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4-8-2015

Center for Social Policy: Reshaping Poverty Policy for and with Families and Communities

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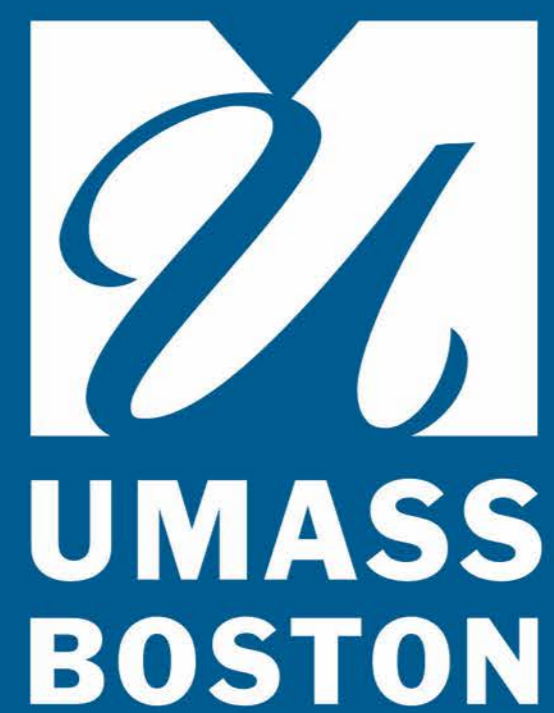


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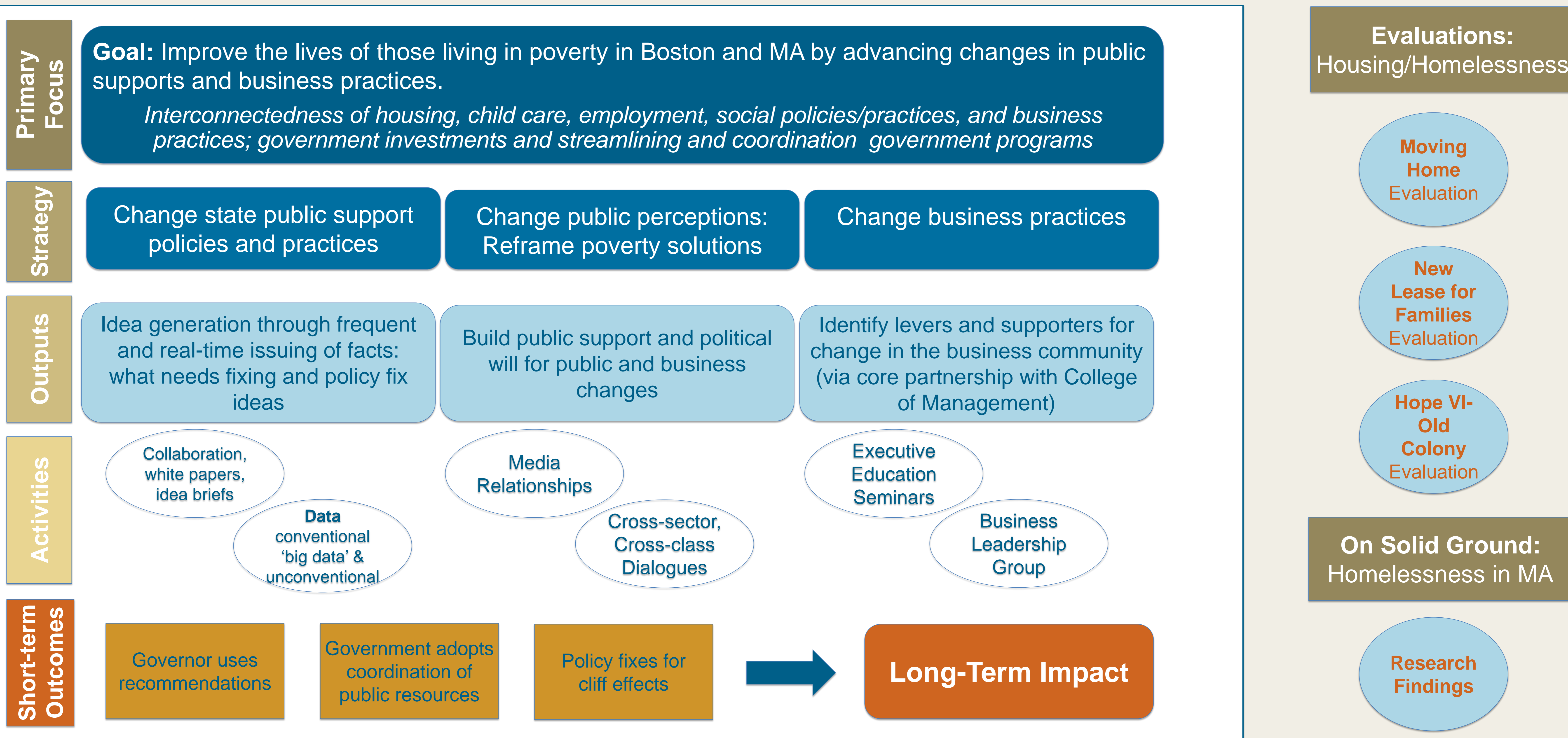
Recommended Citation

Tripp, Julia; Coonan, Mary; Kabir, Priyanka; and Devins, Susie, "Center for Social Policy: Reshaping Poverty Policy for and with Families and Communities" (2015). *Office of Community Partnerships Posters*. 247. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/ocp_posters/247

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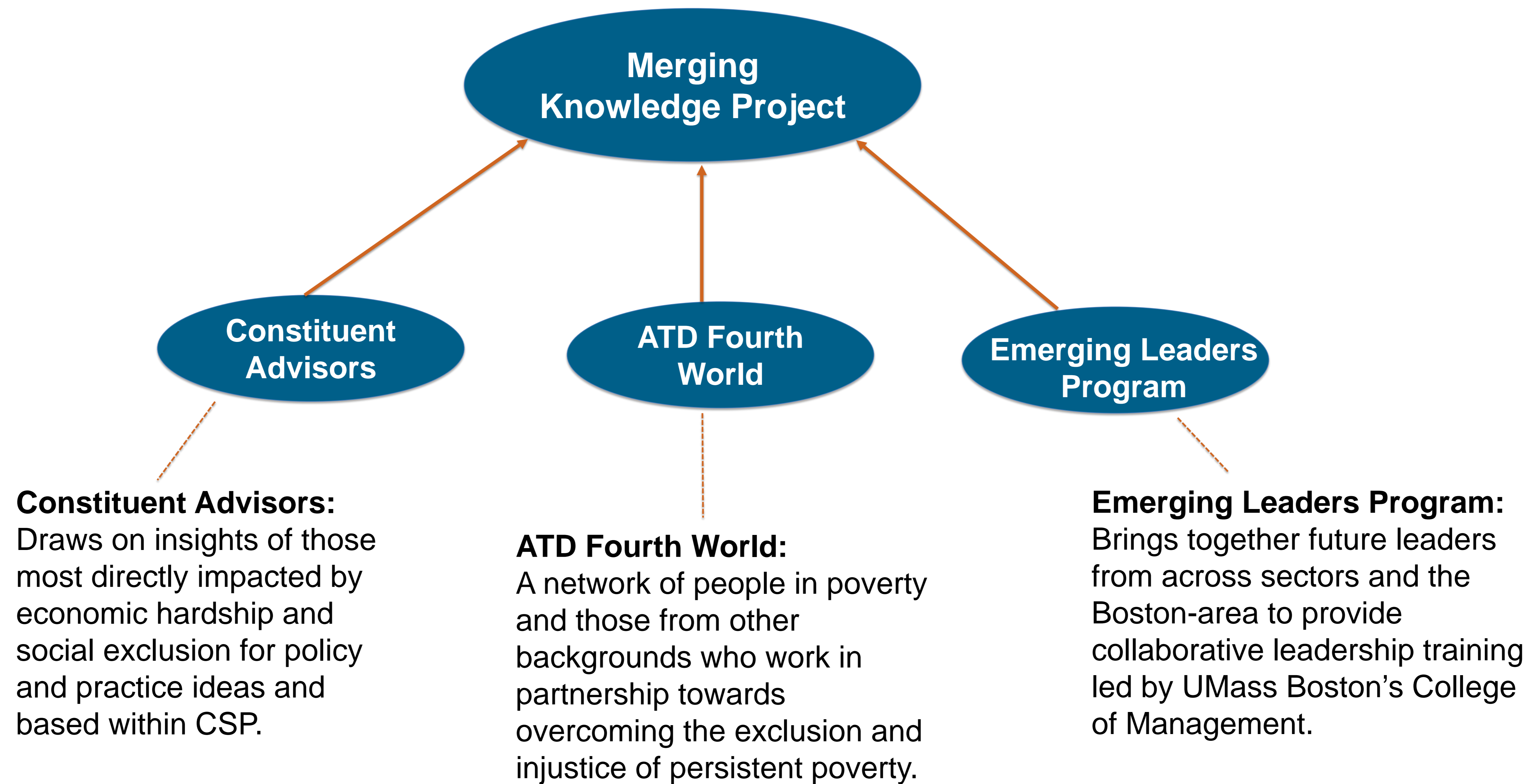


Center for Social Policy: Reshaping Poverty Policy for and *with* Families and Communities



Center for Social Policy: Reshaping Poverty Policy for and *with* Families and Communities

Merging Knowledge Project



Julia Tripp participated at the United Nations panel "Participatory Monitoring and Accountability: Critical Components for the Post-2015 Development Agenda". She talked about the importance of participatory action research and creating a more inclusive world.

Home

Watch a Participant Speak at UN!

"People in poverty cannot be viewed through a lens that only sees what is lacking, but rather through a lens that also sees the knowledge gained through their life experiences."

- Derek Morris, a participant in Emerging Leaders and our Boston Merging Knowledge project, speaking at the UN on October 17 2014.



Center for Social Policy – On Solid Ground: Building Opportunity, Preventing Homelessness Report

About

The “On Solid Ground” report documents the impact of the Commonwealth’s housing shortage on families with extremely low incomes and outlines the critical components of a preventative approach to family homelessness and income insecurity. It is a blueprint for change, offering specific, evidence-based policy recommendations to the new governor, legislators, service providers, the private sector, and the public at large.

The project builds on the collaborative work of the cross-policy coalition already in place, led by Citizens’ Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) and Homes for Families (HFF) and involving, in addition to CSP, an advocacy coalition with 18 participating organizations representing childcare, housing, homelessness, education, employment, public health, hunger, legal services, public income support areas and faith-based communities.



Coalition and partners hand deliver On Solid Ground white paper to legislators.

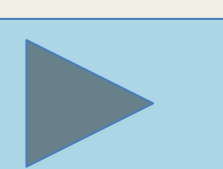
Findings of Our Mixed-Methods Research

- ✓ Analyzed contextual forces that influence the extent and increase of extremely low income families without stable housing in Massachusetts:
 - 75% increase in usage of family shelters on a given day since 2007;
 - Steady increase in student homelessness over past decade;
- ✓ Analyzed the characteristics of extremely low-income (ELI) families in Massachusetts:
 - ELI families include almost 112,000 school age children and 61,000 under age 5;
 - 85% of ELI families have school age children and 45% have children under the age of 5;
 - Children 5 years and younger make up nearly half of the total child population in State’s Emergency Assistance (EA) system.
- ✓ Analysis of hardship, eligibility, and coverage gap among Massachusetts families (2008-2013)
- ✓ Analyzed trends in state supports for economically vulnerable families such as policies directed to low-income working families; direct cash assistance benefits; other direct benefits and subsidies; programs to support affordable housing; and resources that help shore up families encountering difficult times.
- ✓ Conducted 12 focus groups all across the state with families, front-line staff, and property owners who have direct experiences with the EA system.
- ✓ Analyzed other state approaches to program eligibility and integration issues to bolster prevention of family homelessness.
- ✓ Outlined and proposed three possible projects for the next administration all aimed at increasing families’ access to public resources needed to avoid housing income catastrophe.

[View Report](#)

Insert Text here

[Home](#)





Center for Social Policy – On Solid Ground: Building Opportunity, Preventing Homelessness Report

Coalition Partners

Community Partners

Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness (ANEFH)
Bessie Tarrt Wilson Initiative for Children
B'nai B'rith Housing
Casa Myrna
Children's HealthWatch
Citizens for Affordable Housing in Newton Development Organization (CAN-DO)
Citizens' Housing and Planning Association
Crittenton Women's Union
Family Independence Initiative
Family-to-Family Project
Father Bill's & Mainspring
HAPHousing
Home Funders
Homes for Families
Horizons for Homeless Children
Jane Doe Inc.,
Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

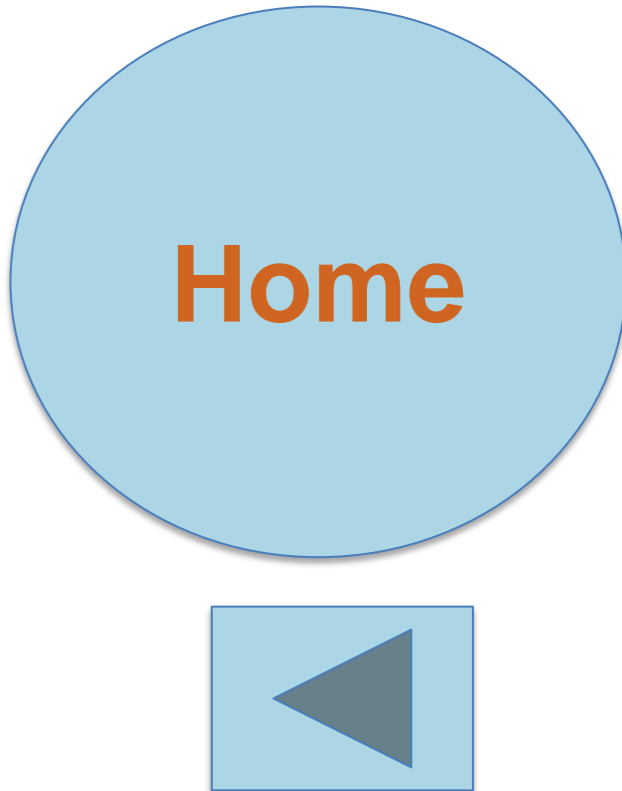
Jewish Community Relations Council
Massachusetts Association for Community Action
Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Massachusetts Public Health Association
Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership
One Family, Inc.
Project Bread
Project Hope
Regional Housing Network of Massachusetts
Somerville Homeless Coalition
Square One
Thrive In Five Initiative
Tzedek Reflection
Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness

Research Partners

Center for Social Policy, UMass Boston
Collins Center, UMass Boston
Massachusetts Budget & Policy Center

Philanthropic Partners

The Boston Foundation
Oak Foundation
United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley





Center for Social Policy: An Evaluation of the Moving Home Initiative

Moving Home Initiative

The Bowery Residents' Committee (BRC) in New York City (NYC) is one of the largest, most comprehensive social service agencies in NYC, offering a client-focused continuum of 27 programs that serve 2,600 individuals daily. Launched in 2007, BRC's Moving Home initiative applies an individualized, low-threshold model to transitioning chronically homeless men and women from the streets to permanent housing. The program was inspired by the Housing First model to house and support people in their transition to stable housing and possible access to employment.

CSP Evaluators

Françoise Carré:
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Karen Monaghan:
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Goals and Approaches

Partnership Goals

- To assess retention in permanent housing for participants 3, 6, and 12 months after entry into housing.
- To explore correlations between housing status at the 12-month follow-up and personal characteristics and institutional context variables (e.g. access to housing vouchers).
- Assess the effectiveness of this particular model for supporting families with transition to housing stability.
- Draw lessons from this NYC-based experience for other homeless service programs in Massachusetts and elsewhere.

Approaches

Examine multilevel factors affecting housing:

- Analysis of participant housing status and personal characteristics.
- Analysis of the context for low-cost housing and the subsidies available.

Evaluating innovative programs helps us inform policy decisions, replication or expansion efforts, or changes in practice.

Home

Center for Social Policy: Evaluation of New Lease for Homeless Families

New Lease for Homeless Families

New Lease for Homeless Families will connect 200 or more homeless families to affordable housing units provided by private and non-profit property owners over a two-year period. The infrastructure will then be in place to continue matching homeless families coming out of shelter to affordable housing units, which may change the larger systems of reducing family homelessness in Massachusetts.

Partners

New Lease for Homeless Families
The Citizens Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA)
DHCD
HomeStart

CSP Evaluators

Mary Coonan:
coonanma@comcast.net

Marija Bingulac:
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Goals and Approaches

Evaluate through the lens of **systems-change**, with a focus on:

1. measuring the effectiveness of housing interventions;
2. the extent to which stakeholders institutionalize these practices;
3. and the feasibility of extrapolating these interventions to a larger level.

Mixed-methods Approach

- Quantitative data analysis
- Qualitative interviews

Process Evaluation

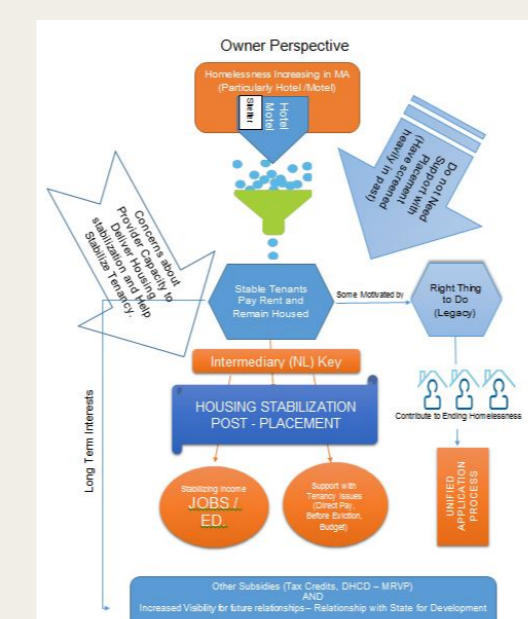
- Extent to which participating agencies, landlords, and DHCD participated in the program as designed and anticipated.

Outcomes Evaluation

- Standardization of housing admission process.
- Centralized communication across all parties.
- Enhanced stabilization services.
- Flexible use of the emergency fund.

A Three Year Period

- Ample opportunity to test different types of housing subsidies, account for a rolling enrollment, and for partnership deepening and development.



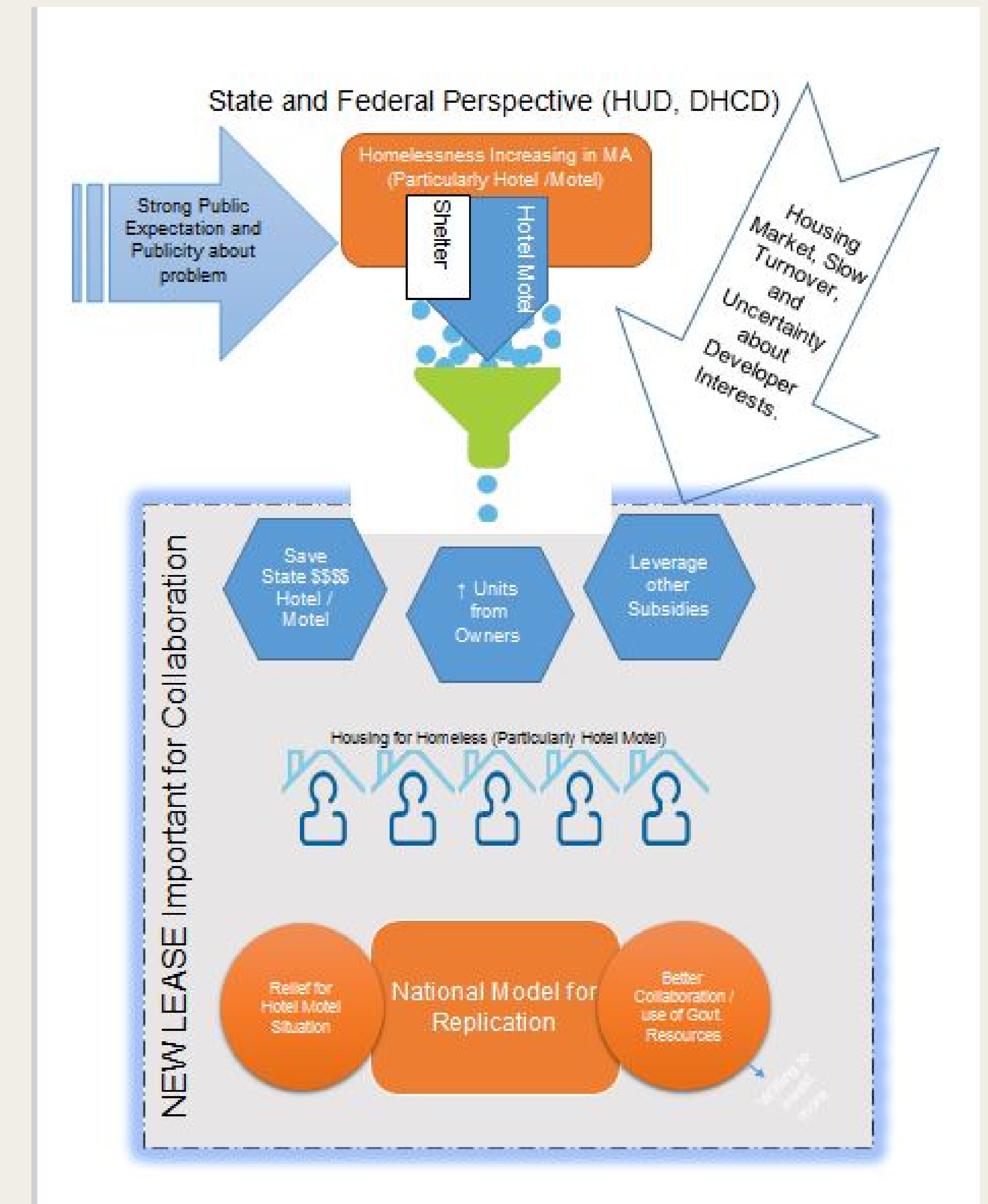
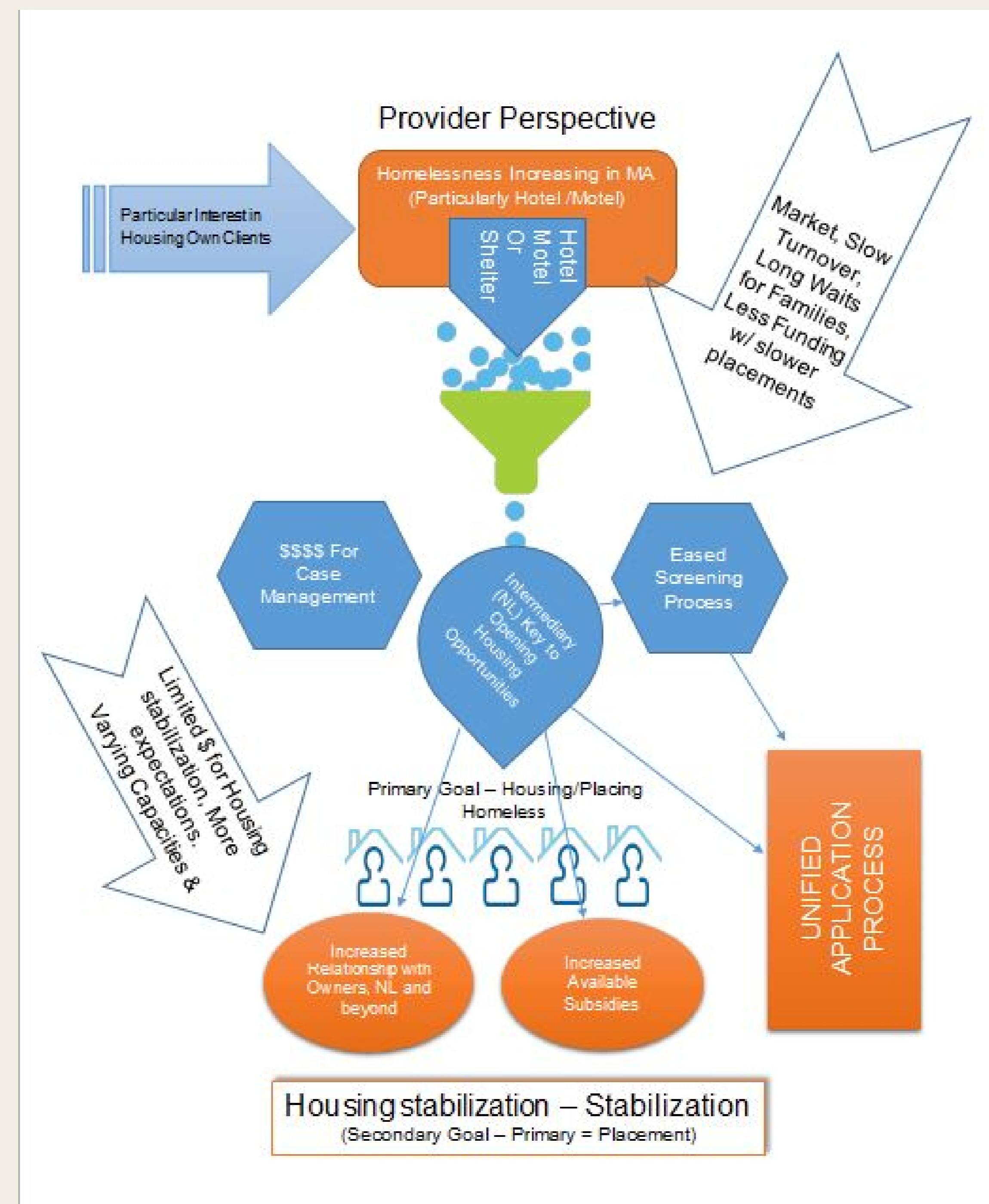
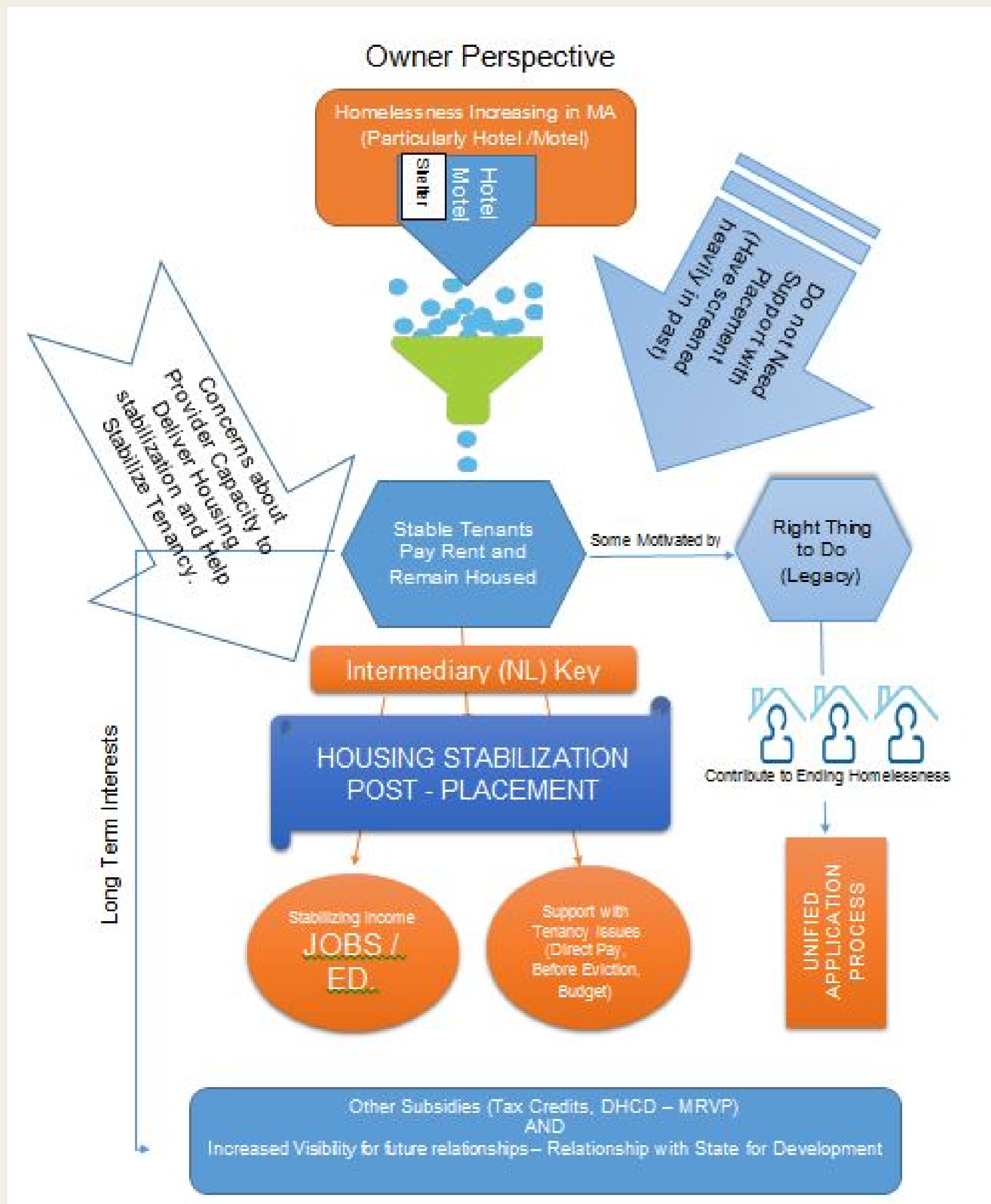
View Mind Maps

We design these evaluations to answer questions like:
What works and for whom?

Home

Center for Social Policy: Evaluation of New Lease for Homeless Families

Mind Maps





Center for Social Policy: Evaluation of HOPE VI – Old Colony

Evaluation Role with HOPE VI

CSP continues its ongoing evaluation role with HOPE VI, a federally funded program operated by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. HOPE VI allows public housing authorities to apply for funding to redevelop severely distressed housing developments. The Old Colony development is currently the most physically distressed site in the BHA's federal portfolio, with aged systems and infrastructure and high annual energy and water costs.

Redevelopment focuses on:

- physical improvements;
- management improvements;
- social and community services to address residents' needs.

Phase one will include building up to 150 new housing units and a new community center, as part of the plan for physical transformation matched by a comprehensive program of Community and Supportive Services.

CSP Evaluator: Mary Coonan,
coonanma@comcast.net

Background

The Boston Housing Authority is the largest landlord in Boston and the largest public housing authority in New England. As such, the BHA houses approximately 10 percent of the city's residents through its programs. In addition to providing conventional public housing, the Boston Housing Authority also provides affordable housing through the administration of several rental assistance programs.

Approaches

The planning process includes participation from key stakeholders, such as Old Colony residents and the broader South Boston neighborhood.

- Qualitative interviews with core partnering and second tier partnering agencies.
- Focus groups with residents moving into/out of Old Colony, the resident Task Force, and residents serving as community outreach workers.
- Participation data at the community center.
- On-going technical assistance.

Contributions

The evaluation contributes to knowledge about how best to affect the housing transition with emphasis on how partner agencies can work collaboratively in this effort. Partner agencies have developed close working relationships to support families with relocation, income stability, and community development. Residents are scheduled to begin moving back into the refurbished housing in early summer.

We focus on improving the lives of those outside the circles of power by engaging constituents "to build knowledge from the ground up."

[Home](#)