

Paul Hamlyn
Foundation

Shared Ground Fund

Theory of Change

August 2021



Introduction

The Shared Ground Fund at Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) was created in 2015 to help ensure that young people who migrate to the UK can get the support they need to settle and thrive and that communities experiencing immigration become stronger and more connected.

Developed with support from
Sophie Ahmad and Shelley Dorrans

Although migration and integration has been an important area of work for PHF for many years, due to our founder's own experience of migration escaping Nazi persecution with his family and as part of our commitment to social justice, the Shared Ground Fund established these areas as a core part of the Foundation's activity. This was recently reaffirmed in our current [strategy](#) published in September 2020 which sets out our values and approach and has informed the development of this document.

The Fund has grown since 2015. While in our first year, we awarded £2.5 million to 22 organisations, in 2020/21 we made grants valuing £4 million to 30 organisations. In total, since 2015, we have awarded £17.8 million and supported 157 organisations.

£17.8m

Since 2015, we have awarded £17.8 million through the Shared Ground Fund and supported 157 organisations



This is an interactive document

Navigate through the different sections of the guide using the links in the top bar and buttons below.

Introduction

Our reasons for developing a theory of change

In the Spring of 2017, we began working with learning partners Sophie Ahmad and Shelley Dorrans and in the autumn of 2018, with their help, we published a first theory of change (ToC) for the Shared Ground Fund.

We developed the ToC because we wanted to be transparent and articulate: the aspirations that informed the establishment of the Fund; our analysis of how positive change might happen; our role in facilitating that change; and the types of work we were keen to support. Our hope was that producing the document would make it easier for organisations seeking funding to see how their work fit with ours. We also wanted to open up a dialogue with the migration sector and the wider social justice movement about how, together, we might achieve change.

The current context

Such a lot has changed in the migration sector, in the UK, and in the wider world since we wrote our ToC in 2018. We have seen a continuing increase in far-right activity in the UK, EU, and US, and the rise (and in some cases fall) of populist governments in numerous countries. With these developments have come attacks on the framework of law and rights that underpin democracy, and on the very idea of truth itself. Last year, just as the UK took its first steps into a post-Brexit era, the Covid-19 pandemic swept the world, greatly exacerbating existing inequalities both within and between countries. This year, we have seen an immigration proposal that is a fundamental threat to international human rights standards.

In many ways, the threats to the people and communities the Shared Ground Fund focuses on seem even greater than they were in 2018. However, the explosion of energy within movements for racial, economic and climate justice, particularly among young people, also give us some hope for the future.

What is clear, however, is that the last few years have shaken the status quo and any complacency that existed in the social justice sectors and amongst funders, compelling everyone to give as much thought to how we go about our work as we do to what we hope to achieve. While it remains unclear what sort of settlement will emerge after the pandemic has finally been brought under control, we feel a renewed sense of urgency to make sure that our approach is up to the task that lies ahead.

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Introduction

Revising our theory of change

The Shared Ground Fund theory of change is a 'live' document. Over the past six months, in our team learning sessions, we have been reflecting on changes in the world and learning from our work since 2018 and thinking about how we can use our funding and influence to support positive change in this new context.

What we hope to achieve

In writing this revised ToC, we have reflected on the evidence from interviews that our learning partners conducted with some of the organisations we fund and work with regarding our first ToC. We also note that our analysis is built on the work of others and wish to thank those who have been generous enough to share their thinking with us.

We have tested out some of the ideas in this new document on an informal basis. However, the contents of this revised ToC reflect our own understanding of key issues in the field of migration and integration. As a funder with broad areas of interest, we are in a fortunate position to be able to look across the migration sector and identify how connections between organisations and issues might lead to wider change. However, we are aware that our perspective is also limited by our role, position and current networks, which are predominantly medium-sized organisations (with a turnover between between £100,000 and £1 million) situated in metropolitan city areas.

This revised ToC is shorter than our original version. We hope this means it is easier for organisations and partners to engage with, and that the central arguments are clearer and so more readily open to challenge.

We know it's important that we put our ideas into practice. We are currently developing an evaluation framework to sit alongside this document, which we hope to publish as an annex in the coming months. This will go further in setting out some clear ambitions for the next couple of years, against which we, and organisations and partners, can judge our progress.

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Introduction

An invitation to share your thoughts

We plan to gather feedback on this ToC in a range of ways over the next two years. However, we would love to hear from anyone who wants to talk to us about our ideas, challenge our analysis, blindspots and assumptions and/or suggest ways this ToC can be improved for the future. If you have any comments on this document, please write to us at migration@phf.org.uk.

We anticipate updating our ToC every couple of years from now on. We are really keen for organisations and partners who are interested to have a greater role in this process in future and are exploring how we can open up our internal learning processes to give organisations we work with a greater role in developing future iterations.

Structure of this document

The rest of this document is structured as follows:

- **The focus of our Fund** describes the focus of the Shared Ground Fund and our understanding of the immigration system
- **Our vision and long-term change goals** sets out our vision and long-term change goals
- **Our view of what's required** outlines our analysis of what's required to change the immigration system
- **PHF's contribution, approach and priorities** describes our contribution to that change, our approach and our funding priorities

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We are exploring how we can open up our internal learning processes to give organisations we work with a greater role in developing future iterations.

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The focus of our Fund

The UK immigration ‘system’

The focus of the Shared Ground Fund is to transform the UK immigration ‘system’ so it centres humanity, rights and justice and ensures everyone who migrates can get the support they need to achieve their potential and thrive, and where communities experiencing migration become stronger, more connected and able to live better together. We use the immigration system as shorthand, but we mean it to include asylum, nationality and integration or inclusion of people who have migrated to the UK.

We define a system as “a configuration of interacting, interdependent parts that are connected through a web of relationships, forming a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts” (Holland 1998). Social systems comprise tangible things, such as people and organisations, connected by more intangible things, including histories, worldviews, and culture (Abercrombie, Harries, and Wharton, 2015).

What does the UK immigration system comprise?

When we talk about the UK immigration system, we mean: the framework of law and policy and the culture and behaviours of key institutions (in particular the Home Office); public, media and political narratives about migration (including the attitudes and deeper social and cultural norms that inform them); the support that is available to people who migrate on arrival and when settling in the UK (including support to challenge decisions made against them); and the degree of agency people within the immigration system have to live their life fully and to influence the immigration system they experience.¹

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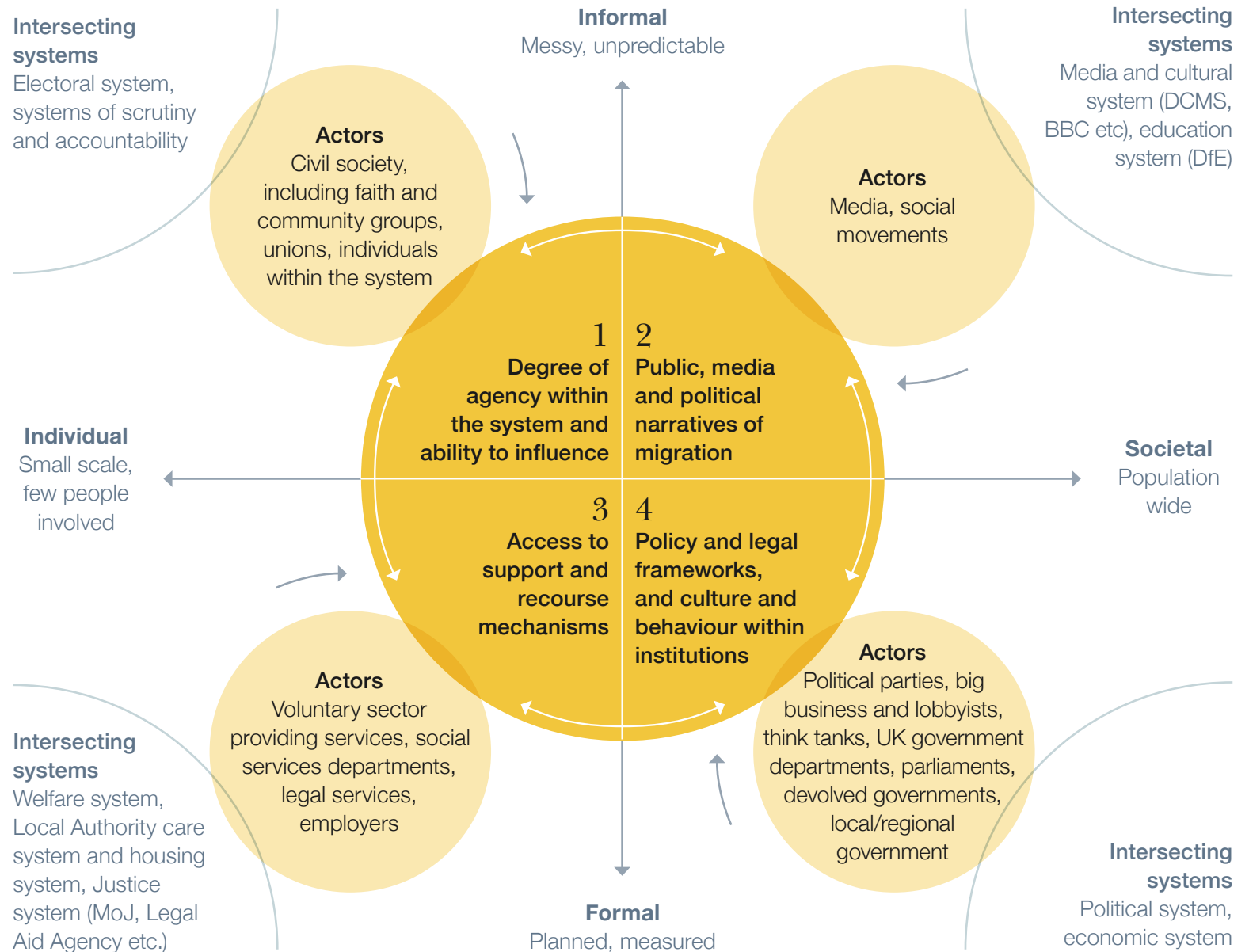
The UK immigration system does not exist in isolation; it is connected to a host of other social systems, including the legal, political, economic, welfare, and national security systems. We are interested in these systems in so much as they directly impact on the immigration system and the people who are subjected to it. As a complex system, we recognise that the precise boundaries of the immigration system can be hard to define (Chapman 2004). We also acknowledge that our view of the system reflects the issues that we are interested in and may not be shared by everyone.

¹ Our thinking about the four domains set out in the following diagrams has been influenced by Sheila McKechnie Foundation’s Social Change Grid.

Our view of what the UK immigration system comprises

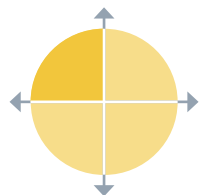
The system comprises: the framework of law and policy, and the culture and behaviours of key institutions; public, media and political narratives of migration; the support and recourse mechanisms available to people; and the degree of agency and influence afforded to people within the system.

You can find further detail about the indicators which we can use to judge the health of the system on the following page.



1

Degree of agency within the system and ability to influence

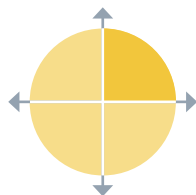


Potential aspects or indicators of the immigration system against which we can judge the health or dysfunction of the system:

- Ability of people who migrate to participate in democratic life and in formal power structures
- Complexity and opaqueness of the system
- Understanding of rights and entitlements
- Degree of risk associated with self-advocating

2

Public, media and political narratives of migration

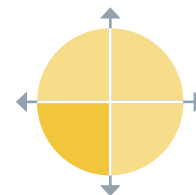


Potential aspects or indicators of the immigration system against which we can judge the health or dysfunction of the system:

- Media, arts and cultural portrayals of people who migrate
- Public salience, concern about and support for immigration and asylum
- Political narratives of immigration and asylum

3

Access to support and recourse mechanisms

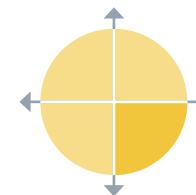


Potential aspects or indicators of the immigration system against which we can judge the health or dysfunction of the system:

- Local Authority support for individuals, families and voluntary sector
- Equality of outcomes for different groups
- Funding for legal aid and advice provision
- Access to appeals and judicial reviews
- Support for those experiencing labour exploitation

4

Policy and legal frameworks, and culture and behaviour within institutions



Potential aspects or indicators of the immigration system against which we can judge the health or dysfunction of the system:

- Degree of centralisation of policymaking
- Policy and practice at Home Office, MoJ, UKVI
- Key legislation, policy guidance and rules
- Political parties' position on immigration

The focus of our Fund

The UK immigration system in 2021: A dysfunctional system

All social systems are embedded within, and are reflective of, a set of foundational beliefs about how to structure relations and allocate power and resources that have a long history.

The past few years have made us even more painfully aware of the way in which such belief systems continue to shape UK society in a way that creates deep inequalities. A rise in insecure and exploitative work, a housing crisis and increasing levels of destitution, and a welfare system hollowed out by years of austerity have left many parts of our community in crisis, whilst those who are asset-rich have seen their fortunes soar.

The pandemic has exacerbated these trends, disproportionately affecting women, the young, and migrant communities (who have also been hit hardest by the health crisis). However, despite growing evidence of unequal outcomes, “meritocratic and individualistic” beliefs remain pervasive and persistent.²

² Unequal Britain: attitudes to inequalities after Covid-19. Polling by YouGov. Kings College London. This research found that nearly half of people believed those who have lost their job during the pandemic were likely to have been underperforming. It also found greater levels of concern about inequalities of income and wealth, and between geographical areas, than between races, genders and generations.

³ See Mayblin L, Wake M & Kazemi M (2020) [Necropolitics and the Slow Violence of the Everyday: Asylum Seeker Welfare in the Postcolonial Present](#). *Sociology*, 54(1), 107-123.

Structural racism and the UK immigration system

The immigration system reflects and perpetuates the history and beliefs that shape UK society and its relationships with the rest of the world, as a former colonial power. The concept of who is a citizen and has the right to migrate to the UK, and the current use of state powers to intimidate, strip of rights, exclude from welfare and isolate, imprison and forcibly remove people who migrate is founded in legislation which has roots in colonial enterprise and racially hierarchical worldviews.³

While the system continues to work for some people (generally educated, white, middle-class professionals, and select others where the political will exists, as we have seen in relation to British National (Overseas) Visa holders from Hong Kong), there is a pattern of poor outcomes for others, especially for people of colour and those from lower socio-economic groups. The shameful treatment by the Home Office of the Windrush generation, in particular, has illustrated this. The Review's author suggested the Department's failings demonstrated “*institutional ignorance and thoughtlessness towards the issue of race and the history of the Windrush generation...which are consistent with some elements of the definition of institutional racism.*” (Williams, 2020).

The focus of our Fund

Our view of the UK immigration system in 2021

The following diagram outlines our view of some of the dysfunctional elements of the current immigration system, and the factors that we think are driving or sustaining this dysfunction, including: lack of diversity in the media and politics; a policy process dominated by a restricted range of voices and interests both within and outside of Government; outsourcing of key government functions to unaccountable private contractors; the undermining of civil society and rights and justice frameworks; and the increasing use of new technologies that lack transparency and accountability in decision-making processes.

The purpose of the current system

The immigration system is focused on economic extraction (it values humans based solely on their labour and economic contribution), enforcement and penalisation. However, even on these terms, the current system is failing. For example, there is little evidence that the set of interconnected, restrictive policies that constitute the hostile (now 'compliant') environment discourages people with irregular immigration status from coming to the UK and from staying here, as intended (CCLC 2013, IPPR 2020). Yet these policies consign people to ever more precarious situations, place additional strains on local services, and undermine efforts at integration. Enforcement and penalisation are also costly, and prevent the UK from realising the rich economic, social and cultural contribution migration brings. For example, excluding a cohort of young people who were born in the UK to migrant parents, or came here as young children, from their rights as citizens is a shameful waste of human potential from which the whole of UK society might otherwise benefit.

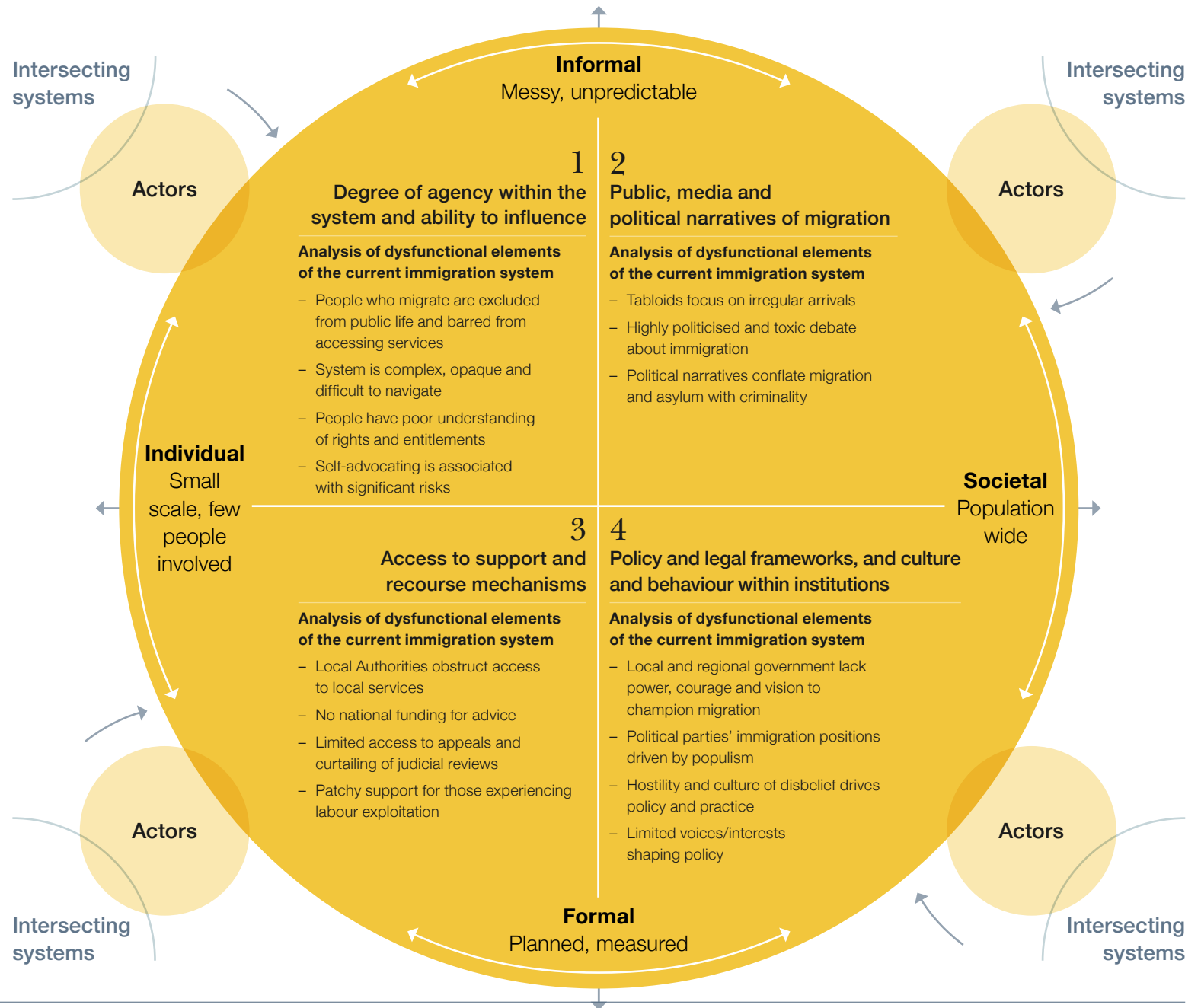
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Enforcement and penalisation are costly, but also prevent the UK from realising the rich economic, social and cultural contribution migration brings.

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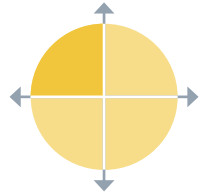
Our view of the UK immigration system in 2021

The system is currently: focused on economic extraction and enforcement; increasingly militarised; systemically racist and discriminatory against women and other groups; shaped by populist narratives and highly centralised policy making; largely unaccountable; and responsible for forcing some groups into poverty, destitution and exploitation and undermining integration.



1

Degree of agency within the system and ability to influence

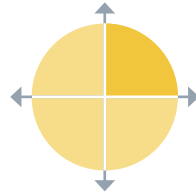


Wider factors that are driving/ shaping system dysfunction

- Closing space for civil society and curtailing of right to protest
- Informal support networks undermined by Covid
- Fragmentation, under-resourcing and lack of infrastructure in the migration movement making it difficult to meet community needs

2

Public, media and political narratives of migration

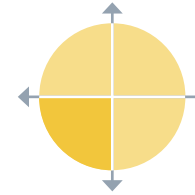


Wider factors that are driving/ shaping system dysfunction

- Structural racism, misogyny and discrimination against other key groups
- Lack of diversity in the media
- Government response to Black Lives Matter downplays role of structural racism
- Emboldened far right targeting asylum accommodation in a coordinated way to draw attention to their cause
- Increased prevalence of 'fake news' and questioning of elites and sources of information erodes trust in politics

3

Access to support and recourse mechanisms

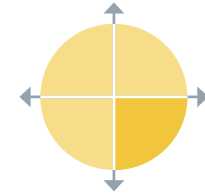


Wider factors that are driving/ shaping system dysfunction

- Government undermining of human rights, legal aid, and judicial review
- Austerity reduces capacity of Local Authorities to respond to need and support the voluntary and community sector
- Digitalisation of welfare and increased use of algorithms in decision making decreases transparency and accountability
- New employment practices undermining rights

4

Policy and legal frameworks, and culture and behaviour within institutions



Wider factors that are driving/ shaping system dysfunction

- Rise of populism and far right
- Weak and divided opposition
- Highly centralised approach to policy making that in response to Covid-19 and Brexit lacks oversight and scrutiny
- Outsourcing of key government functions to private contractors

Our vision and long-term change goals

A more humane, just, rights-based system

At PHF, we believe the current system serves neither the interests of people who migrate to the UK nor wider society, and it needs to fundamentally change in purpose and design.

We want to see a very different system, in which everyone who migrates can get the support they need to achieve their potential and flourish, and where communities experiencing migration can live better together. We want to see a system that centres humanity, rights and justice while meeting the economic needs of country, fulfilling international obligations fully, enabling integrated communities with a positive political and public narrative.

The change we want to see

While we recognise that there are many successful stories of migration to the UK, our concern is with those people who are especially disadvantaged by the system dysfunctions outlined above. We remain particularly interested in ensuring young people who migrate can reach their potential and thrive, however, we recognise that to achieve this aim systemic change is required across the board.

Our vision and long-term goals are set out in the following pages. In addition to reform of the policy and legal frameworks that govern the immigration system, we recognise the importance of ensuring people can access support from the welfare, housing and education systems in the short and longer-term if they are to survive and thrive in the UK. More positive political and public narratives and opportunities for civic engagement are also important, not only because they affect individual and community wellbeing, but because they create the space and conditions in which policy and legal reform can be achieved and sustained over time.

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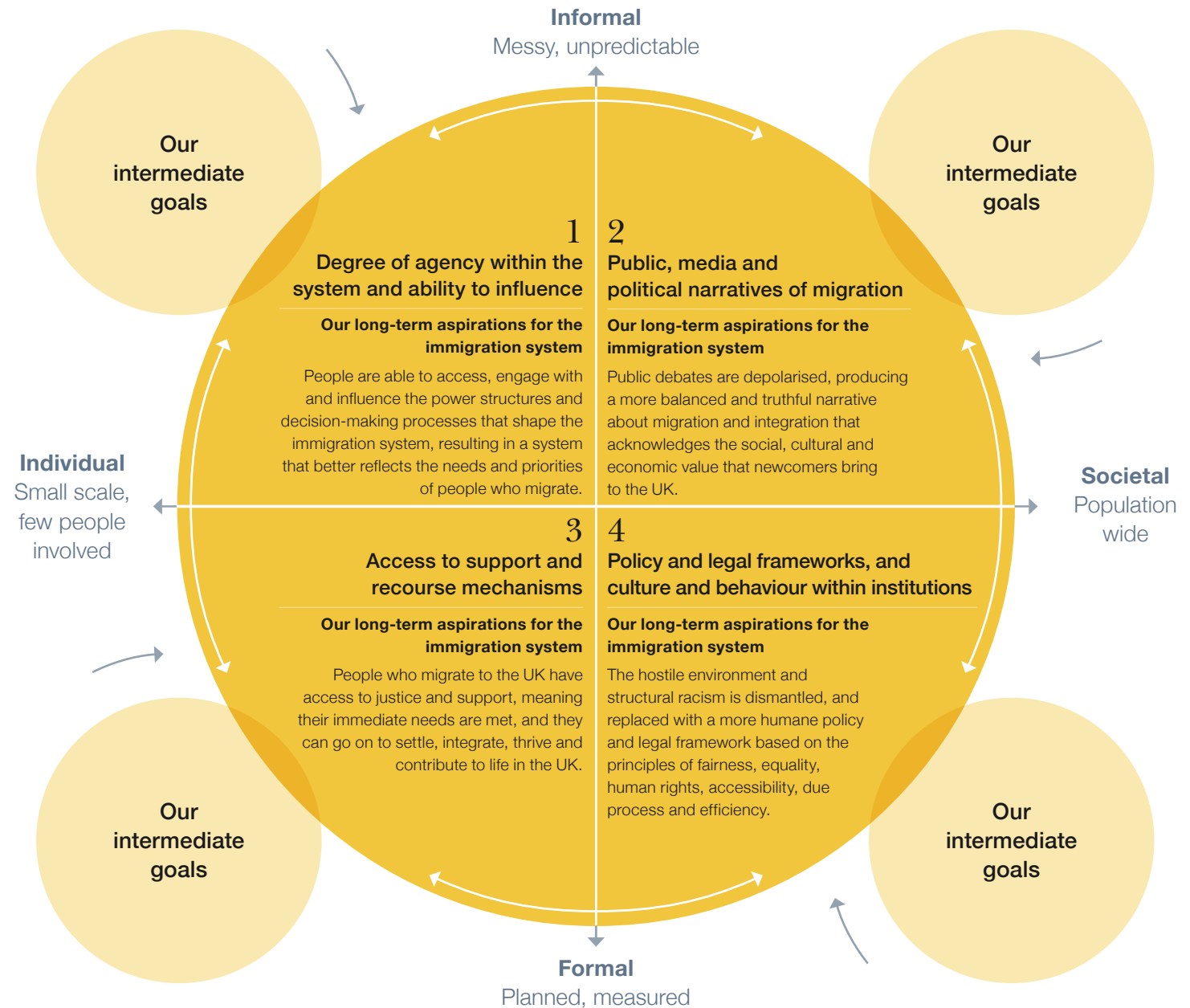
We want to see a system, in which everyone who migrates can get the support they need to achieve their potential and flourish.

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In pursuit of these goals our funding is currently clustered in some priority areas which are outlined later in this document. These clusters reflect developments in the external context, issues we identify as critical (including those that we judge can leverage wider change in the immigration system) and topics that receive less attention from other funders.

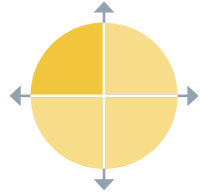
Our view of what a more humane immigration system might look like (our long-term vision and intermediate change goals)

A very different system in which: everyone who migrates can get the support they need to achieve their potential, and where communities experiencing migration become stronger, more connected, and can live better together.



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Degree of agency within the system and ability to influence

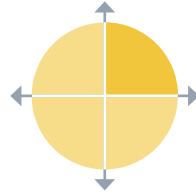


Our intermediate goals

- Increased opportunities for those who migrate to influence the policies, decision-making structures, and services that affect them and their communities (e.g. via voting, standing for election, and holding other positions of responsibility e.g. as school governors or magistrates)
- Increased opportunities for those with “lived experience” of migration to influence the policy frameworks for immigration and integration
- Closer working between civil society organisations, statutory services and communities to support settlement, deepen connections and solidarity between people, and alleviate tensions when they occur

2

Public, media and political narratives of migration

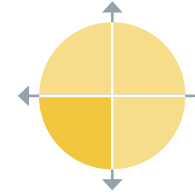


Our intermediate goals

- A broader range of voices and perspectives reflected in media debates about migration and integration
- A shift in public narratives away from a focus on new arrivals in crisis to encompass the full range of reasons why people migrate, from forced displacement to economic migration, and everything in between

3

Access to support and recourse mechanisms

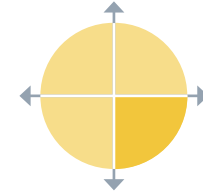


Our intermediate goals

- Increased access to crisis support, to avoid destitution
- Increased provision of high-quality, affordable/free legal advice for those with insecure immigration status, especially young people eligible for citizenship
- Increased knowledge of rights/entitlements among young people who migrate
- Ensuring people who migrate can access support services online
- Increased protections in the workplace to prevent migrant workers from being exploited and improve conditions for all workers
- An increase in the resilience and adaptability of support services
- Development of local and sub-regional leadership and plans to support inclusive places, institutions, and services

4

Policy and legal frameworks, and culture and behaviour within institutions



Our intermediate goals

- An increase in legal pathways for people to come to the UK
- An end to the use of hostile environment policies
- Reforms to the immigration and asylum determination system so it delivers quicker, fairer and better-quality decisions
- Simpler, quicker and more affordable routes to citizenship
- A reduction in the barriers to family reunion
- A reduction in immigration detention and use of community-based alternatives
- Safeguards concerning the use of algorithms in immigration decision-making
- Securing rights for all EU national post-Brexit
- A greater role for other government departments in the formulation of immigration policy

Our view of what's required to change the immigration system

Some general principles

A long-term but flexible approach

At PHF, we recognise the importance of responding to immediate harms created by the immigration system. However, we also believe that it's important to challenge the system as a whole. Unless we do this, victories in one area will quickly be superseded by problems in other areas.

We appreciate that a range of changes, many beyond the control of our sector, are required for significant reform of the immigration system to take place. These include: expanding the franchise; achieving greater diversity in the media and in parliament; and electoral success of political parties that are truly committed to a rights based framework. A whole host of developments in politics, law, the economy, society and technology will also continue to shape the immigration system and throw up new challenges for people who migrate and the communities they join.

For these reasons, reform of the immigration system is likely to be a complex and long-term task, requiring sustained effort. It is very likely that there will be significant set-backs along the way, not because sector action has been ineffective, but because wider developments are shaping the field in unexpected ways. In some situations, simply "holding the line" may constitute a significant achievement.

Our assumption is that while the sector needs to work more deliberately and purposefully towards a positive long-term vision, it will also need to be agile and responsive. In this context, it doesn't make sense to specify goals or target groups too tightly in advance.

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One reason that many social innovation efforts fail to have the impact hoped for is that these innovations are not designed to bring about wider systems change: they are like individual points of light when they need to form a new constellation with a new shape and structure.

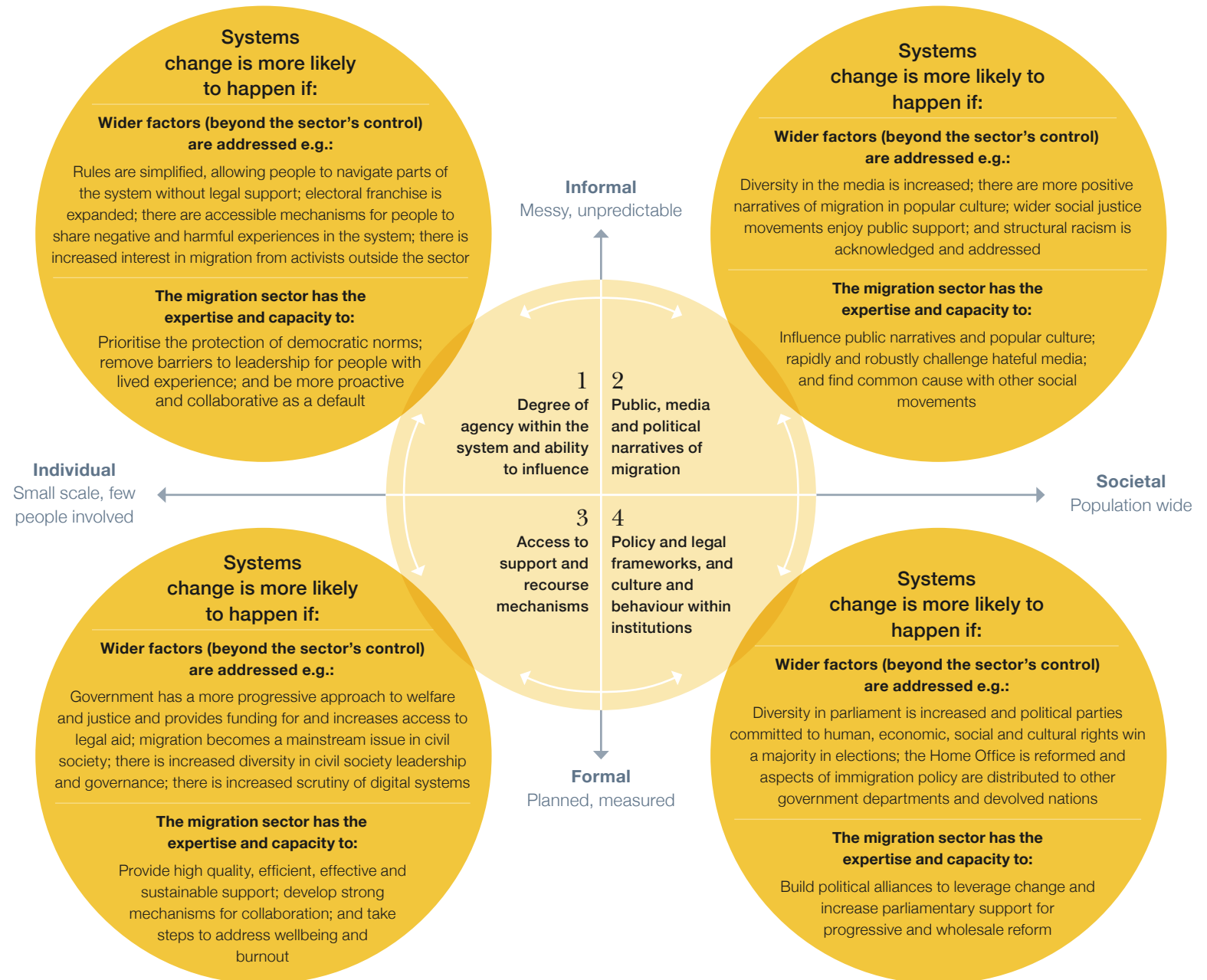
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Leadbeater and Winhall, 2020

Our view of what is required to bring about a more humane immigration system (our theory of change)

Bringing about systems change will require: a long-term change project, in which the sector can play a crucial role but where outcomes are also shaped by many factors that are beyond its control.

Please refer to the diagram on page 14 for our long-term aspirations for the immigration system.



Our view of what's required to change the immigration system

Challenging and redefining the system's 'purpose'

In their recent paper on systems change, Leadbeater and Winhall argue that social systems are hard to change because power, relationships and resources are locked together in a reinforcing pattern based on the system's current purpose. They suggest that change happens when these dimensions are realigned around a new conception of what the system is for.

One of the reasons why the immigration system is perhaps so challenging to shift is that not everyone currently regards it as broken. We recognise that many of the harms experienced by people subject to immigration control are an intentional output of the current system's purpose. Some people aren't aware of the system's dysfunctions and others don't regard the harm it creates as relevant to their own lives. This suggests that one of the most important tasks ahead will be to help more people to understand how the system works in practice, the harms it creates for some people and communities, and its failure in meeting even its current purposes – and to convince government that a fundamentally different approach to immigration is possible.

Our assumption is that it is possible to develop an immigration system that treats people fairly and with dignity and respect, while commanding public confidence and consent. However, we recognise that this will require new and more compelling ways of expressing our goals that are meaningful to the general public and to partners beyond our specialist sector.

Modelling a different approach

While work at UK national level continues to be important, we know that the opportunities for significant change at this level are currently limited.

Our assumption is that there remain greater opportunities to build movements for change at local, regional and devolved levels, supported by local leaders with passion and courage and new collaborations of organisations working together across sectors in support of common goals.

As 'microcosms' for change, cities, sub-regions and devolved nations offer an opportunity to explore how elements of a more progressive system might come together and reinforce each other.

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Our view of what's required to change the immigration system

Developing 'system-changing' capabilities and ways of working

Our assumption is that the chances of achieving systems change are greater if we can build a more resilient, adaptable, diverse and connected community of change makers. Below we outline some of the characteristics, capabilities and ways of working that we think are likely to be important. However, we appreciate that our sector is made up of very many different types of people, groups and organisations, so these points will apply in different ways across the sector.

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The migration sector is made up of passionate people whose commitment, hard work, skill and creativity is the driving force for change.
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People

The migration sector is made up of passionate people whose commitment, hard work, skill and creativity is the driving force for change. They are our biggest asset. We think it's vital that the sector can attract great people, enable them to develop to their full potential, support their well-being, and reward them appropriately for the difficult work they do.

Leaders, by which we mean those demonstrating leadership in various settings and levels and not just those in executive roles, have a crucial role in 'reading' the system, setting direction and holding things together, often in exceptionally difficult circumstances. As figure heads, they also have an important role in telling the story of their organisation's work and communicating the truth about the immigration system. Increasingly, leaders need to be able to work effectively across, as well as within, organisations and be willing to share their power. We need to invest in the current cohort of leaders, and the leaders of the future, to ensure they are equipped for these tasks.

We know that our sector has not given sufficient attention to the involvement and leadership of people with lived experience in the past, and that parts of the sector have adopted a deficit based approach which views people as essentially vulnerable or victims rather than an asset based approach which recognises individuals as active agents of change. When lived experience is acknowledged, it has often been tokenistic, and people's time and skills have not always been fairly rewarded. People with lived experience have rarely had the opportunity to lead in their own right, often finding themselves in frontline facing roles rather than executive or governance roles. Those lived experience leaders who have broken through despite these challenges have often been overburdened with requests to support other organisations and have not always had the support they need and deserve from funders. We believe that knowledge drawn from lived experience needs to be given equity and considered alongside learned knowledge and practice experience.

Our view of what's required to change the immigration system

Our assumption is that positive change is more likely to come about when people with lived experience of migration are leading that change. People with lived experience bring unique insights into the harms caused by the immigration system, insights into how hidden power structures are operationalised, as well as passion and skills. Change efforts informed by people with lived experience also often have more legitimacy and impact. People with lived experience need to be involved in change at all levels, but their involvement in leadership positions is key, where they can shape the work of organisations and the sector as a whole.

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To change the immigration system, we need a diverse and movement-generous ecology of people, groups and organisations that bring different perspectives, skills and networks.
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Organisations

If we want people to do their best work, we need to build healthy and resilient organisations that are more financially stable.

We know that the migration sector is structurally unequal. A large proportion of it comprises small, grass-roots groups that do not receive any funding or pay any wages. In the funding world, in particular, we need to reflect on who gets access to funding, and therefore the chance to scale their work, and who does not. At PHF, we recognise the particular barriers that Black and migrant-led organisations often face in securing funding and scaling their work. As well as access to additional funding, organisations need resource and infrastructure support to develop sound financial management and robust governance arrangements as a foundation for growth.

Organisations in our sector are facing unprecedented pressure to adapt and change how they work in order to respond to escalating need with ever more restricted resources. The pandemic has amplified the need to transform services and ways of working. In this context, we think it's vital that organisations protect time for reflection and create cultures in which learning is valued.

Sector

No single leader or organisation has the answer to the challenges we're grappling with. **Our assumption** is that to change the immigration system, we need a diverse and movement-generous ecology of people, groups and organisations that bring different perspectives, skills and networks. This includes those with both radical and reformist goals and approaches, and those working to effect change on different timescales. We believe these approaches can be complementary without undermining one another but we need to create more opportunities for people and organisations to come together to exchange insights and learning, to have frank but open-hearted conversations about how change might come about, and to identify and pursue shared goals.

Our view of what's required to change the immigration system

While organisations will always have their own priorities, and they won't agree on everything, we have seen over the past few years that it is possible for people to come together around shared values and principles.

Collaborative arrangements need to facilitate both long-term work and rapid response to unfolding events. Our sector's response to Windrush demonstrates how it can act extremely effectively at pace. So often this turns on strong relationships between leaders. We need to nurture these relationships, and the trust that underpins effective collective action. We also need to ensure that collaboration is properly resourced, and that issues of power, equity and inclusion are addressed.

As a sector, we need to continue to expand our understanding of the range of approaches that will help us achieve systems change, from community organising, to policy influencing, to strategic litigation. We also need to build sector infrastructure that commands widespread support and can act as a repository of expertise on how to tackle current and future threats and opportunities.

Movement

It's clear from our analysis of the immigration system that the migration sector is unlikely to achieve systems change acting alone. **Our assumption** is that the 'formalised' migration sector, which has deep expertise in services, law and policy needs strong connections to the wider migration movement, which in turn needs to forge closer links with wider social justice movements in order to tackle some of the issues that are driving or compounding dysfunction in the immigration system. **Our assumption** is that the lives of the groups we are concerned about will be improved if more progressive values are upheld and championed for everyone.

At PHF, we are particularly focused on the need to build bridges between the migration sector and the racial justice and human rights sectors. We think it's vital that more people understand the connections between the struggle for migrants' rights and broader struggles for racial justice, climate justice, and human, economic, social and cultural rights.

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PHF's contribution, approach and priorities

In the Shared Ground Team, our hope is that we can support systems change not just through the work we fund and the organisations we support, but also through the roles we adopt and the way in which we behave. However, we are clear that we are a tiny cog that is unable to achieve the ambition of this document alone, and that change will require more partners focused on this issue as well as more resource.

Our role and contribution

Our judgement is that we can best support systems change by modelling the type of behaviours we think support systems change, and supporting organisations who also demonstrate these system-changing behaviours. We strive to be:

A consistent and responsive presence

We know it will take time to achieve our change goals. At PHF, migration is a key priority in our strategy and we are clear that we are invested in this area for the long haul.

While we continue to focus on our long-term change goals, we are acutely aware of the unpredictable context and the need to be agile and responsive too. We know that funders sometimes find agility difficult, and we have not always got this right. However, our response to Covid and to current attacks on judicial review shows that we can do this, and we know it's important that we continue to do so.

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PHF's contribution, approach and priorities

A funder focused on relationships

We want to be the best partner we can be to the people and organisations we support. We believe that funders can add the most value when they have strong and trusting relationships with the organisations they fund. We know that leaders, in particular, are under a great deal of pressure, and we want to be a source of support as well as funding. We understand that all relationships between funders and grantees are shaped by power dynamics. We try as much as possible to work in a way that minimises the effect of this dynamic, while being open and upfront where we cannot.

We know that applying for funds is hugely time-consuming. We try to be as clear as possible about our criteria and interests, to avoid wasting applicants' time, and hope this document contributes further to this end. Wherever possible, we signpost applicants to other potential sources of funding where their work does not fit with our goals. We also try to ensure that our application processes are as simple as they can be, and that we only ask for information that is strictly necessary. We know we can always do better in these respects, and we welcome feedback on how we can improve our processes further.

We want to work with people who are thoughtful about their work and the impact they want to have. However, we know that great ideas and practice don't always translate well on to paper. We try to help applicants shape their proposals and put their best case forward. **Our assumption** is that our team's expertise allows us to spot opportunities and improve the quality of proposals and funded work, while our approach builds in sufficient opportunities for our ideas to be challenged.

We understand that applicants can sometimes feel under pressure to promise too much in order to secure funding and fit with funders' criteria. We encourage applicants to put in realistic budgets for their work. Increasingly, we try to offer flexible, longer-term and unrestricted funding to support core costs. Wherever possible, we also make connections to other sources of funding within PHF that can be drawn on to support our aims. **Our assumption** is that a more varied, bespoke and flexible approach to funding will help ensure the success of individual programmes, while contributing to the financial health and sustainability of the organisations we support.

In addition to funding, we offer a range of other 'grants-plus' support, such as advice on governance or evaluation, brokering of relationships with sector experts, and opportunities to participate in our convening (see next page). We know the support that organisations need will vary and may also look different depending on the stage they are at with their work. **Our assumption** is that our engaged style and "grants-plus" support are experienced as helpful rather than an additional burden on the organisations we fund.

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PHF's contribution, approach and priorities

A convenor and supporter of generous collaboration

We want to use our position and our resources to bring people together to share perspectives and learning, deepen trust and relationships, consider long-term hopeful visions and possibilities and develop joint strategies for work towards common goals.

Our assumption is that the inevitable power dynamics involved in funder-organisation relationships do not prevent us from taking on this “honest broker” role.

Currently, our convening takes place at three levels: across the whole cohort of organisations we fund at our annual residential (which is held in partnership with Unbound Philanthropy and also includes some of their funded organisations); at a thematic level, involving cohorts of organisations working together to pursue shared objectives in a particular area (e.g. to improve local services for care leavers); and in response to emerging agendas or events (e.g. to discuss the sector's response to Windrush, or the pandemic, or to new pieces of legislation).

In all our convening, and at our residential in particular, we try to bring a diverse range of people together with different experiences, outlooks and skills. We always try to ensure strong representation of people with lived experience of migration and in future will ring fence places for leaders with lived experience. We also include people from related sectors, such as the racial justice, civil liberties and human rights sectors, and other experts. We try to create positive, inclusive spaces for collaboration, which are co-designed with organisations we work with. At our residential, in particular, we always build in a focus on individual and collective care, as a contribution to creating a sector culture that values well-being.

Our assumption is that PHF's reputation and networks mean we are well placed to reach out to new allies and bring diverse parties together, and that the way we pick issues on which to convene, and our approach to convening, supports and adds value to existing sector networks.

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PHF's contribution, approach and priorities

A champion of learning

Our assumption is that the issues we are working on are so complex and fast moving that adopting a learning approach is essential. We hope that by committing to a learning approach ourselves, we can inspire and support others to do this too.

We encourage organisations we fund to build time for reflection and learning into their budgets. We also provide advice on monitoring and evaluation, and signpost to other sources of support (including PHF's own evaluation support scheme). We know that the work organisations are engaged in is ambitious and difficult, and that a certain degree of risk inevitably comes with this. While we want organisations to succeed, we accept that grant-funded work does not always go to plan. We try to be as flexible as possible to allow people to change course in response to shifting conditions and emerging insight into what works. We value learning from 'failure' as an ingredient for future success.

We know that people working in our sector are often so busy "fire-fighting" that they have little time to reflect on how the whole system operates, and the types of action that may spark or sustain change. As a team, we have our own analysis of the system and the sector's collective strengths and capabilities. We try to share this analysis, and also commission research, horizon scans, and think pieces from leading experts to add to this picture. We recognise that there are parts of the sector that we still do not know well, and we are committed to extending our networks and intelligence gathering processes in future.

We draw on insights from all the work we fund to identify gaps in sector capabilities. We work very closely with funder partners to develop new sector infrastructure in response to these gaps. We also try to encourage more funders to support work on migration and integration because a significant injection of funds to the sector is needed to progress towards meaningful change.

Our assumption is that having more funders active in this space, and deeper collaboration between them, will improve the prospects for positive change. We assume any risks associated with funder collaboration, such as increased bureaucracy and "group think", can be minimised with sufficient attention and challenge.

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We are committed to extending our networks and intelligence gathering processes in future.

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PHF's contribution, approach and priorities

An advocate for lived experience leadership, equity and inclusion

Over the past few years, we have increasingly funded migrant-led mobilising and lived experience leaders have played a more prominent role at our annual residential. We have also recently changed the criteria we use in our assessment processes to enquire about lived experience leadership. However, we know there is much more we need to do across all areas of our portfolio and processes and, in particular, with respect to paid sector roles. **Our assumption** is that we should be using our power, influence and resources to do more to support the next generation of leaders with lived experience of migration, and that our interventions in this area will be regarded as legitimate and helpful by our grantees and partners.

There is wider work underway at PHF to address issues of racial justice, equity and power, and we are committed to supporting this, as well as continuing to explore these issues in our own team. We have not found this work easy or always got things right. However, we are determined to do better in future and, wherever we can, to support the organisations we fund and partners to do the same.

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We should be using our power, influence and resources to do more to support the next generation of leaders with lived experience of migration.

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PHF's contribution, approach and priorities

The types of work we support and current thematic clusters

Our overall approach to investing

Our sector's work is broad and diverse. The issues it is grappling with are wide-ranging and the legislation in this area is complex and fast-changing. At PHF, we can only realistically support some of this activity. However, we liaise closely with our funder partners to try to ensure that collectively we are able to meet more of the sector's funding needs.

At PHF, we currently invest in change at three levels:

- **At the macro level:** Some of our funding is spent addressing wider systemic challenges that are impacting on the immigration system. This involves, for example, joining together with people and organisations in related sectors who are working on racial justice or human rights issues. We also hope to connect more to other social justice movements where it will have a clear and positive impact on the immigration system.
- **Within the immigration system:** Most of our funding is focused within the immigration system itself, on our thematic clusters (outlined on the following page).
- **At the sector/movement level:** We also make some strategic investments in sector infrastructure and expertise to help develop the capabilities for systems change.

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We liaise closely with our funder partners to try to ensure that collectively we are able to meet more of the sector's funding needs.

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PHF's contribution, approach and priorities

Current thematic clusters and the types of change approaches we support

Within the immigration system, we focus our funding and our wider support on a wide range of change approaches. This includes the following types of work:

- **Lived experience leadership** – support for leaders with lived experience of migration to play a more prominent and effective role in change
- **Community organising** – support for communities to challenge power structures and organise to achieve change
- **Alliance building and mobilisation** – building strategic alliances to take action on issues at local, regional and national level
- **Strategic communications** – work that supports the communications capacity of the sector and the framing of messages to reach new audiences
- **Political analysis and strategy** – to support the sector to build cross-party alliances
- **Collaborative campaigns** – joint work with partners in other parts of the social justice movement to progress common goals
- **Policy influencing** – research and analysis to improve understanding of key issues and influence policy or legislation
- **Legal work and strategic litigation** – use of the law to achieve change through casework, test cases or judicial review, and
- **Service innovation** – new models of delivery that can increase the quality, capacity and accessibility of support services.

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We focus our funding and our wider support on a wide range of change approaches.

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PHF's contribution, approach and priorities

Our funding is currently clustered around a handful of dysfunctional aspects of the immigration system. In selecting these thematic issues, we consider: the critical urgency and impact on individuals; whether they are likely to leverage wider change within the immigration system beyond a narrow group; and how much attention they receive from other funders.

Our assumption is that our knowledge of the sector and close engagement with organisations and partners means we have correctly identified the most appropriate issues to focus on.

Our funding is currently clustered around the following areas:

- **Ending the hostile environment**, including action to tackle destitution and the use of detention
- **Reform of immigration policy post-Brexit**, including steps to address the troubling use of new technologies in the immigration system
- **Creating simpler, quicker and more affordable routes to permanent status or citizenship** for children and young people born in the UK or long-resident here

- **Increasing access to high quality, affordable or free legal advice** for people with insecure immigration status, especially children and young people eligible for citizenship
- **Improving support for children and young people in care** with insecure immigration status
- **Creating more inclusive cities and towns**, by developing local leadership and coherent and comprehensive approaches to migration and integration to ensure the pressures that migration brings are managed effectively
- **Shifting public narratives on migration** and countering the populist and far right, and
- **Strengthening labour organising** to prevent workplace exploitation.

While the bulk of our grant-making is currently focused on these issues, we are open to supporting work beyond them if the approach to the work is well considered and likely to achieve wider systemic change. This is intentional as, at any point in time, it is difficult to predict where the spark for change

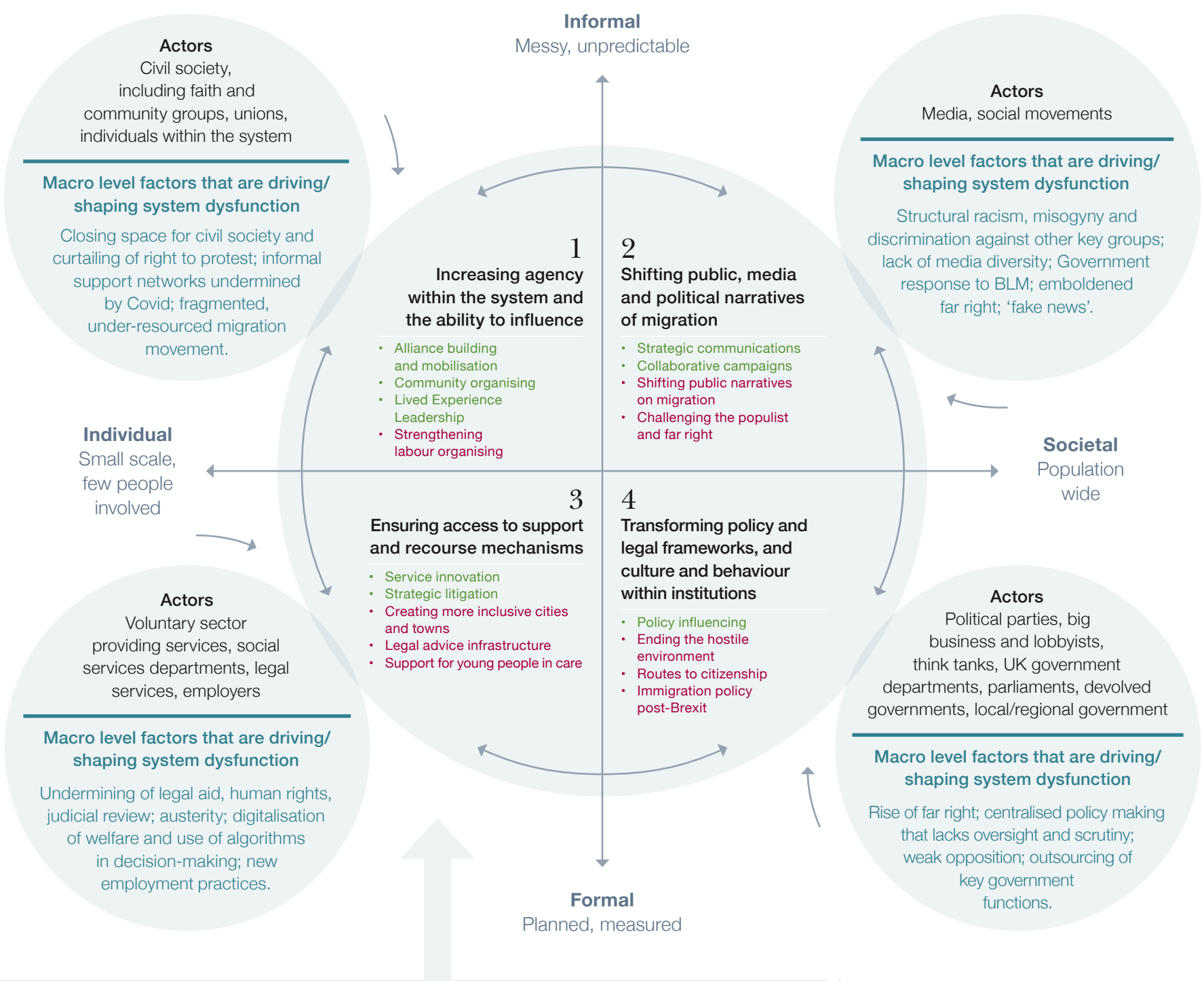
will come from or the approaches that are likely to be most impactful. We actively try to forge connections between work on different topics and using different change approaches (both within and across organisations) to maximise the chances of success.

Our assumption is that funding a diverse range of interconnected work will have a greater overall impact than a more targeted approach, and that our efforts to make connections between different types of work add value to, rather than over-complicate, individual work and programmes.

The diagram on the following page summarises our contribution, approach and current thematic areas.

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Our assumption is that our knowledge of the sector and close engagement with organisations and partners means we have correctly identified the most appropriate issues to focus on.
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PHF's contribution, approach and current thematic areas (our theory of action)



At PHF, we believe systems change is more likely to be possible if we can foster:

- A wider **social justice movement** that has a greater understanding of and commitment to creating a fair immigration system.
- A **sector** that is more diverse, equitable and connected, that benefits from deep expertise in a range of change mechanisms and that is more closely linked to the wider social justice movement (especially the human rights and race equality sectors).
- Organisations** that are more stable, resilient and adaptable, with cultures that support reflection and learning.
- People** who enjoy their work, feel valued and supported, and have time to reflect. A strong cohort of leaders, including those with lived experience, who are comfortable to share their power and skilled at working across organisations as well as within them.

When considering a grant request, we consider:

- The level of a proposed intervention (**sector**, **immigration system**, **macro level**)
- How **system behaviours** are demonstrated
- The **approach to change** and how this aligns with other approaches being taken within/outside an organisation, and
- The **specific issue** being tackled and how this aligns with our long-term vision and intermediate goals.

At PHF, we invest in change at three levels:

At the macro level

Some of our funding is spent addressing wider systemic challenges that impact the immigration system.

Within the system

Most of our funding is focused within the immigration system on our current thematic priorities. These are issues we believe are currently critical, can leverage wider change, and receive less attention from other funders.

At the sector/movement level

We make strategic investments in sector infrastructure and expertise to develop the capabilities for systems change.

At PHF, we try to encourage, resource and model the following system-changing behaviours and ways of working:

- A focus on relationships
- A commitment to collective action
- A learning approach
- Long-term visioning
- Balancing proactivity with agility and responsiveness
- A focus on generous and collaborative leadership
- Support for shared sector infrastructure
- A focus on individual and collective wellbeing

At PHF, we support work that utilises a variety of change approaches, and actively try to forge links between these for maximum impact:

- Lived experience leadership
- Alliance building and mobilisation
- Community organising
- Strategic communications
- Collaborative campaigns
- Policy influencing
- Service innovation
- Strategic litigation

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England and Wales (number 5042279) and a
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Design: red-stone.com

