NIHR Project Overview and Programme Theory

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FUNDED BY NIHR National Institute for Health and Care Research

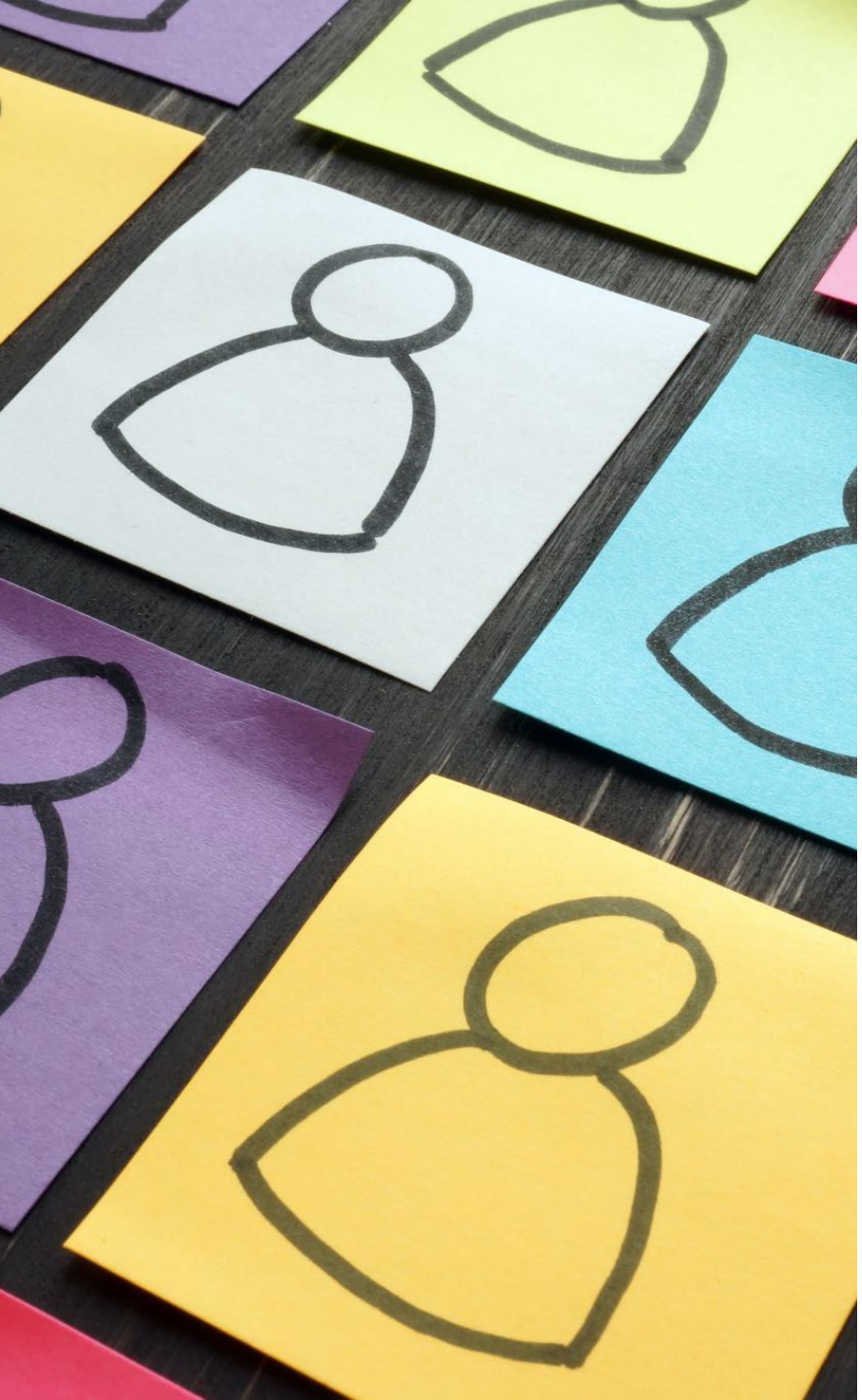
UKaid from the British people

Project: Critical Realist Control Trial of Mindfulness Intervention

- Quasi-experimental Cluster Difference-in-Difference Control Trial – Baseline, Mid-Term and End-of-Line – Quantitative - Does the Intervention Work?
- Process Evaluation – Quantitative - Structural Equation Modeling, Qualitative Research - How does the Intervention work – Testing a Programme Theory (Hypothesis)
- Economic Costing
- Funded by NIHR from UK Aid

Project Stages

- Stage 1 – August 2022 - July 2024
- Stage 2 – August 2023 – August 2025
- Stage 3 – September 2025 – July 2026
- Cross-cutting: Training and Capacity Building, Community Engagement and Involvement, Policy Advocacy, Dissemination



Stage 1

- Recruitment of PDRs, PhD Students & Other RAs
- Ethics Approval
- Appointment of International Advisory Board
- Political Economy Analysis - Ethiopia & Rwanda
- Critical Realist Literature Reviews
- Development of Intervention and Training to Teach Mindfulness – Diploma for Mindfulness Champions)
- Appointment of Community Reference Groups and Local Advisory Groups

Stage 2

- Development of Tools (Qualitative and Quantitative) (January 2024)
- Ethics Approval Ethiopia and Rwanda – February 2024)
- Training of Teachers in Mindfulness in Feasibility Schools (March-April 2024)
- Feasibility Studies in Rwanda and Ethiopia (April- June 2024) (Tools in Schools and Mindfulness Intervention)
- Modification of Mindfulness Intervention (July 2024)
- Training for Baseline and Process Evaluation including Modification of Research Tools etc. (July- August 2024)
- Training of Teachers in Intervention Schools in Mindfulness (August-September 2024)
- Support Teachers in Feasibility and Intervention Schools in Delivering Mindfulness Intervention
- Base-Line Community Survey and Qualitative Research (Qualitative Research Only in Intervention) and Baseline in Intervention and Control Schools (August - September 2024)
- Qualitative Process Evaluation in Intervention Schools (October 2024 – June 2025)
- Researching Fidelity of Mindfulness Intervention in Intervention and Control Schools (PhD Project Rwanda) (October 2024 – February 2025)
- Mid-Term Quantitative Research in Intervention and Control Schools
- End-of –Line Survey and Quantitative Research in Intervention and Control Schools (June-August 2025)

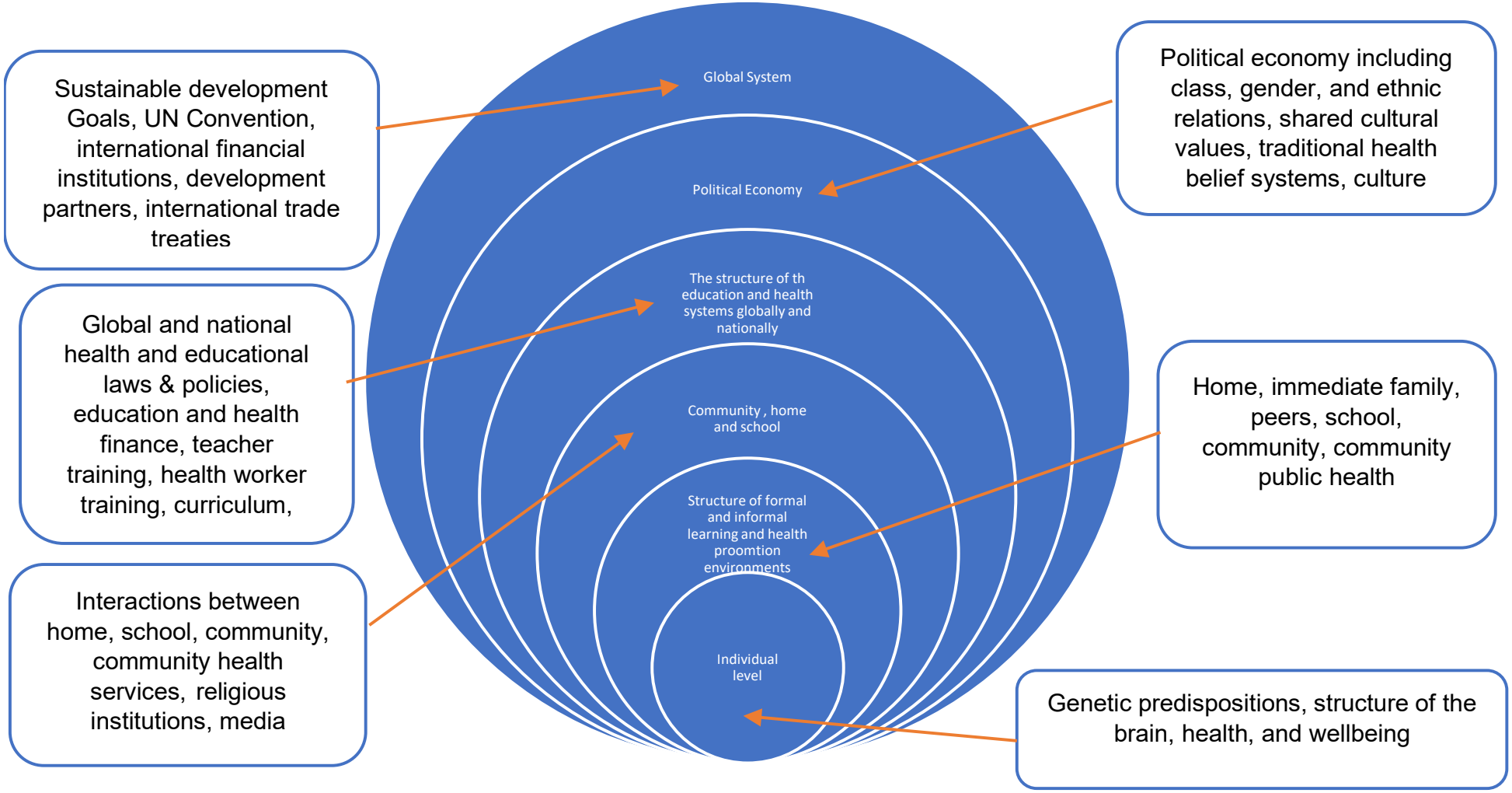
Stage 3

- Training of Teachers in Control Schools in Mindfulness (August – September 2025)
- Support to Teachers in Control Schools (and feasibility and intervention schools) (September 2025 – August 2026)
- Preparation of Data Sets for Open Access Archiving (September 2025 – November 2025). UK Data Service (Other ?)
- Writing Retreat (November 2025)
- Dissemination (Peer Review Journal Articles, Blogs, Policy Briefs, Conference Presentations, PhD Dissertations etc.) (August 2025-July 2026)
- Project Report NIHR (June – July 2026)

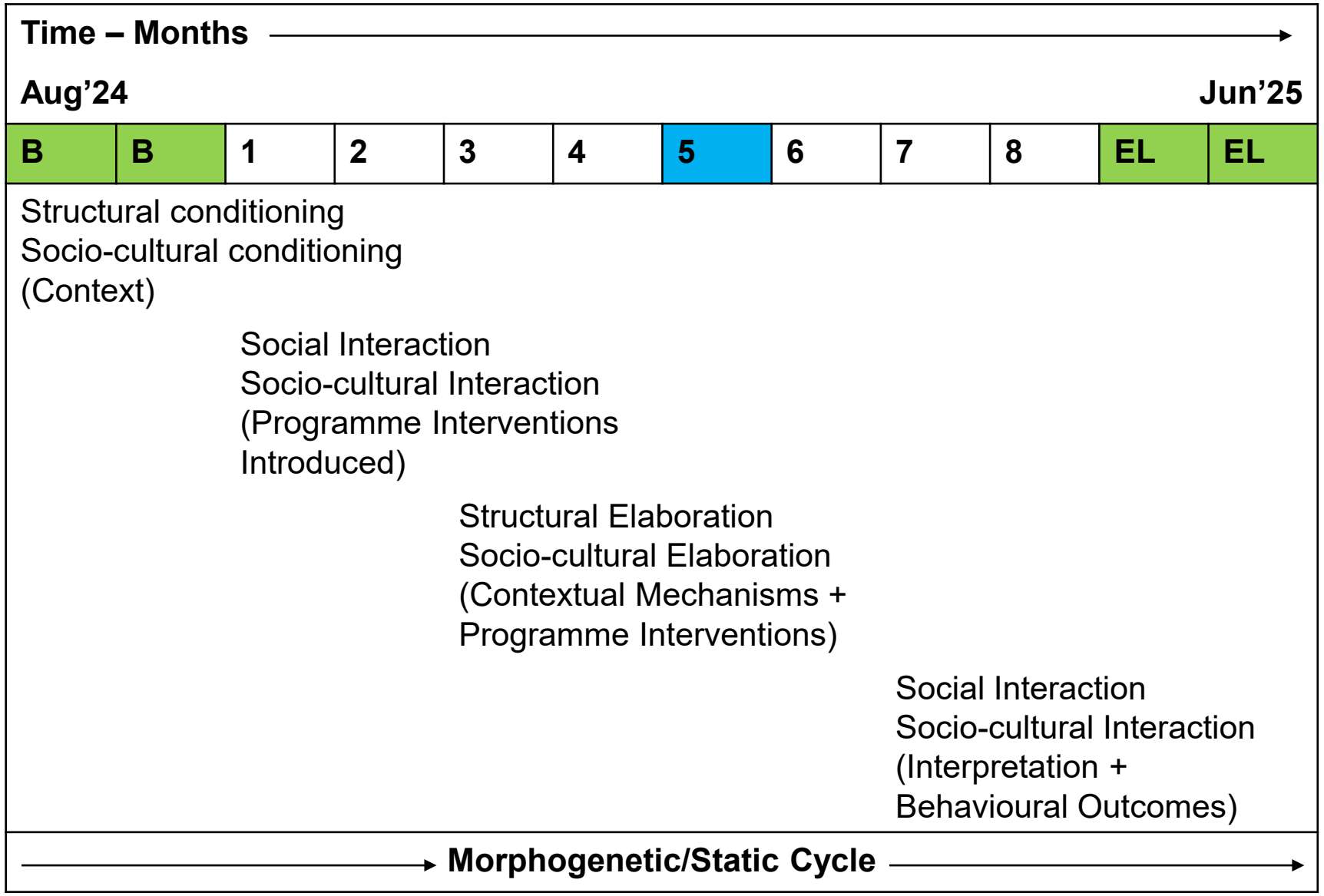
End of Project Workshops? (July 2026)

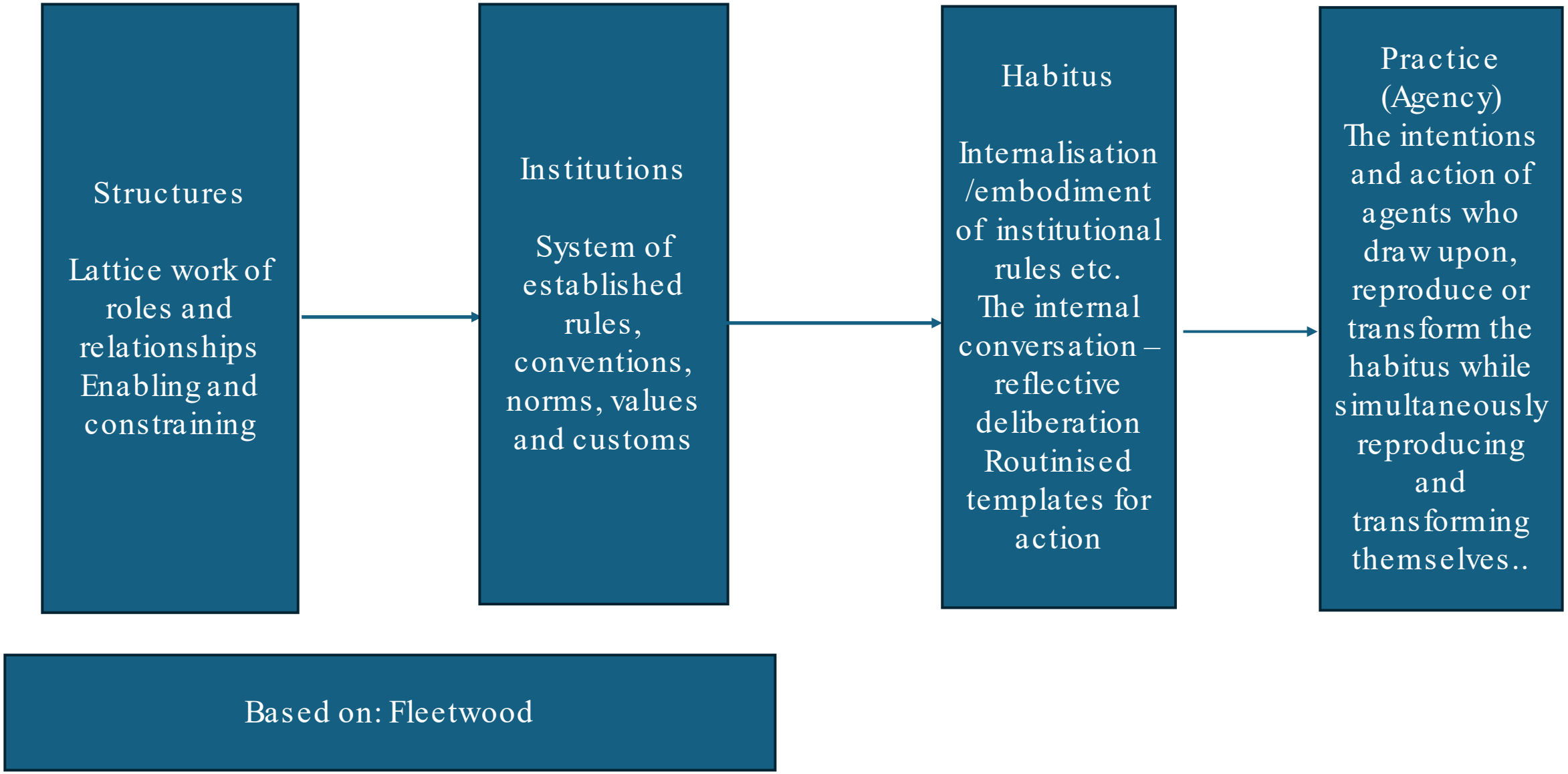
Programme Theory

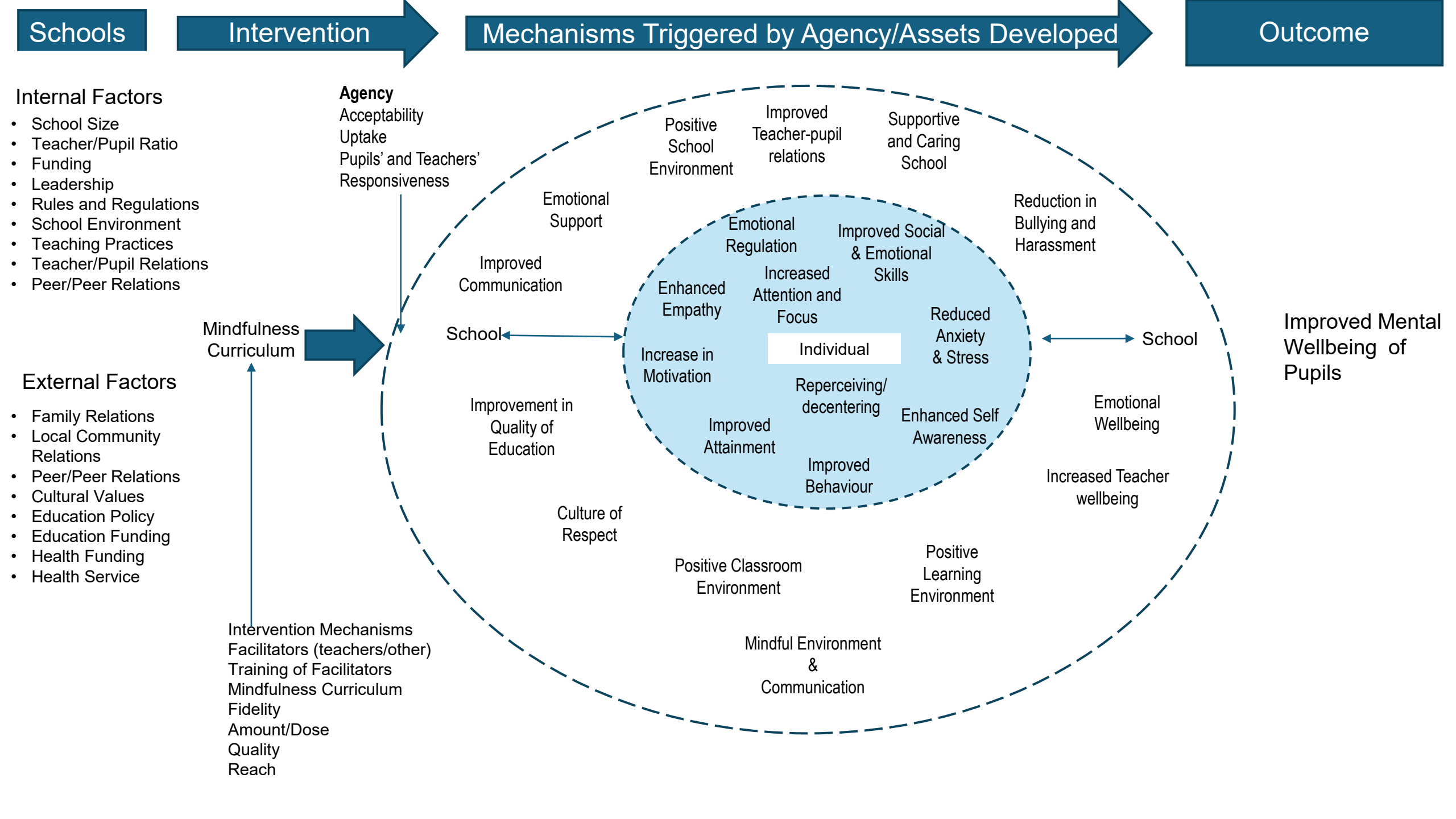
Figure 1: A Laminated CA Learning and Wellbeing System



Adapted from: Tikly L. What works, for whom, and in what circumstances? Towards a critical realist understanding of learning in international and comparative education [Internet]. International Journal of Educational Development. 2015 40:237–49.


Time – Months
Aug'24
Jun'25
B
B
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
EL
EL
Structural conditioning
Socio-cultural conditioning
(Context)
Social Interaction
Socio-cultural Interaction
(Programme Interventions
Introduced)
Structural Elaboration
Socio-cultural Elaboration
(Contextual Mechanisms +
Programme Interventions)
Social Interaction
Socio-cultural Interaction
(Interpretation +
Behavioural Outcomes)
Morphogenetic/Static Cycle


Structures
Lattice work of roles and relationships Enabling and constraining
Institutions
System of established rules, conventions, norms, values and customs
Habitus
Internalisation /embodiment of institutional rules etc. The internal conversation – reflective deliberation Routinised templates for action
Practice (Agency)
The intentions and action of agents who draw upon, reproduce or transform the habitus while simultaneously reproducing and transforming themselves..
Based on: Fleetwood


Schools
Intervention
Mechanisms Triggered by Agency/Assets Developed
Outcome
Internal Factors
School Size
Teacher/Pupil Ratio
Funding
Leadership
Rules and Regulations
School Environment
Teaching Practices
Teacher/Pupil Relations
Peer/Peer Relations
Agency
Acceptability
Uptake
Pupils' and Teachers' Responsiveness
Mindfulness Curriculum
External Factors
Family Relations
Local Community Relations
Peer/Peer Relations
Cultural Values
Education Policy
Education Funding
Health Funding
Health Service
Intervention Mechanisms
Facilitators (teachers/other)
Training of Facilitators
Mindfulness Curriculum
Fidelity
Amount/Dose
Quality
Reach
Positive School Environment
Improved Teacher-pupil relations
Supportive and Caring School
Emotional Support
Reduction in Bullying and Harassment
Emotional Regulation
Improved Social & Emotional Skills
Improved Communication
Enhanced Empathy
Increased Attention and Focus
School
Reduced Anxiety & Stress
School
Individual
Increase in Motivation
Reperceiving/ decentering
Improvement in Quality of Education
Enhanced Self Awareness
Emotional Wellbeing
Improved Attainment
Improved Behaviour
Increased Teacher wellbeing
Culture of Respect
Positive Classroom Environment
Positive Learning Environment
Mindful Environment & Communication
Improved Mental Wellbeing of Pupils

Acknowledgments

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