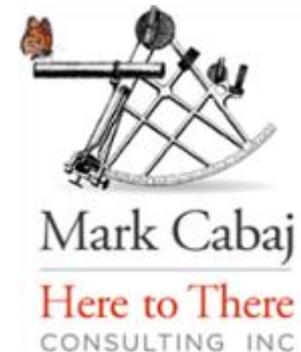


Evaluating Community Impact

**CAPTURING AND MAKING SENSE
OF COMMUNITY OUTCOMES**

Special thanks to our event partners



#ECISASK2017

www.tamarackcommunity.ca



Module

Policy Change

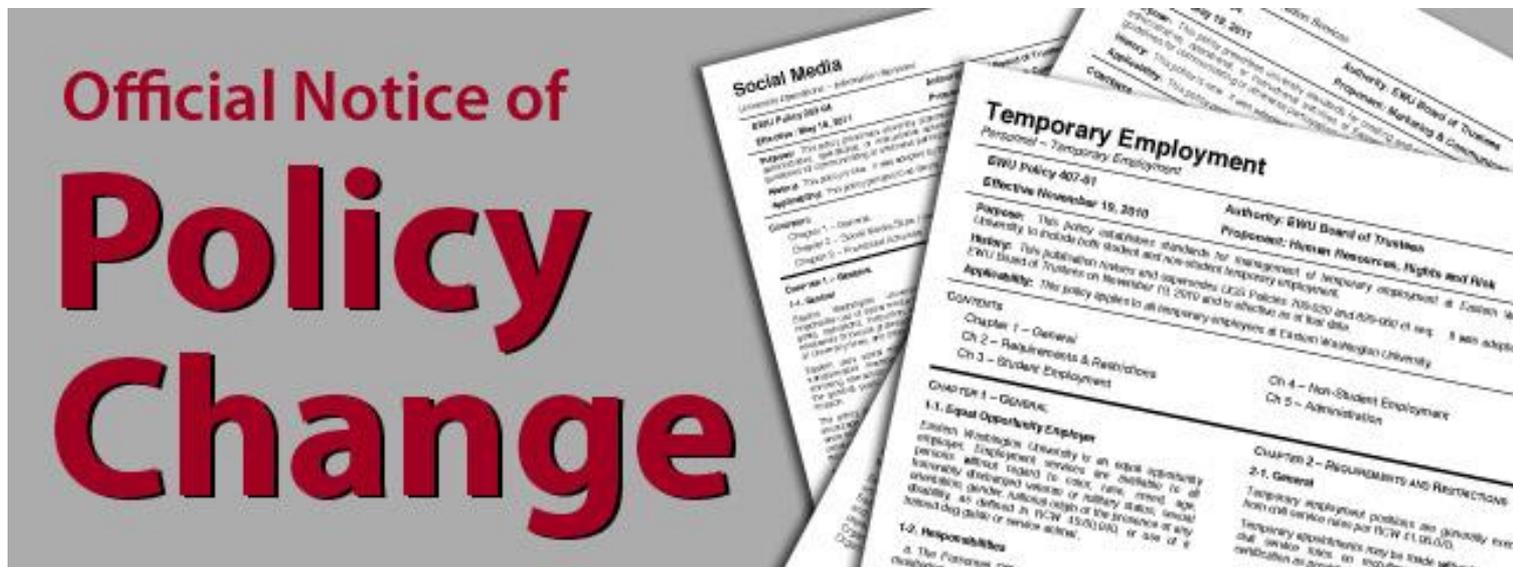


Main Ideas

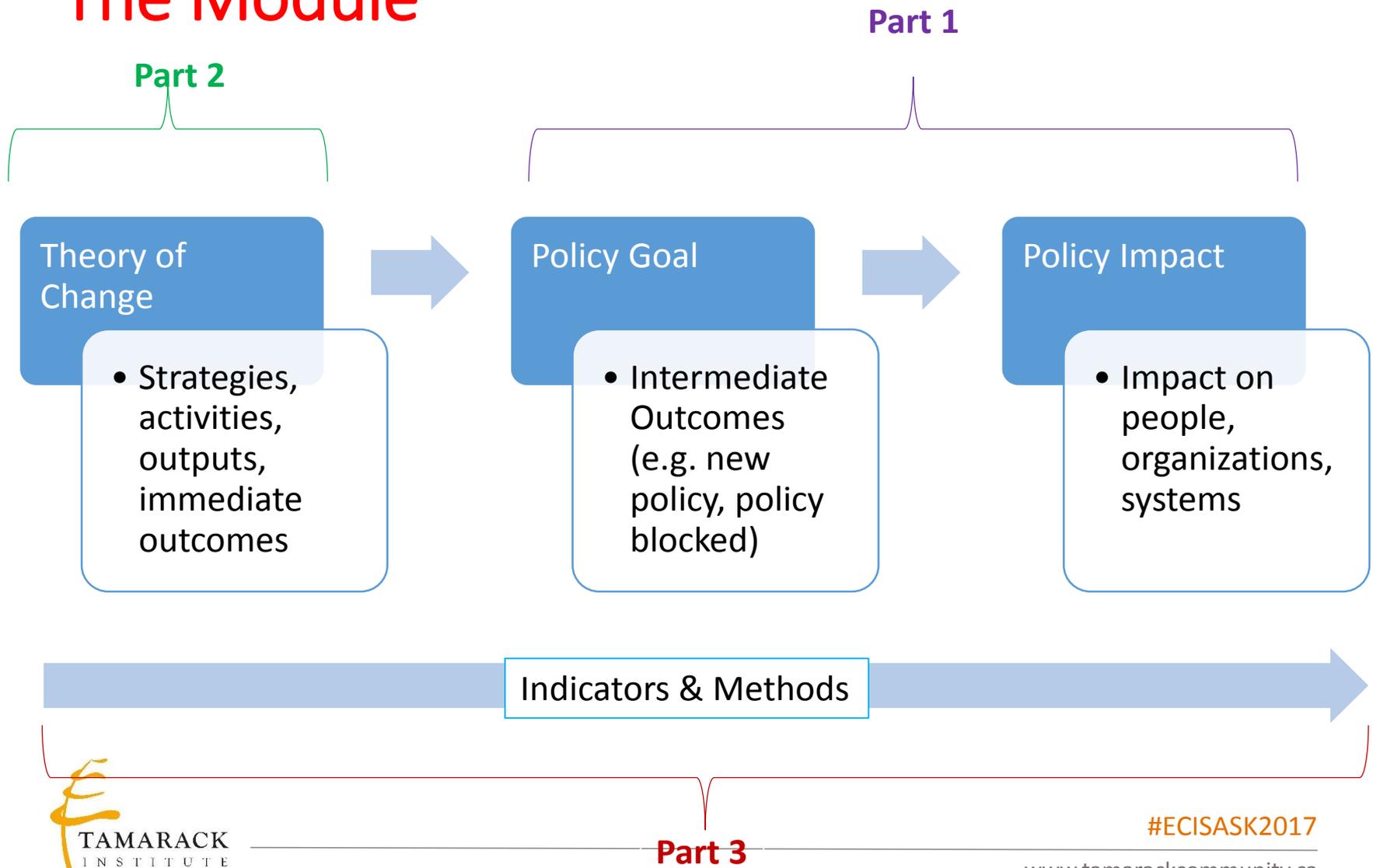
1. It is useful to **distinguish** between policy impacts, policy goals or objectives and theory of change.
2. There are **multiple types of policy goals** or objectives: be clear what you are seeking.
3. Groups can employ multiple (often overlapping) **theories of change**, each with their own strategy and intermediate outcomes.
4. The process of policy change is always **adaptive**.
5. There are some useful **indicators** and **methods** for evaluating policy change.

In Groups of Three

Share a concrete example of (a) a policy that your community change group is trying to change and (b) the outcome(s) you hope will emerge if the policy does change.

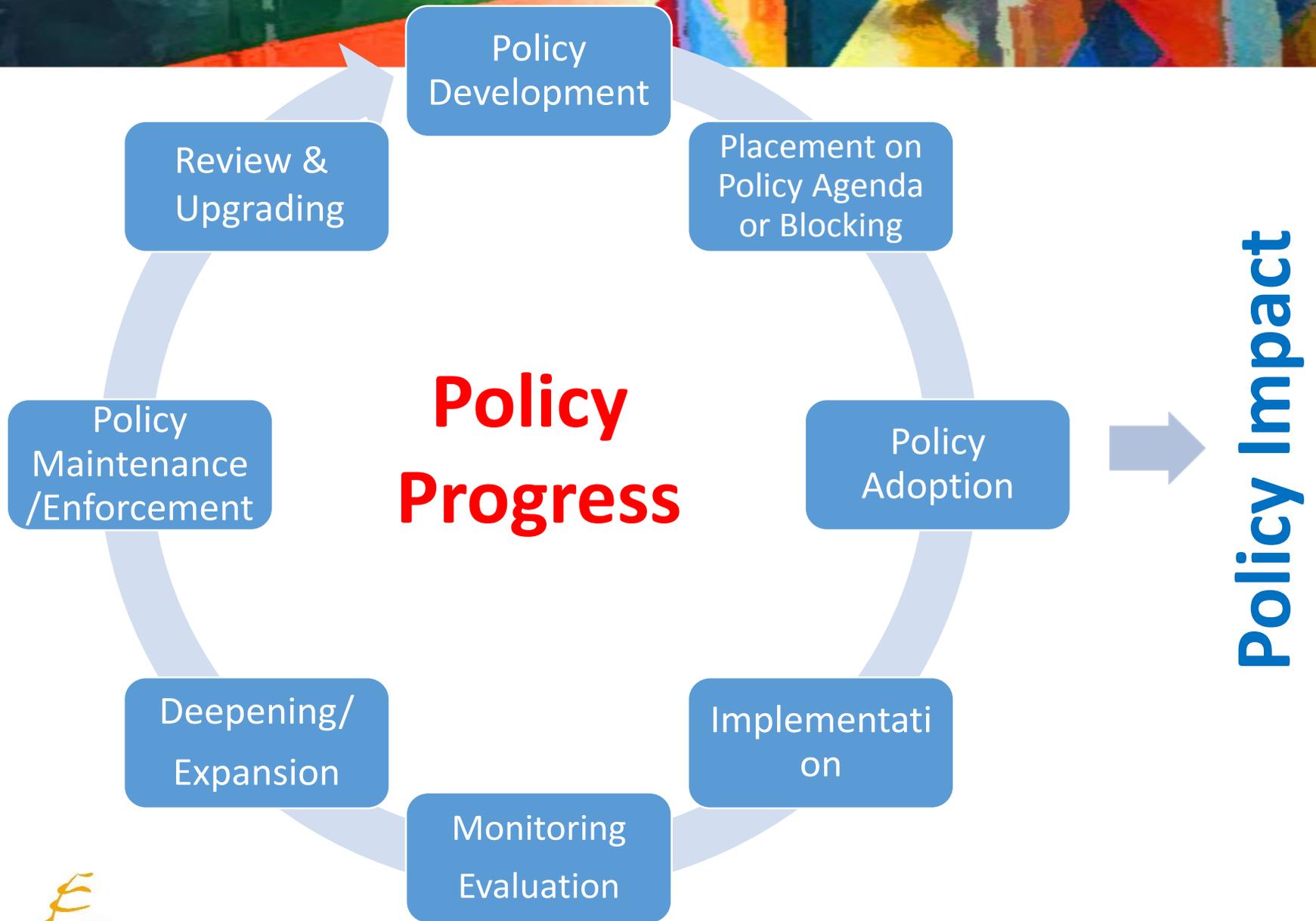


The Module



Policy Impacts & Goals

- **Policy Impacts** – the big change and benefits being sought for people, services or systems as a result of a policy change or policy goal (e.g. improve the way that health care services are provided, a safer community for young children).
- **Policy Goals** – what the advocacy strategy is trying to achieve in the policy arena. Issues at different strategies in the policy process require different types of goals.



Case Studies



Waterloo Region Guaranteed
Income Supplement



Calgary's Fair Fares



Edmonton Urban Food Policy

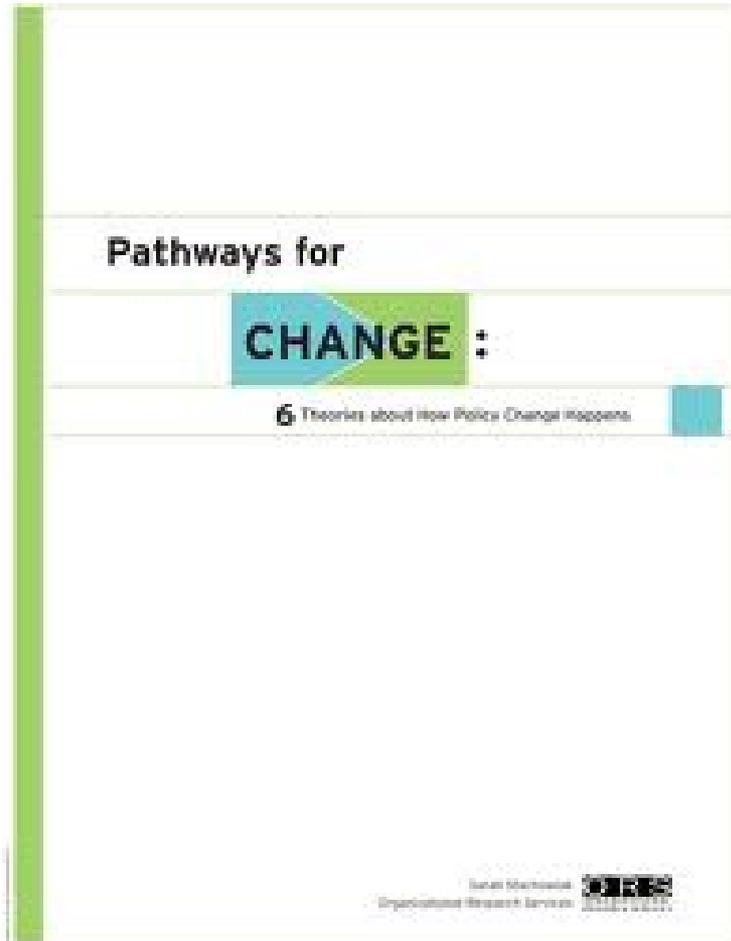
What type of policy goal do you have to achieve your desired impact?



Theories of Policy Change



Pathways for Change



- This brief lays out six theories grounded in diverse social science disciplines and worldviews that have relevance to advocacy and policy change efforts. The brief is not meant to be comprehensive; rather it introduces and illustrates theories and approaches that may be useful to advocates, funders, and evaluators



Large Leap Theory



Coalition Theory



Policy Window



Messaging & Frameworks



Power Politics



Grass Roots

1

Large Leaps



How Change Happens

- Like seismic, evolutionary shifts, significant changes in policy and institutions can occur when the right conditions are in place.

Useful When

- Large-scale policy change is the primary goal
- Strong capacity for media advocacy exists

2

Coalition



How Change Happens

- Policy change happens through coordinated activity among a range of individuals with the same core policy briefs.

Useful When

- A sympathetic administration is in office
- A strong group of allies with a common goal is in place or can be formed

3

Policy Windows



How Change Happens

- Policies can be changed during a window of opportunity when advocates successfully connect 2 or more components of the policy process: (a) the way a problem is defined, (b) the policy solution to the problem, and (c) the political climate surrounding the issue.

Useful When

- Multiple policy streams can be addressed simultaneously (e.g. problem definition, solutions or climate)
- Internal capacity exists to create, identify, and act on policy windows

4

Messaging & Frameworks



How Change Happens

- Individual's policy preferences or willingness to accept them will vary depending on how options are framed or presented.

Useful When

- The issue needs to be redefined as part of a larger campaign or effort
- A key focus of the work is on increasing awareness, agreement on problem definition, or an issue's alliance

5

Power Politics



How Change Happens

- Policy change is made by working directly with those with power to make decisions or influence decision making.

Useful When

- One or more key allies is in place
- The focus is on incremental policy change (e.g. administrative or rule change).

6

Grassroots

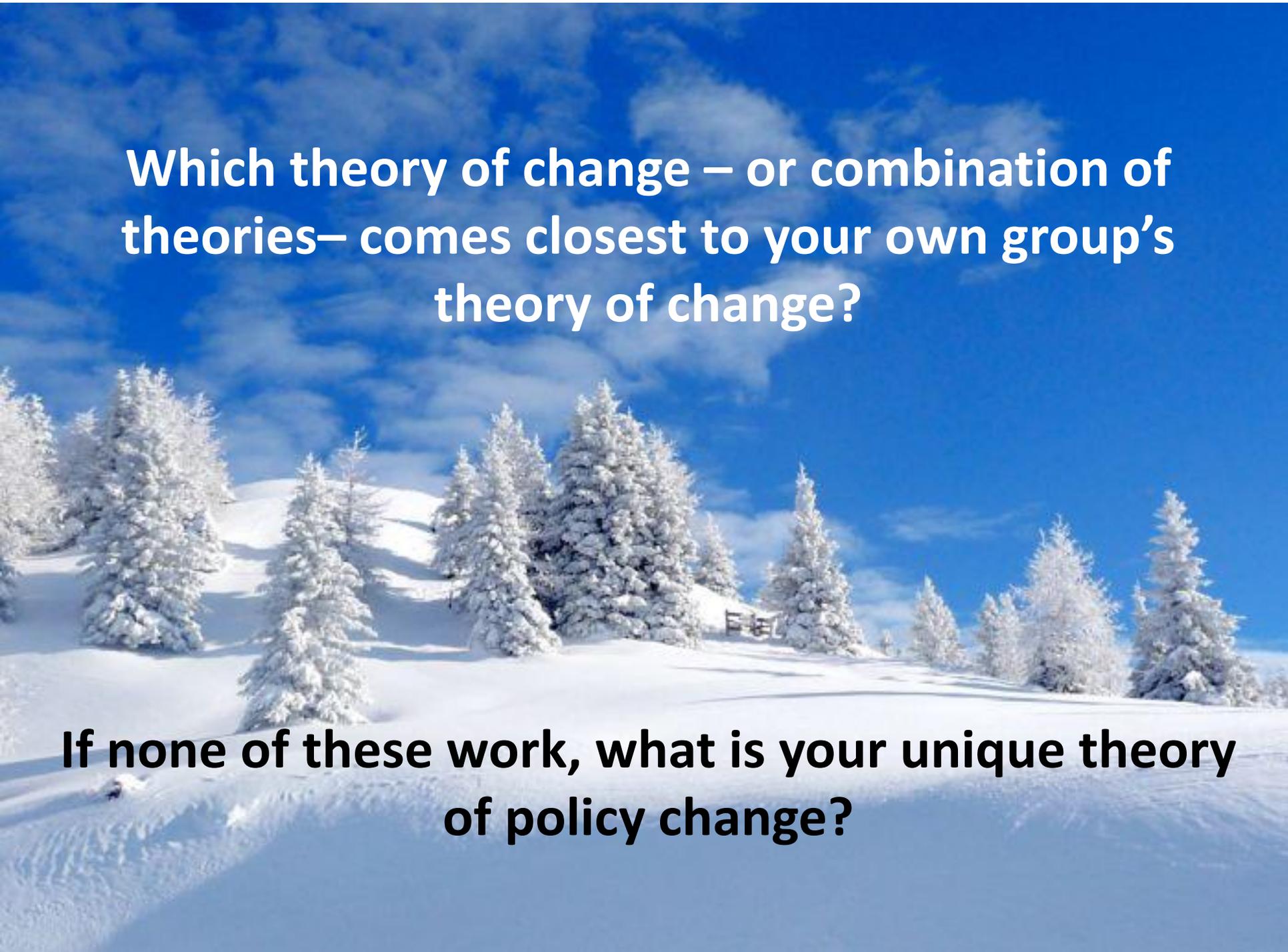


How Change Happens

- Policy change is made through collective action by members of the community who work on changing problems affecting their lives.

Useful When

- A distinct group of individuals is directly affected by an issue
- The advocacy organization can and is willing to play a “convenor” or “capacity building” role rather than a “driver” role.

A winter landscape with snow-covered evergreen trees under a blue sky with light clouds. The scene is bright and clear, with the snow reflecting the sunlight. The trees are densely packed in some areas and more sparse in others, creating a sense of depth. The sky is a vibrant blue, with soft, wispy white clouds scattered across it. The overall atmosphere is serene and peaceful.

Which theory of change – or combination of theories– comes closest to your own group’s theory of change?

If none of these work, what is your unique theory of policy change?



EVALUATION

- Outstanding**
- Very Good**
- Satisfactory**
- Marginal**
- Unsatisfactory**

Resources



The tool helps users:

- **Identify how the evaluation will be used and who will use it** to ensure the evaluation delivers the right kind of information when it is needed.
- **Map the strategy being evaluated** to illustrate how activities lead to policy-related outcomes.
- **Prioritize the components that are most essential for the evaluation** to make sure the evaluation is resource-efficient and manageable.
- **Identify measures and methods** that signal whether advocacy strategy elements have been successfully implemented or achieved.



Indicators/Measures

- **Impact Measures** – demonstrate what will happen after a policy goal is achieved (i.e. effects for program, systems, or populations).
- **Policy Goal Measures** – signal whether goal goals have been achieved.
- **Activity/Tactic Measures** – measures of effort indicate what and how much advocacy activities or tactics produce or accomplish.
- **Interim Outcomes Measures** – signal progress toward the achievement of policy goals.

Types of Indicators

ACTIVITIES/TACTICS

Communications and Outreach

Electronic Outreach/Social Media

Coalition and Network Building

Briefings/Presentations

Earned Media

Grassroots Organizing and Mobilization

Public Service Announcements

Paid Media

Rallies and Marches

Polling

Media Partnerships

Voter Education

Demonstration Projects or Pilots

Politics and Policy

Issue/Policy Analysis and Research

Policymaker and Candidate Education

Litigation or Legal Advocacy

Policy Proposal Development

Relationship Building with Decision Makers

Lobbying

INTERIM OUTCOMES

Advocacy Capacity

Organizational Capacity

New Advocates
(including unlikely or nontraditional)

New Donors

Partnerships or Alliances

New Champions
(including policymakers)

More or Diversified Funding

Collaboration and Alignment
(including messaging)

Organizational Visibility or Recognition

Policy

Awareness

Public Will

Media Coverage

Salience

Political Will

Issue Reframing

Attitudes or Beliefs

Constituency or Support Base Growth



Popular Methods

- **Surveys/Interviews** – gather stakeholder perspectives of feedback.
- **Document Review** – explore the frequency, type and quality of reference to policy issues from key stakeholders.
- **Observation** – participation in advocacy meetings or events to gain first-hand experience or data.
- **Polling** – interviews with a random sample of stakeholders to gather data on knowledge, attitudes of behaviours.
- **Focus groups** – facilitated discussions with advocacy stakeholders (usually 8-10 per group) to obtain reactions, opinions, or ideas.



Popular Methods continued

- **Case Studies** – detailed descriptions and analyses (often qualitative) or individual advocacy strategies and results.
- **Policy Tracking** – monitor the progress of policy proposals in the policy making process.
- **Network Mapping** – explores the connections between people, groups and institutions as well as the strength of those networks.
- **Media Tracking** – monitors the frequency, tone, quality and content of media coverage of an issue over time.

3 Innovative Methods



Bellwether Evaluation



Policymaker Ratings



Intense Period Debriefs

#1 Bellwether Evaluation



bell·weth·er

/'bɛɪ,wɛð ər/ Show Spelled [bel-weth-er] Show IPA

noun 1. a [wether](#) or other male sheep that leads the flock, usually bearing a [bell](#).

2. a person or thing that assumes the [leadership](#) or forefront, as of a profession or industry: Paris is a bellwether of the fashion industry.

3. a person or thing that shows the existence or direction of a trend; index.

4. a person who leads a mob, mutiny, conspiracy, or the like; ringleader.



Ohio now owns the best-in-the-nation streak with 12 straight cycles seeing its Electoral College votes go to the eventual president



Bellwether Interview Protocol: Sample Questions

1. Currently, what three issues do you think are at the top of the [state/federal/local] policy agenda?
2. How familiar are you with [the policy of interest]?
3. What individuals, constituencies, or groups do you see as the main advocates for [the policy]? Who do you see as the main opponents?
4. Considering the current educational, social, and political context, do you think [the policy] should be adopted now or in the near future?
5. Looking ahead, how likely do you think it is that [the policy] will be adopted in the next 5 years?
6. If [the policy] is adopted, what issues do you think the state needs to be most concerned about related to its implementation?

Who are the bellwether”
people in the policy
domain in which you are
operating -- and might
approach for an
evaluation interview?



#2: Rating Scale



Advocates (or other informed stakeholders) rate select policymakers of on scales that assess policymakers' support for, and influence on, the issue.



Domains to Rate

- *Policymaker level of support*—Individual policymaker support for an issue based on his or her public behaviors or actions on behalf of the issue.
- *Policymaker level of influence*—Policymaker influence on the policy issue of interest (similar to the idea of a power analysis). Ratings are based on criteria that research shows relate to policymaker influence.
- *Rater level of confidence*—Confidence in the accuracy of ratings on the first two scales.

#3 - Intense Period Debriefs



- The idea of the debrief grew out of the need to have a forum that encouraged participation from key groups and individuals engaged in different layers or “spheres” of influence surrounding decision-making. It is particularly use for providing a way for individuals in the inner city of those spheres ... to tell the story of what happened behind the scenes?

- This approach engages advocates in evaluative inquiry shortly after an intense period of action occurs, often after a policy window opens and advocates have the opportunity to make significant progress on their issue of interest.
- Many advocacy efforts experience periods of high intensity activity. While those times represent critical opportunities for data collection and learning, advocates have little time to pause for interview or reflection. The unfortunate consequence is that the evaluation is left with significant gaps in data during times in the advocacy cycle when those data are particularly valuable.

Areas for Review

- The public mood and political context during the policy window
- What happened and how the campaign members respond to events
- Perspective on the outcome(s) achieved or not achieved
- How strategies might be adjusted in hindsight.

A night sky filled with stars and a bright planet, with a silhouette of a desert landscape in the foreground. The sky is dark blue and black, with many stars of varying colors and sizes. A bright, white planet is visible in the lower center of the sky. The foreground shows the dark silhouette of a desert landscape with rolling hills and some sparse vegetation.

**What questions or ideas are
emerging for you about how to make
– and evaluate – policy change?**



tamarackcommunity.ca

Building a connected force for community change.

- Online Learning Communities
- Communities of Practice
- Monthly online seminars
- A monthly online journal – Engage! magazine
- Face to face learning events

To learn more email: tamarack@tamarackcommunity.ca



#ECISASK2017

www.tamarackcommunity.ca