

Advicenow's theory of change

Context of our work

Free legal advice services are vastly over-subscribed and paid-for legal help is expensive. As a result, many people are unable to resolve the legal problems which affect their lives. This increases poverty and disadvantage in our society, negatively impacting the health and well-being of individuals and communities.

What we do

We address this by building legal capability so that people can deal with the legal problems in their lives. We give people the knowledge, confidence and skills to use their rights, identify and challenge unfair practices, and make fair agreements. We also collaborate with individuals and communities to challenge systemic problems.

Impact of our work

We challenge injustice and inequality by equipping individuals and communities to deal with life's legal problems.

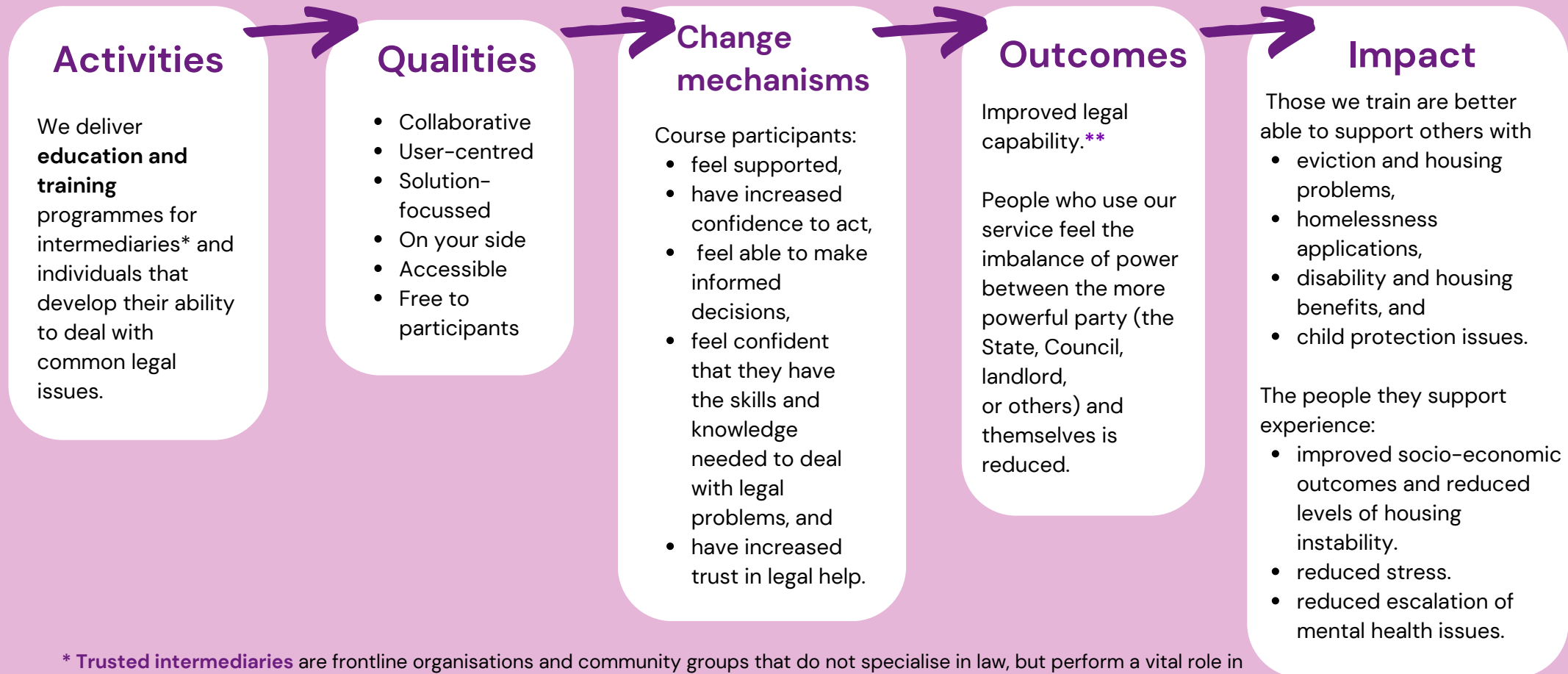
Who we work with

Most of our services are open to all, but we prioritise working with groups who experience greater barriers to justice, including low-income households, disabled people, migrants, and young people.

Within these groups, we often focus on women as they frequently bear the brunt of unjust decisions, and are often tasked with taking action on behalf of the family and wider community.

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Education



* **Trusted intermediaries** are frontline organisations and community groups that do not specialise in law, but perform a vital role in helping people navigate legal problems, connect them to sources of legal help, and support the early interventions that are needed to avoid problem escalation.

** **Legal capability** refers to the knowledge, skills and attitudes/confidence needed to frame and identify legal issues, find further sources of help, take appropriate action to successfully resolve law-related problems (even where advice and representation is not available), and influence systems and processes.

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Information and advice

Activities

We provide **accessible, quality resources online** that equip people to deal effectively with their law-related problems.

We provide **pathways** to affordable expert advice and personalised legal support tools that ameliorate disadvantage caused by lack of access to legal aid or an adviser.

Qualities

- User-centred
- Solution-focussed
- Strengthening
- Collaborative
- On your side
- Accessible
- Free or affordable

Change mechanisms

People who use our digital service:

- feel supported,
- have increased confidence to act,
- feel able to make informed decisions,
- feel confident that they have the skills and knowledge needed, and
- have increased trust in legal help.

Outcomes

Increased legal capability**, increased access to expert advice and/or tech solutions, and reduced barriers to the legal and administrative skills needed. This enables those who use our services to:

- increase their household income.
- challenge discrimination.
- resolve their family law, benefit, housing or employment problem.
- resolve their broken contract, negligence or personal injury problem.

People who use our service feel the imbalance of power between the more powerful party and themselves is reduced.

Impact

Reduced financial insecurity for low income and separating families, disabled people, migrants, and young people who use our service.

Increased access to justice for people with civil and employment disputes who use our service.

Reduction in stress and familial conflict experienced by people who use our service.

Increased resilience and reduced escalation of mental health issues in people who use our service.

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System change

Activities

We uncover unlawful or unfair practices and seek to change them through **strategic events, collaborative campaigns, and legal challenges**

Qualities

- Collaborative
- Evidence-led
- User-led
- Strengthening
- Inclusive
- Active

Change mechanisms

Those we collaborate with:

- understand how to take action, and have the skills and knowledge needed to do it effectively,
- have the network of experts and individuals necessary to demand change effectively, and
- experience solidarity and hope.

We amplify people's voices so that their stories are heard.

Outcomes

Barriers to justice and unlawful/unfair practices are exposed and challenged.

Those who use our service have an increased ability to push for change on the issues important to them, which strengthens our democracy.

Successful campaigns and legal challenges create change.

Impact

Stronger communities, able to influence and participate in effecting change.

Greater social justice through improved housing stability, reduced poverty, increased ability to challenge discrimination, and reduction of stress and conflict that adds to health inequality.

Insight

Activities

We **research** legal need, the nature and extent of legal capability, barriers to justice, and the related effects of inequality, disadvantage and systemic failures.

We carefully and honestly evaluate the impact of our work.

Qualities

- Evidence-led
- Rigorous
- Action centred
- Transparent
- Ethical

Change mechanisms

Individuals and communities feel their experiences are valued and heard.

Policy makers, academics, partner organisations trust our insight and interventions.

Outcomes

Greater understanding of legal issues, barriers to justice, and systemic failures.

Greater understanding of the impact of our interventions. Successes and mistakes inform future work.

Impact

Evidence of the role legal problems have in causing poverty, discrimination, and health inequality, and of the role increased legal capability has in alleviating it.

More equitable justice processes and procedures.

Improved evidence-led user-centred services.

Increased evidence about what works