

Advance to Zero  
Brisbane + Logan

# Year Two Learning Report

March, 2024

**BRISBANE**  
**ZERO**

**LOGAN**  
**ZERO**

 **GRIFFITH**  
**UNIVERSITY**

GRIFFITH CENTRE FOR  
SYSTEMS INNOVATION

# Contents

This report documents the work of both Brisbane Zero and Logan Zero in the second year of a learning partnership between these two initiatives and the Griffith Centre for Systems Innovation. We thank the amazing partners of both initiatives for their participation in workshops, interviews, training sessions and reflection sessions.

Unlocking systems  
to end homelessness



Unlocking systems  
to end homelessness

3

## Introduction + Process

Intention + Overview of the Report  
Overview of the Process for this  
Evaluative Report

High Level Overview of Findings

6

## Evaluation Question 1: How are systems collaborating or not?

There is a thickening of  
collaboration networks in the  
initiatives + the growing strength  
of clustered action

11

## Evaluation Question 2: How well are data + collective processes being shared?

Data collection + sharing has  
strengthened significantly + collective  
processes are starting to be shared  
more broadly

15

## Evaluation Question 3: How are structural choices getting translated into technical behaviours?

BZ + LZ have made significant steps  
forward in structuring the collaboration  
+ focusing action through subgroup /  
cohort strategies

20

## Evaluation Question 4: How well are practice changes translating into systemic + structural changes?

There is growing evidence that practice  
changes are influencing systemic +  
structural shifts

23

## Evaluation Question 5: How are pieces fitting together around the user?

Awareness, understanding +  
potential points of action that will  
help shift outcomes and experiences  
of people at risk of homelessness  
are becoming much more central to  
the work

27

## Conclusion , Recommendations + Next Steps

Conclusions + Four Key  
Recommendations

29

## References

30

## Appendix One

BZ + LZ Original Program Logic /  
Theory of Change

## Appendix Two

BZ + LZ First Phase Learning  
Report

# Introduction

Since early 2022 Griffith Centre for Systems Innovation (GCSI) has worked with Brisbane Zero (BZ) and Logan Zero (LZ) as a learning partner and developmental evaluator. The evaluation focused on how change happened through collaboration across the system, and what was learnt about how the initiatives contributed to systemic change.

This report builds on the Year One Learning Report to help BZ and LZ reflect on how the initiatives have learnt, adapted and facilitated collaborations that are influencing changes in the homelessness ecosystem at multiple scales. The recommendations of this final report also seek to offer insights into how these findings may be carried forward and shared.

During the 24 month period covered by this final report significant challenges such as COVID,

major floods, the housing crisis and inflation, affected both rates of homelessness and supply of housing, and this of course had the potential for serious implications for LZ and BZ to lead collaborative approaches to systems change.

However, despite these broader challenges, LZ and BZ have achieved many of the output milestones identified in the original program logic (see appendix one). The original outcomes BZ and LZ proposed to generate continue to emerge as they steadily work to build the social infrastructures required to support collective leadership and grow the potential of the Advance-to-Zero (A-to-Z) approach.

Perhaps most significant is the change in the tone and content of interactions within BZ, LZ, the local homelessness service sectors and the interrelated

services systems the initiatives operate within. Conversations, within the Brisbane sector particularly, have shifted from services focusing on competition, talking about "our clients" (or 'our organisation and it's impact') to the emergence of a much more collective and collaborative system wide narrative that focuses on services finding cooperative ways to meet the needs of people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

These changes have been accompanied by BZ and LZ strategically shifting their focus from trying to affect broad systems change to enabling collective leadership across systems. The work that goes into creating collaborative ecosystems such as those emerging in LZ and BZ is often unseen. Hence, this evaluation aims to make the invisible visible.

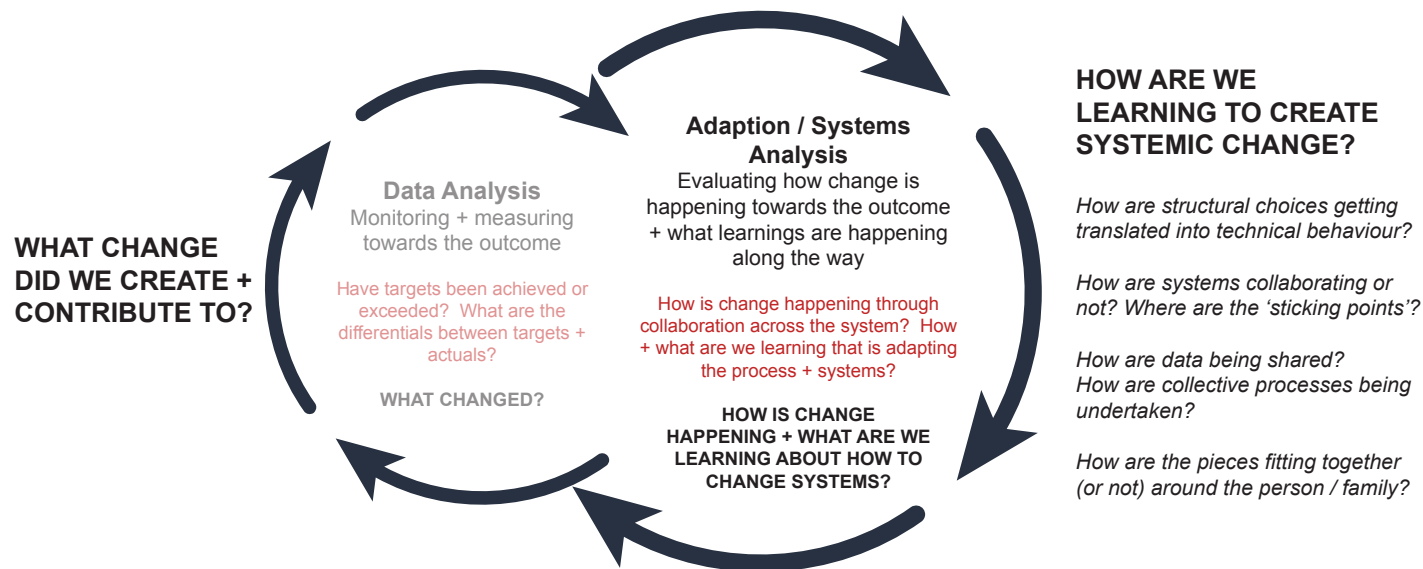


Figure 1: The focus of this developmental evaluation is to understand how the initiatives are learning to create systemic change.

Throughout this report we make visible the nuanced practices, processes and infrastructures that have enabled BZ and LZ partners to support collaboration and collective leadership. This is made visible by surfacing and reflecting on how BZ and LZ have subtly affected change at multiple levels, and the emerging results they have been sharing with the wider movement focused on ending homelessness.

Following a description of the evaluative process, there are sections that answer each of the five evaluative questions (listed in Figure 1). Each section describes the findings, learnings and insights generated over the last twelve months.

## Process

The quotes, analysis and insights reported here have been drawn from processes and events that made up each annual cycle in the developmental evaluation (as depicted in Figure 3). The evaluation process and activities are outlined below.

### Year one: The Exploratory Cycle (2022/3)

- Zero Homelessness Kickoff Workshop: Planning the Developmental Evaluation and Impact Map Review (9 February)
- Interviews and thematic analysis (ongoing)
- Informal generative conversations (ongoing)
- Attendance at Zero Campaign: How can we end homelessness in Logan (28 March)
- Workshop two: Reflections on What we've heard + signal strengths for action
- Evaluation update 2022: high level insights from first cycle (July)
- Separate BZ & LZ Evaluation Sprint Workshops (Oct)
- Attendance at Zero Homelessness Summit (27 Oct)

## Key Evaluation Questions

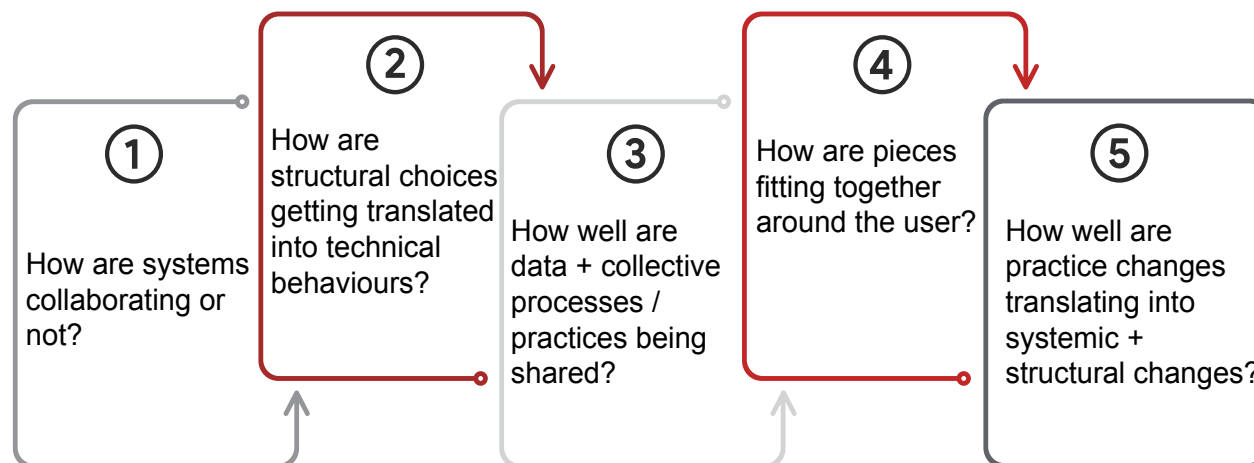


Figure 2: The key evaluation questions of the BZ + LZ developmental evaluation

- Ellen Whitty Reference Group Meeting (early February)
- Advance to Zero Brisbane + Logan Year One Learning Report (March/April)

### Year two: The Explanatory Cycle (2023/4)

- Critical Friends feedback workshop (March)
- Interviews ongoing - including partners, government, stakeholders directly and indirectly involved, non-participating homelessness services
- National A-to-Z data leads monthly community of practice workshops
- Peer to Peer Action Learning session (June)
- Systems Mapping and Beyond Workshop (July) – separate from evaluation, but relevant
- Advance to Zero Year Two Progress

- Workshop (August)
- Sub-group (cohort) strategy workshop (2023)
- Journey mapping workshop (2023)
- Critical Friends Draft Report Feedback Workshop (Feb 2024)
- Ellen Whitty Reference Group Presentation (Feb 2024)
- Informal conversations across both initiatives during the two years
- Presentations at associated events e.g. Australian Homelessness Conference 2023/34 (AHURi); Brisbane Domestic Violence Conference 2023.

In addition to generative workshops we have drawn on informal conversations and problem solving sessions, observations of collaborative spaces (such as data leads community of practice

workshops) as well as a total of 29 in-depth interviews with practitioners from across BZ + LZ.

## High Level Findings over the 2 years: Overview

### **Strengthened collaboration + collective action**

There has been both a thickening of collaboration networks in the initiatives, and a growing strength of clustered action, indicating that real collective responsibility for outcomes is starting to develop.

### **Improved collection + sharing of data has grown trust + shaped better outcomes**

The number of partners collecting data, the consistency of data collected and the visibility of that data within organisations and across the initiative is moving towards a critical mass of participation. That means that the data is more reflective of the what is happening across places and real outcomes are both more possible and more visible to partners. Further, sharing of data and analysis has significantly grown both the trust in the initiative, and the appreciation that data has a role to play in shaping better outcomes

for people at risk of homelessness.

### **Focused subgroups and cohort strategies are creating stronger collaboration + demonstrable outcomes**

Through experimentation BZ and LZ have demonstrated that supporting separate and focused subgroups who act together towards better outcomes for specific cohorts builds both stronger collaborations across the partnership and also demonstrable outcomes for high acuity groups. In taking this approach BZ and LZ are creating organising structures that engage inter-system actors (e.g. from the Health and Justice sectors, amongst others) by expanding and integrating the scope of actors to see intersectional, upstream and downstream drivers for homelessness and it's causes in relation to particular cohort groups.

### **Growing signs that BZ and LZ are contributing to structural and systemic changes**

The practice of collecting and sharing data is enabling BZ and LZ, to advocate for systemic and structural changes, whilst also improving

outcomes at sub-group and individual/family levels, which in turn are critical for any kind of systems shifts. The evidence suggests this approach is influencing behaviours of participating members as well as other system actors. Seeing results of a shared language, improved collaborative decision making and sustained housing outcomes are all generating greater interest, shifting mindsets, and providing a basis for further investment.

### **People at risk of and experiencing homelessness are increasingly at the centre of the data, advocacy and change work**

The thoughtful and rigorous use of tools such as journey and systems maps demonstrates how both initiatives are integrating data, collective analysis, coordination and narrative into actions for service improvement and arguments to support advocacy towards better outcomes.

The evidence and insights supporting these findings is outlined in the following sections.

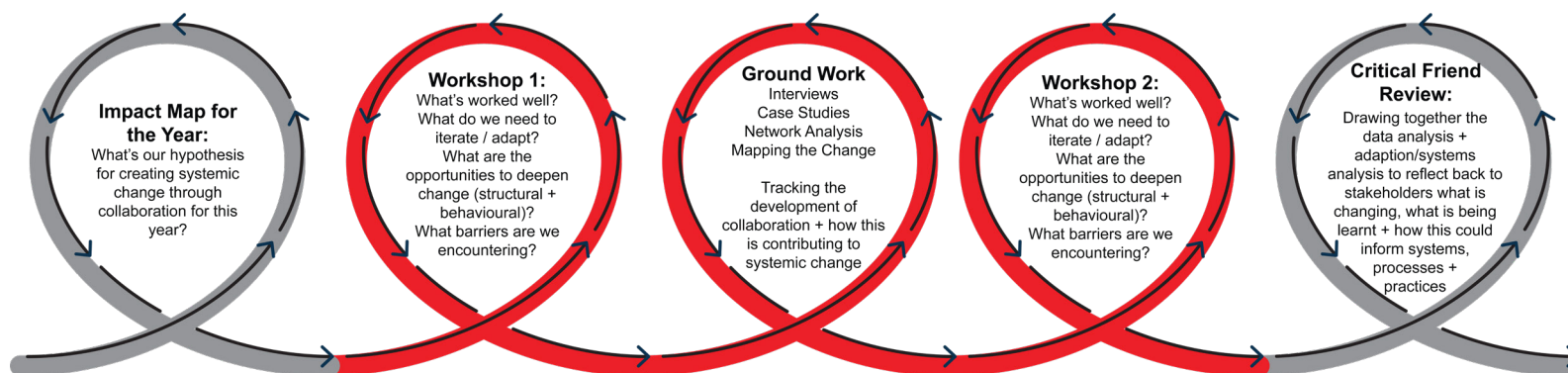


Figure 3: The Yearly Learning Cycles Underpinning the Process of this Developmental Evaluation

# Evaluation Question 1: How are Systems Collaborating or Not?

“  
*Mapping the nature and strength of the collaboration process makes visible and reinforces how collective action can support system change. And, illustrating with data and narrative analysis can help articulate the value in collaboration.*  
 ”

The above quote from one of the initiative partners points to what this developmental evaluation aims to shed light on: the value of reflecting on how the BZ and LZ initiatives collaborate across service systems to generate systemic impacts.

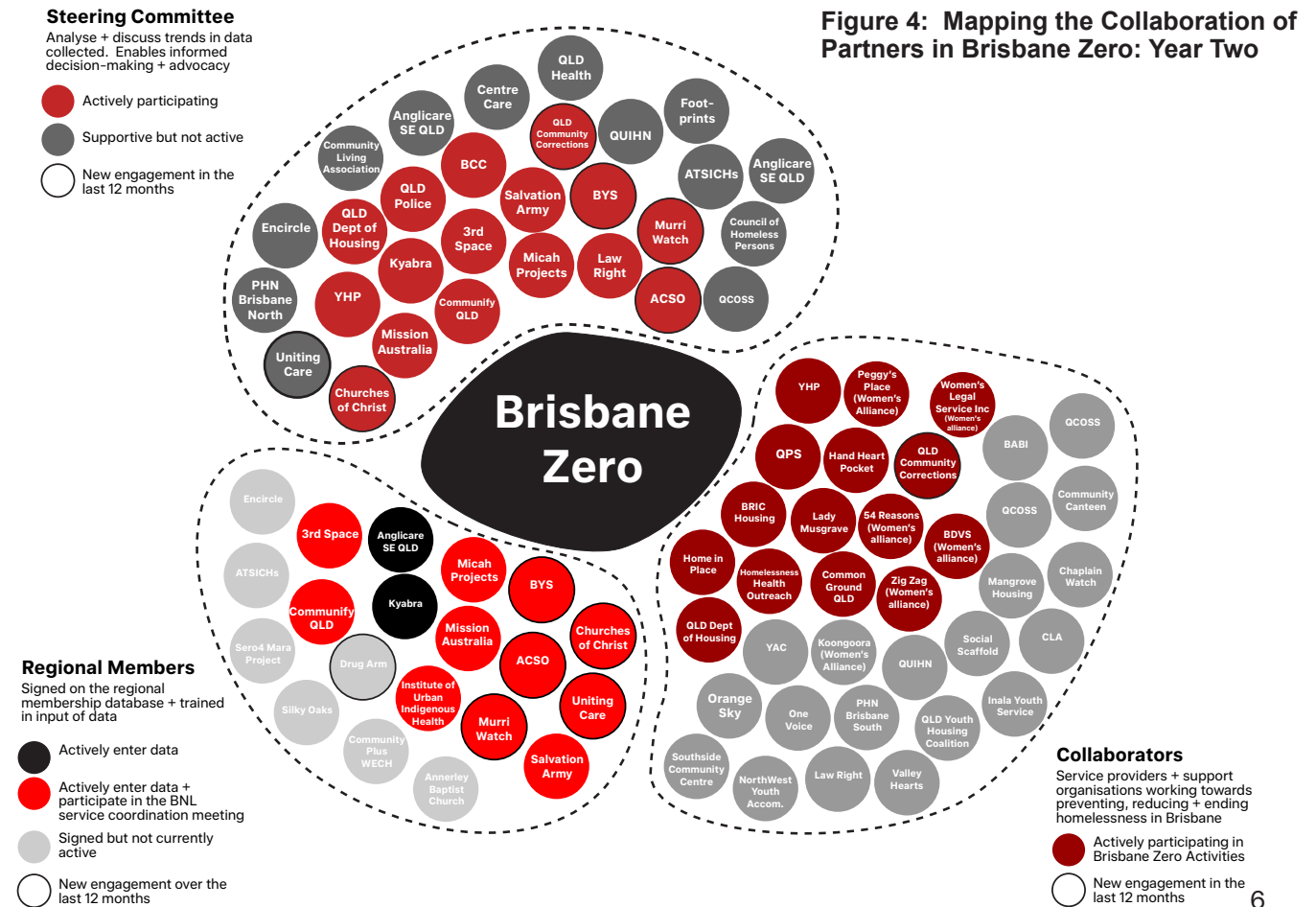
Results shared in the year one learning report suggested that BZ and LZ were starting to find effective, networked ways of organising collaborative work that were less governance focused than typical ‘collective impact’ frameworks (Kania and Kramer, 2011). Both initiatives were starting to innovate around clusters of activity and much more networked approaches to organising action, and this in turn was strengthening collaboration.

BZ and LZ’s respective journeys have also continued to focus on a ‘learning by doing’ approach to nurturing collaborative cultures and shifting organisational mindsets by demonstrating what data, collective action and advocacy can achieve.

***In this second year, then, both a thickening of collaboration networks in the initiatives, and the growing strength of clustered action, indicate that real collective responsibility for outcomes is starting to develop.***

Over the past 12 months both initiatives have grown and deepened participation from the homelessness service system, but also from a range of intersecting agencies and supporters who are concerned with reducing, preventing and ending homelessness in the region.

BZ has grown engagement particularly in the collection and sharing of data (through the steering committee and members entering data). Regular data collection across the membership has consolidated and there is greater shared responsibility for action, evidenced through increasing participation in subgroups for example.



Further evidence supporting a thickening of networks and engagement is found in the multiple levels at which members and committee members are now participating – not only collecting data, but also coordinating meetings and subgroups, and supporting the initiative through co-chairing or hosting activities. Figure 4 illustrates the engagement of partners in BZ over the past twelve months. Compared to the engagement maps in the previous twelve months (see Year One Report), it is evident that there has been both broader and deeper participation.

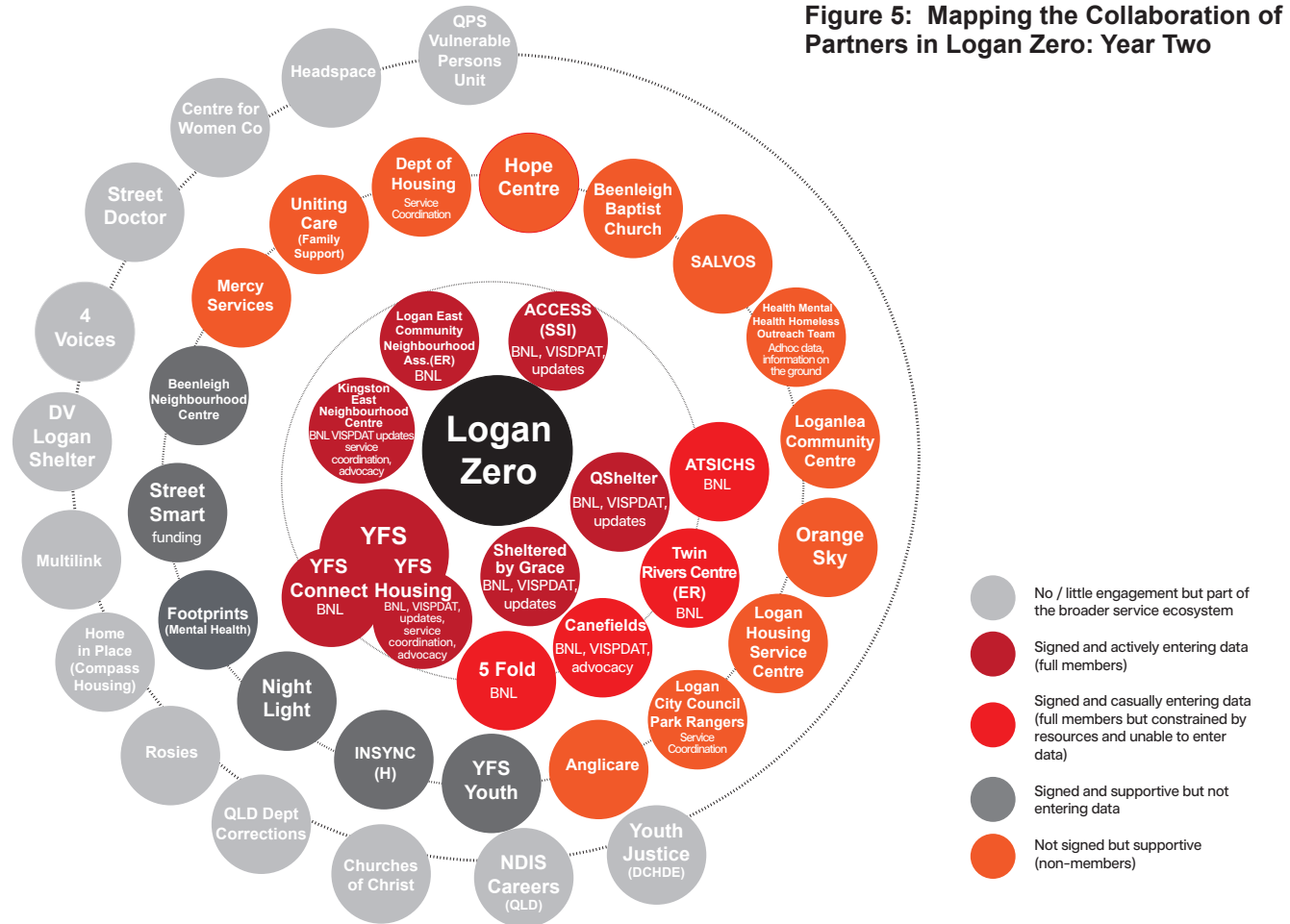
In LZ there has been a consolidation of core members, and a recognition that in a thinner service system there are different ways in which organisations can participate (see Figure 5). The service system in Logan includes a range of much smaller, diverse agencies, many of whom are run through faith-based organisations or cater for specific cultural groups in a very culturally diverse region. For the smaller, less well resourced organisations it is harder to consistently enter data, but their participation in the broader movement is critical, particularly in relation to advocacy and coordination.

The LZ team have undertaken a great deal of work to engage the service sector, catering for a range of organisations with different resourcing constraints, capabilities and capacities. This is significant because such work is critical for growing the collaborative infrastructures needed for networks or alliances to thrive – however, it is often not adequately recognised nor resourced well.

The addition of outreach into the Logan service system (as a result of advocacy work by LZ) has also enabled LZ to engage and collectively coordinate with a broader cross-section of services working at the intersection of issues faced by people at risk of homelessness.

“Not all the homelessness service providers in Logan (so many doing different things) are included in the homelessness networks. The informal (volunteer, faith-based etc) and formal (government funded) parts of the sector do not have a strong relationship.”

“We’ve always had connections and partnerships with the key Zero member, from partnering with them in the past. Keeping those ties strong ... all helps, especially working as a partnership or collaboration.”



## **Stronger collaboration around subgroups and focused insights from data**

Both LZ and BZ have been able to extend what is working in their contexts to engage partners for collaboration. This continues to emerge most effectively around clusters of activity focused on specific subgroups and/or addressing specific issues, rather than broadly gathering around the overall goal of 'Zero Homelessness' (which is both more amorphous and harder to focus action around).

For example, LZ has coordinated a coalition of government agencies and local services with disparate missions around action in a particular 'hot-spot' locality. Data and insights from partners highlighted the needs and risks of a growing number of people who were sleeping rough in a park adjacent to a motorway. LZ were recognised as facilitative leaders who could coordinate a response to this situation across multiple partners. This experience has thickened the network's capacity to collaborate in tackling other issues in the region.

BZ's experiences of innovating to engage partners in more networked approaches to collaboration has resulted in a number of focused reduction strategies in which partners are collaborating around specific subgroups such as First Nations people aged 45+, veterans, women experiencing domestic violence and young people (each in various stages of development).

These are described in a later section, but what is interesting in relation to this evaluation question is the demonstration that partner organisations are increasingly engaging across a range of activities in the collaboration. Smaller, tighter, ongoing collaborations focused on specific issues or sub-groups has resulted in key staff in partner

organisations developing deep and constructive working relationships that can support broader collaborative processes.

## **Beyond transactional collaboration - towards shared action and transformation**

In the last 12 months both LZ and BZ have demonstrated subtle shifts away from traditional forms of collective impact - with its focus on a strong backbone organisation and hierarchies of governance and leadership - towards a kind of leadership that facilitates possibilities for system actors to lead through networked action and innovation (see Year One Report for a comparison between the two approaches). The shift towards more distributed systems leadership has played out at multiple scales. The changes distributing leadership brings indicate progress or at least enabling conditions for the kinds of system changes BZ and LZ set out to create.

These changes reflect a maturation of collaboration from more 'transactional' modes towards greater evidence of 'shared action' and even instances of 'transformational' collaboration (see Figure 6).

From individuals, and how they talk about participating in decision making or leadership roles, through to teams, and entire organisations there is evidence that collaboration across the initiatives has both strengthened and thickened.

In particular, this can be identified through:

- increased participation and enthusiasm from frontline staff to participate in data collection and actual use of that data in their teams;
- partner organisations and their staff are stepping up into the opportunities facilitated by BZ's openness to share decision-making

and experiment with approaches based on evidence;

- examples of multi-scale collaborative advocacy and its influence on individual cases, sub-groups, the homelessness service sector and across into related service systems (such as health and domestic violence).

“  
*It's more impactful when you've got some sort of outcome or some real dedicated collaboration around a piece of work to communicate that A-to-Z does work.*

”

“  
*Successful collaboration comes out of good relationships and that takes time - trust is built up out of years of relationship which leads to collaboration*

”



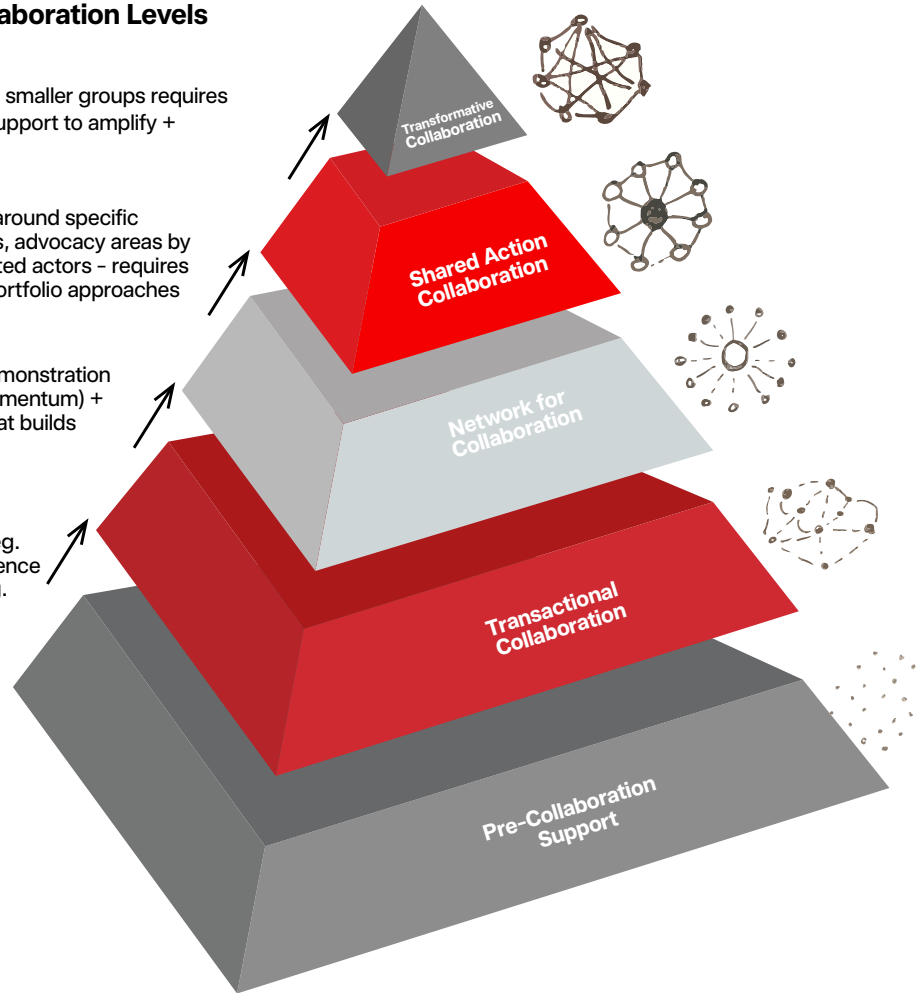
## Moving Up the Collaboration Levels

Interconnectivity between smaller groups requires collective governance + support to amplify + elevate results

Stronger focus on action around specific elements - cohorts, issues, advocacy areas by smaller groups of committed actors - requires distributed leadership + portfolio approaches

Stronger trust + action demonstration (eg. evidence of some momentum) + relational infrastructure that builds commitment

Addition of some clear benefits to participation (eg. shared, open data) + evidence of changed conditions (eg. commitment to a shared agenda building process)



## Defining Features

Inter-connected tight, close networks with high trust who coordinate clear agenda setting + actions.

Focused groups, tight organisation, open to new engagement but with clear expectations, high trust groups

Loose + open groups, but often with strong relationships that encourage participation + attraction of actors with high commitment + capability to contribute

Loose + open groups, but commitment is generated through signed agreements + some common goals (often supported with training)

Loose, porous groups, shared goals but not always shared agenda about how to achieve those goals

## Defining Processes

Commitment to + active participation in systemic advocacy + use of data + collective decision-making to shift

Active participation in singular action areas that could improve outcomes or shape practice for specific cohorts or in specific contexts

Participation in coordination meetings, analysis of trends in data + broad decision-making around shared use of data, without commitment to joint actions

Signing on to agreements + fulfilling shared data collection obligations - little engagement beyond collecting + sharing data

Working in the same sector, supporting the goals but not actively participating the collaboration to achieve those goals

Figure 6: Understanding Levels of Collaboration (and movement between levels) in BZ + LZ

## Key shifts growing collaboration

Reflecting on the shifts in collaboration since the start of the initiative, it is fitting to remember the emphasis in the first round of interviews, and the workshops around the 'territorialism' and 'competition' that was identified across both sectors and systems.

There was a very prominent sense of collaboration being not only difficult, but potentially impossible due to a lack of trust and a structural embedding of competitive relationships. The prominence of this narrative in interviews, workshops and learning sessions has fundamentally shifted over the last two years of working alongside BZ and LZ.

When prompted to reflect on this change, partners and others in the service system have identified 'increased trust' and 'stronger relationships' as clear drivers of this change. Analysing data to understand this further suggests that there are four key shifts that have become clearer in the initiatives, and therefore grown trust, fostered relationships and ultimately created conditions for stronger collaboration (see Figure 7).

***There is still work to do to grow collaboration, but data from interviews, workshops and peer learning exchanges are now supporting a much broader and deeper collaboration space across homelessness service providers and increasingly, within related service systems, than was present when the Zero initiatives began.***

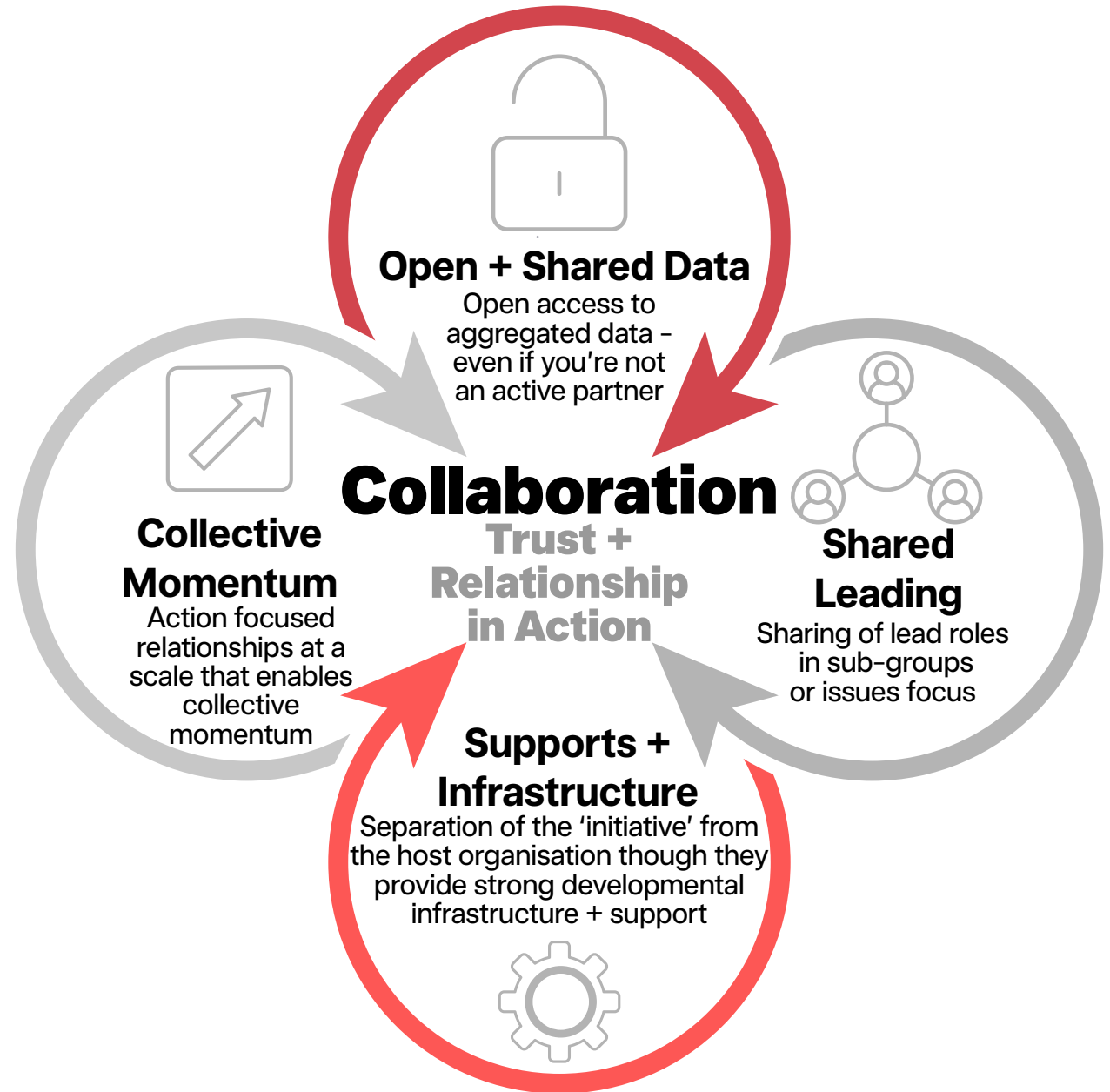


Figure 7: Elements + Contributions to Collaboration in BZ + LZ

# Evaluation Question 2: How well are data + collective processes being shared?

“Look at the big picture of what we’ve got from Zero. Even if it’s just data, that can be so powerful to change government policy, or to attract funding streams, or to raise public awareness to the community. The data matters.”

The Year One report shared how BZ and LZ had increased the value proposition of collecting and using data. In addition it was clear that both initiatives were developing relational as well as data-sharing processes that enabled partners to better contribute and benefit from a data-informed approach. The ways BZ and LZ use and leverage data to engage stakeholders has been developed further in the last twelve months.

The increased participation in both collecting and acting on data across both initiatives demonstrates a deepening of the recognition that data enables actors to:

- **make sense of what is happening** to people who enter the homelessness service system, when they cycle through this system and what their housing situation is upon leaving the system;
- **make informed decisions** about resourcing, focusing and directing services and supports;
- **advocate for changes** at multiple sites and scales across the systems involved in housing and supporting people at risk of homelessness; and
- most importantly, collaborate across the housing and other systems that feed into or are related to homelessness to **act towards better outcomes**.

## Growing the collection and sharing of data

The number of partners collecting data has gradually increased over the past year, but more importantly, the consistency of data collection by partners and the visibility of that data within organisations and across the initiative has improved substantially.

“It’s about tracking (all) outcomes, rather than focusing on whose outcomes.”

In addition, both initiatives have started to share a greater depth of analysis from the data, producing for example, intersectional factsheets (see Figure 8); dashboards that enable the ecosystem to see inflow, outflow and key issues (see Figure 9); and dig deeper into particular themes emerging out of the data that could frame decisions, actions and/or advocacy (see Figure 10). The fact that these data artefacts are made public, accessible for both partners and the broader ecosystem means that they can be used both within the initiatives, but also to inform action in specific organisations, by government or by other sectors.

The sharing of data and analysis has, according to the partners and supporters we engaged with, significantly grown both the trust in the initiative, and the appreciation that data has a role to play in shaping better outcomes for people at risk of homelessness.

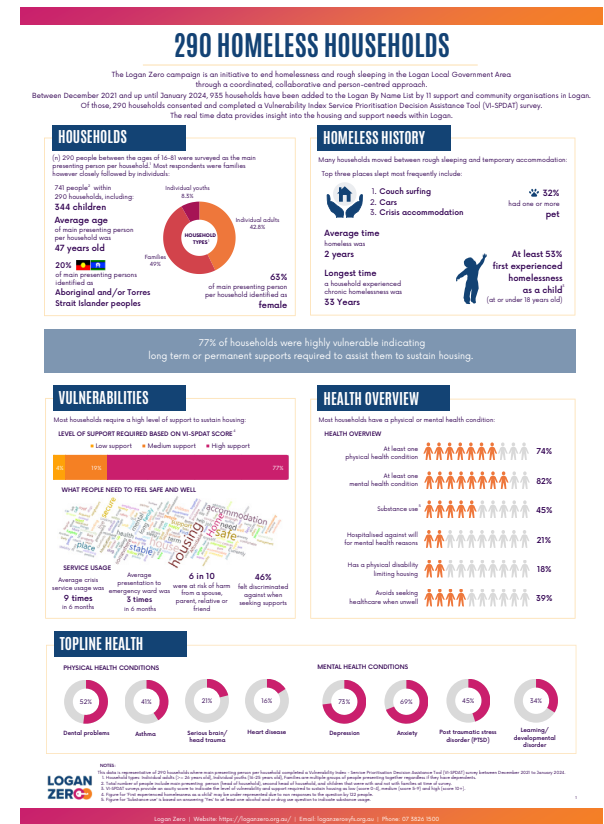


Figure 8: Intersectional Fact Sheet Example (LZ)

“This year compared to last we’ve got a lot more momentum and a lot more participation... we’re seeing regional members that weren’t really contributing or coming along to meetings ... [as well as] new people come [into BZ] because they can see the good work that’s happening. ... They could see this space, so they were more keen and putting in data or coming on to those meetings and having outcomes, [which] ... improved visibility across the board as well.”

## Innovating support for data collection and sharing

In response to feedback from their partners LZ and BZ have continued innovating training and peer-to-peer learning processes to build partner capacity to use data in supporting effective action (see Figure 11).

For instance, BZ and LZ have tailored their approach to supporting partners to embed data collection into their existing processes. This has enabled key partners to adapt them to their circumstances, thus achieving greater sustainability and capability for multiple staff to engage in A-to-Z.

These approaches have been developed to build momentum through realistic goals focused on data collection within each partner organisation drawing on tailored support. Starting small, trying, testing and learning with partner organisations has proven much more effective than assuming a target of 100% data collection from the outset and experiencing shortcomings as failure.

Taking an adaptive approach to supporting partners has improved BZ and LZ's success in adjusting shared processes to align them with particular organisation's operational contexts and needs.

For instance, several active partners acknowledged that just starting with getting staff to enter people into the "By Name List" (BNL) in the first interaction is a big enough step. Once there is some rapport the worker can then conduct a VISPDAT interview when it makes sense relationally with the client/user. Although LZ has been more constrained by partner resourcing and contextual factors,

“(It’s) what gets workers excited. Using the database on a daily basis and giving workers feedback, allowing them to co-determine how the tools are integrated into their workflow, rather than just being told what to do.”

“I said to other people, don’t aim for 100%. Start by aiming for 1%. Because if you aim for 100, you’re never gonna get it. And you’re just gonna give up trying, .... figure out a way that you can tailor it to work for your organization, don’t work really hard to embed a database [unless you can] make it meaningful. (So) that’s what we’ve done, ... people are excited to use it. ... And they feel like they’re a part of something now where they didn’t feel that way [at the beginning].”

“We have learned that data + shared methodology for how you prioritize and advocate...is very powerful.”

## Brisbane Zero Homelessness Trends

From July 2021 to date

Unlocking systems  
to end homelessness  
**BRISBANE  
ZERO**

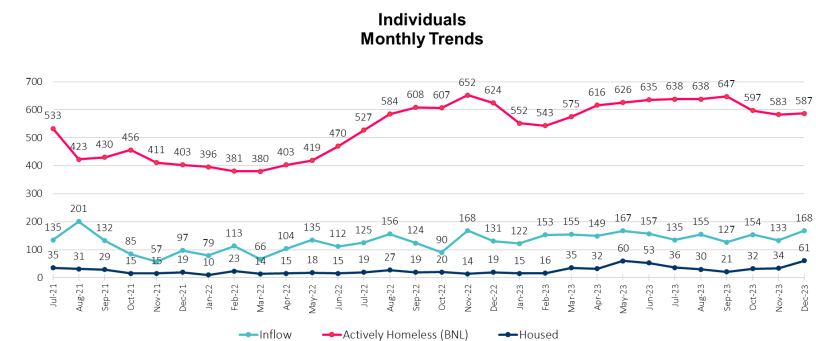


Figure 9: Data Dashboard Example (BZ)

Data reported as of 10/01/2024

## SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTH: HIGHLY VULNERABLE

People experiencing homelessness have been shown to be at increased risk of morbidity and mortality. 224 households surveyed with a high vulnerability score had the following health conditions and support needs:

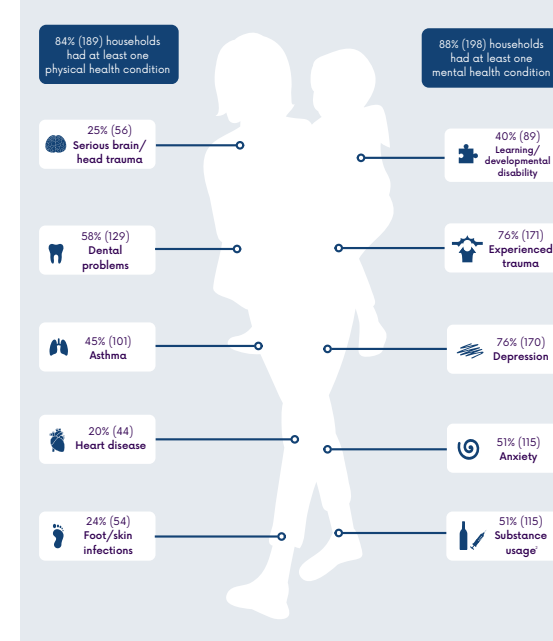


Figure 10: Deeper Data Analysis Example (LZ)

**LOGAN ZERCO**  
This data is representative of 2023 households where more pressing issues per household completed a vulnerability index. Source: Prioritisation Decision Support Tool (VISPDAT) using AND SCORED INDEX. VISPDAT developed 2020 to 2022. © Logan Zero. All rights reserved. This data is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be used for any other purpose. For more information, please contact Logan Zero at [info@loganzero.org.au](mailto:info@loganzero.org.au).  
\* Note: This data is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be used for any other purpose. For more information, please contact Logan Zero at [info@loganzero.org.au](mailto:info@loganzero.org.au).  
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Logan Zero | Website: <http://loganzero.org.au/> | Email: [loganzero@loganzero.org.au](mailto:loganzero@loganzero.org.au) | Phone: 07 5420 1500

they have continued to innovate to build on early successes in supporting partners to collect and share data. Thus, both BZ and LZ have - to differing degrees and using different methods - managed to deepen and broaden engagement with their key partners. This has principally been achieved by engaging across different teams within partner organisations to create buy-in to data collection and then extend this to other aspects of collaboration.

**Influencing what data is collected and how it is used across the system**

The focus on data collection, analysis and sharing has had ripple effects across the initiatives - from partners, to the wider service ecosystem, to government-sector relationships. The narrative around the value of data has shifted from the early interviews across the initiative to the latest interviews. Frontline staff recognise data can

inform better outcomes, making it valuable beyond compliance and reporting.

Further, the collection and analysis of data to highlight the issues experienced by particular subgroups has prompted partners and supporters to refine their internal data collection processes.

For example, participating in the First Nations 45+ strategy prompted Queensland's largest social housing provider to incorporate a specific First Nations 45+ tab into their internal housing allocation spreadsheet. This seemingly small change signals shifts towards what could underpin significant institutional mindset and process changes.

***In effect, changing the nature of the data collected, and the purpose for doing this, flows on to influence what is made visible in the housing system and what can be and is acted on.***

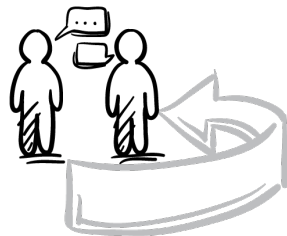
“  
*The Zero data has helped us because our mob are often the highest acuity, which helps to get things moving quicker.*  
 ”

“  
*The top 10 discussion (focuses on people who) have been on the BNL the longest. (Through identifying the top 10 and discussing how to get them housed) we'll have an escalation group going directly to the [Dept housing] area manager saying, Oh, these people discussed so many times and are still on the BNL and need some different sort of outcome.*  
 ”

**Embedding Zero Methods across the Service System: Learnings from Brisbane + Logan**



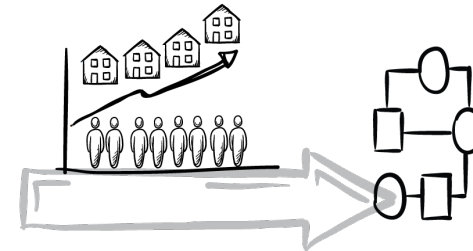
Importance of Engaging Key Senior Staff who 'get it' + will work developmentally to test how it could work in context (with support from initiative)



Active engagement that is context specific, working with partners to support + learning + grow participation (not one-size fits all training), onsite trouble-shooting + participation in induction



Frontline + senior staff across partners experience how data connects to real outcomes for people + can participate in coordination groups + sub-groups



Data + collective outcomes becomes part of 'business as usual' across the service sector + its usage generates other innovative approaches so that systems shifts become achievable

Figure 11: Embedding A-to-Z Methods Across the Service System

## Monitoring data for weak signals

One of the strengths of using data that engages directly with the experiences of people at risk of homelessness is that it has the potential, in aggregate, to generate 'weak signals' or first indicators of potential challenges, shifts, issues or changes.

Too often in responding to complex social challenges we are reliant on 'lag' data or high level population level data as the basis for shaping responses to a challenge. This data can be helpful in analysing patterns over time and across large populations, but it is too abstract for planning change at a human scale, designing action or monitoring shifts at the level of practice.

The sort of data that is generated in A-to-Z is different because it is immediate, current and reflective of what people are experiencing and have experienced in this moment of time. This sort of data has the potential to generate weak and strong signals that can help make decisions about how to act, or at least take the next steps towards action that could result in better

outcomes. The collection of this kind of data - and more importantly, sharing the data and collectively interpreting it - is critical for really tackling complex, multidimensional issues such as homelessness. Figure 12 illustrates the value of the sort of data that is generated in the Zero projects - and the type of data that we want less of and more of in initiatives seeking to tackle complex systemic issues.

The right data at the right level is critical for supporting change - however it is not, in and of itself enough. The use of data in order to inform and shape action is equally important. BZ and LZ have demonstrated how the 'collective interpretation' of data at levels where there is real agency to act for change (eg. example where service providers can coordinate action to house and support people at risk of homelessness) is crucial to generating better outcomes. Further, the generation of insights around patterns and signals in the data can support both better outcomes for individuals and families, **and** action around groups or cohorts or places where patterns in the data are identified.

## Influencing data tools and processes more broadly

Stepping back from the BZ and LZ initiatives themselves, it is clear their collective processes are being shared with other stakeholders in their regions and more broadly within Queensland's homelessness / housing systems as well as other Australian Advance to Zero initiatives.

By demonstrating the effects of innovation and how it's been achieved, BZ and LZ are humbly becoming leaders within the A-to-Z movement. For example, BZ experiences and innovations have led the process to upgrade the A-to-Z database as well as review and replace the VISPDAT form. These moves represent a nationally and potentially globally significant evolution of the key data related tools and processes used by A-to-Z initiatives around the world.

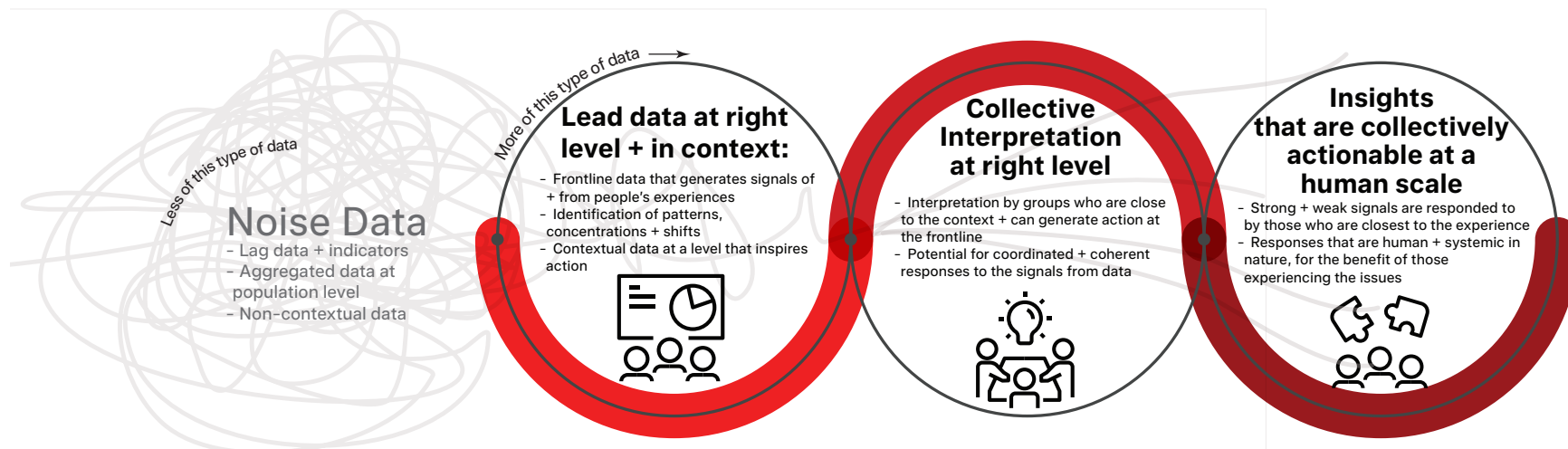


Figure 12: The Types of Data Needed for Shifting Complex Systems

## Evaluation Question 3: How are structural choices getting translated into technical behaviours?

This evaluation question focuses on the dynamic between structural decisions (eg. about the BZ and LZ governance, processes, structures and policies) – and their impacts on the ground as they are reflected in and made visible through practices and behaviours.

The Year One report found that context influenced structural choices greatly. LZ and BZ were found to have adopted a healthy pragmatism that held governance lightly while focusing on engaging partner organisations by experimenting with different forms of action-oriented collaboration. There was an overarching sense that behaviours across systems could be shifted by realising the value of data informed approaches in navigating towards the directional goal (that is, Zero Homelessness).

BZ and LZ have continued to make significant progress by recognising and responding to constraints that hold current systems in place, continuing to actively respond to signals within the data, and learning from and with partners in developing collaborative processes.

### Acknowledging and Making Constraints Visible

Over the last two years LZ and BZ have intentionally developed approaches to make structural constraints visible and advocated for shifts that improve outcomes. This is not new work, but in the last twelve months the initiatives have started to engage with different ways of demonstrating collective leadership across both specialist service systems and broader related systems in order to challenge structures that are

exacerbating or complicating risks of homeless for particular groups. Three particular factors have been identified through the workshops and interviews:

1. *Responding to the Housing Crisis:* Increasing demand for homelessness services due to a lack of supply and very tight rental markets. As BZ identifies, “in 2023, the demand for homelessness services surged by 43% compared to 2022”, and “rental prices risen 28.4% since the onset of the pandemic” (BZ data report, 2024).
2. *Contract / Procurement / Funding Arrangements:* overly prescriptive funding arrangements, micro-management inside contract management are often hamstringing the ability to support families and to innovatively respond to the housing crisis.
3. *Intersections with other service systems* that could either increase risks or could assist in addressing risks of homelessness: particularly those focused on health, mental health, corrections, or veteran services.

BZ and LZ have been able to leverage the specialist homeless service sector’s motivation to innovate by working through the challenges posed by these factors. Specific responses include:

- **Analysing and sharing data with the service system and with key decision-makers.** For example, sharing data with housing providers and Queensland Government Housing

Department has actually resulted in an “11% increase in housing placements” (BZ, 2023);

- **Identifying particular ‘hot spots’ in other service systems that represent increased risks of homelessness.** For example, LZ identifying discharge from Logan Hospital as a key risk point, and making this visible through journey mapping and engagement with decision-makers;
- **Highlighting the flow-on effects of funding arrangements that promote competitive relations over collaboration, and articulating implications of overly prescriptive contracting arrangements utilising data and insights from across the service system.** For example, the requirement that compliance based data entry be undertaken by trained social workers, when an administrative role would suffice.

This in itself has demonstrated the potential of a ‘bottom-up’, relationally based and coordinated approach by service providers to engage with and advocate for changes using data and insights that otherwise would be somewhat ‘privatised’ because of competitive contracting arrangements.

“  
Changing big messy systems like homelessness on a measurable scale takes many smaller, nudges and micro shifts that are often imperceptible amongst the glaring trends and crises.

”

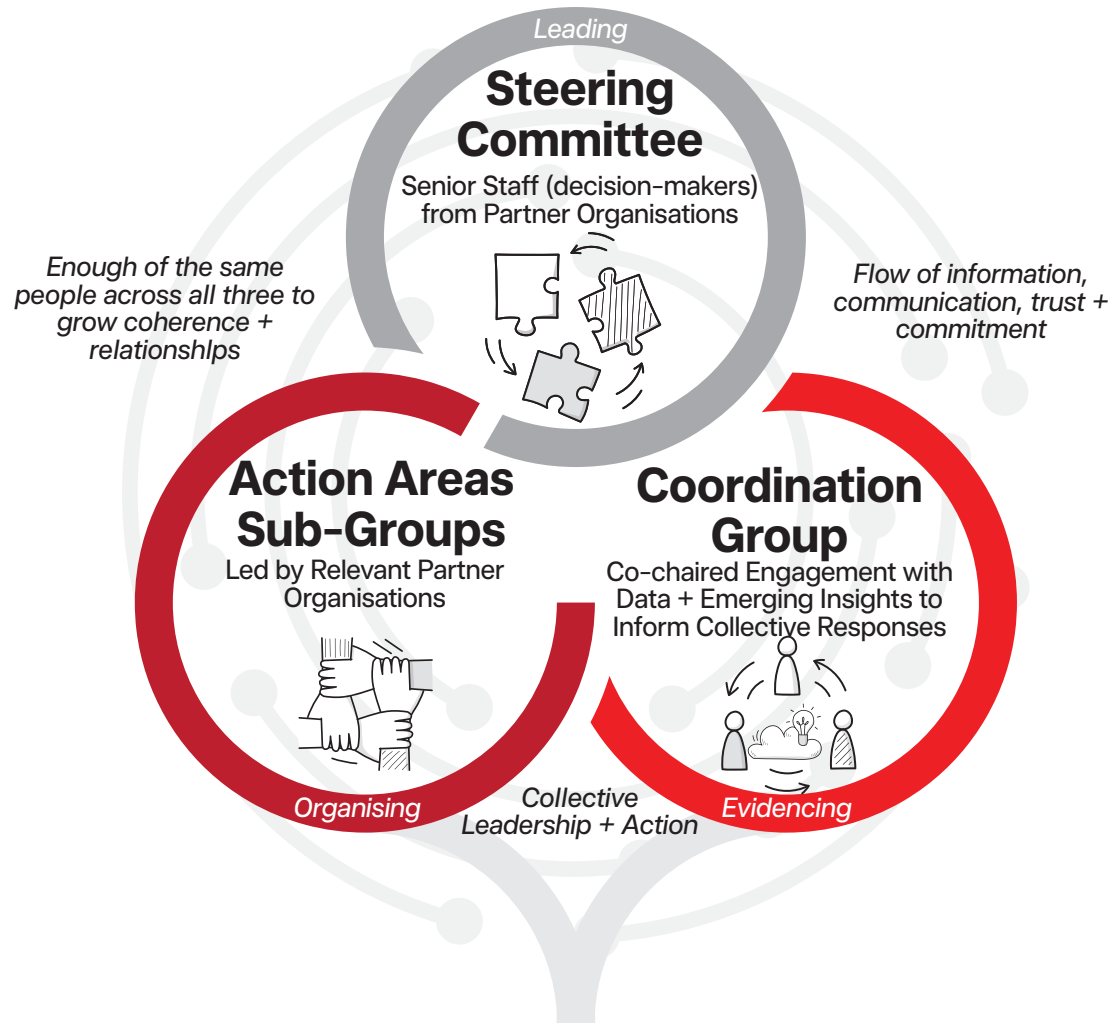
## Making Visible the Work of Structuring Collaboration

Collaboration is key to the work that underpins the BZ and LZ initiatives. It necessitates clear structures, action infrastructure, relationships, communication and commitment – and all this requires a great deal of work that takes time and resourcing but which is largely invisible.

BZ has taken a relational approach to coordinating the partnerships, which has been achieved through multiple levels of supporting collaboration. From the BZ steering group, down to subgroup coalitions and the weekly coordination meetings BZ often has the same staff present across the levels to ensure continuity of information and relationships (see Figure 13). By sharing decision-making with partner organisations at all three levels BZ has been able to demonstrate the value of A-to-Z approaches whilst developing trust and reciprocity through an expanding sense of ownership amongst partner organisations.

Despite the importance of initial conditions, according to multiple practitioners within BZ, changes in how it has been organised have been pivotal in developing a sense of shared ownership and has supported greater distributed leadership across the initiative. Distributing ownership and power within BZ has been achieved through cumulative effects of micro-practices such as asking a partner organisation to co-chair the coordination meeting.

“  
*Innovation needs different pockets of people innovating and then getting together to talk to each other. (One) controlled leadership (group) hasn't really proved to be a good governance structure over the years*”



**Figure 13: The Work of Structuring Collaborations (based on BZ)**

“  
*Moving past BZ being a Micah thing means “the switch flipped and other services have seen that certain strategies are working. They’ve got some really good input and they feel they like they are owning the information, as well as owning changes in the system.*”



## Distributed leadership and leading towards systems shifting

The work of shifting systems requires many different 'roles' and small 'actions' across organisations to generate momentum towards systemic goals. Collective Impact approaches have often focused too narrowly on the role of 'backbone organisations' in generating change. What is evident in BZ and LZ is that energy and action is and will continue to be required beyond the 'backbone' towards other parts of the ecosystem/s if any real progress is to be made.

“  
(This work takes) many players and each player needs to understand their role in the system: like a tree- all parts of the system work together and would be good to show that to each player.  
”

As the practitioner identifies in the above quote, one of the clear insights from interviews and workshops across the two years has been that all partners need to both 'see' their role in the process, **and** understand how this role contributes to better outcomes for people at risk of homelessness. Without this understanding there can be resistance or reluctance to add another task to already stretched workloads.

In Figure 14 we attempt to illustrate at least some of the interconnections between players involved in BZ and LZ. It is not a perfect representation - but what it portrays is the often invisible 'messiness' of the layers and connectivity needed. This starts to suggest where the work and energy involved in ensuring there is relationality and coherence across the layers needs to be directed.

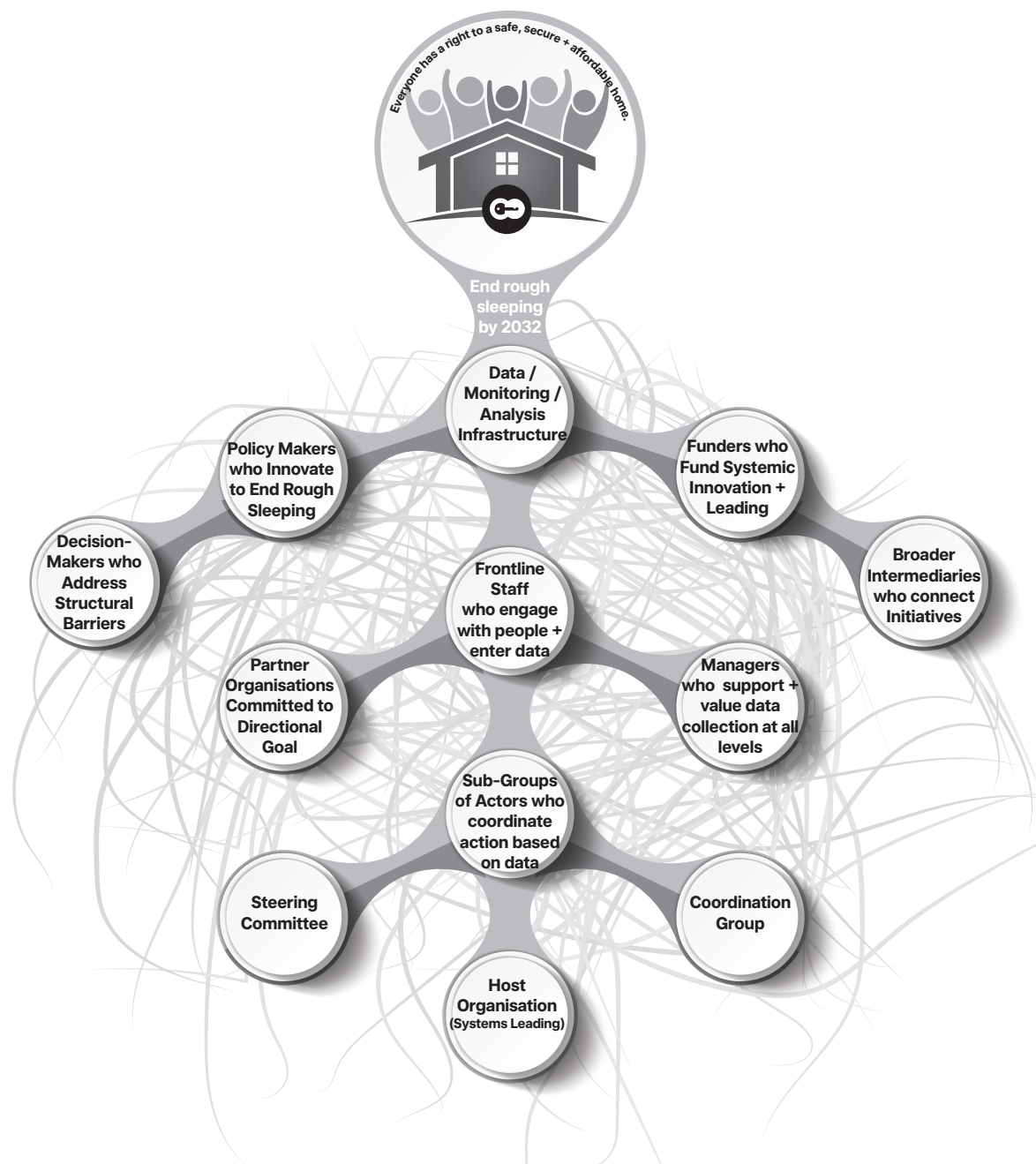


Figure 14: Interconnected Roles and Actors are Needed for Shifting Systems

## Focusing Action to Contexts: The Role of Sub-Groups

Momentum towards the initiative's directional goal has been most evident in the initiation and uptake of strategic subgroup (cohort) coalitions, where BZ (and to some extent LZ) have innovated different A-to-Z approaches.

BZ and LZ's approach to subgroup strategies is different to the typical approach taken by A-to-Z initiatives where subgroups are discussed as one part of larger coordination meetings including all partnership members in alternating between coordination and subgroups on a weekly basis. Through experimentation BZ and LZ have

demonstrated that supporting separate and focused subgroups who act together towards better outcomes for specific cohorts builds both stronger collaborations across the partnership and also demonstrable outcomes for high acuity groups. For example, BZ has supported each of its subgroup coalitions by coordinating how the partners share information, respond to case management challenges, make decisions, and learn together to improve outcomes in relation to a specific cohort identified through the data.

BZ's First Nations People 45+ is the most advanced and successful subgroup coalition. Figure 15 describes the other subgroup coalitions

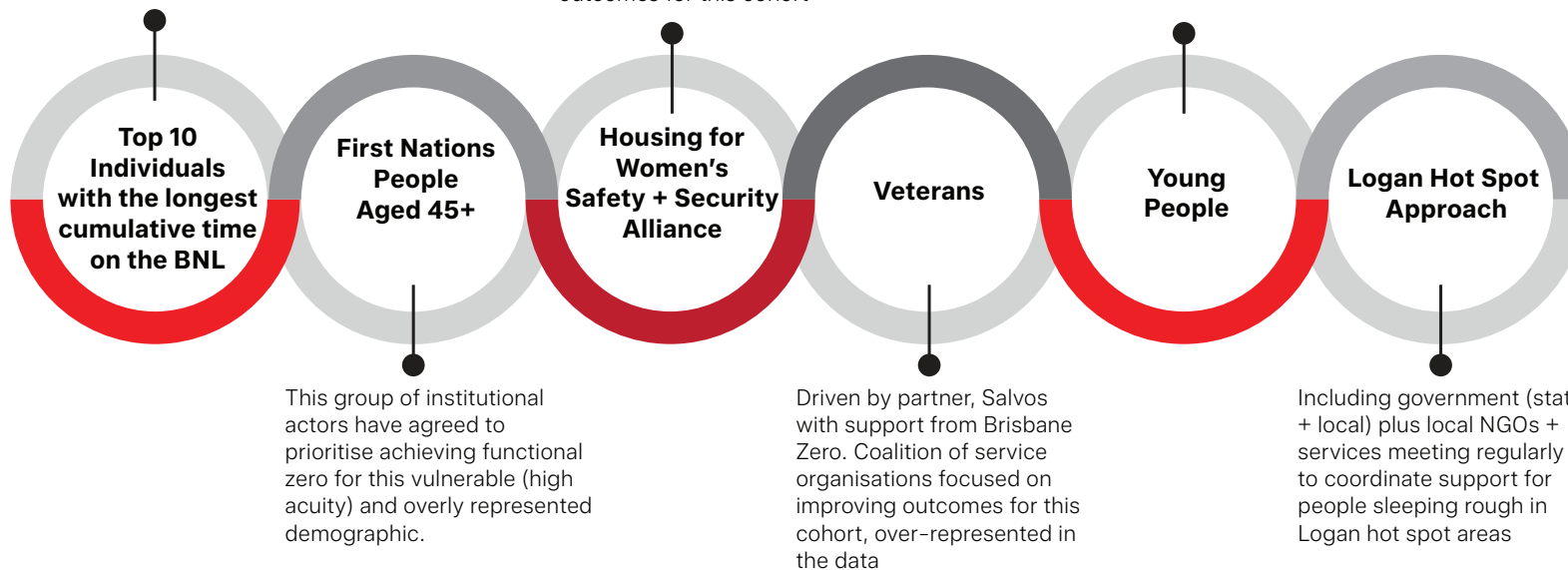
being actively pursued by BZ and LZ. Some of these coalitions have been ongoing and were reported on previously. Others, such as LZ's hot spot, and BZ's Youth and Veterans coalitions are much newer.

In taking this approach BZ and LZ are creating organising structures that engage inter-system actors (e.g. from the Health and Justice sectors, amongst others) by expanding and integrating the scope of actors to see intersectional, upstream and downstream drivers for homelessness and it's causes in relation to particular cohort groups. For example, BZ is integrating sustaining tenancy services into the First Nations People 45+ subgroup coalition

This strategy focuses on achieving sustainable housing outcomes for people who have been on the BNL for the longest period and are experiencing multiple systemic barriers.

Data demonstrates relationship breakdown + violence is a factor in 4/5 women becoming homeless. Working group approach focusing on advocacy to improve policy + outcomes for this cohort

Driven by emerging partnership with Brisbane Youth Service, with potential to engaged a wider partnership around young people as over represented in the data



**Figure 15: Currently active subgroups (particularly in Brisbane Zero)**

meetings, so as to mitigate against failing tenancies and the resultant 'churn' that is created within the homelessness system. By collaborating with upstream and downstream services, BZ is providing more integrated support that connects directly to people's experiences rather than service silos. This in turn creates improved potential for sustained outcomes.

Examining the First Nations Aged 45+ subgroup strategy it is clear that this approach requires greater levels of coordination, trust from different institutional actors, and significant expertise to case manage - but the results are demonstrating that it is possible to successfully house people who have previously been 'falling through the cracks' in the system (i.e. the most at risk and vulnerable people experiencing homelessness).

It is also important to appreciate how the process of conceptualising and exploring possibilities for each of these coalitions is itself impactful. The subtle but profound opening these coalitions can create has influenced what partner organisations think is possible and are willing to invest in. While there is a tendency to assess the subgroup strategy according to the number of active and "successful" coalitions, the pivotal functions such coalitions play are growing potential for transformational collaboration that could foster deeper and longer-term collective actions.

For example, not only has the First Nations People 45+ coalition managed to house the majority

“

*The alliance and the cohort strategy can get people speaking about different options and how to support mob who're on the streets.*

”

of people originally on the BNL, a key partner in this coalition was also able to independently secure significant funding to support First Nations people moving into new tenancies. Over time, this could start to make inroads into addressing issues such as culturally appropriate service delivery in housing, overcrowding, and the churn of failed tenancies. On the back of their collaboration this partner has sought support from BZ to integrate this work into the First Nations People 45+ coalition.

LZ has had some buy-in from potential partners in subgroup strategies that were reported in the first twelve months of this developmental evaluation. Due to context-based factors (such as a thinner service system with much smaller specialist homelessness programs and no outreach) LZ has had to adapt its partnering strategy through multiple iterations.

“

*The perception that homelessness is a real problem in Logan isn't at a scale for organisations to invest in joining a weekly meeting about any particular subgroup.'*

”

LZ recognised the scale and resource base of the homelessness and social services sector in Logan did not have capacity to resource subgroup specific initiatives. Pivoting to meet the stakeholder institutions where they were motivated and able to collaborate has resulted in a current focus on a homelessness "hot spot" within in the Logan region, where people sleeping rough have congregated and therefore made homelessness visible and requiring attention and investment. Further, LZ continues to examine areas of intersection with other service ecosystems (such as Health Services) as potential spaces for growing actions which may develop into 'coalition' type responses.

“

*We did a lot of talking in the beginning. But now it feels like this cohort strategy is action. And I think that really drives me, I know, it drives my team leader. I know when other people in the room are showing up every time because they're ... all there. And it's, not stagnant.*

”

“

*Previously to now, there's been a lot more sharing power... like co-chairing (the) steering committee meeting. It's not just that Micah has Brisbane Zero, (other partners) have made a big impact. And the other thing is, [now] if anyone comes up with an idea, then someone follows that idea...*

”

## Evaluation Question 4: How are practice changes translating into systemic + structural changes?

This evaluation question epitomises the project's initial focus on driving system change and therefore the need to make sense of what has been achieved and how it is occurring.

The uptake of A-to-Z methods has grown the partnerships (particularly in BZ) towards a critical mass of participation since the first report, which means that the data is more reflective of the what is happening across places and real outcomes are both more possible and more visible to partners. This has opened space to recognise more subtle and relevant signals around how collaborative practices are generating shifts across actors and systems at different scales.

In the year one report we proposed that:

"If the coalitions can move beyond host organisations 'servicing capability uptake' and instead empower partners to take action and responsibility it's foreseeable these strategies can lead to lasting structural changes. (p. 18)"

Twelve months on it is evident partners in BZ, and to an extent in LZ, are stepping up to take action and responsibility for aspects of each initiative's broader collaboration.

In Brisbane these partner organisations are increasingly entering into the idea of a co-ownership of BZ, they are becoming champions for BZ and initiating their own subgroup coalitions (with support from BZ collaborators). Distributing leadership is simultaneously driving growth and consolidation in BZ.

Detailed data is foundational in each element of BZ strategies, and is increasingly being used by LZ, to develop cases for change at multiple levels of their operations.

For instance, several practitioners have suggested BZ and LZ's data driven approach enables them to:

- recognise what's needed at case by case, as well as sub-group and system levels, and then,

- collect more detailed information to formulate advocacy approaches that work at each of these levels

This is depicted in Figure 16 below. This insight demonstrates how the practice of collecting and sharing data is enabling BZ and increasingly LZ, to advocate for systemic and structural changes, whilst also improving outcomes at sub-group and individual/family levels, which in turn are critical for any kind of systems shifts.

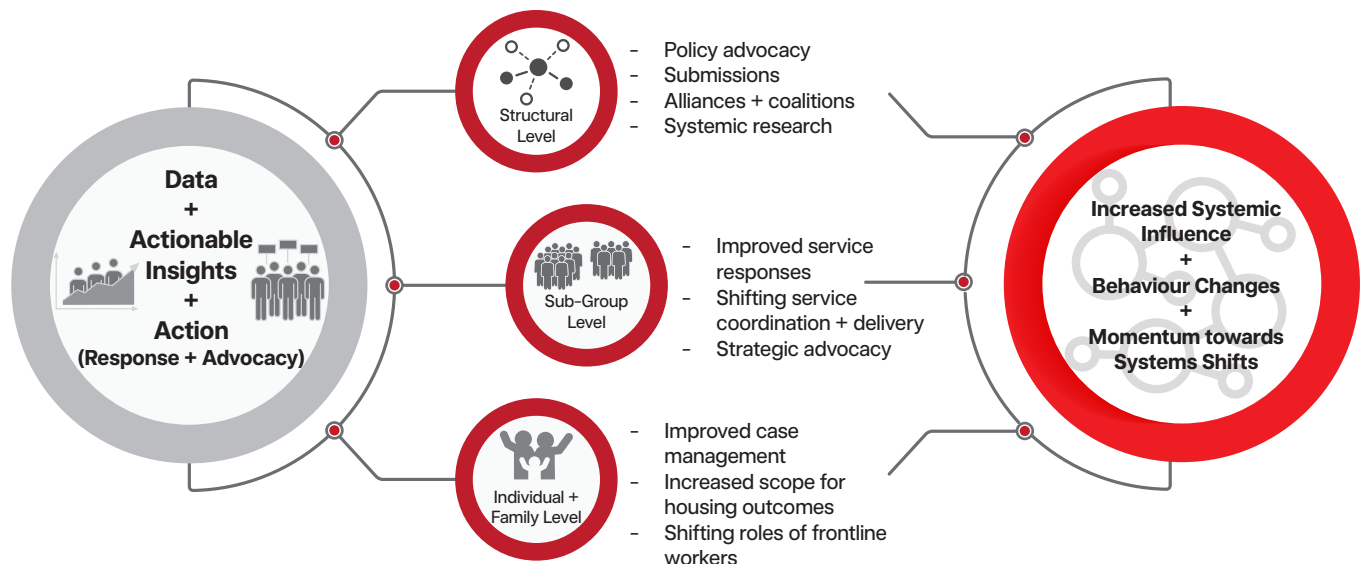


Figure 16: Connecting Data to Actionable Insights and Action in BZ and LZ

## Cases for Change: Data, Advocacy and Instances of Systems Leading for Change

Maturing the collective advocacy and strategic capabilities of large scale collaborations takes time.

Over the last 12 months LZ and BZ's respective journeys towards systemic advocacy have come to fruition in their own ways. In the process they have produced many different 'cases for change' that are worth reflecting on. Here we draw insights from three specific cases for change.

### 1. Relational Advocacy

The first case for change has involved some reflections around how LZ and BZ undertake advocacy work.

Because the Zero initiatives are grounded in collaborative action, they have focused on forms of advocacy that seek to establish and sustain trust through offering and sharing insights that only data informed stories and statistics can influence. Rather than push through singular agendas, for example, BZ has created various advocacy materials that aim to create a human connection with their audience, illustrate an opportunity for something to be done and to share this with people who are in positions of power to affect key decisions and make longer lasting change. (Examples of these materials can be found on the BZ social media channels, and on their website: <https://www.brisbanezero.org.au/>).

In producing affective and powerful communication devices (such as memes, rich videos and journey maps) the intent has been to help audiences, particularly decision makers, recognise that whilst causes of homelessness are complex, homelessness itself is solvable.

As a result BZ has developed a significant example of relational advocacy in their approach to influencing what is included in the current Queensland government's homelessness plan and housing agenda.

As the quote below outlines, BZ have mapped all the commitments the current state government has made to housing and homelessness and compared this to the evidence-based A-to-Z framework:

“  
*We've been doing a piece of work, where we've mapped every media release and every announcement that the Queensland Government has done since July last year, about the spend on social, affordable, land release, respite, immediate relief [anything to do with housing and homelessness]. So, we've mapped that against what we see as a prevent, reduce and a housing first homelessness plan or a framework for the homelessness plan. So, basically what we're asking for in the coming year is a concerted effort, bipartisan approach to homelessness as an overall issue.*

This example illustrates BZ's commitment to non-partisan, relational advocacy at the state government scale. This approach of joining the dots for decision makers - by retrofitting policies into an A-to-Z framework based on data and evidence - builds on what was reported in year one (pages 6 + 8). The data and advocacy becomes powerful when there is a relationship through which to interpret it and learn into uncertainty as to how it might influence systemic shifts.

“  
*I think it's because they're seeing the dashboards and hearing the language, ... members and beyond (are using the A-to-Z language). We're hearing the language being used by politicians, the Committee for Brisbane, Meals on Wheels, we're seeing it used everywhere.*”

“  
*It's quite profound, how positive the change has been ... you know, they you never waste a good crisis. So it's been a point in time, where, people are saying “okay, well, that's not working. We need to try this.” I honestly think it's about the building of trust. as soon as they could see the dashboard, this snapshot data that was published last year, and they could all use it, it started to click, the penny started to drop that, you know, they don't have to be fearful, or mistrustful.*”

### 2. Data as a Connector for Advocacy across Different Levels

By focusing on data informed collective advocacy and facilitating A-to-Z processes effectively, LZ and BZ have demonstrated the potential to generate coherence between advocacy at multiple levels - from case work to sub-groups to structural issues.

For instance, within BZ, partner organisations, case managers and frontline workers advocate for their clients on a daily basis. In their efforts to get housing outcomes these practitioners understand the system's limitations because they encounter their effects on system users (people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness).

A-to-Z enables each case to be triaged according to acuity, thus improving the potential that the system will better support people according to their needs. A-to-Z does this in part by bringing “the right people to the table” to work relationally in coordination meetings that get outcomes for people.

Conversations and actions taken to improve the system are in effect a system level aggregation of the case-based advocacy undertaken by front line workers. At this scale A-to-Z initiatives rely on coherence between partners (through their collaborative relationships) to influence behaviour at the subgroup and structural levels.

The Zero initiative's approaches to advocacy have a strategic focus through the use of data. The evidence suggests this approach is influencing behaviours of participating members as well as other system actors. Seeing results of a shared language, improved collaborative decision making and sustained housing outcomes are all generating greater interest, shifting mindsets, and providing a basis for further investment.

### **3. Collaborating to Secure Funding**

The third case for change relates to LZ's successful campaign to secure funding for enhanced outreach services and housing options in Logan. The year one report noted the moves LZ were making to develop a campaign for outreach (see pages 9 and 16). A practitioner described the state of play:

“Prior to LZ... there was no [coordinated campaign that pushed for] outreach. ... The Logan strategy group or other groups .... said, ‘yeah, it was needed.’ But there wasn’t any persistent documentation or data (to support the need)...”

Although minimal outreach funding had been assigned, it was seen as inconsistent with the level of demand and therefore curtailed its effectiveness. When LZ started, “the first immediate need was [to address rough sleeping and [establish] outreach,” which became LZ’s focus.

“We did get temporary, like a 0.7 FTE funding for outreach before this, ... And it worked a little bit. But it also demonstrated the need is bigger than that funding could address.”

The Queensland government recently indicated they would fund enhanced outreach in Logan and announced they have purchased a retirement village that would be developed into 124 social housing dwellings.

LZ saw their campaign and approach to advocating for outreach directly contributed to the government decision to fund the service. Similarly, but to a lesser extent LZ's data and insights contributed to the case for the state government to increase the number of social housing options in Logan.

“When it came to working with government and outside agencies Logan Zero was valuable because it had the connections, .... to the rangers and the other people that were already working on that [hot spot] area.”

Practitioners have reflected that LZ’s positioning and collaborative connections with key government agencies and other stakeholders meant they were able to mobilise diverse actors to demonstrate how coordinating their efforts achieved greater impact. LZ’s approach has triggered a government response.

Through relationship building, not just with the people experiencing homelessness, but also with the other actors working in the ‘hot spot’ space and homelessness across Logan more generally, LZ has tightened relational responses (or what could be categorised as ‘network collaboration’ in the typology of collaboration on page 9).

“[LZ’s] outreach was different, [because it was] more able to build relationships. I think the relationship building aspect of LZ’s outreach style really helped to prove essentially that it works and it’s needed.”

The success of LZ's campaigns is translating into real changes across the homelessness and housing service ecosystem in Logan. Importantly the collaborative and evidence based approaches that underpin how LZ works are contributing to raising the profile of coordinated homelessness responses in its partner organisations and the Logan region.

## Evaluation Question 5: How are pieces fitting around the user?

Grounding their work in tangible and demonstrable impacts for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness is central to the BZ and LZ methodology. The rental affordability and housing supply crises have meant that securing permanent housing opportunities are harder. However, this has made the need for collaboration amongst services partnering with the Zero initiatives much more pointed and provided a clear demonstration of the power of sharing the 'right' data to drive better outcomes.

The data collected over the last twelve months demonstrates A-to-Z methods are generating outcomes for people using homelessness services. Highlights from recent BZ and LZ data reports include:

- 637 housing placement across the initiative in 2022-23 compared to 443 in 2021-22, despite a deepening housing supply crisis;
- Subgroups have helped focus housing outcomes for particular cohorts - for example, the First Nations 45+ subgroup housed 83 people in 2023, many of whom were identified as having 'high acuity' needs;
- Across 2023, despite inflow increasing, there were also increased placements, meaning the overall BNL remained relatively steady;
- In BZ, 465 Individuals and 324 Families from the BNL found a permanent housing outcome in 2023. For individuals, the majority of housing outcomes were through public housing (58%) which is significantly higher than the proportion in 2022 at 37% public housing. For families, 39% of these outcomes

were through public housing and 37% through private rentals. 80% (118) of these families indicated high acuity.

- In LZ, the funding of an outreach team has led to the identification of many more actively homeless households, with this now consistently including over 200 households. The full funding of outreach began in February 2024 and these activities will help to identify more people and families at risk or experiencing homelessness. It is expected that this will also lead to greater quality of data as there are so many small NGOs in the homelessness sector in Logan who have much less capacity to enter data consistently.

Beyond provision of support, permanent housing solutions are central to 'solving' homelessness. To date, the data is both highlighting the need for more permanent housing options in addition to demonstrating how such options create positive outcomes for individuals and families.

### Mapping User Journeys to Advocate for Change

Using the more nuanced and targeted data now being generated, both BZ + LZ have continued to grow sector, policy and public awareness of the experiences, needs and the potentials for better outcomes for people at risk of homelessness. One of the ways in which both initiatives have conveyed these experiences is through Journey Maps, that is, visual representations of how people access, navigate and experience various services and systems as they seek secure and permanent housing.

“

*People are experiencing extreme physical and mental health issues, and they're not being addressed because of the nature of not having a home. It seems like there's all these coordination approaches happening all over the place. But yet we're still not on the mark. So it just struck me because I've been attending all the cohort strategy, coordination meetings that we are actually getting somewhere with people - we ARE getting a coordinated response, especially with housing and health, which I think is so valuable.*

”

“

*we need to understand the needs of those target population groups. So, whether it's women escaping DV, people with disability, people with mental health, people exiting prisons, we've used the Brisbane Zero data to express the needs for supportive housing, because social housing, or affordable housing is not going to do the trick for these people. ... we use that Brisbane Zero data to inform that group of people to help unite in that systems change piece of work that we're doing to ultimately end homelessness, by adding ... different versions of supportive housing.*

”

LZ and BZ began developing various forms of Journey Maps over the past year, with the predominant form being used as advocacy tools. By representing a person's history and lived experiences in their own words, journey maps help to understand both the complexity of the service system and people's experiences of seeking outcomes. This helps decision makers and services to recognise the intangible, often unforeseen and hidden impacts of systemic failures on people's lives.

Journey maps can highlight policy failures and perverse outcomes, in ways that cannot be understood with only numbers, abstract or conceptual information. They can also serve as a way to track potential intervention points that represent recurrent places where people at risk of homelessness could be assisted better or where people are encountering barriers to assistance. For example, BZ has developed a number of journey maps based on people's experiences of both health and justice services where intervention or coordination could have resulted in much better outcomes (see figure 17).

“  
*Having the break down of health factors (mental, morbidity etc.) and what may expose you to homelessness. That enables us to ask for better resources and how we might work to prevent issues and how to support people to sustain their tenancy. The data brings about a better understanding to find solutions.*  
 ”

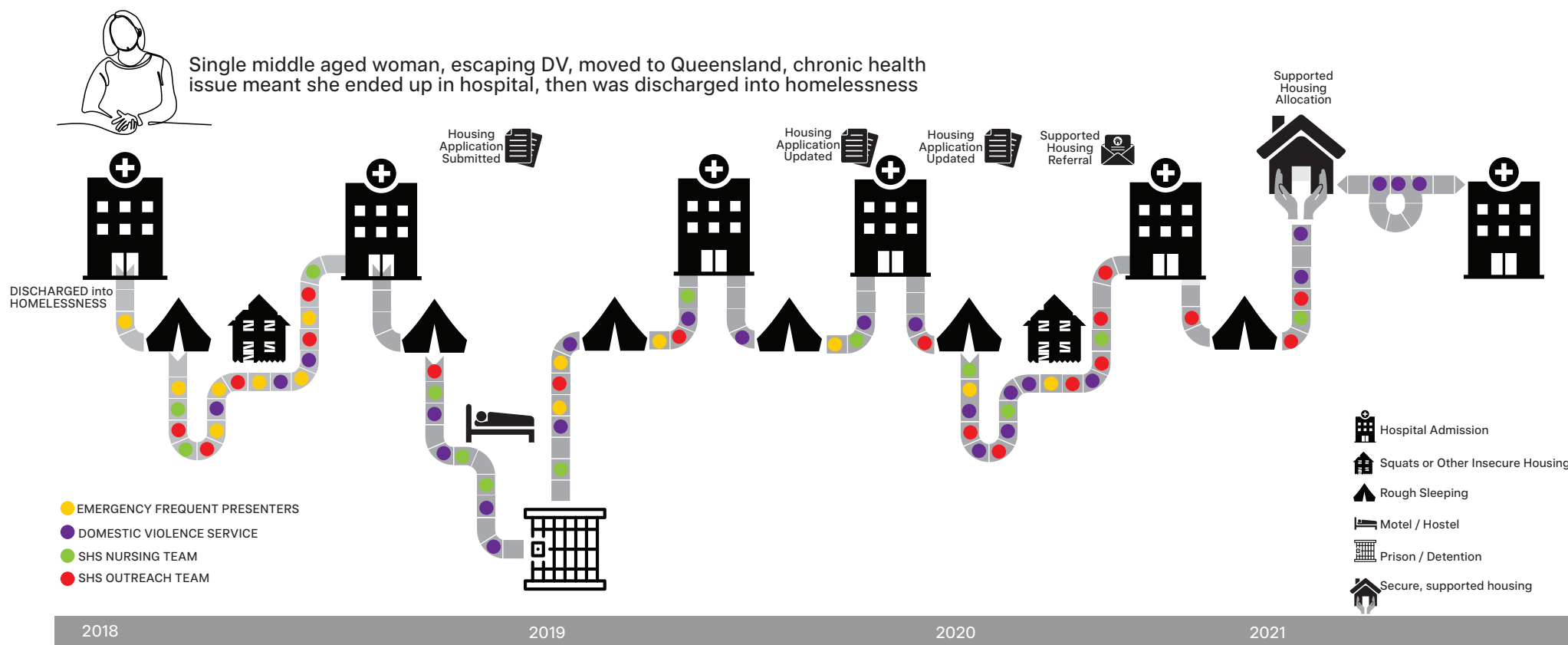
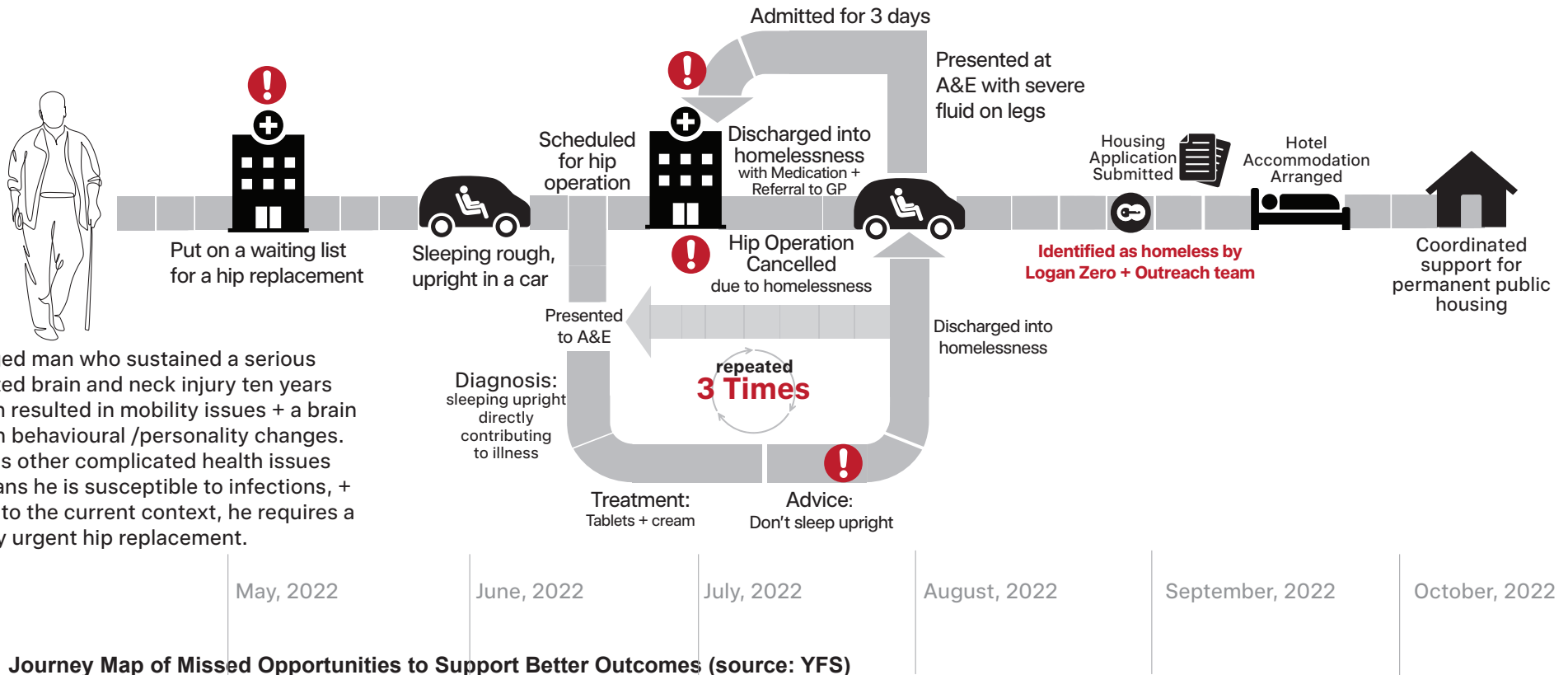


Figure 17: A Journey Map Across Homelessness + Chronic Health Issues (source: Micah)





This particular map also highlights patterns in the engagement of diverse services across the person's experience of homelessness, and enables opportunities for identifying any potential points in time for better coordination or collaboration of these services.

As illustrated in Figure 18, LZ also identified persistent discharge of a very unwell person to homelessness and how this then resulted in deterioration, hospitalisation, and other perverse outcomes – such as not being eligible for critical surgery because they would not be able to recover from it due to a lack of suitable housing in which to recover.

Both BZ + LZ have used interviews with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness to collect information for journey maps. They have also used case notes, VISPDAT data, and coordination group discussion notes to understand the complexity of journeys whilst also maintaining confidentiality.

In experimenting with formulating arguments to support systems change, LZ has also explored animated journey maps that outline the social and economic costs incurred by a person as they move between typical service systems and institutional care. This could help create a stronger case for policy and funding change

“ We haven't looked for common patterns between the journey maps, we've more so tried to highlight that each person has a unique experience and frequency of engagement with systems. For example, a family will engage differently with the different service systems across the city versus a single male. The history that comes along with someone's homelessness matters as does what happened to them before that. Cookie cutter approaches risk failing to understand what is important for each individual. Journey maps help understand that everyone has their own story. ”

particularly as government looks for more effective and efficient housing solutions.

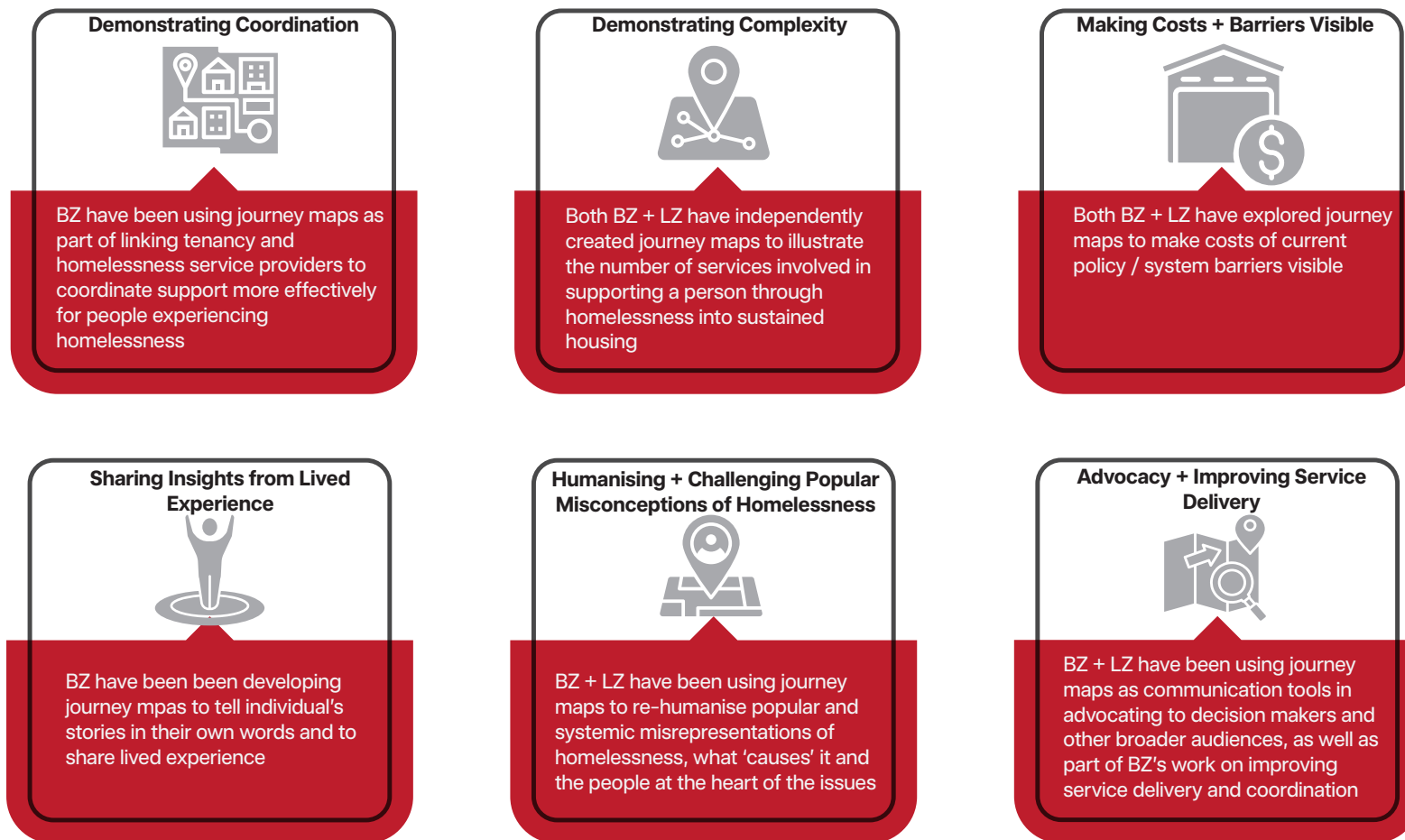
Journey maps have also been used across BZ and LZ for other purposes (see figure 19), particularly to challenge assumptions about barriers and opportunities around homelessness, but also to understand how partners are integrating the use of the BNL and the VISPDAT into organisational processes.

The use of journey maps, and the structuring of subgroup strategies around particular

cohorts or groups of people identified in the data demonstrate a strengthening of focus on the 'user' in the BZ and LZ work. The important addition that has been made by both initiatives is the quest to link deeper understandings of how people are engaging with services, to the structural and systemic challenges they face – and an increased focus on how advocacy and engagement strategies could help respond to these strategies. The thoughtful and rigorous use of tools such as journey and systems maps demonstrates how both initiatives are integrating data, collective analysis,

coordination and narrative into actions for service improvement and arguments to support advocacy towards better outcomes.

“  
*We need to understand the needs of target groups. So, whether it's women escaping DV, people with disability, people with mental health issues, people exiting prison, we use Brisbane Zero data to inform groups of services to help unite them in the systems change piece of work we're doing to ultimately end homelessness.*  
 ”



**Figure 19: Use of Journey Maps Across BZ + LZ**

# Conclusions, Recommendations + Next Steps

The creation and growth of the Zero projects in Brisbane and Logan over the past two years has demonstrated how investment into ecosystem development can generate both greater coordination of services and improved outcomes for people at risk of homelessness.

In many ways, BZ in particular, and LZ in a different but also important way, have played a critical role in modelling 'systems leading' (a more active version of 'systems leadership!'). Systems leading involves supporting and taking real, joint actions across sectors and systems towards better practices, policies and collaboration and ultimately shaping better outcomes. We have summarised some of the key elements of 'systems leading' as demonstrated by BZ and LZ in figure 20.

The work that has been done by BZ and LZ in this space differs to some extent to other initiatives that form around 'backbone' organisations or 'intermediaries'. In particular it has begun to demonstrate much more of an ecosystem approach to systems leading - where leadership is distributed and shared, and where the sharing of outputs and data is not restricted to 'members' or official partners.

There are also significant learnings from BZ and LZ that could inform other systemic initiatives that are seeking to grow collaborative, innovative approaches to creating better outcomes for people and places.

The investment made into BZ and LZ to support systems leading over the past two years has been both critical and somewhat unique. Despite many, many calls for collaboration across systems, few recognise the work or fund it. And yet, as demonstrated through the data collected and as outlined in this

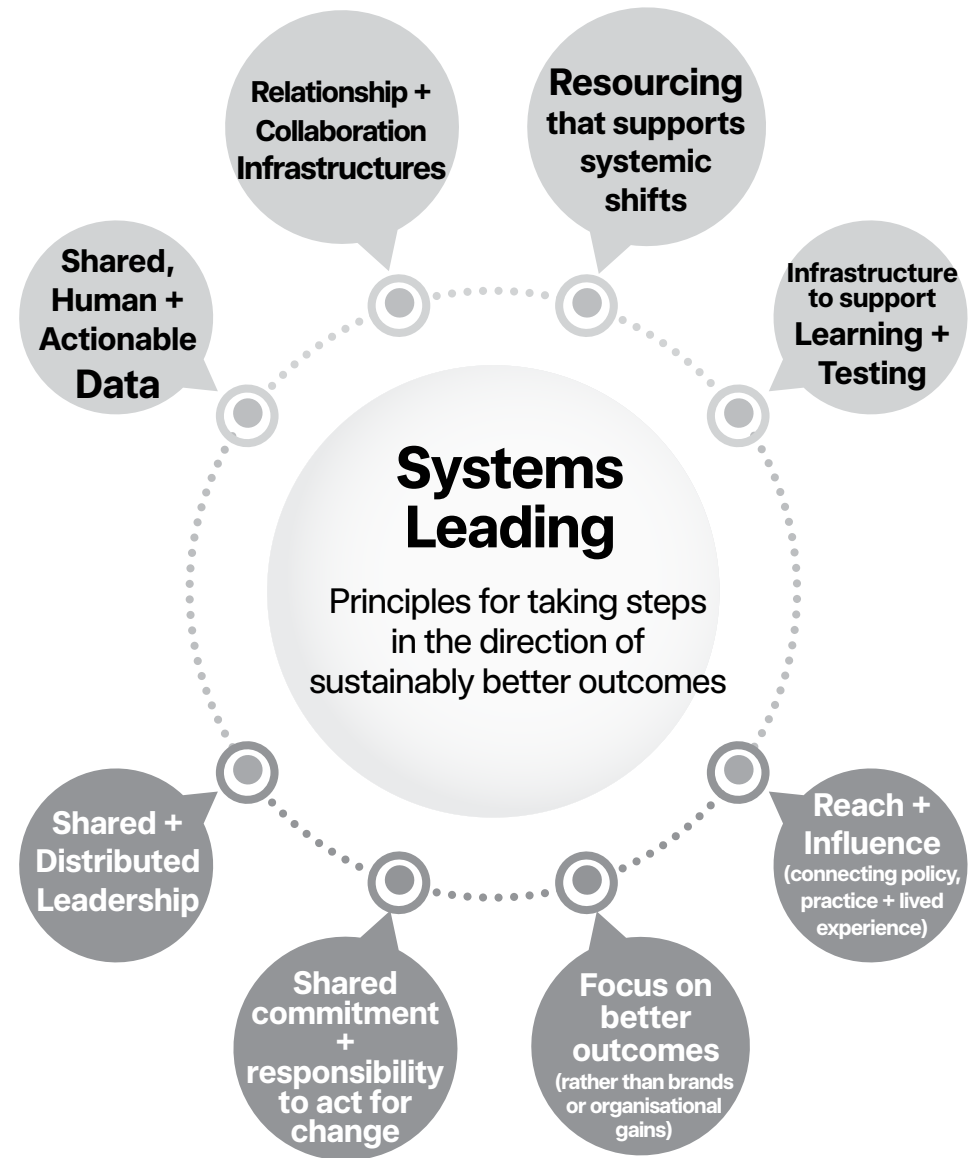


Figure 20: Systems Leading: Learning from BZ + LZ about what it takes to shift outcomes

report, the returns that intentional investment into supporting the actual 'nitty gritty' of collaboration activities delivers real outcomes and these have potential to generate significant 'savings returns' both for people and for service systems (and therefore, ultimately, the funding bodies).

There should be no doubt that the work of BZ and LZ has led to better outcomes for people at risk of homelessness across the two regions. It is also establishing greater cohesion within the local sectors, and has supported innovations in both practice and policy over the past two years.

The networked approach + the sharing of data has strengthened coordination and collaboration across the housing and homelessness sectors - and started to influence other adjacent sectors - such as health, youth, family violence.

The big question is 'what happens next'. This work has received broad support and importantly, some core funding for this initial stage. It has demonstrated effectiveness - but it is still relatively early stage ecosystem work. In conclusion, we present four key recommendations that could be considered by both partners and funders going forward (see figure 21).

**Recommendation 1: Recognising + Strengthening Ecosystem Leading**

The independent and neutral identity of the Zero initiatives is critical in a sector where competition has characterised organisational relationships. While such initiatives often refer to themselves as 'backbones' or 'intermediaries', BZ and LZ have started to

model a potentially different way of supporting the work of 'ecosystem leading'. Traditional 'backbones' or 'intermediaries' too often become focused on their own survival rather than existing to support the work of many. This phase of work created solid foundations for an ecosystem approach. Maintaining the focus on shared data and joint actions for outcomes will be important for sustaining momentum. Strengthening this focus by engaging more partners and engaging partners further by deepening commitments to collective

action will be an important part of ensuring transformative outcomes going forward.

**Recommendation 2: Growing Ecosystem Capabilities and Commitments**

The Zero ecosystems are developing well and the next phase will be crucial to sustaining momentum. Ecosystems are relational and much of the work of building and maintaining relationships and collaboration infrastructure is invisible and too often assumed to occur



Figure 21: Recommendations for BZ + LZ going forward

'naturally'. The outcomes that have been achieved by the Zero initiatives are promising but their potential for shifting systems is much greater, particularly if the ecosystem can be grown and strengthened. A next step could be to map BZ and LZ functions and roles, with partner organisations, with the aim of distributing these across the ecosystem according to strengths and capabilities. This could also include partner organisations investing (according to their means) to fund the operations and collaborative goals of LZ and BZ.

**Recommendation 3: Enabling Ecosystem Innovation**

BZ and LZ have and continue to innovate almost every aspect of the A-to-Z approach. This has demonstrated the potential for strategic innovation, as well as the need to cultivate cultures, processes and practices that enable ideas to be tested and adapted. Participating actors, partners and others, associated with LZ or BZ, could invest in expanding their innovation capacities for ecosystem collaboration. This innovation could focus both on strengthening outcomes locally, and also on intentionally stretching the Zero methodology towards a much more explicit reduction and prevention focus. This would amplify impacts generated locally, through influencing and strengthening the work of the global initiative with potential outcomes for homeless people, and the services and funders who support them, around the world.

**Recommendation 4: Sustaining Ecosystems and Collaborations**

Growing and sustaining an Ecosystem requires resourcing. The work that has been undertaken by BZ and LZ has created strong foundations and infrastructures (relational, data, organising infrastructures) to support the further development of an ecosystem. However, it is not the case that resourcing is needed only for these foundational years. Exploring ongoing resourcing (across the ecosystem) will be crucial for momentum to be sustained and further developed. The focus for resourcing should be developed jointly by partners and funders, with careful attention paid to how funding supports key functions of the Zero initiatives, but also sustains collaboration and relational approaches to shifting systems.

“

*We need to unite in south east Queensland if we've got any hope of dealing with this issue over the next five years ...The Zero framework (provides) an evidence based process that supports the sector to effectively coordinate the limited resources available, improving housing outcomes for people experiencing homelessness*

”

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# Appendix One Original Theory of Change / Program Logic for BZ + LZ

## MICAH PROJECTS: PROGRAM LOGIC

<b>PROGRAM NAME:</b> Brisbane Zero and Logan Zero Project						
<b>TARGET POPULATION:</b> Brisbane and Logan community, service systems and individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Agreement 2010-13						*Service
<b>PROGRAM PURPOSE:</b> To reduce overall homelessness in Brisbane and Logan Cities and end rough sleeping by 2025 through Built for Zero methodology						
<b>THEORY OF CHANGE:</b> Making homelessness rare and brief in our community is possible by using data to change how we work and the impact that we can achieve. With collaborative effort, rigour and data driven problem solving to create solutions we can prevent the inflow into homelessness from happening in the first place, build and sustain a homelessness services systems and services that can continuously end, rather than manage, homelessness for populations across Brisbane and Logan. Together we can prove that homelessness is Solvable.						
INPUTS What we invest	ACTIVITIES What we do	OUTPUTS What is delivered and to whom	OUTCOMES			IMPACT (ie, why this project)
			6 months	1 year	LONG-TERM 3 years	
<p>Ellen Whitty Sisters of Mercy investment \$1,000,000 over three years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Micah projects backbone for Brisbane Zero</li> <li>YFS backbone for Logan Response.</li> </ul> <p>Employ a team of staff to resource the Brisbane and Logan Zero activities</p> <p>Two shared positions</p> <p>Data Lead and Project assistant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to resource Brisbane and Logan</li> <li>Liase with AAEH national campaign</li> <li>Maintain data base for the common assessment tool</li> <li>Update scorecards monthly</li> <li>Maintain quality monitoring and oversight</li> </ul> <p>Local Community Leaders and Systems Improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brisbane Zero Collaboration and Systems Advocate Lead</li> <li>Brisbane Zero Systems Improvement and Know by Name List Coordination (Individual adults, couples families, women and children, DV)</li> </ul> <p>Logan Zero Collaboration Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logan Zero Collaboration and Systems Advocate Lead</li> <li>Logan Zero Systems Improvement and Know</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an effective backbone team to support people who are homelessness get into housing with services by supporting and work with the outreach and hub workers in Logan and Brisbane</li> <li>Train the local services system to use the common assessment tool the VI SPDAT</li> <li>To have a quality know by list for rough sleepers, temporary housing, women and children and families</li> <li>Weekly service coordination meetings to update the know by name list and measure progress number of people housed in Brisbane and in Logan</li> <li>To maintain the Brisbane and Logan Dashboard for community awareness and accountability</li> <li>To identify system improvement projects to address the systemic barriers to why individuals or families cannot get housed through collaboration and problem solving with cross sector such as health, housing and justice</li> <li>To coordinate and resource local area stakeholder groups in Brisbane and Logan to problem solve solutions</li> <li>To develop guidelines for direct financial assistance to individuals and families to address barriers to being housed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The communities of Logan, Brisbane will have a backbone team resourcing overstretched services to participate in collaboration and collective effort</li> <li>Communities and decision makers will be better informed with comprehensive, real time ,by name data as part of local collaborative effort</li> <li>Community Solutions USA will include Logan alongside Brisbane, Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide as a community of practice to reduce overall homeless and end rough sleeping in local communities by 2025</li> <li>Logan and Brisbane will be supported in three-year cycle for action planning and quality improvement of the service system supported by AAEH</li> <li>Teams will advocate with state and commonwealth governments, private corporate sector and local councils</li> <li>Website development and training will be provided to communicate to the community the number of people who are homeless and no of people who are housed in each communities through real time data</li> <li>Financial assistance to individual, women and children will be provided to address barriers to getting housed and transitioning into</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back bone teams for the overall project in Brisbane and Logan will be recruited, trained and operational</li> <li>Logan and Brisbane as two cities in QLD will be part of national and international collaboration, mentoring and training for quality know by name lists and analytics</li> <li>Each community will have a stakeholder leadership group established for the action cycle process over the duration of the project</li> <li>Stakeholder groups will be working towards stopping the inflow into homelessness through joint problem solving and collaboration</li> <li>Use of the VISPDAT to understand need of population and measure progress will be established and monitored in an ongoing maner</li> <li>Logan Zero Dashboard will be public with 6 touchpoints reporting progress</li> <li>Brisbane Zero will be enhanced and continue with 6 touchpoints reporting progress</li> <li>Common understanding of population need and what is needed to solve homelessness will be emerging to inform year 2 and 3 of the work which needs to progress</li> <li>Number of people provided direct financial assistance will be reported public ally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive real time, by name community data will be available for individuals and families</li> <li>Reduction in rough sleeping or acute information of inflow if rough sleeping increases due to market trends</li> <li>Enhanced commitment to understanding that homelessness is solvable through commitment and shared definitions</li> <li>Communities have participated in establishment of a new crisis system for people who are homelessness</li> <li>Quality Improvement projects to reduce system failures will be identified and reporting progress will be public</li> <li>A clear communication strategy will be in place</li> <li>Advocacy with stakeholders about data driven housing investment will be in progress</li> <li>Community of Practice with other communities to learn will included Logan, Brisbane through Autralian Alliance to End Homeless</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No of people house</li> <li>No of individuals and families who have sustained housing over three years</li> <li>Reduction in number of people sleeping rough in Brisbane and Logan and is at functional zero</li> <li>Inflow into homelessness from justice, health and child protection has decreased in Brisbane and Logan</li> <li>New housing investments have been completed or in progress driven by data informed investment responding to need</li> <li>Stakeholder attitude to solving homelessness has improved</li> <li>Decreased utilisation of acute and emergency health and justice services</li> <li>Overall outcomes of advocacy and number of people assisted with be reported as a collective</li> </ul>	<p>By 2025 homelessness in Brisbane will be widely understood as solvable with favourable conditions in place with favourable conditions in place to improve outcomes of individuals, women and children, families regardless of age, gender, cultural backgrounds, identity, diversity of need, capacity and circumstances impacting on their lives by creating opportunity for access to housing, healthcare, cultural and community services.</p> <p>As a collective we are committed to reducing the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experiencing homelessness, reducing overall homelessness, and ending rough sleeping in our city.</p> <p>Government departments, elected officials, policy makers and community organisations responsible for housing, healthcare, corrections, child protection,</p>

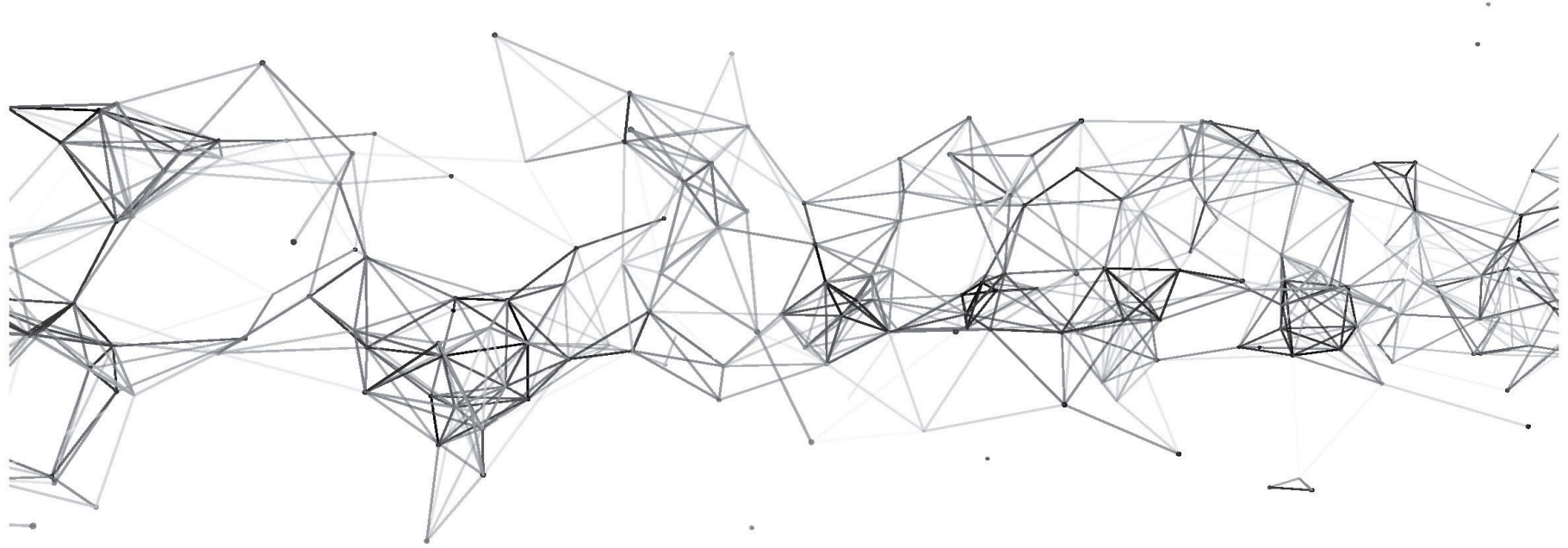
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MICAH PROJECTS: PROGRAM LOGIC

<p>by Name List Coordination (Individual adults, couples families, women and children, DV)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote outcomes and barriers to Qld and Commonwealth Government</li> <li>• To promote the development of a supportive housing system based on the data through the know by name list analytics through advocacy and liaison with government</li> <li>• Educate stakeholders on the number of people homeless by population type and the solutions to house and support them</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p>housing, and access to services</p>			<p>domestic violence, mental health and drug and alcohol services, aged care and disability services will be able to demonstrate improved integration and collaboration through measurable progress in preventing, reducing and ending homelessness across all age groups and population groups with diverse and specific needs.</p> <p>Government, national, state, and local with responsibilities will be equipped to track and report on progress in Brisbane. Healthcare institutions will have a clear role in this work, as we all work together to ensure public policies across all sectors adapt and change to accelerate progress in ending homelessness and promoting health equity in Brisbane.</p> <p>We will work together towards creating an equitable, safe and Inclusive Housing System For All as a platform for embedded healthcare, culture, child and family and community services through the Brisbane Alliance to End Homelessness and all other collaborative efforts sharing the same goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
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Advance to Zero Brisbane + Logan  
**Year One Learning Report**

March, 2023

# Contents

**3**

## **Introduction**

Intention + Overview of the Report + Summary of Key Findings

**4**

## **Process**

Overview of the Process for this Evaluative Report

**5**

## **How are systems collaborating or not?**

Finding that there are Diverse Forms of Collaboration Emerging

**8**

## **How are structural choices getting translated into technical behaviours?**

Finding that Fit-for-Context Collaboration Structures are Emerging to Coordinate Data + Activity for Systems Change

**12**

## **How well are data + collective processes being shared?**

Finding that Data Sharing is becoming the A to Z Methodology Pearl (though it is still grainy)

**15**

## **How are pieces fitting together around the user?**

Finding that Vulnerable People are Beginning to Experience the Benefits of Preventative + Holistic Support Systems

**17**

## **How well are practice changes translating into systemic + structural changes?**

Finding that Early Indications Suggest A to Z Practices *Can* Induce Systemic Responses

**20**

## **Conclusion**

Conclusions + Overview of What's Next in the Second Year of the Developmental Evaluation

## Introduction

This report summarises findings from the first 12 months of working with the Brisbane and Logan Advance to Zero Collaborations to end homelessness through a developmental evaluation focused on how the initiatives are learning to create systemic change (see figure 1).

Over the course of this process, both Brisbane Zero (BZ) and Logan Zero (LZ) practitioners have indicated they've experienced the opportunities, challenges and limitations of the growing collective and collaborative infrastructure to support the initiatives, particularly as the Zero methodology centres on a more structured collective impact approach to collaboration. Taking an emergent learning approach has been recognised as crucial for this kind of collaborative work, along with the potential shift from structured to a networked paradigm of organising.

BZ and LZ's response to these limitations has been to start what one practitioner described as "big conversations" in order to find innovative ways to collaborate for systems change. In the vein of critical friends having big conversations this report aims to be a little provocative, reflective and most of all encouraging of what has and might be done with the insights gathered. The content of the report will largely be known to BZ and LZ core staff as these reflections have been shared at workshops throughout the process.

This developmental evaluation process has provided multiple moments to learn whilst doing the collaborative work and reflecting on the experiences together.

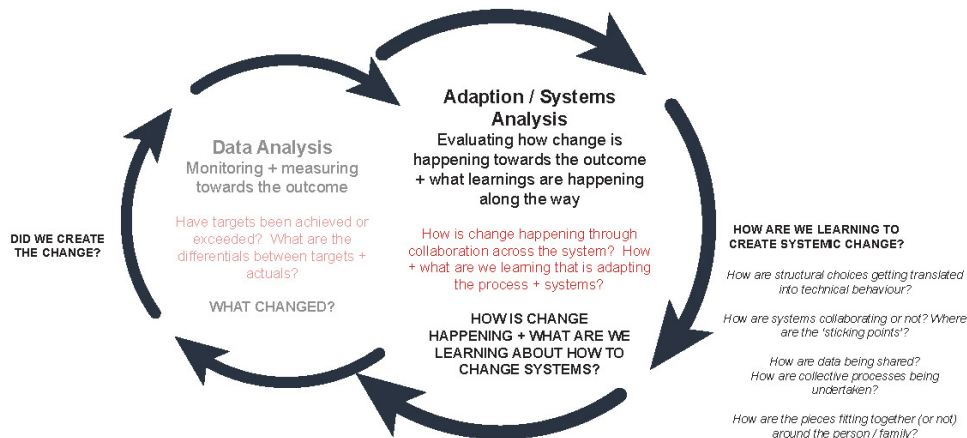


Figure 1: The focus of this developmental evaluation is to understand how the initiatives are learning to create systemic change.

## Key Evaluation Questions

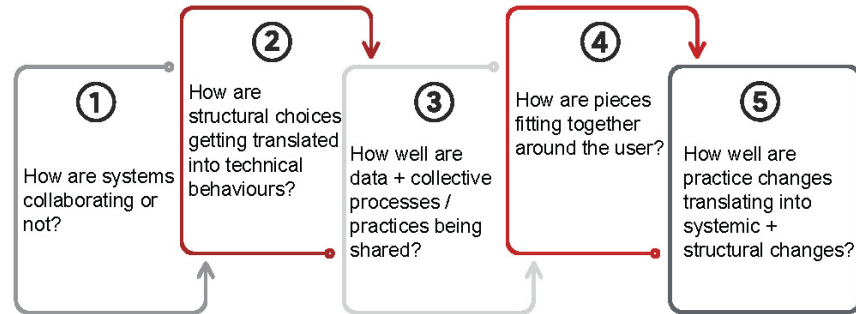


Figure 2: The key evaluation questions of the BZ + LZ developmental evaluation

Hence, this report presents findings from asking and answering the five key evaluation questions listed in Figure 2.

Key findings are presented in respective sections that address (i) the need for diverse forms of collaboration, (ii) role of data sharing, (iii) how people are experiencing the changes brought by BZ and LZ, and (iv) potentials for systemic shifts.

The primary suggestions for how to evolve LZ and BZ collaborations include:

- Nurturing the diverse typologies of collaborative forms emerging in LZ & BZ and developing context specific network-based strategies to move up the pyramid;
- Recognising and amplifying the roles that data sharing plays in enabling collaboration, whilst experimenting strategically to work around constraints;
- Supporting a shift to networked collaboration with an action learning partnership that deepens and expands on the opportunities identified through the use of developmental evaluation. This could include creating and testing an online learning space to engage and deepen partner and practitioner participation;
- Gathering participatory most significant change stories with front-line workers and people engaging with homelessness system to better understand how collaboration is improving outcomes and experiences of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

## Process

The reflections presented come from walking alongside BZ and LZ on their respective implementation journeys over the past 12 months (see figure 3 for an outline of the cycles and loops of learning and adapting). When reflecting these findings we reiterate the difficulties inherent in forming and sustaining system scale collaborations and seek to provide helpful insights that can be built on in the year ahead. As such we've taken a learning based approach to interpreting what is unfolding whilst reflecting potential opportunities and critiques from both research and practice which may be relevant for what practitioners have experienced in BZ & LZ.

Further, we have used interview data (from 18 interviews from across the Zero initiative), outputs from generative workshops, observation and analysis of data collected by BZ & LZ to illustrate how collaborations are forming around thickening data collection practices. For instance, through greater system buy-in BZ is starting to see the more nuanced collaborative decision making, advocacy and flow on effects these practices produce. The findings to establish these insights are presented below and elaborated in the following sections as well as vignettes of specific examples.

The vignettes highlight two insights - one illustrating how practice is translating into potential for systemic and structural changes through a specific activity, and one focused on how outreach and the maturity of integrated activity shapes how the pieces are fitting around the user.

**Outreach, Case Management and Ecosystem Maturity:** This vignette outlines the role that outreach can play as a means of helping to shape the pieces around a user - but also as a signal that the maturity of the service ecosystem can significantly influence the shape of the work needed to support systemic change initiatives. Brisbane Zero has a mature service ecosystem including outreach services in place. In Logan, both the density and the maturity of the service system are less developed and outreach is largely absent. Therefore, LZ has had to take a different developmental pathway. This points to quite different approaches between the two initiatives but could also indicate a need for different kinds of resourcing into the future.

**Housing for Women's Safety and Security Alliance:** This vignette illustrates the potential of shifting from a structured action approach to focused collaboration approaches that address specific issues identified in the data. This summary highlights how trends identified in the data led to the formation of a specific action collaborative - the Housing for Women's Safety and Security Alliance by Brisbane Zero.

Each of the five evaluation questions and core reflective findings will be outlined, including a summary of how these findings could shape work in the next yearly cycle of the developmental evaluation.

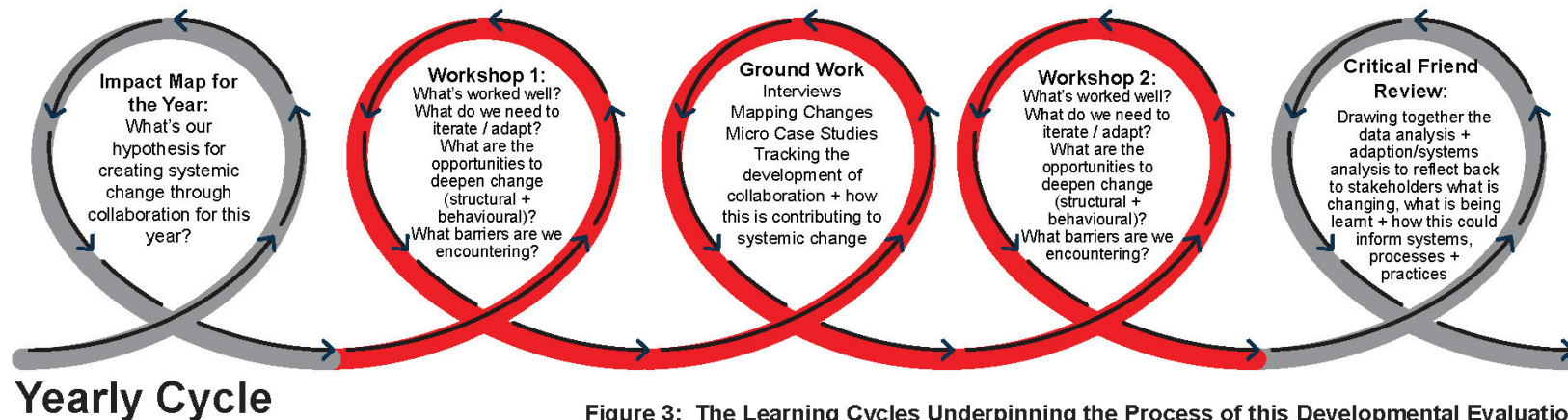


Figure 3: The Learning Cycles Underpinning the Process of this Developmental Evaluation

## How are systems collaborating or not?



Putting the advance to zero and collective impact methodologies into practice in Brisbane and Logan has demonstrated a need for diverse and situation specific approaches to collaboration. It takes time to develop and draw big collaborations around an outcome goal or issue together on a good footing, hence much of this reports provides preliminary insights or initial steps at the beginning of what will no doubt be a non-linear journey.

The nuanced and slow work of bringing actors together into a possibility space, where mindsets can shift, trust, and relationships can be nurtured is essential to enable more rapid change to be realised in the subsequent phases of the BZ and LZ initiatives. One of the challenges of this sort of collective work is making sense of how to structure and govern the activity, and steer it towards the common goal, particularly when it involves the work of many people and organisations who are not 'structured' to collaborate on a day-to-day basis. This is not only a challenge for the Zero initiatives - it is a challenge that is being felt in many initiatives who are framing their work as 'systems change' or 'collective impact'.

One of the issues, we propose, is that many of these initiatives have been drawn to a very structured ways of organising and governing the collaborative work - they are based on a theory of action that supposes if everyone aligns to a single goal and then aligns actions and data towards that goal it can ultimately be achieved. Most initiatives influenced by the 'collective impact' framework (Kania and Kramer, 2011) are structured in this way. It is effectively a 'theory of action' that is built on a structured, logical hypothesis of how change can be effected, and underpinning this is a perspective on systems change that is primarily about systems being just a larger scale of change work.

We propose that an alternative 'theory of action' based on a more 'networked' approach could be more effective for a goal as complex as ending homelessness. A networked approach recognises that change at systems level is complex, contested and therefore needs to be both adaptive and respectful of diverse forms of action (rather than seeking alignment around *how* to act) is more appropriate and also potentially more effective for a goal as complex as ending homelessness. We outline the difference between the more structured theory of action and the networked theory of action in Figure 4 below.

It may seem a little conceptual or theoretical, but in reality, the way we conceptualise how to organise for systemic work will ultimately be played out

“

This is a great starting point, as it highlights the fact that there isn't one way to collaborate, it is always more nuanced and cannot always be an all-in open process. For instance, politically sensitive government stakeholders are not always able to collaborate in open emergent processes that could leave them exposed to accountability risks. Hence, there's a necessity to adapt collaborative approach to the situation and the needs of critical stakeholders. There are also functional constraints that determine the scale and shape of collaborations, for example, the coordinated work of achieving functional zero for demographic groups involves only relevant actors in the week-by-week activities, but will engage others as required.

”

in the way we implement our organising structures and governing models - and this has a direct relationship to how we behave and what we value in terms of the work. Two key points relate to how BZ and LZ are starting to shift their work into a much more 'networked' approach. The first is about structure, the second is about learning.

**1. Governance happens around clusters of activity rather than broad goals.** In a networked approach 'governance' is sited as close to the action and data as possible. So, for example, rather than trying to coordinate or govern all the stakeholders who have an interest in the initiative in broad terms, the governance and coordination shifts to specific actions, key issues identified through the data and to actors/stakeholders who have a direct motive and impetus to engage collaboratively on key issues identified in the data. This has started to happen in the BZ initiative in particular, with examples provided in a later section.

**2. The underlying assumption of the Advance to Zero initiatives is that collection of data across organisations and the sector will drive movement towards the ultimate goal of ending homelessness.** In the existing methodology there is little emphasis on the learning infrastructures that are required within and across organisations and sectors in order for this assumption to actually generate movement towards the goal. For example, practitioners point out the need for and difficulty of driving behavioural change in partner organisations so that (a) data is collected and (b) consistency and

fullness of data collection is valued. There is an ongoing tension between the need to bring practitioners into the methodology (e.g. make them aware of why it is important to collect all the VI-SPDAT data); the limited time or appetite practitioners have for yet another framework; and a data hungry protocol (noting some organisations require practitioners to enter data into three or more databases).

This has sometimes resulted in quite transactional relationships between the 'backbones' of Zero and the partners, with both BZ and LZ staff suggesting a kind of servicing relationship with partners dominates, whereby Zero staff are doing many of the activities *for* partner organisations (eg. data entry and providing an auditing report for each organisation that inputs data into the "by name list"), rather than this being seen as an investment in their own organisations and a contribution to the overall collaboration.

This highlights both ambiguity about broader Zero protocols and a need to recognise that initiatives such as Zero are pioneering new foundations for collaboration across service systems which are not necessarily mature in their understanding of or commitment to collective action (and who are not always incentivised to prioritise this).

As a result BZ and LZ are investing in more than merely data infrastructure - they are **resourcing and investing in generating learning infrastructure across the sector to support a greater understanding of the potential value of shared data and collective action.** For example, BZ and LZ are developing dashboards, fact sheets, tailored resources for training, protocols and other means for partners to know what data they have contributed, what is available and how it can be used to make more informed strategic and operational decisions.

In effect the data and learning infrastructure that is being developed is a means to grow trust, knowledge sharing, network building and relationship across the sector which could lay foundations for more collaborative efforts into the future. The potential impact of this in the context of what early interviews indicated was a sector dominated by 'turf battles' should not be underestimated.

“ Part of the struggle I've seen in a lot of the meetings is how we pitch [A-to-Z], and what we're using it for. We need systemic change here ...and looking at trends and advocating for systemic change is obviously a big part of the advance to zero campaign. But I also think when you're on the ground, we need to be able to talk to how is it going to help the person who I'm seeing today? And how is it going to help staff work with their clients, and ultimately, assist them to be in stable accommodation? ”

“ Really it's not just one big collaboration, there's lots of little collaborations that pair up + try do their thing, + then come back to the bigger, more open collaboration. ..then there's sort of a closed group collaboration out of necessity. ”

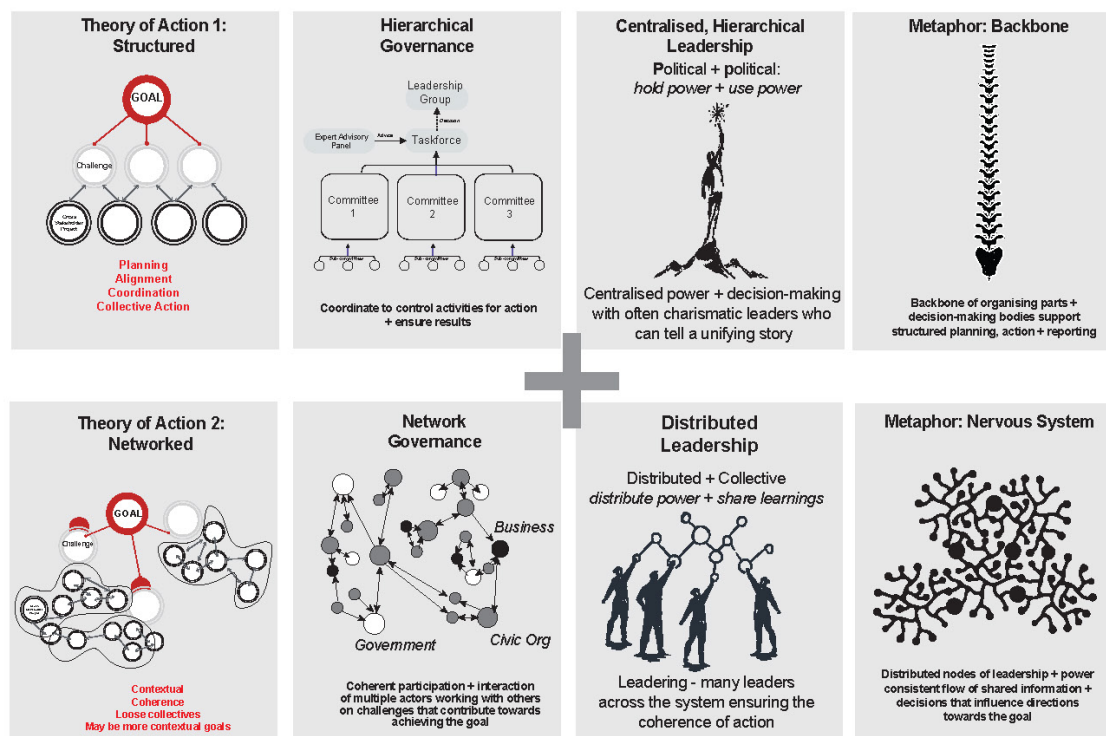


Figure 4: Distinguishing between Structured + Networked Theories of Action

Throughout the last year there has been regular discussion of what 'collaboration' for systems change actually means. In early workshops there was a call for some kind of typology or definitional framework for collaboration because it seemed like a particularly slippery term and was hard to apply consistently.

This was a tricky ask of the evaluation team to do in the abstract as there were so many definitional frameworks of collaboration that were either too conceptual or where the process collaboration was the focussing lens rather than the means to a bigger outcomes.

However, over the course of tracking collaboration across the initiatives, some elements of both different stages and types of collaboration (a sort of typology!) has started to emerge from the practice itself (see Figure 5 below). This proto-typology illustrates the different kinds of collaboration that are evident or emerging across the initiatives. What is also clear is that the vast majority of collaboration in both BZ and LZ remains in the first three layers of the figure. There are, however, hints of the fourth layer, and potential for the top layer emerging from the practice, and these could be the focus for more work in the next yearly learning cycle.

Further, there are now questions emerging about how to support partners to 'move up the layers', and to understand what it might take and how BZ and LZ could support such movement. This could also be the focus of more experimentation in the next phase of the learning cycles.

So, rather than import a definitional framework and typology of collaboration, there are signs that these are actually emerging from the practice. This illustrates that insights from broader research around structuring collaborative efforts can both inform but also be informed by what is happening in BZ and LZ.

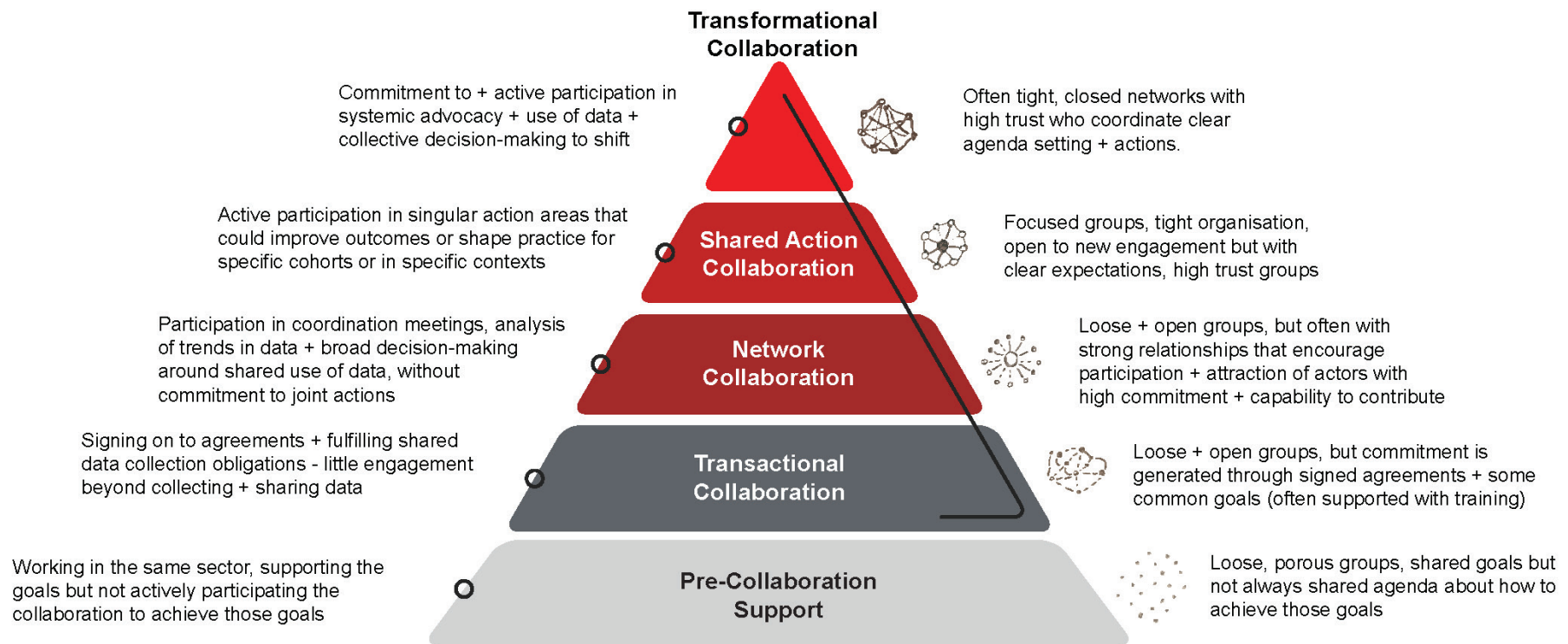
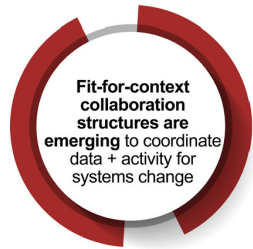


Figure 5: The 'Proto-typology' of Collaboration that is Developing out of the Zero Initiatives in Brisbane and Logan

**How are structural choices getting translated into technical behaviours?**



From the earliest meetings with both BZ and LZ, there was healthy disregard for centralised and highly structured governance and coordination functions. Both initiatives have adopted loose coordination, governance and partnership structures, with a focus on relationship building and support towards action rather than tight management of process.

It is clear from the reviewing progress, and from examination of other large scale systemic initiatives that this approach is both appropriate and pragmatic. 'One-size fits all' collaboration / governance structures are not appropriate for work in such complex contexts.

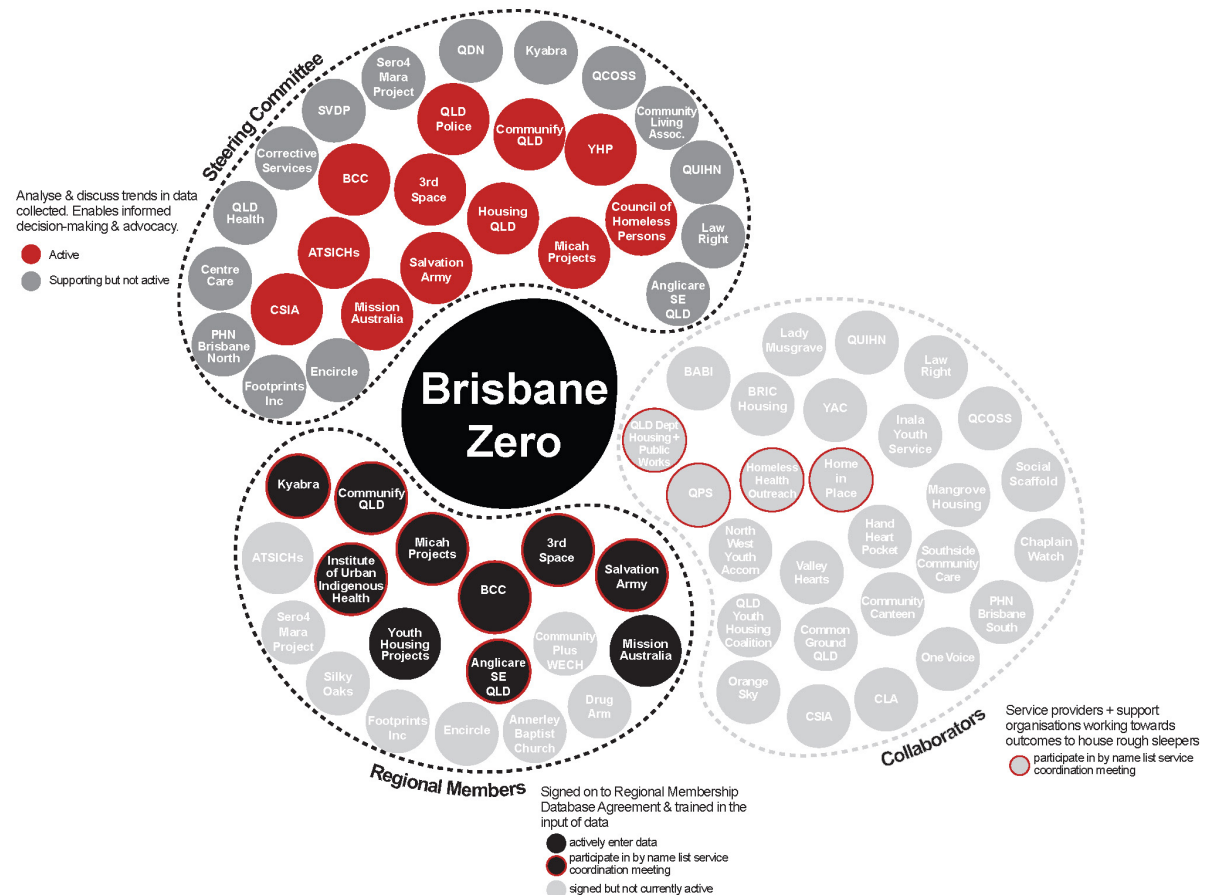
The structuring of collaboration has progressed differently across the two initiatives.

In the Brisbane Zero initiative the key observations are:

- Large engagement + varied participation: up to 70 organisations are signed up in various partnerships with BZ; with only around 6 actively and consistently involved in entering data in the VISPiDat / By Name List (BNL). Eleven organisations were initially involved in the Women's Alliance, which is now up to eighteen.
- Emergent + responsive governance focused on specific systemic needs + cohorts, with data enabling the identification of higher risk cohorts. BZ has, for example, identified women and children with domestic and family violence backgrounds.

- Growing recognition of Zero as a broad initiative, though much of the effort still sits with backbone host organization, Micah Projects.
- Coordination governance across the initiative remains a challenge – however there is positive + encouraging movement, particularly as smaller, more focussed action groups emerge.

There will always be 'non-participating' stakeholders. The challenge over the coming year will be to explore what factors could help spread the activity towards the broad goal more effectively across the stakeholders - and ensure that the engagement, relationship building, advocacy and shared infrastructure work inherent in the nature of the initiative are both recognised and slightly more distributed so that effort is not only concentrated in the backbone function (see Figure 6 below).



**Figure 6: The Emerging Structuring of the Brisbane Zero Initiative, including Participation**





Below we articulate two of the key insights and spaces for exploring further action in the next cycle of learning.

### Growing and Spreading the Understanding of the Role and Usefulness of Data for Systems Change

Practitioners from both initiatives have regularly pointed out that it is still early days in the process of driving behavioural change in partner organisations. There is an ongoing tension between the need to bring practitioners into the methodology (e.g. make them aware of why it is important to collect all the VI-SPDAT data) and the limited time or appetite practitioners have for yet another framework and data hungry protocol (noting some organisations require practitioners enter data into three or more databases). The limited ability for team leaders and managers to engage with and learn about the methodology has also caused some misunderstandings and inconsistency between what participating organisations think they are contributing and what is happening ‘on the ground’ around data entry. To address this, BZ and LZ are developing dashboards and other means for partner orgs to know what data they have contributed, what is available and how it can be used to make more informed strategic and operational decisions. Other opportunities to grow the narrative and understanding more broadly could be explored.

Linking the Zero initiative to the broader framing of ‘prevention, reduction and ending’ narrative which has been well articulated by Micah / Brisbane Zero, and which could help to link up various networks and alliances (and create a bolder agenda across the sector) (see Figure 8).

“It’s difficult when you’re trying to influence and make a change at a systems level. We’re always brought back to the reality of what matters for individual organisations and their rules.”

One way to do this and to start to consolidate a more ‘networked based theory of action’ could be to adopt a challenge-led innovation framing of the work around Zero. This would involve:

- articulating and visualising the initiative as having a clear directional (and systemic) goal, which inspires collective action across multiple sectors;
- developing clear and coherent fields of action around ‘Prevent’, ‘Reduce’ and ‘End’ which could engage actors and stakeholders from across different sectors with interests / motivations to contribute to the challenge and the overall goal;
- Building portfolios of actions around each challenge, that engage with those stakeholders who have a real motivation around the specific data that supports that challenge and portfolio area. The Women’s Safety and Security Alliance is a great example of how such smaller action areas could be framed - and taking a portfolio approach would suggest to those actors that they articulate a body of work (action and innovation) that could help to shift the data related to that context, and which they could commit to taking action on.

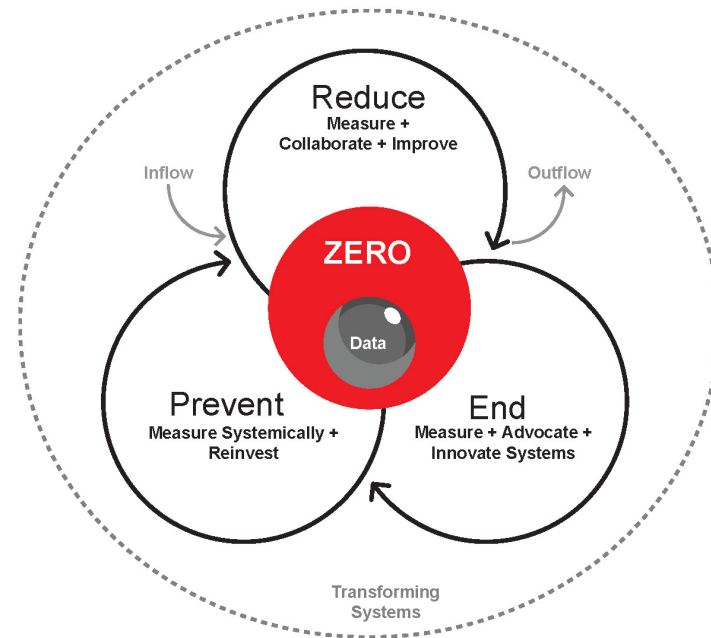
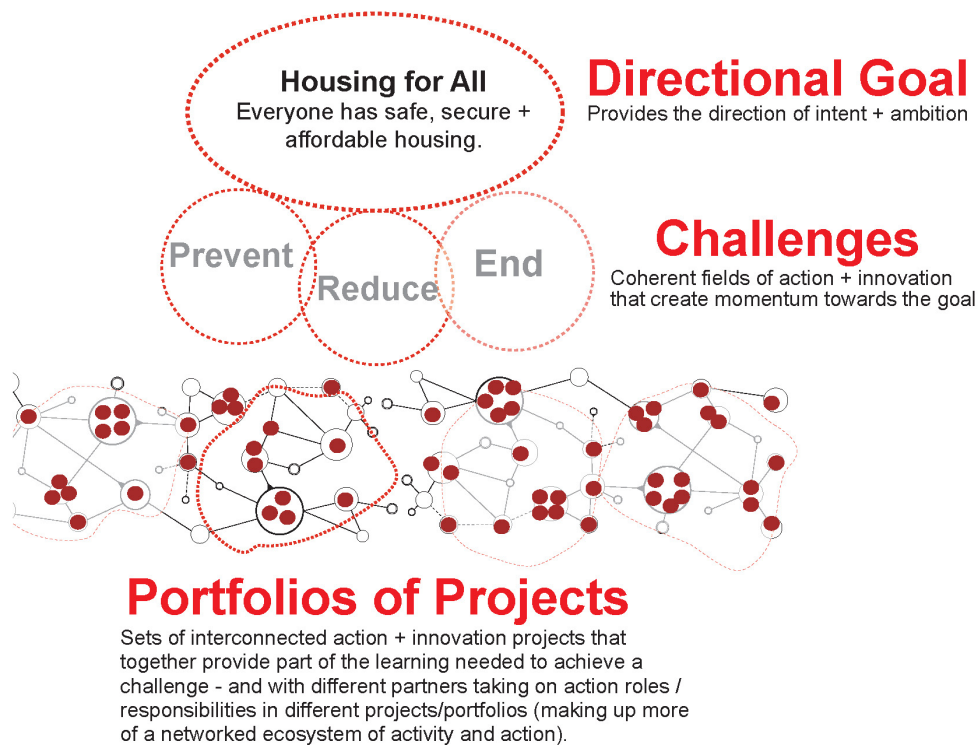


Figure 8: The Prevent, Reduce, End Narrative as Articulated by Micah / Brisbane Zero

One of the limitations of the current structuring of the collaborations is that the centre of the focus is on data collection and data interpretation - and whilst there is an implicit focus on the outcome, it seems that many partners are not able to make the link clearly or don't have the capacity to do so.

Restructuring the initiative so that partners are action focussed and that the actions are framed from the data, could help to grow more focussed, more networked groups of partners who take on smaller actions and experimentations that could, collectively, contribute towards the goal (see Figure 9).

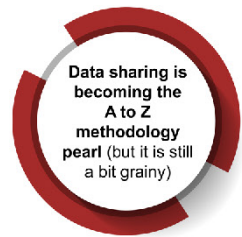
Again, this could be explored in the next learning cycle.



“ So the strategies [to prevent, reduce and end homelessness] need multiple forms of collaboration. If you look at people coming into the [homelessness] system, and people going out of the system, and people within the system, there are different types of collaboration required for each of these components. So, let's just say people coming into the system, so the people who are actually sleeping rough, and the people who are being released from certain systems into rough sleeping. So then how do you collaborate with those systems [that often produce homelessness] like people exiting prisons, people exiting foster care and childcare system? If you're going to turn off the tap and stop that from inflow into homelessness, what would those kinds of structural arrangements look like to turn off the tap of people flowing into the homelessness system? Those collaborations are typically quite different from outflow. So if you're gonna say, how do we then look at [stopping people] existing prisons [becoming homeless] what kind of collaboration? What kind of strategy? What kind of partnerships? Do we need to actually need to divert them from there? What resourcing will work? What kind of partnership do we have to form? And where will they be diverted to? And what relationships do we need to form? ”

Figure 9: Imagining the Restructuring of a Broader Initiative using a Challenge-Led Framework

**How well are data + collective processes being shared?**



The purpose of this report is not to detail or analyse the data but to understand and reflect how it is supporting collaboration and systemic shifts. With this in mind, the key finding at this point is that the Zero initiatives in Brisbane and Logan have contributed to a deepening of understanding across the sector about the importance of data (and more specifically, quality data) in understanding both the nature of problem but also the potential ‘sensitive intervention points’ that could help shift outcomes in the system.

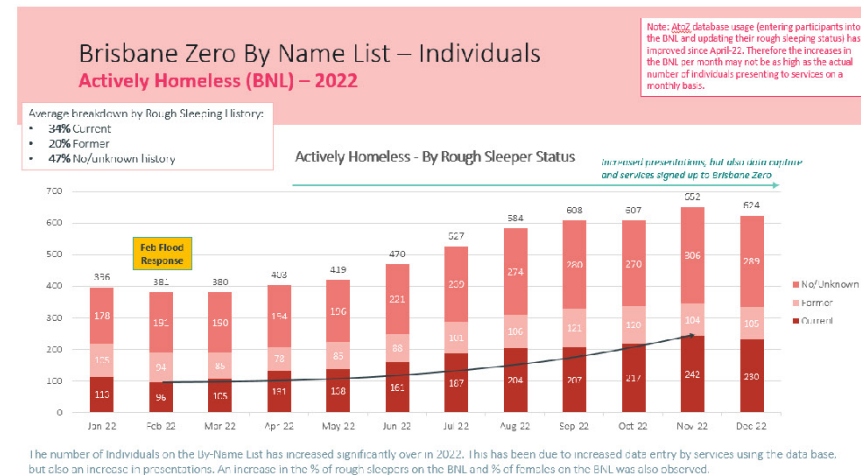
Over the course of the last 12 months the perceived ‘value’ of the data collected via the Zero initiatives has developed significantly, both across the partnerships but also in the eyes of policy and government stakeholders, and external funding agencies. In addition, the ‘thickness’ of the data collected has improved significantly over this time too.

Both LZ and BZ are focussed on attracting more collaborator organisations to share data by entering details into their respective BNL. LZ and BZ are also working to improve the coverage and quality of the data entered to make it more useful.

LZ and BZ have shared insights that led to them both having initiatives underway to improve reporting methods, produce fact sheets, and dashboard ideas to report data back to participating members. Although LZ and BZ do not compare data at this stage, they have cross checked their BNLs and found that four individuals and one family appeared on both lists. This correlates with the anecdotal experience that there is increasing movement between regions and therefore additional complexities to consider where tracking a BNL.

Brisbane Zero has been collecting BNL data since 2019. There are fifteen collaborating organisations that could enter data into the BZ BNL, however only around five of these organisations actually contribute on a consistent basis. In April 2022 a database utilisation summary and feedback survey were provided to each organisation with database access. Subsequent training and capacity building activities improved the coverage.

Logan Zero’s BNL has expanded to include data sharing beyond the host organisation since July 2022. In the year to March 2023 the LZ database collected detailed VI-SPDAT assessments of 150 households (comprising 360 people

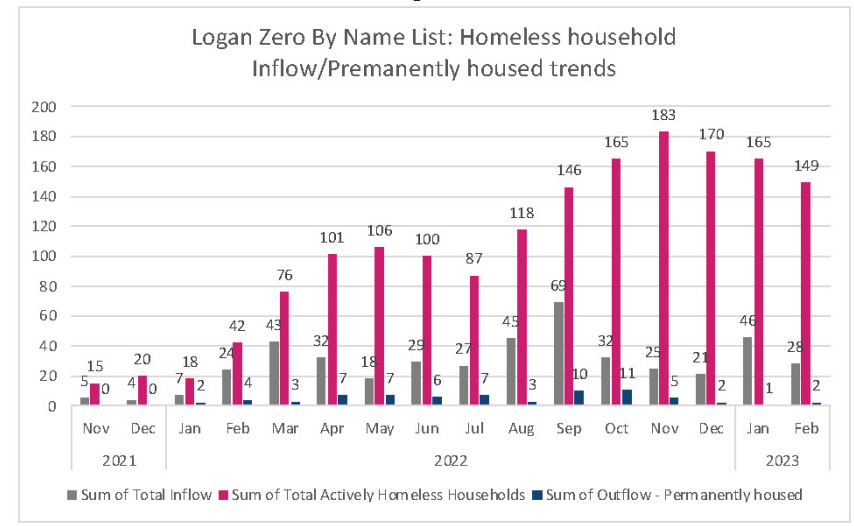


The number of individuals on the UY-Name List has increased significantly over in 2022. This has been due to increased data entry by services using the data base, but also an increase in presentations. An increase in the % of rough sleepers on the BNL and % of females on the BNL was also observed.

**a. Brisbane Zero**

**Figure 10: The By Name List Data across the Two Initiatives**

**b. Logan Zero**



including 208 children). Figure 10(b) accounts for the inflow of people experiencing homelessness who were entered into the LZ database, whether they were housed or remained actively homeless. Because most of these people entered the BNL through the LZ host organisation, it is clear the number of actively homeless people in Logan grew during the period.

To summarise LZ's most recent VI-SPDAT findings and provide an illustration of the richness of insight that this data can generate:

- People (including households) who are homeless in Logan spent on average 18 months homeless
- 87% of people experiencing homelessness have at least one mental health condition;
- 81% of people have at least one physical health condition;
- 43% of people avoid seeking healthcare services when unwell despite need, and
- 53% of people felt discriminated against when accessing services.

From this data there is potential to identify 'sensitive intervention points' at the intersection of healthcare and homelessness that could (if there is enough motivation and commitment across the relevant services) result in specific collaborative action agendas that could help to generate movement towards the wider goal of ending homelessness.

Further, more sustainable outcomes could be generated by extending data collection and sharing analysis to inform action. This would require a commitment of partners to maintain the database and more actively and regularly contribute to entering data. The potential power of this is reflected in the following situation:

*"Anecdotally, increased demand and funding has meant more people exit into temporary accommodation than permanent housing, which has implications for both the sector but also for policy, but there is limited resourcing to actually enter data into the database".*

As BZ and LZ have increased coverage and quality of the data they collect it has emerged that they use data in four distinctive ways. These delineations are summarised in Figure 11 below. Importantly, these insights could help to better understand how partners and practitioners are engaging with data and using it. It also indicates potential ways in which the narrative about the role and useful of data (see above) could be shaped, as data has the potential to help not only managers, but also frontline staff validate and make sense of what is happening.

“ The initial phase was focused on uptake of tools and data entry to provide information – database, VISPDATs. A year on, we notice a need for emphasis on the methodology and systems level thinking. This means emphasising collection of systems level data such as our 'housing and support system readiness checklist' and client journey in the system, not just the VISDPAT. ”

“ I would love to use [data as] a be all and end all. Pull out data and purely look at the data set to make decisions. But because we don't have the number of [organisations] signed up to the campaign that we'd like and [our data is] not at a quality level it's not really something we can rely on to identify trends at this point in time. [so we] use our data with other data sets to make sure it's [able to be useful]. ”

Recognising that data can and will be used in multi-directional and adaptive ways (and framing its use in this broad way) could support engagement with partner organisations and their staff.

Some examples of how both LZ and BZ are using data to generate insights and engage stakeholders include:

- Developing a website based VI-SPDAT summary dashboard.
- Sending periodic reports on First Nations homelessness and associated data to First Nations services (such as ATSIHCS, ATSIHQ) for their use and analysis.

- Responding to requests from potential partner organisations (such as public health networks) for quality deidentified data for specific demographics e.g. older persons VI-SPDAT data has been fed into health assessment reports, and may have influenced new health programs such as the Care Finders pathway program for older persons.

Again, the value of this level of support for data and learning infrastructure should not be underestimated, both for the Zero initiative itself, but also for its potential spillover effects more broadly for the development of the regional human services sector.

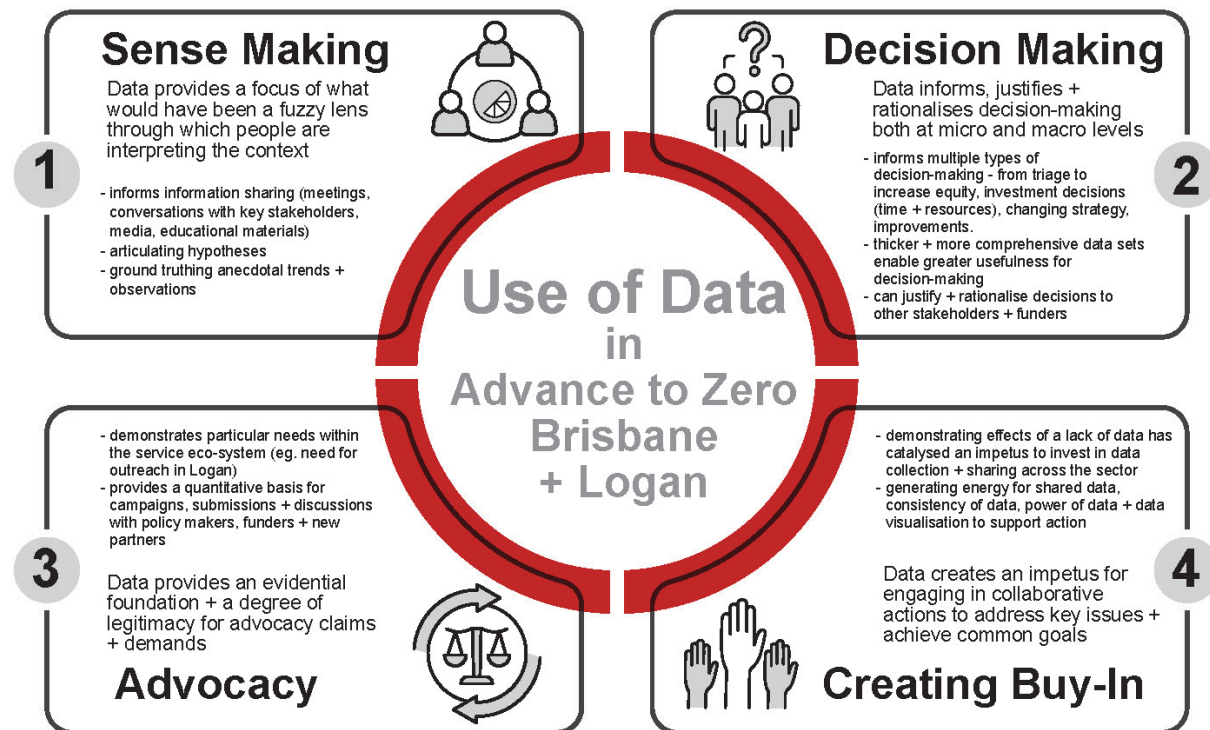


Figure 11: The Key Uses of Data across BZ + LZ

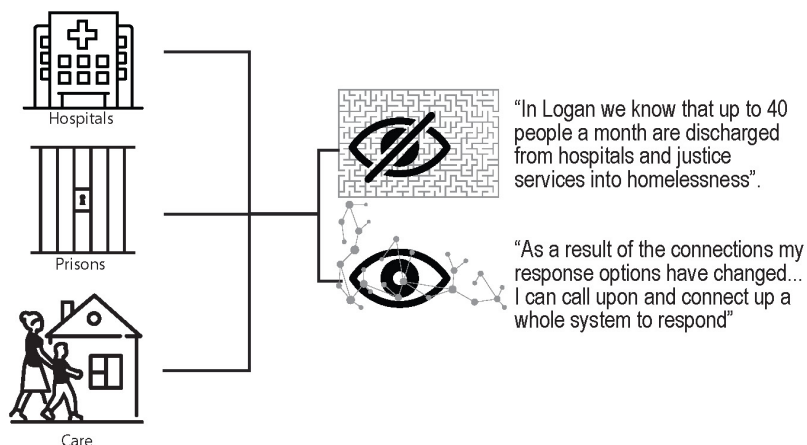
**How are pieces fitting together around the user?**



There were and are ongoing questions as to how the A-to-Z approach can impact people's direct experience of the homelessness system. For instance, during early stage one practitioner noted that advocating for system change is important but

*"we need to be able to talk to how is it going to help the person who I'm seeing today? And how is it going to help staff work with their clients, and ultimately, assist them to be in stable accommodation?"*

These questions will inevitably be ongoing because the preliminary stages of A-to-Z focus on establishing collaborations, data collection, sharing and coordinating service delivery. Further, it obviously takes time for systemic change to start to influence how users experience services. However, there are instances where practitioners in both initiatives are clearly observing 'moments of impact' which they attribute to the thickening of the relationships across the ecosystem of services. Practitioners from inside and outside the initiatives spoke of the data (itself and the process of collecting the data) making people experiencing or at risk of homelessness more 'visible' and also making the cumulative effects of experiences like mental health, physical health, violence (for example) and their links to homelessness much more evident (see Figure 12 for an example from LZ).



**Figure 12: Practitioners spoke of how data is making people + response options more visible**

“ When I've been in a lot of the meetings people [who are] not necessarily doing face to face work [with clients] or involved in the case management work - they forget about the person centered approach. [A-to-Z is] a lot about the big picture of what can be done systemically. But we also, I guess, day to day, [need to be able to demonstrate] how is it going to help the clients that we are seeing? ...We want to be able to ensure that the people [on the database are all] being supported... [so it's clear] that we are looking at housing outcomes for individuals [not just changing the system]. ”

“ Zero is what brings people [experiencing homelessness] into the system. If a person is not visible, either through the healthcare system, or to the homeless system, or to the NDIS system, or the ACH system, the person doesn't get service. So visibility is critical. Advance to Zero enables that process, right, making the person visible [to and from the relevant systems] ”

“ The data actually forms pictures and the portraits of people that are experiencing homelessness. And the picture that is formed is one where it becomes obvious that it's all interconnected - health, homelessness, housing, jails. The data makes the picture you know when you're amongst it clear and present and able to be shared so that it becomes much more stark and real to everyone. ”

## Vignette #1 – Outreach and Case Management

The different context, maturity and scale of Logan and Brisbane’s homelessness systems influences how their respective Advance to Zero initiatives have developed to fit around the user. This needs further investigation and testing, but there is an emerging view that getting the system components in place and ensuring they’re accessible to users constitute broad challenges.

Outreach, case management, and multiple supported living options are three significant components of Brisbane’s homelessness system that are less developed in Logan. Without these components in Logan:

1. collaboration across programs is focussed on coordination of services rather than more assertive agendas to end homelessness;
2. the Zero team has had to advocate for service collaboration more strongly and this has slowed the initiative’s development.

In working to help mature/grow the Logan system’s capabilities the Zero initiative has focussed on training to

enter data into the VI-SPDAT and use the collated results for evidence-based decision making.

For instance, Logan system data reveals that housing placement was nine times higher in households that had a case manager. Only 7% (29/385 households) that did not have a case manager were housed compared with 52% (51/98 households) that had a case manager. Hence, it makes sense to invest in case management, particularly when only 20% of people on the LZ database had case management. These as well as similar statistics underpin Logan Zero’s advocacy for increasing outreach, case management and collaboration across the region’s service systems.

Along with case management, outreach is considered a critical component in addressing primary homelessness, particularly from a ‘housing first’ perspective. Whether it’s the service system itself that is ‘hard to engage’ (see Coleman et al, 2013; CHP, 2019) or the complex needs and disconnection of rough sleepers that makes outreach necessary, the evidence suggests outreach is effective.

The Road Home: A national approach to reducing homelessness (Homelessness Taskforce, 2008) white paper revived an interest and some political commitment to outreach, though this has not been funded universally, and focused in capital cities.

“

Most members use the tool after existing case management has taken place or after existing intake processes. Unfortunately, this means the tool is sometimes perceived as just a ‘data collection’ exercise rather than a way to measuring vulnerability. Again this emphasised the need for systems level thinking and getting people to understand how each tool fits into a system.

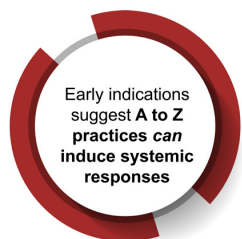
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Logan Zero began testing multiple informal outreach methods with collaborators. This included collaborative ad hoc outreach, using mobile technologies, and investigating how public facing staff from local government and other agencies could help people engage homelessness services.

To be effective these outreach efforts need to be integrated with continuing case management, and supply of appropriate housing options (emergency and long term). All of which present a system level collaboration challenge, that has to overcome unprecedented demand within Southeast Queensland’s rental markets (Powell in Garcia, 2022).



**How well are practice changes translating into systemic + structural changes?**



Systems change is a long-term and complex undertaking, which will require many initiatives and approaches. So, it is clearly too early to provide any definitive findings at this stage - but there are some weak signals that suggest the ways in which Brisbane and Logan are approaching the Zero initiatives could positively contribute to their systemic goal.

Practitioners within BZ and LZ have effectively applied the Zero methodology to

formulate and pursue strategies that have potential to structurally change how the homelessness system prevents and works to achieve functional zero.

BZ and LZ have proactively used data to identify vulnerable demographics at risk of homelessness and begun gathering together coalitions from multiple service systems to address the drivers of homelessness. As per the examples in Figure 13, the prospective coalitions range from partnerships with a Public Health Network to the eighteen-member Women’s Safety and Security Alliance. Each coalition is at some early stage of development in Brisbane, Logan or both.

Focussing on specific demographic cohorts enables the Zero initiatives to identify and attract actors from multiple systems into collaborations that dissolve traditional system boundaries. This cornerstone of the Zero methodology, builds on data sharing to create a shared agenda that serves the cohort while nurturing social capital, trust and reciprocity between the practitioners of participating organisations.

This in turn changes how organisations from different systems work together to allocate their capabilities, support the specific demographic in overcoming homelessness challenges and advocate for change (as in Vignette 2). These collaborations are initiating coherent yet distributed actions that have potential to change policies, paradigms, and practices at the organisational and system level. Although they are only embryonic at this stage, these changes are making the respective systems more flexible and adaptive to the emerging needs of users.

	Context	Structure	Stage	Drivers
Women+ single female headed households	Brisbane	Alliance	Formed. Active + Growing	Data indicating relationship breakdown + violence are a factor in 4/5 women becoming homeless
Youth / under 25 years old + head of household (young families)	Logan	TBC	Under investigation - Logan is analysing data + testing hypothesis	Data indicating increasingly higher risks of homelessness for younger families in particular
First Nations over 45 years old	Logan + Brisbane	TBC	Under investigation - Logan + Brisbane liaising with First Nations organisations + sharing data	Data indicating higher risks of homelessness, opportunity to connect resources with needs
Over 55 non-Indigenous	Logan	TBC	Under investigation - Logan + Brisbane reaching out to Aged Care services	Data indicating higher risks of homelessness, opportunity to connect resources with needs
Recently released from prison	Logan + Brisbane	TBC	Under investigation - Logan + Brisbane liaising with Corrective Services	Data indicating post prison risks of homelessness, opportunity to connect resources with needs
Hospital discharges	Combined	TBC	Under investigation - combined discussions with hospitals + health services	Data indicating post hospital risks of homelessness, opportunity to connect resources with needs
Prevention - Primary Health Network (PHN)	Combined	Partnership	Combined discussions with PHN	Data indicating clear links between homelessness + social determinants of health

**Figure 13: Potential Collaborations or Coalitions Emerging from Data Analysis**

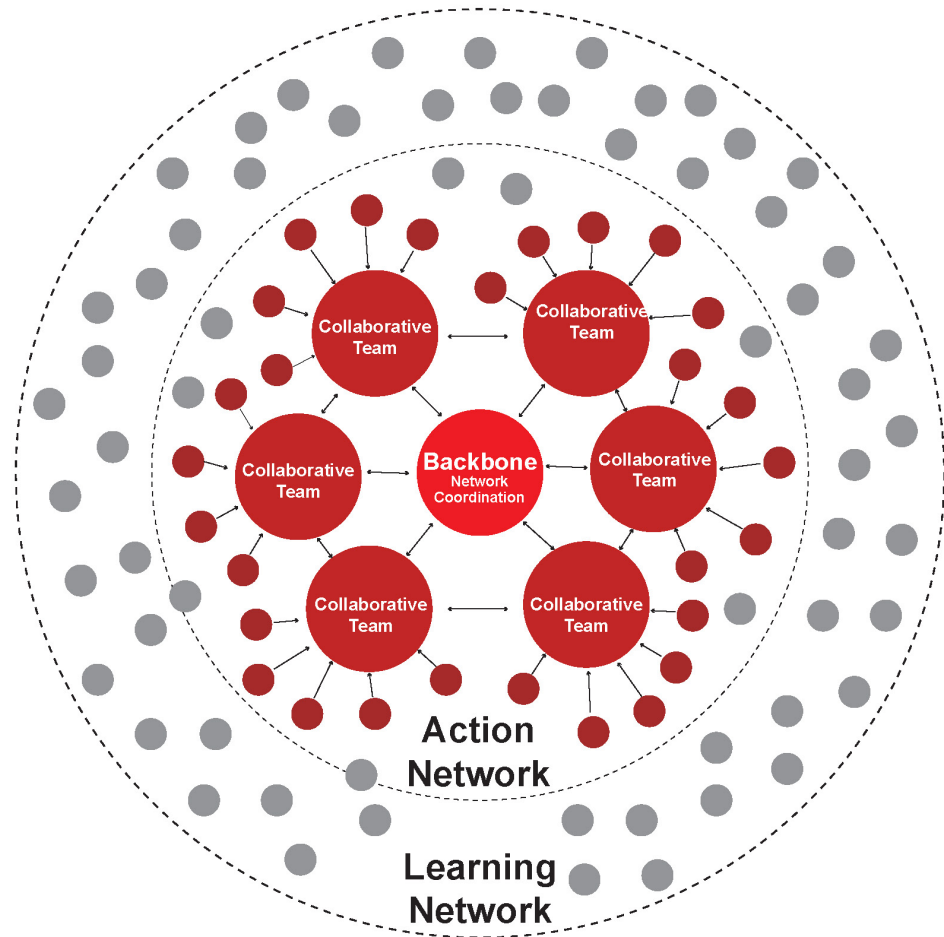
“ The strategies need multiple forms of collaboration. ... If you look at people coming into the system, and people going out of the system, and people within the system, there are different types of collaboration required for each of these components. ”

By adopting these demographic specific strategies, the Zero initiatives also aim to demonstrate how functional zero can be achieved. They are engendering thinking along the lines of “if we can do it for them, we can do it for this group or that other group.” If the coalitions can move beyond host organisations “servicing capability uptake” and instead empower partners to take action and responsibility its foreseeable these strategies can lead to lasting structural changes.

The alliance has opened doors and reduced dissonance among key potential collaborators who have specific knowledge and experience with particular cohorts or contexts. Such grouping could potentially respond more effectively to specific insights from data and/or they could collaborate to build more specific datasets around their cohorts and contexts (see Figure 14 for an overview of how this approach could shift dynamics in the organising of the initiatives) .

This is starting to happen naturally but could be fostered more intentionally. For example, since an advocate from the Women’s Safety and Security Alliance has started sharing positive experiences with a service for young people that was initially skeptical of the Zero approach, they are now discussing how they could undertake some kind of collaborative action. At the heart of this opportunity are insights generated by the BZ data and how this could be used by partnerships to address the challenges facing young people at risk of homelessness - as the following worker explains:

*“(the worker from youth homelessness brings a) new lens and a new set of eyes, and she is so engaged in the group with the Women’s Alliance group. She’s been taking really positive feedback back to (the service), which has just cracked open the door for me to start the conversation with them about potentially (engaging around youth homelessness)”.*



**Figure 14: Potential Model for Rethinking Collaborations towards Distributed Action**  
 (source: Spence, M., Ehrlichman, D., & Sawyer, D. (2018). Cutting Through the Complexity: A Roadmap for Effective Collaboration. Stanford Social Innovation Review)

## Vignette #2 – Housing for Women’s Safety + Security Alliance

This vignette illustrates the potential of shifting from a structured action approach which has broad goals around which everyone seeks to align, towards a series of much more focussed, smaller, tighter collaborations centred on addressing specific issues identified from data (see Figure 15). If these actions can move from identification and transactional responses towards portfolios of projects which are designed to test various ways to progress towards addressing the issue there is greater potential for contributing to systemic shifts.

The BZ team identified an important vein in the data not through a broad analysis of all data, but in getting clear about the sorts of questions that should be asked of the data.

The team started to dig deeper into the data and seek out growing trends, look at specific cohort data, look for the sorts of signals that were apparent in the data around critical issues and causal pathways into homelessness. One of those issues focused on an increase in homeless for women with children escaping domestic violence.

*“So what actually preceded the overall trends to be honest, was more around questions that were being asked by some of my team members”*

The data collected by Brisbane Zero clearly highlighted that single mother families are the majority of families experiencing homelessness, and that domestic violence and relationship breakdown is a critical factor in that homelessness for 3 out of 4 of these families.

The data and the insights that were able to be generated from it indicated that addressing domestic violence and ensuring access to alternative accommodation for these families was key to prevention and reduction of homelessness.

BZ used this insight to draw together services, policy makers, funders and other actors in the homelessness and family/violence support systems to create a working group focused on DV and homelessness in early 2022, which then led to the formation of the Housing for Women’s Safety and Security Alliance in June 2022.

*“there are 18 people now within that group. You can see the tribe forming – they are kind of subject matter experts, the ones that have got the most interest or are the most passionate (about this particular insight)”*

While the actions to date have centred primarily around advocacy (eg. a joint submission to the Queensland Housing Summit in September 2022), there is potential for more distributed and connected action that draws together such focussed groups around addressing specific issues identified in the data. As one of the workers argued,

*“the data becomes the guide (to where action should be focused) rather than the destination of the initiative”.*

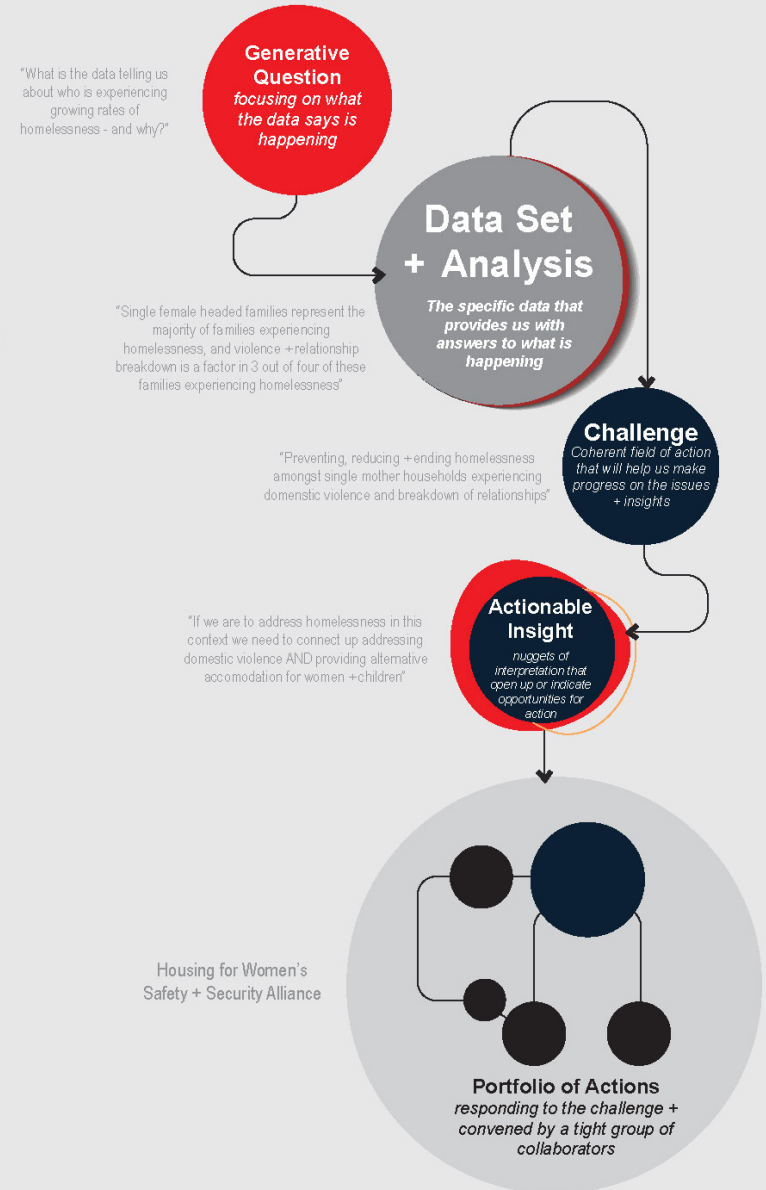


Figure 15: How Questions Shape Use of Data and Potential Actions

## Conclusion

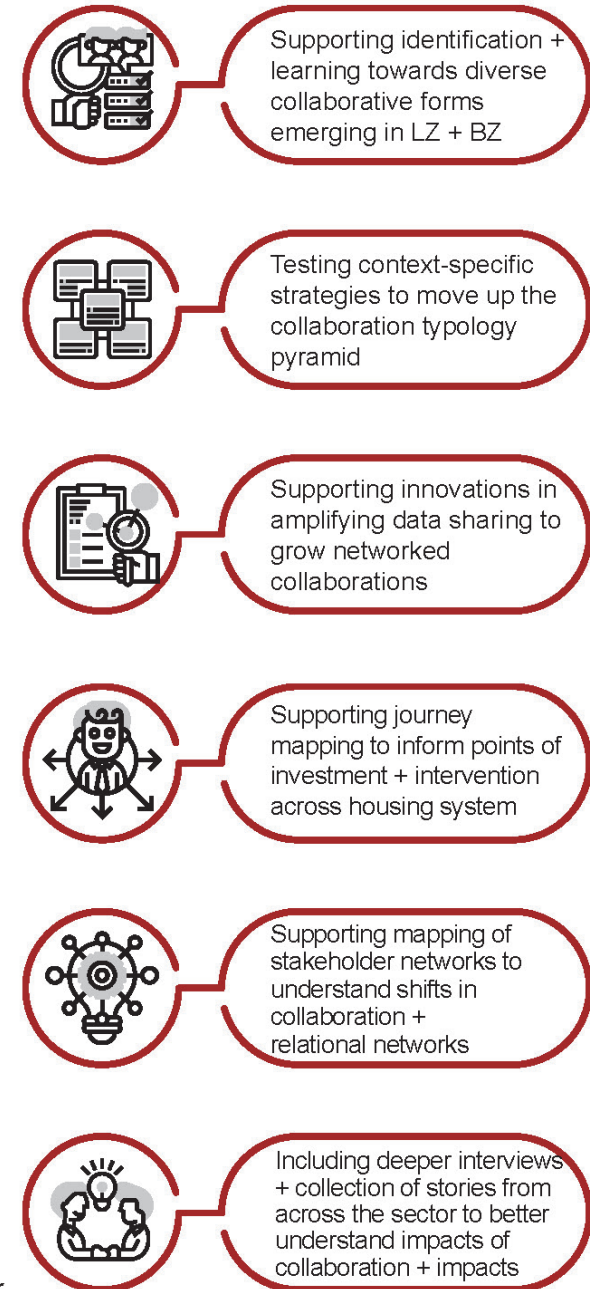
The first 12 months of reflecting with the Brisbane and Logan Advance to Zero Collaborations has uncovered a wealth of insights and innovative ways they are working to end homelessness.

This report draws together analysis from project publications and practitioners' responses to the five evaluative questions that underpin this evaluation, and which were central to inquiry across workshops, and group discussions. The crux of this learning addresses (i) the need for diverse forms of collaboration, (ii) strategies to nurture innovative behaviours, (iii) the role of data sharing in supporting collaborations, (iv) the potential of systemic responses, and (v) how people are experiencing the changes catalysed by BZ and LZ.

Context matters. Although Logan and Brisbane practitioners share common reflections and experiences the greater maturity and scale of Brisbane's homelessness system means Logan has had a different approach and different focus areas. As the collaborations progress and innovate according to their capacities and opportunities, the potential for mutual exchange is growing, as is the scope to learn and adapt.

Synthesising the answers to the evaluation questions provides a means to consider where further collective learning and practical adaptations in the second year of the developmental evaluation might lead. Discussions during the first annual critical friends report workshop suggested how to evolve this development evaluation and the LZ and BZ collaborations. These are outlined in Figure 16.

In the second year there is likely to be more emphasis on action learning and testing, and a focus on tracking the growing movement towards systemic responses with the developmental evaluation. A detailed theory of action for this work will be developed over coming months.



**Figure 15: Potential Focus Areas for the Developmental Evaluation in the Second Year**

