs are disjointed, hard to navigate + do not result in lasting outcomes

5 years

Average length of time in JobActive for most disadvantaged job seekers is five years.

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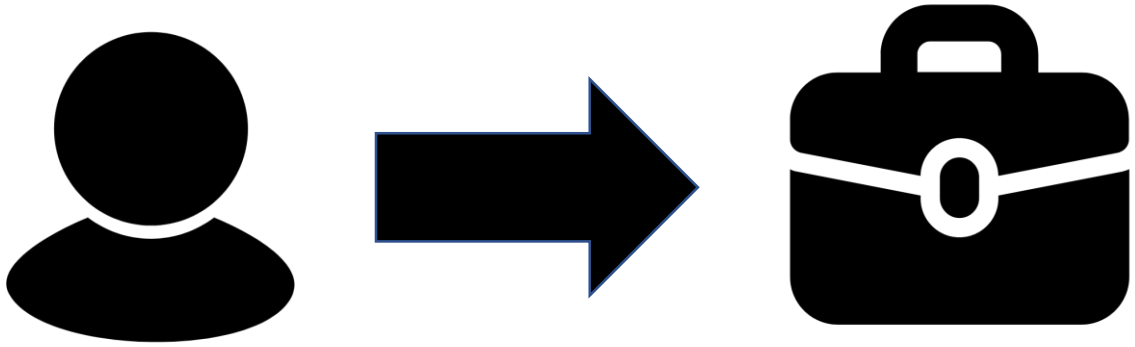
Destinations that rocky

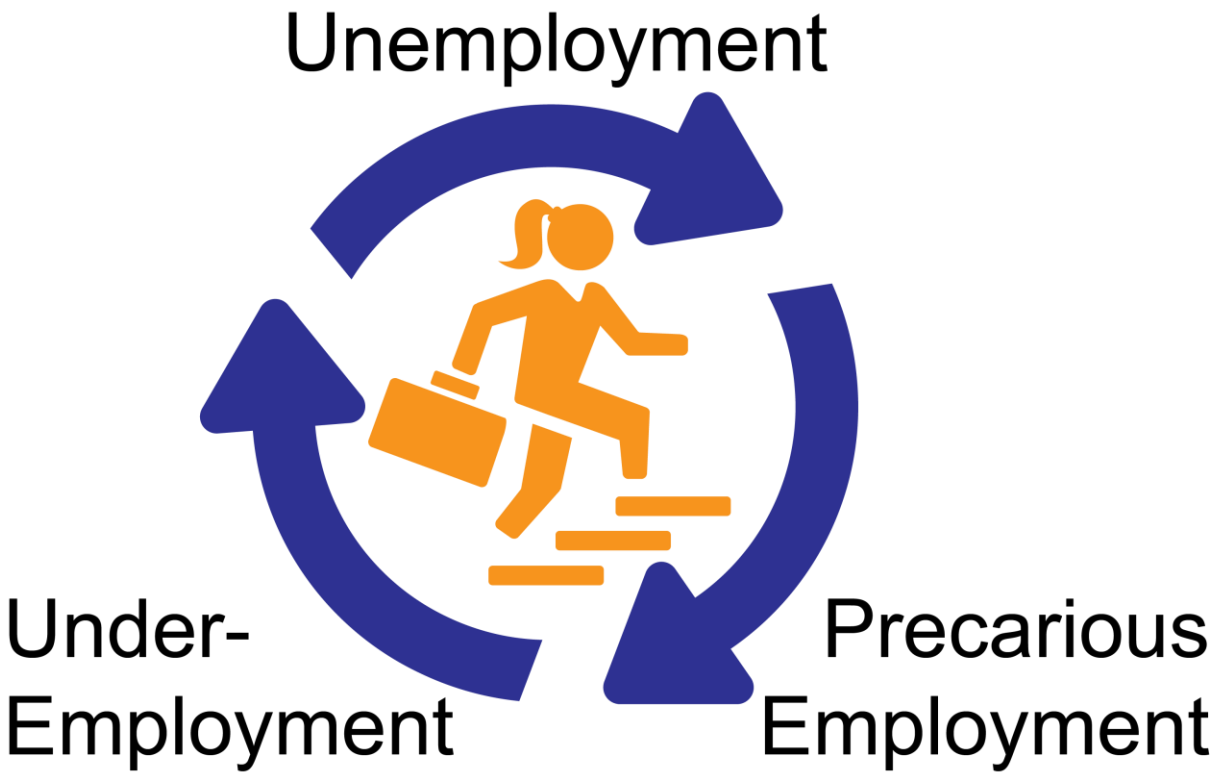
“Outcome”

person + job = outcome



Addressing the churn

2/3 JobActive caseload is long-term unemployed (over 12 months)



47%

of disadvantaged jobseekers cycle back to JobActive after a job ‘outcome’ within 5 years.

Raising the bar on outcomes creates a safety net

Transformational outcomes
(with intergenerational impacts)

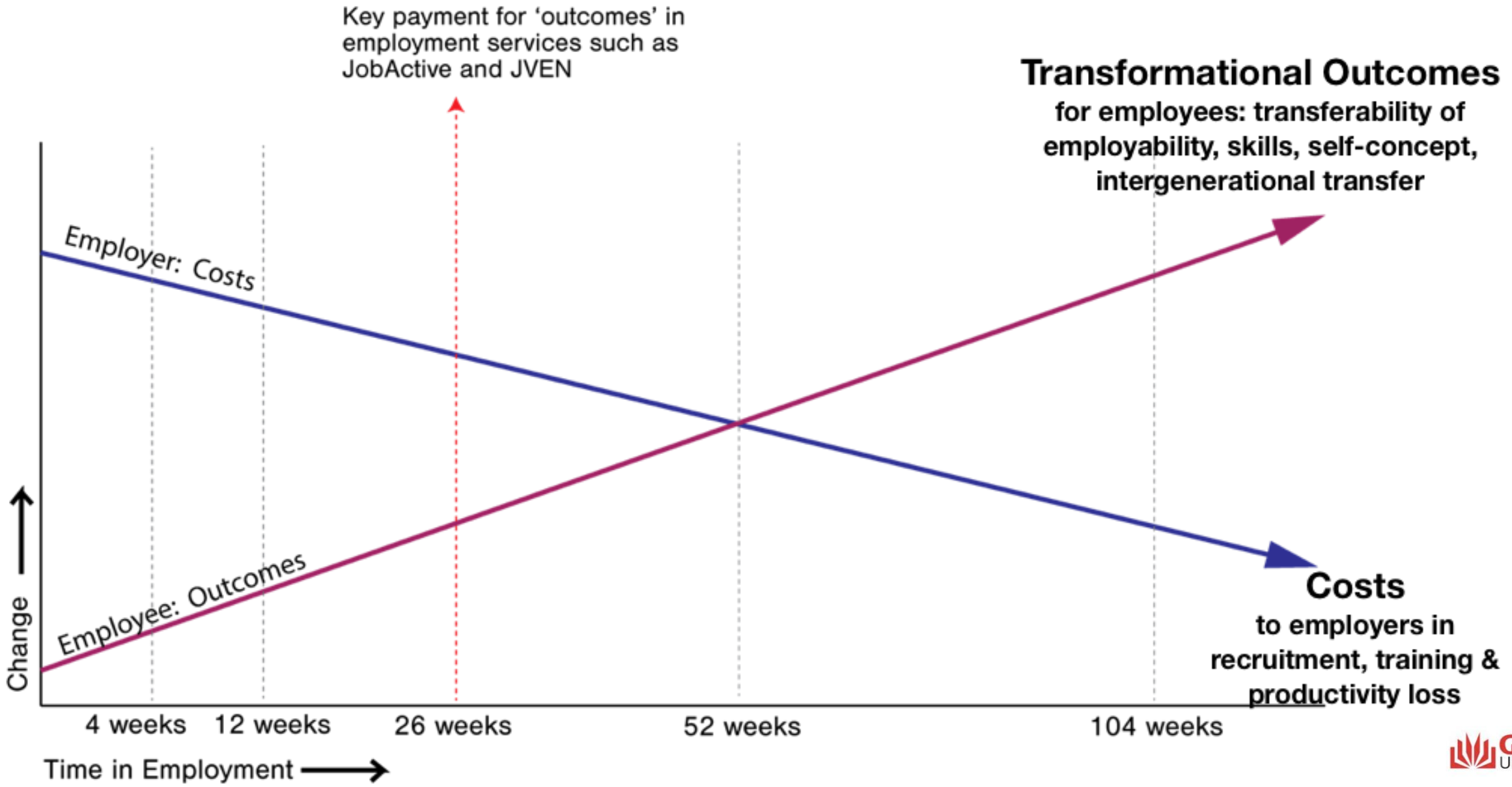
person
+ quality job
+ living wage
+ pathways to address other issues
=
outcome

Strengthen the Safety Net

Safety Net of the Future is not going to be able to be held by government alone…

Is it realistic that private sector would commit to its share?

Intersecting outcomes



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Addressing disadvantage is everyone’s business

An Economic Shift: Shift in Local Spend + jobs bias into target communities

Regional target 2020: 7% shift in local spend, bringing $1bn into the G21 region and 2500 jobs, including 500 jobs in to GROW target communities.

- Baseline compact signatory local spend: $255.60M
- The 2020 target of 7% represents an increase in local spend of: $17.89M
- Actual change in local spend so far: 9.34% and $23.88M
- Regional economic impact:

Jobs Total	145.4
Output Total	$61.14M
Value Added Total	$44.14M
Wages Total	$36.87M

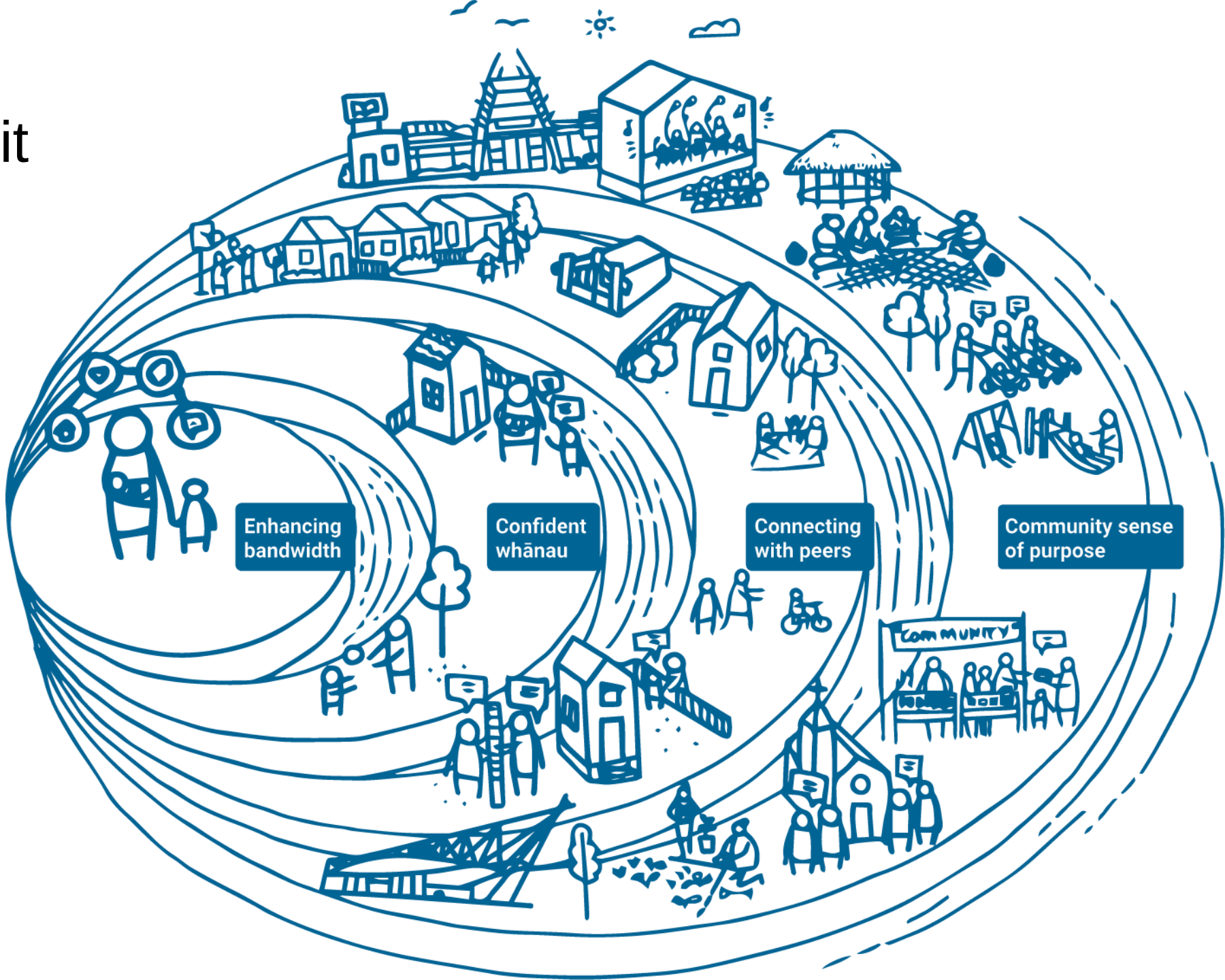
Collectively, for every $1M spent locally

6.09

new jobs can potentially be created.

Closing the gap one business + one wage at a time

Creating Anchor Institutions that knit together whatever + whoever it takes to generate real + lasting outcomes



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