# WAGGA IMPACT NETWORK – COLLABORATION WORKING GROUP WORKSHOP

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# PART 1: INTRODUCTION & SET UP

## BACKGROUND

- Changing context – more complex, more challenging & more competitive
  - NFP is increasingly integral to governments' services delivery
- Calls for new ways of thinking & working
  - Co-production, collaboration & networks
    - Can be uncomfortable/challenging
- But: also time of opportunity for the NFP to re-invent its approach
- Calls for strategy, creativity & bold change by all

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# Refection & analysis

- **Reflective practice** is "the capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning", which, according to the originator of the term, is "one of the defining characteristics of professional practice".[1]

- **Critical thinking** is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skilfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action

- **Done well it:**

- raises vital questions and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely;

- gathers and assesses relevant information, using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively comes to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards;

- thinks open-mindedly within alternative systems of thought, recognizing and assessing, as need be, their assumptions, implications, and practical consequences; and

- Communicates effectively with others in figuring out solutions to complex problems.

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# Today

- Background & introduction
- The current social services operating context
- The integration imperative
  - networks & collaborations etc
- Current research – what we know
- Relationships– as network foundation
  - Networks – the what, why, how & when The Vertical Dimension – rediscovered
  - Challenging the cult of collaboration!
- Composite integration – new public governance - the new assemblies!
- Taking stock & moving forward ...

# Governance modes & service delivery

| Governance Regime | State | Market | Social Networks |
|---|---|---|---|
| Domain of influence/action | Public Domain | Private Domain | Civic Domain |
| Integrating mechanism | Centralised/legitimate authority hierarchy, | Exchange relationships – formalised, legal contractual arrangements Supply and demand | Social/communal relationships |
| Influence Orientation | Dependent | Independent | Interdependent |
| Integration Arrangements | Procedures, rules, regulations and legislation | Partnerships Mergers, acquisitions alliances | Networks, compacts, collaborations, consortia |
| Management Strategy | Top-down, command and control, chain of command Planning, organising etc Communication is prescribed | Rationality and self-interest advancement Arms-length transactions Written contracts, formal agreements & reliable performance | Building relationships, trust & reciprocity Communication thick & multi-directional |

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# Task 1:

- In your small group spend 15/20 minutes discussing the current situation in the sector
- Nationally, state & local
  - What are the big issues?
  - Are they same/different to others?
  - What/who are the drivers for change?
  - Possibilities & pitfalls?
  - Your feelings?

# PART 2: Understanding integration – via networks :

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# The integration imperative

- 'holy grail' of public services
- The lure
- Makes intuitive sense – but not happen by magic!
- Joined-up, whole-of-government, coalitions, federations, networks collaboration & partnerships
- Since likely to be more emphasis in future
  - timely to review what has been done & successes & learnings
    - The how to, when & why
- Draws on 10 years of data on integrated services in Qld – across number of fields
  - 150 Interviews; 30 focus groups;  300 questionnaires

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# But ....

- But integration is hard to achieve & even harder to sustain  - it costs before it delivers!
- Pitfalls – different drivers, reason/purposes, levels & types
  - e. g panels, networks, inter-agency meetings;
  - Better client outcomes, reduced duplication; cost cutting/effectiveness
  - Legitimacy, mandate, contract
  - Top down, bottom-up, voluntary, self-organising
- Problematic if not get the design/purpose mix right

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# The relational dimension - networks

- Networks are stable patterns of connections between entities

- Many types of ties – information/$ exchanges, referrals, familial, affect etc

*Interpersonal relationships are 'the glue that binds'*

- Many types of networks – transport, communication, supply chains, policy development –

  - SERVICE DELIVERY NETWORKS

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# Relational essentials

- Trust
  - Companion trust: goodwill & friendship based on association
  - Competence trust: confidence in capacity of others to fulfil tasks
  - Commitment trust: contractual or enforceable agreement
  - Shared values:  - the most essential

- Reciprocity: give & take – not an "I will if you will" (self interested)
  - Take a risk & put something on the table
  - Reputation – hard to will/fast to go

- Mutuality: replace independent interests – collective mutually beneficial outcomes

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# Differentiating integration relationships

| Cooperative | Coordinative | Collaborative |
|---|---|---|
| •Low trust – unstable relations | • Medium trust – based on prior relations | • High trust – stable relations |
| •Infrequent communication flows | •Structured communication flows | •Thick communication flows |
| •Known information sharing | •'Project' related and directed information sharing | •Tacit information sharing |
| •Adjusting actions | •Joint projects, joint funding, joint policy | •Systems change |
| •Independent/autonomous goals, •Power remains with organisation | •Semi-independent goals •Power remains with organisations | •Dense interdependent relations and goals •Shared power |
| •Resources –remain own | •Shared resources around project | •Pooled, collective resources |
| •Commitment and accountability to own agency | •Commitment and accountability to own agency and project | •Commitment and accountability to the network first |
| •Relational time frame requirement – short term | •Relational time frame Medium term – often based on prior projects | •Relational time frame requirement – long term 3-5 years |

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**Source: Keast, 2004; Keast & Brown, 2003; Keast et al 2007**

# Fit-for-purpose designs



- All relations have merit & application
- Approaches & relational strength must be ***requisite to purpose***

  - Independent, adjusting actions & information sharing: cooperation
  - Do same, but more efficiently through joint working, aligned resources & action: coordination
  - Systems change: collaboration
- Also – need to consider the vertical relations!

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# CHALLENGING THE CULT OF COLLABORATION!

- Collaboration can produce wonderful outcomes
- BUT
  - Prone to failure
    :40 % +

  - The ability to deliver optimal benefit is limited by the tendency to treat them as undifferentiated, ignoring their many purposes, structural arrangements and relationship strengths.

  - Organisations are not strategic in their relationship building activities- over-investing in existing relations and under-investing in those that should be accessed and promoted

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# Relationships: the heart of networks/ collaboration

- Relationships identified as the 'defining element'
- Strong, intense & ensuring
  - More than 'self-serving' or 'cups of tea & a bit of a chat'
  - Deep trust & commitment to the 'whole' – building social not organisational value
- Processes for building relationships;
  - Shared meals, organised social events 'real people'
  - Site visits – shared appreciation of issues
  - Relationship facilitators

# Do we really need to do this?

- Collaborative networks – high rewards – high resources & risks
- Is there a genuine need to collaborate ?
  - Would some other form of 'working together' suffice?
    - Cooperation, coordination?????
- What are you looking to achieve?
- Are there any other 'drivers' for collaboration
  - Funding; legitimacy; 'right thing to do'?
- What are the collective outcomes?
- What will my organisation 'get' out of the collaboration?

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# Getting started

□ Clarify the purpose & ensure that network/collaboration is the right approach

□ Determine membership basis

  ❑ Who needs to be 'in'

□ Strategic relationship building

  ❑ What are existing relations

  ❑ Ramp-up or scale down

□ Negotiate terms of engagement & collaboration outcomes

□ Set structure & management  processes

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# Changing behaviours & expectations

- Relational orientation -
- Takes time – not short-term solution/relationship
- No-one is in control –shared power
- Step-back – let go!
- Manage relationships – moulding, massaging & manoeuvring   (collaborative thuggery)
- Focus on interests – not positions
- Be prepared to take risks & give space to let the synergies work

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# Changing systems & processes

- Funding regimes
  - $$ not a good conduit for collaboration
  - Funding in new ways – pooling
  - Accountability regimes adjusted
- Employment
  - Cross-agency roles
  - HR implications & training
- Culture
  - Of working together;
- Evaluation approach
  - Outcomes as much about changed relations as tangible deliverables

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# Is my organisations ready for collaboration?.....

- *Is it open and willing to change?*

- *Does* it have the capacity and capability to work collaboratively?

- Is it able and willing to delegate decision making?

- Is it willing to expose itself to the scrutiny of others?

- Is it prepared to be held accountable to network/collaborative agreements?

# New management & leadership

- POSTDCOR
  - Vertical & within

  - Driver

  - Leverage relationships for outcomes *Moulding, massaging & manoeuvring*

- Across
- Dispersed/shared leadership
- Process Catalyst
  - Process minder
  - Leverage synergies

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# Dealing with conflict

- Frequent – yet unacknowledged – element of networks/collaboration
- Must be acknowledged & addressed
- Facilitate discussion to explore the issue – real & presenting
- Explore alternatives
- Conflict – leads to creativity!

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# Collaboration capacities

- Nurturing
- Group work skills
- Negotiation skills
  - Interest based
- Political savvy
- Process analysis

- ☐ Big picture thinking & seeing
- ☐ Perseverance
- ☐ Persuasive
- ☐ Listening, learning, linking & leveraging

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# Are you really my partner?
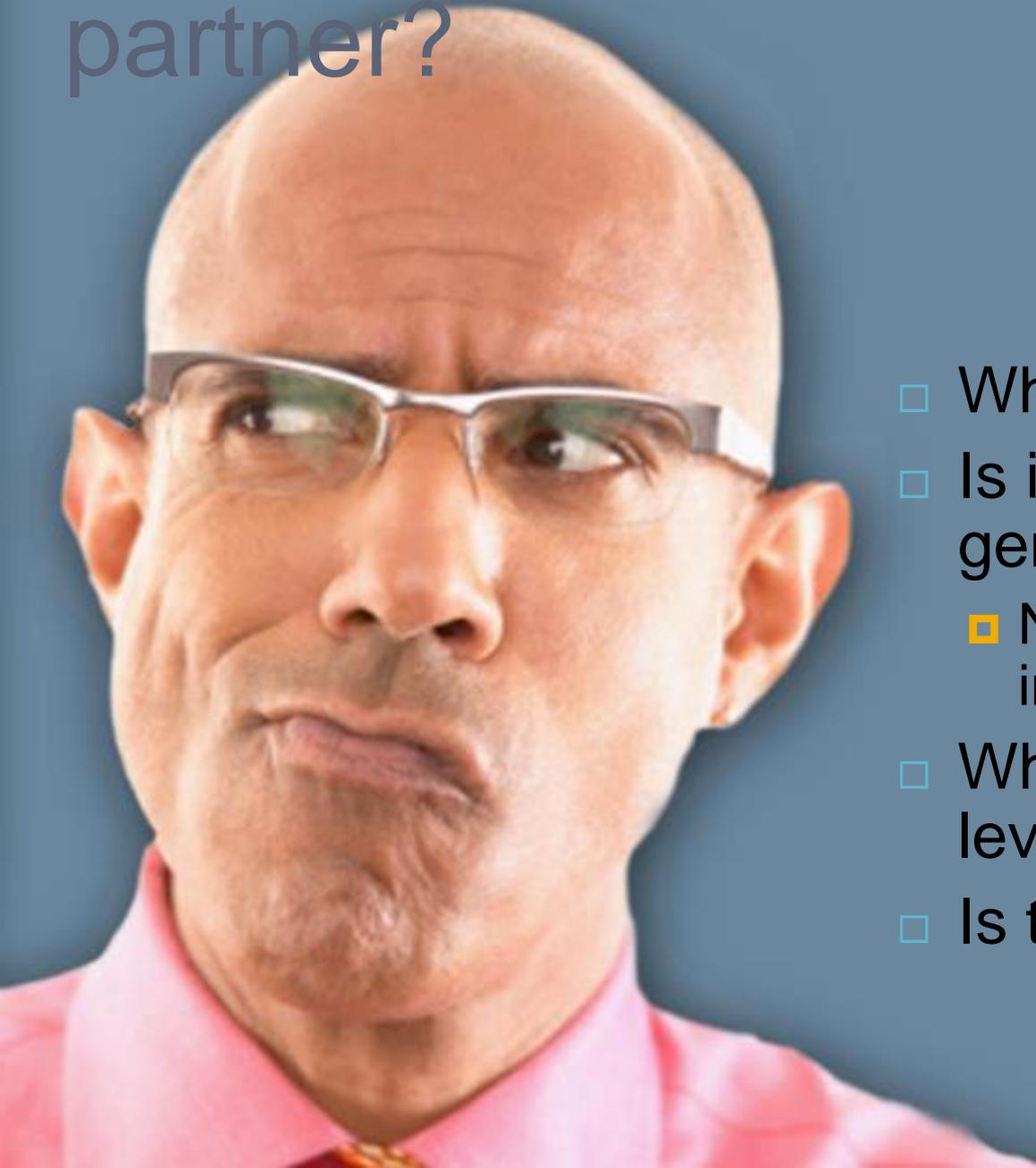
- Who has the power?
- Is information genuinely shared?
  - Not just base information
- What is the trust level?
- Is there commitment?

# A last word on networks ....

- Networks are not a panacea to all social problems
- They work best in certain conditions /certain problems
- Not all networks are equal (good!)
  - Old Boys networks – limit the benefits to a small group
  - Dark networks -
  - Deficit networks – stuck the energy & resources from participants

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**Social capital**
(e.g. the value of social networks, interactions between actors )

**Network capital**
(e.g. cooperation, information sharing, shared objectives)

Current sector efforts

**Institutional**
(e.g. regulative, normative, and cognitive systems; rules and processes)

**Infrastructure capital**
(e.g. housing)

Limited infrastructure capital e.g. lack of housing

**Human capital**
(e.g. skills, experience)

Workforce issues, turnover, losign staff to other sectors

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# Task 2 Building ways of working together

- Think about where you are at now
- Common issue to address – alignment
  - What do you want to achieve/think you could work on together?
    - Network?
  - What is its purpose
  - Who should be involved?
    - Using the relationship (integration) continuum as a guide

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# Strategic relationship building

| | |
|---|---|
| Identify those groups/organisations with which your Project/ organisation should have a relationship with to achieve project outcomes. | |
| Circle those with whom you already have a relationship | |
| *Of those circled* consider if the current strength or nature of the relationship is sufficient to secure outcome. | |
| For relationships that are considered not strong enough, identify possible strategies to strengthen. Similarly it might be necessary to weaken relationships to secure outcomes. | |
| For the firms *not circled* consider (a) what engagement strategies should/could be employed to mobilise commitment/involvement and (b) how strong the relationship needs to be. | |

# Task 4 Keeping it going

⦿ What other adjustments are required?

- Structural changes
- How communicate
- Systems and processes
- Behaviours
- Expectations
- Management & leadership
- How will you assess/monitor/evaluate relationships?

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# Network evaluation

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# Need to assess the impact of different ways of working

- Different ways of working – different ways of evaluating
  - Emphasis first is on the relationships (intangibles)
  - This is not to say that conventional evaluation is discounted (tangibles)
- Looking at:
- the relationships and processes that enable change
- • the level of participation and engagement of members
- • how well the structure allows participants to contribute to and influence work and outcomes

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# Check list

## Relationships and processes

- Are there good relations between members?
- What is the trust level?
- Is time spent on members getting to know each other and their problems/limitations?
- Do members feel a strong or weak bond, or commitment, to each other?
- Are there processes in place to enable these bonds?
- Is relationship building (internal and external) an accepted part of the work program?
- Do members communicate openly and frequently?
- Do members have a sense of commitment to the collaboration as well as their own organisation? What are the power relations?
- Is power shared or does it appear to rest with specific members of the collaboration?
- Are there mechanisms to resolve conflict?
- Is there a culture of learning?

## Participation Level

- Do all members participate in the collaboration, in terms of decision-making and resource provision?
- Are there barriers to participation?
- Are there processes in place to check 'engagement level'?
- Are people participating as much as they can/wish

## Structure and control

- Is the way the collaboration is set up appropriate for the aims?
- Is the structure too tight (strangling), too loose (lacks cohesion) or just right (facilitates action)?
- Where/how are most decisions made?
- Democratically or centralised?
- Is there support for the collaboration by key actors outside the collaboration, eg: parent organisations' powerful stakeholders & respected people in the community?

# Contribution assessment

This tool helps to uncover and understand the level of contribution and commitment that members make to the collaboration, what resources (financial, skill, expertise, knowledge and materials) are available to the collaboration, and where (or with whom) they are located and how they can be used.

The tool:

☐ • identifies the contributors to the collaboration, e.g. the individual members of the collaboration, their parent organisation or stakeholder groups

☐ • specifies the aims of the collaboration and the types of contributions/resources required

☐ • asks members to indicate their actual and potential contributions and how they will deliver on this e.g. by participation or funding

☐ • considers how easily the collaboration facilitator has been able to shift resources around the collaboration or leverage from resources to generate added value

Assessment can then be done to evaluate:

☐ • whether the collaboration has generated the appropriate resources (time, money, participation of key people, staff time, support of the parent organisation)

☐ • whether the collaboration has been successful in facilitating the sharing of these resources between members

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# Participatory evaluation processes

Participatory evaluation involves collaboration members more directly through a process of self-reflection on actions and behaviours as well as uncovering the critical stages and events of the collaboration. Members are asked to reflect on issues such as:

☐ • how far strategies and understandings of the collaboration context are shared

☐ • how far the information, ideas, documents and resources and analysis circulating within the collaboration have been distributed and their impact on critical moments

☐ • how members have been able to work creatively and collaboratively

☐ • how connected members are to others in the collaboration 'network'

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# SNA

- Intuition not enough!
- **Network Analysis**
  - Way to empirically assess/confirm relationships
  - Delivers
    - visual representations – (maps)
    - metrics (statistics for analysis/review)
- Diagnostic & evaluative tool
  - Configure & reconfigure patterns of sales relationships
    - Where to put effort for maximum gain

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# The SNA way!
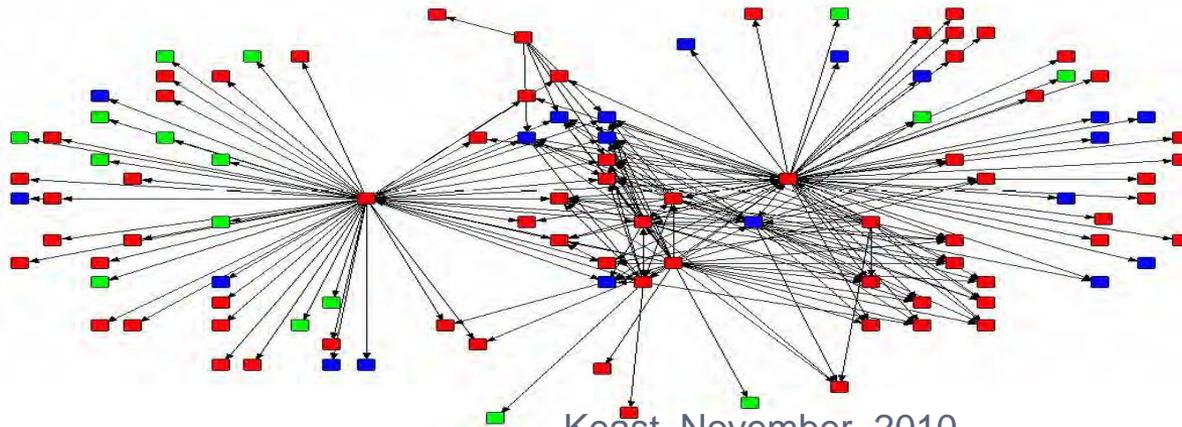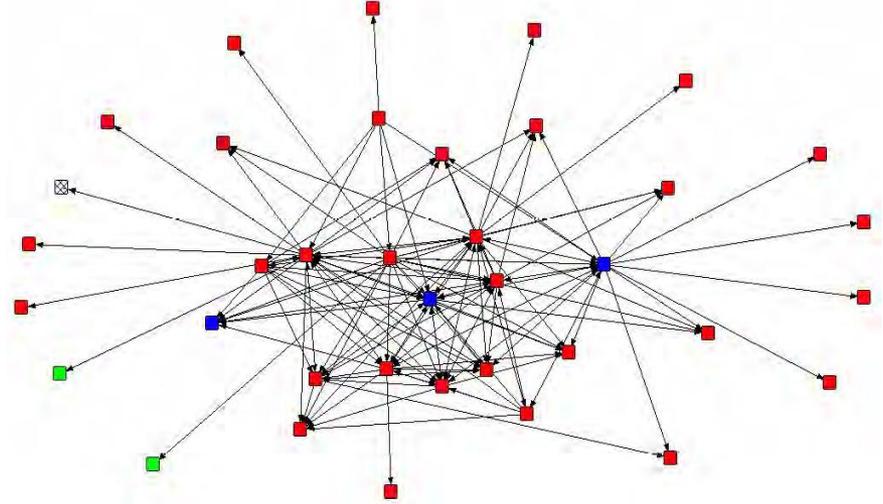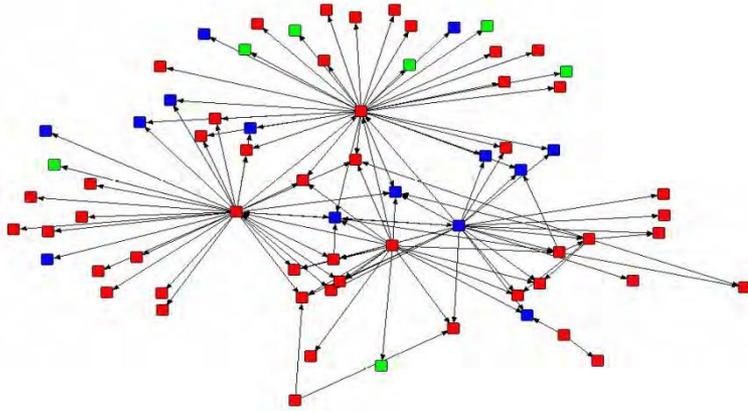


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# Task 4: Evaluation

- ☐ Consider your project/program
- ☐ What evaluation focus have you taken?
- ☐ Will it capture the relationship elements
- ☐ How can you draw from some of these 'alternative' evaluation tools to design an evaluation that is balanced?
- ☐ Which tool would you use?
- ☐ How would you link/engage citizens in this process – do they have a role?
- ☐ What are the ethical considerations?

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# PART 3: The vertical dimension & assembling the bits

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# Integration - unpacked



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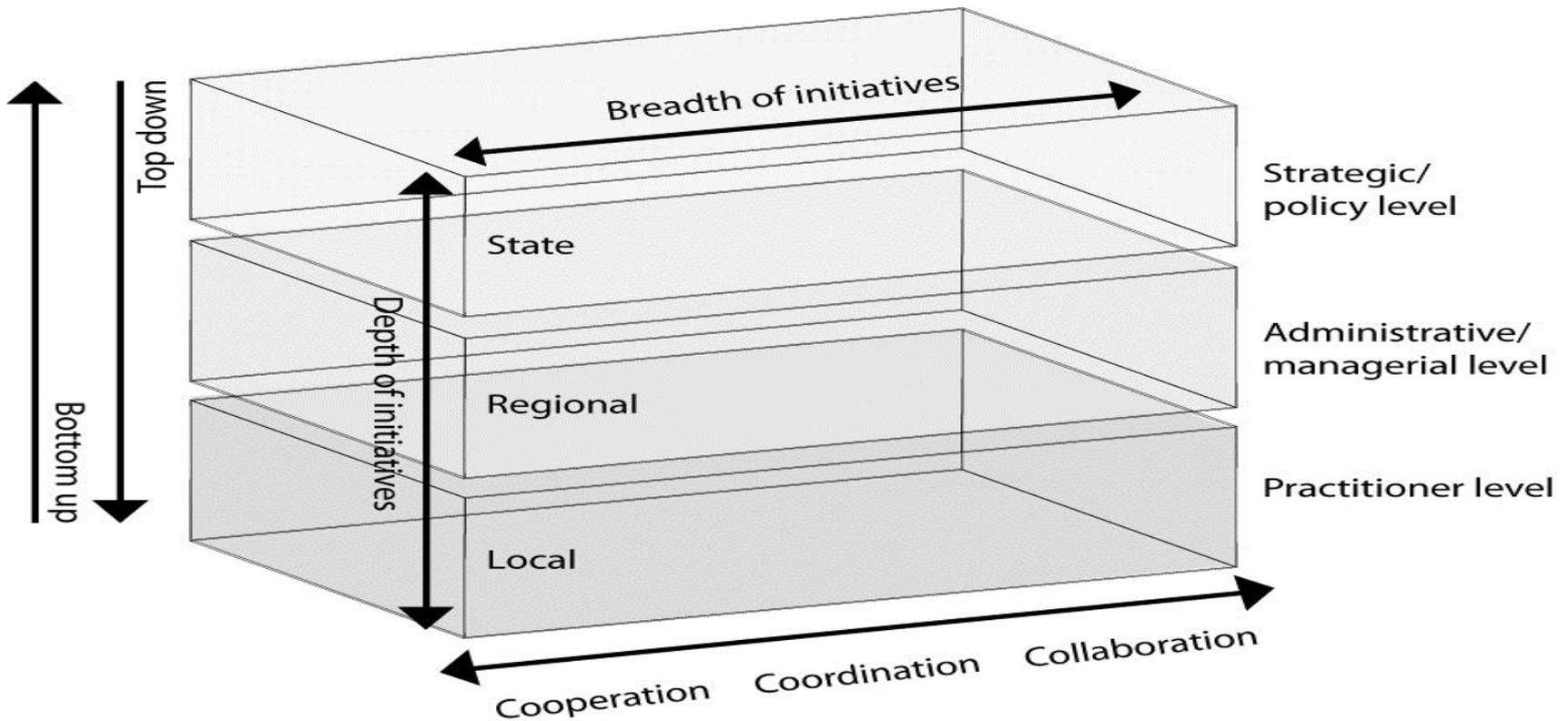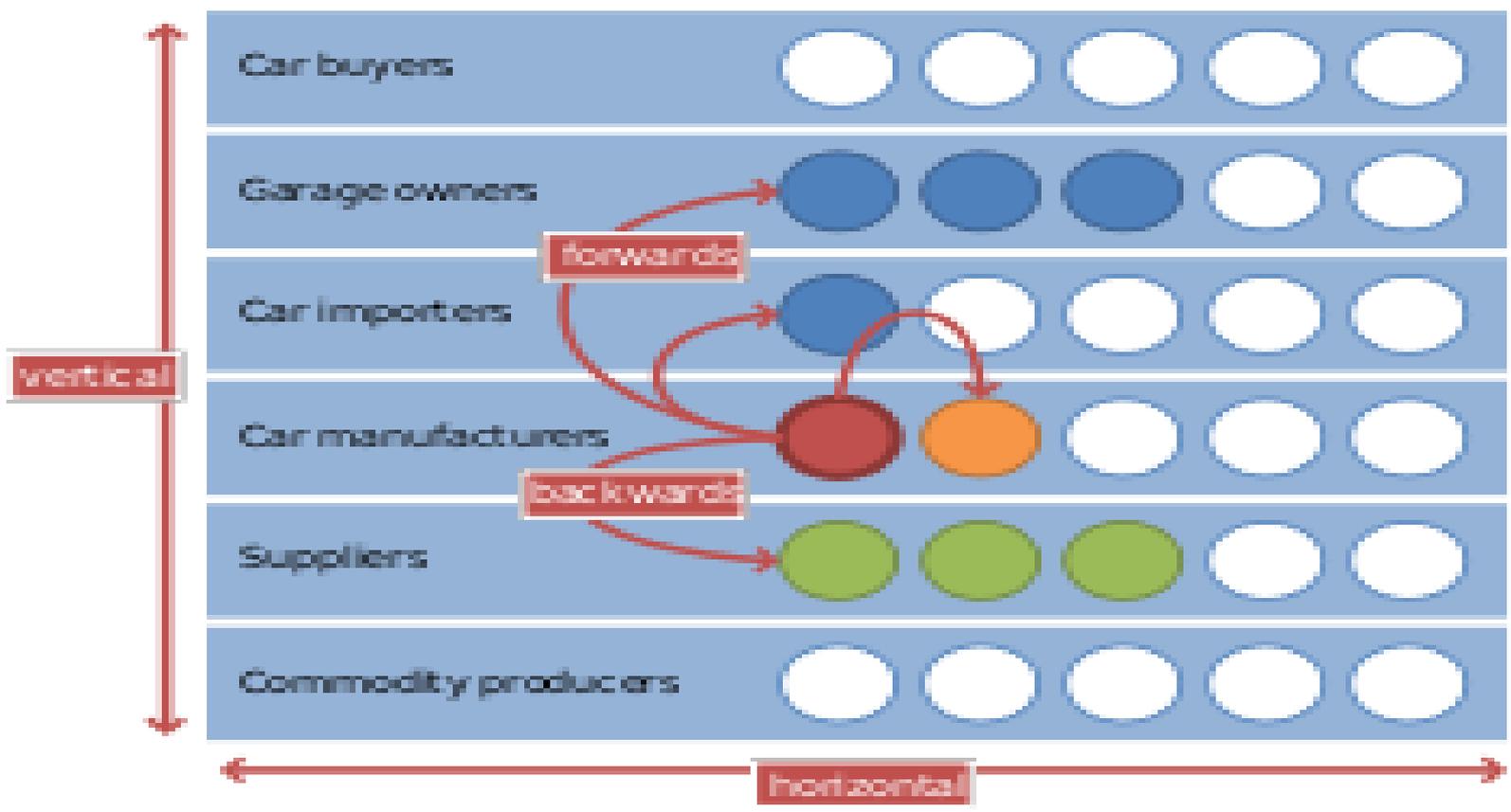
# Vertical integration

Defined:

- Vertical integration is the degree to which an organisation/ firm owns its upstream suppliers and its downstream buyers. Contrary to [horizontal integration](#), vertical integration is typified by one firm engaged in different parts of production (e.g. growing raw materials, manufacturing, transporting, marketing, and/or retailing).

Mechanisms

- Top down
- Firms/mergers
- Super/mega departments
- Consolidations
- Federations

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# Some recent findings

- Bottom- up relationships is central
- Top-down is most effective when coupled with bottom-up (and institutional mechanisms)
- Bottom-up – relationships institutionalised
- Context important
- Top-down is most effective when coupled with bottom-up (and institutional mechanisms)
- Bottom-up – relationships institutionalised
- Breadth

# FILLING OUT THE GREY SPACE

•New skills & training
• Shared Leadership
•Shared skills development
•Shared roles & responsibilities
•Collegiality
• Shared frames of reference
•Common language
•Culture of working together

• Correct organisational structures form
•Right integration mechanism
•alignment of top down policies & bottom up issues

People & culture

Structure, & governance

Processes & systems

New ways of working, managing and leading

• Shared performance measures
•Knowledge
•Established decision making
•Joint budgets & clear agreed goals ; decision making processes; pooled funding

•Managing relations
•Bringing in people & organisations
•Mobilising resources
•Strategic relationship building
•Leveraging relationships

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# Key findings ....

- Multiple drivers – have to match purpose with form
  - Top-down – instrumental
  - Bottom-up – altruistic (doing the right thing)
- Top-down more impact – when coupled with bottom-up elements  e.g. CEO Forum & Regional Councils
  - Tendency to rely on formalised mechanisms – task forces – not strong enough to push through layers
- Bottom-up – sustained by
  - Formalising , e.g. agendas,  managing & leveraging relationships
  - institutionalise relations & processes e.g. MOUs & Training Programs, Terms of Engagement

# What works – the empirical position

**Network context**
•System stability
•High resource munificence

**Network Structure**

•Centralised administration
•Direct, non-fragmented external control

**Network Effectiveness**

**Relationships**
• types, nature of; strength

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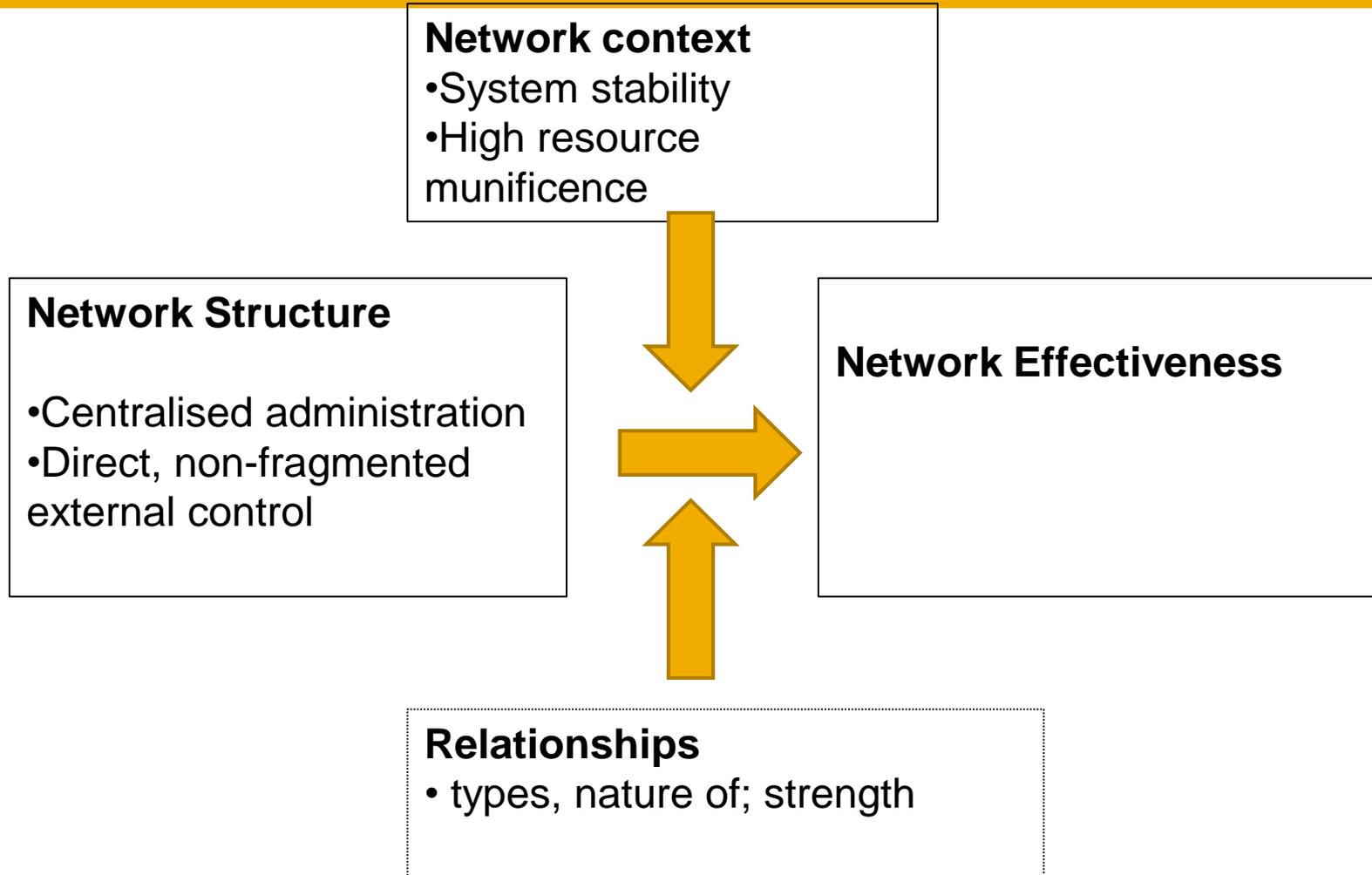
# Bundling & configuring

- Networks – relational dominant
  - Relationships overloaded/transaction cost
  - Tight/loose coupling
- But – often rely on other modes to supplement – sustain
- On own top-down/bottom-up networks lack sufficient bandwidth to push through
- Over time different modes become more dominant
  - Mix & match stage & mode = quality, outcomes & efficiency
  - Crowded policy domain – messy

STATE/SYSTEMS LEVEL

COMMUNITY ACTION
PLANNING OR HOMELESS
PROJECT GROUPS

REGIONAL LEVEL

COORDINATION
ROLES (GOVT/NGO)

CASE
COORDINATION

SERVICE LEVEL

SPECIALISED
SERVICES

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# Taking stock & moving forward

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