2019 High-Level Political Forum – Side event

The Merging of Knowledge

A deeply participatory approach

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Why did we choose the *Merging of Knowledge*?

SDG Target 1.2 to halve poverty *in all its dimensions*

- But what are the dimensions of poverty and who should decide them?

We set out to design research that

- prioritises the knowledge of people experiencing poverty
- merges this with the knowledge of practitioners and of academics/decision-makers

What is the *Merging of Knowledge* and how does it work?

- An approach to research and practice, founded on principles
  - **Full citizenship for all**; every person's knowledge counts
  - **Guaranteed equality**; addresses inherent power dynamics

- Based on the idea that our knowledge derives from our lived experience

Direct experience of poverty Professional practice Academic research

Steered by a team of co-researchers from all backgrounds (**half** living in poverty)

Follows steps:

⇒ Work in peer groups (20 - 30 hours)

⇒ Synthesis of conclusions from each knowledge group (by steering team)

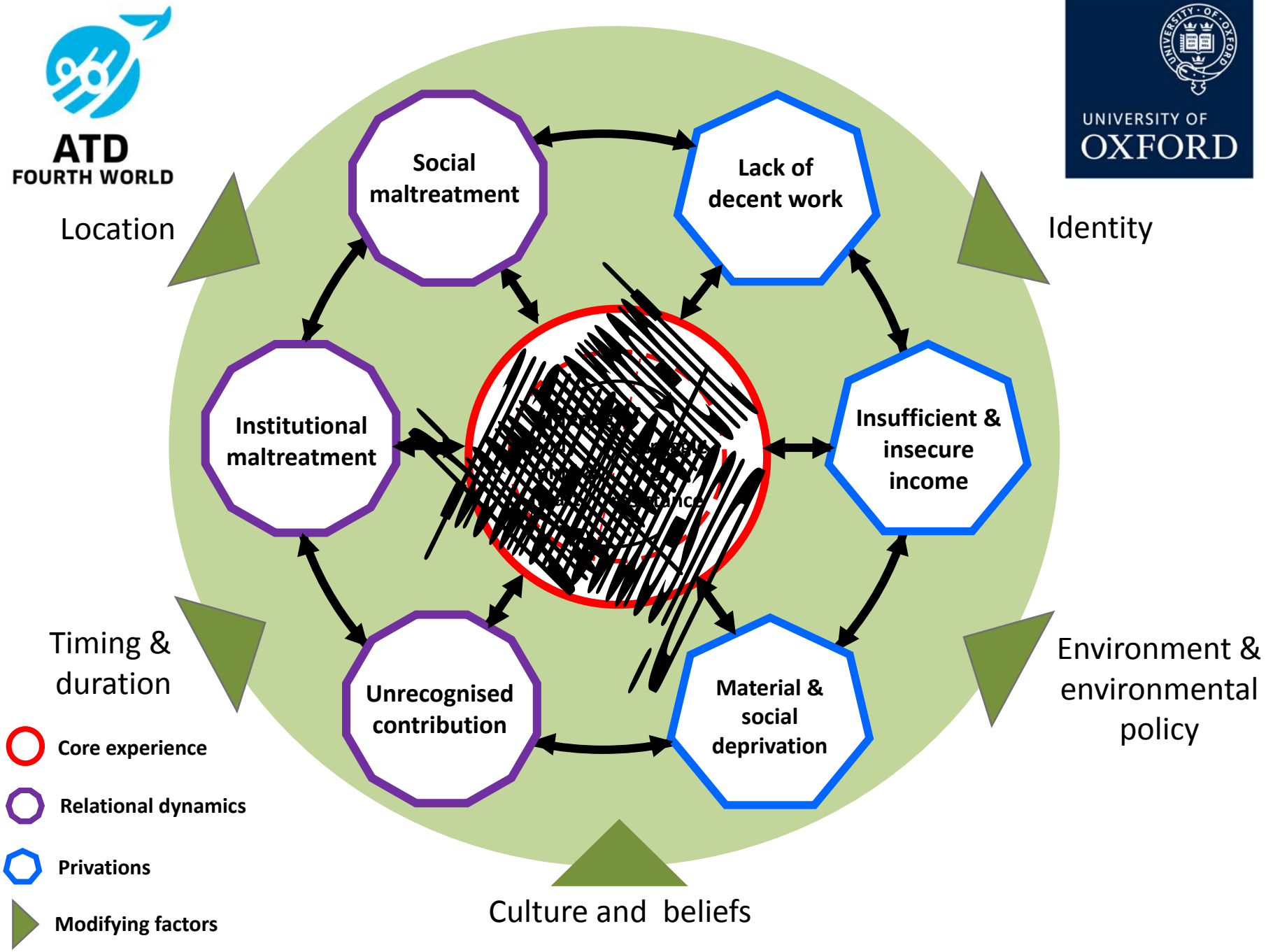
⇒ Collective analysis by representatives from all three groups (3 - 10 days)

Merging of knowledge

Time and money to support a steady process

Merging of knowledge => **new** knowledge

via mutual recognition, trust and reflective questioning


ATD
FOURTH WORLD
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Social maltreatment
Lack of decent work
Institutional maltreatment
Insufficient & insecure income
Unrecognised contribution
Material & social deprivation
Location
Identity
Timing & duration
Environment & environmental policy
Culture and beliefs
Core experience
Relational dynamics
Privations
Modifying factors

As importantly, the process achieved…

Grounding for lasting change

- Transformation for all people/organisations involved
  - Action follows the deep attitudinal change in ***everyone***
  - New ways of thinking about poverty
  - *New ways of working…??*

- Partnerships between institutions evolve naturally
  - as grounded in deep collective analysis

Challenges and how to meet them

- Requires much time, skill, commitment
  - *Invest wisely to ensure value for all*
- Choice of stakeholders as peer groups
  - *Adapt to the question and context*
- Coping with difference when ‘merging’
  - *Record process towards consensus*
  - *Respect disagreement, retain specificity*

Clear potentials for the Merging of Knowledge

- Further work with children and with older people
- Developing further indicators for SDG target 1.2
- Use in policy-making…

For more insights, see our newly-released report:

Google "**The hidden dimensions of poverty**"