Remote Indigenous Housing in Australia – A Social Assessment

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Presentation Outline

- **Scope of Social Assessment**
- **Research Project**
- **Institutional Mapping**
- **Soft Systems Methodology & Social Assessment**
- **Application to Research Project**
- **Conclusion**

Scope of Social Assessment

- Mainly single resource-based projects
- Great potential – especially ‘wicked problems’
  - Complex problems
  - Stakeholders do not agree on the ‘problem’
  - No clear right or wrong answer
  - Only better or worse outcomes

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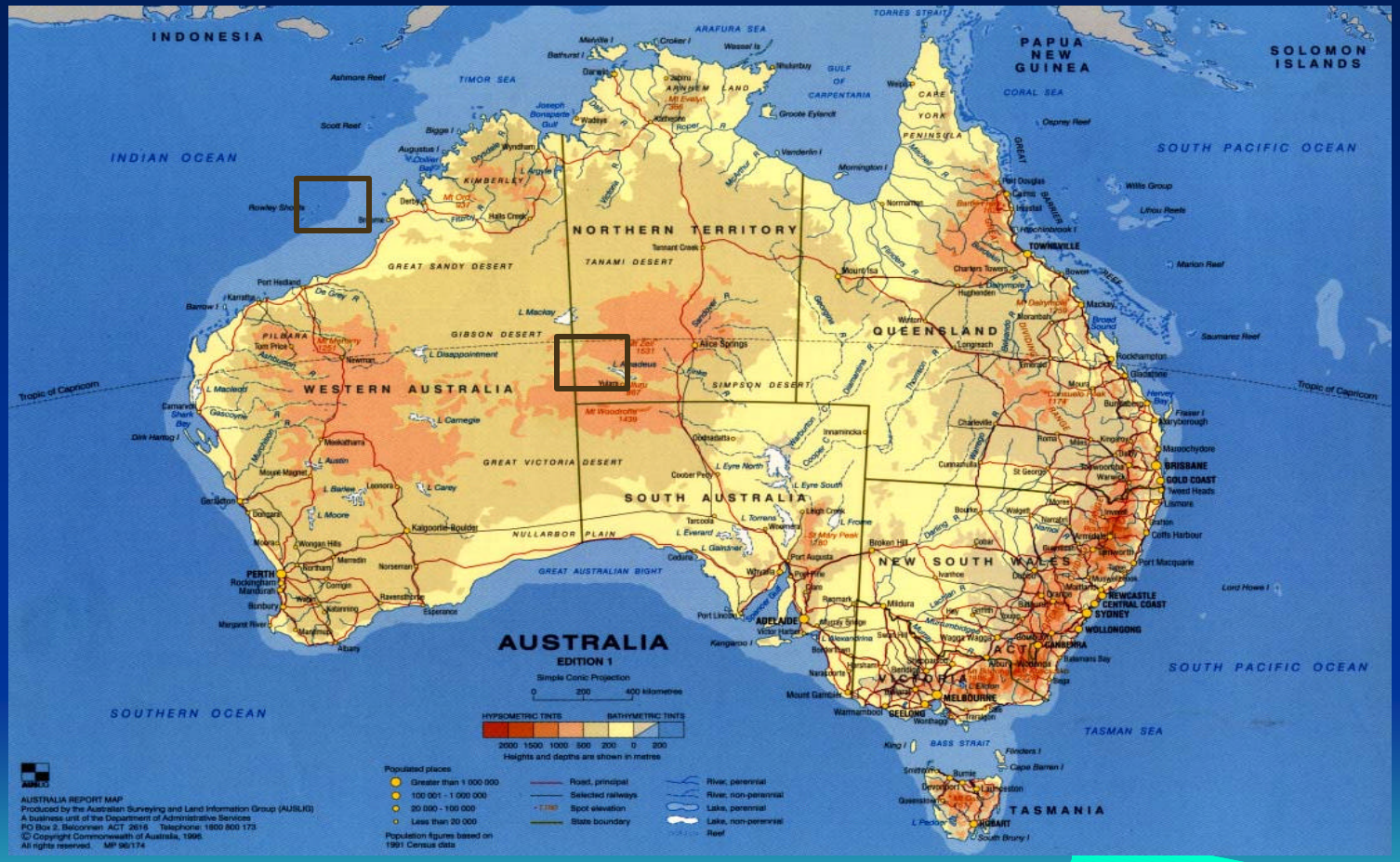
Research Project

- Remote Indigenous Housing
  - Program Integration
- Method – Social Assessment
- Institutionally complex
- Multi-level analysis
- 2 Case Study Areas

Case Study Areas



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‘Levels’ of Research

- Commonwealth Government
- State/Territory Government
- Regional Indigenous Service Providers
- Regional Indigenous Elected Council (ATSIC)
- Communities (2 WA, 2 NT)

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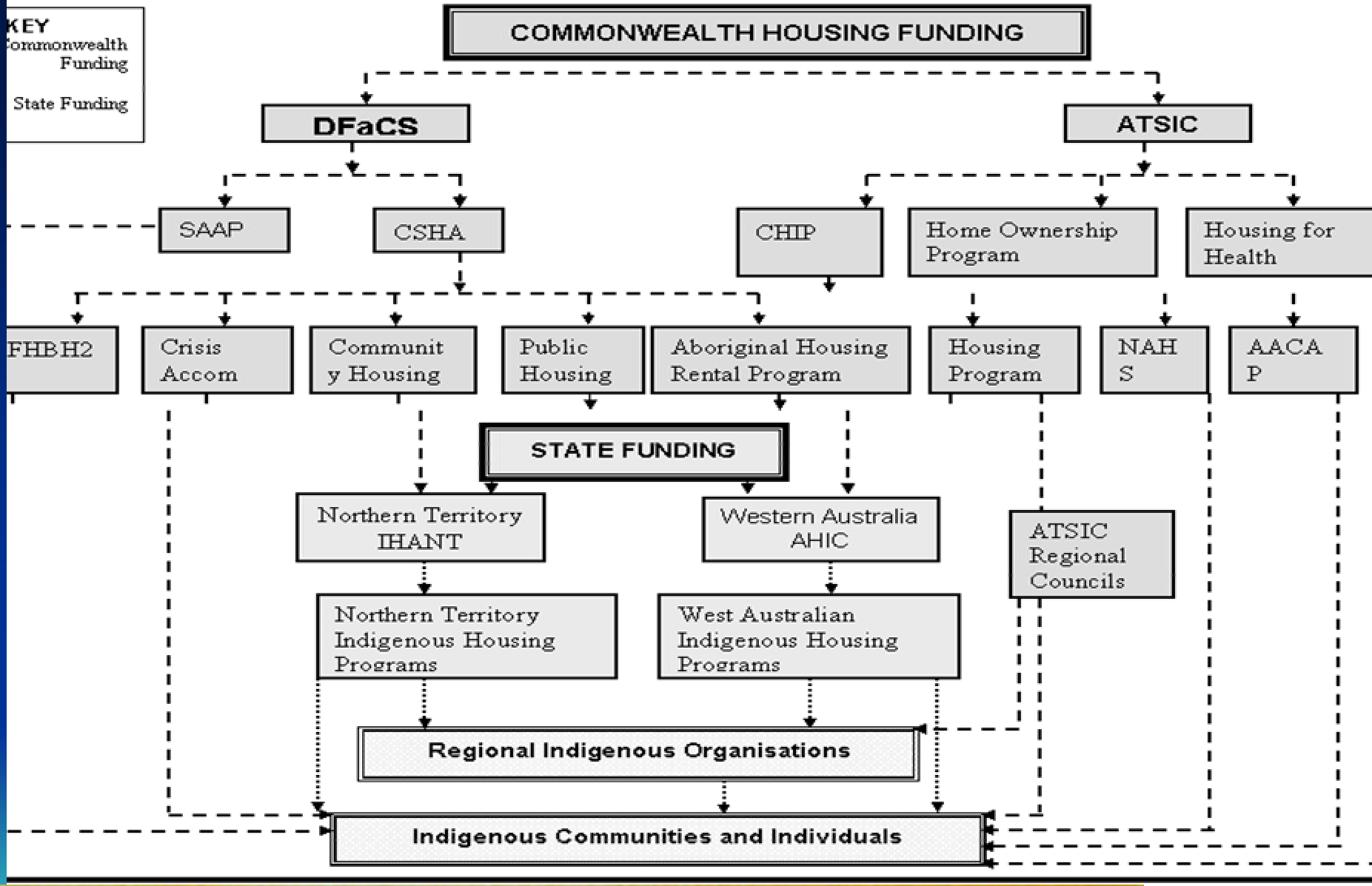
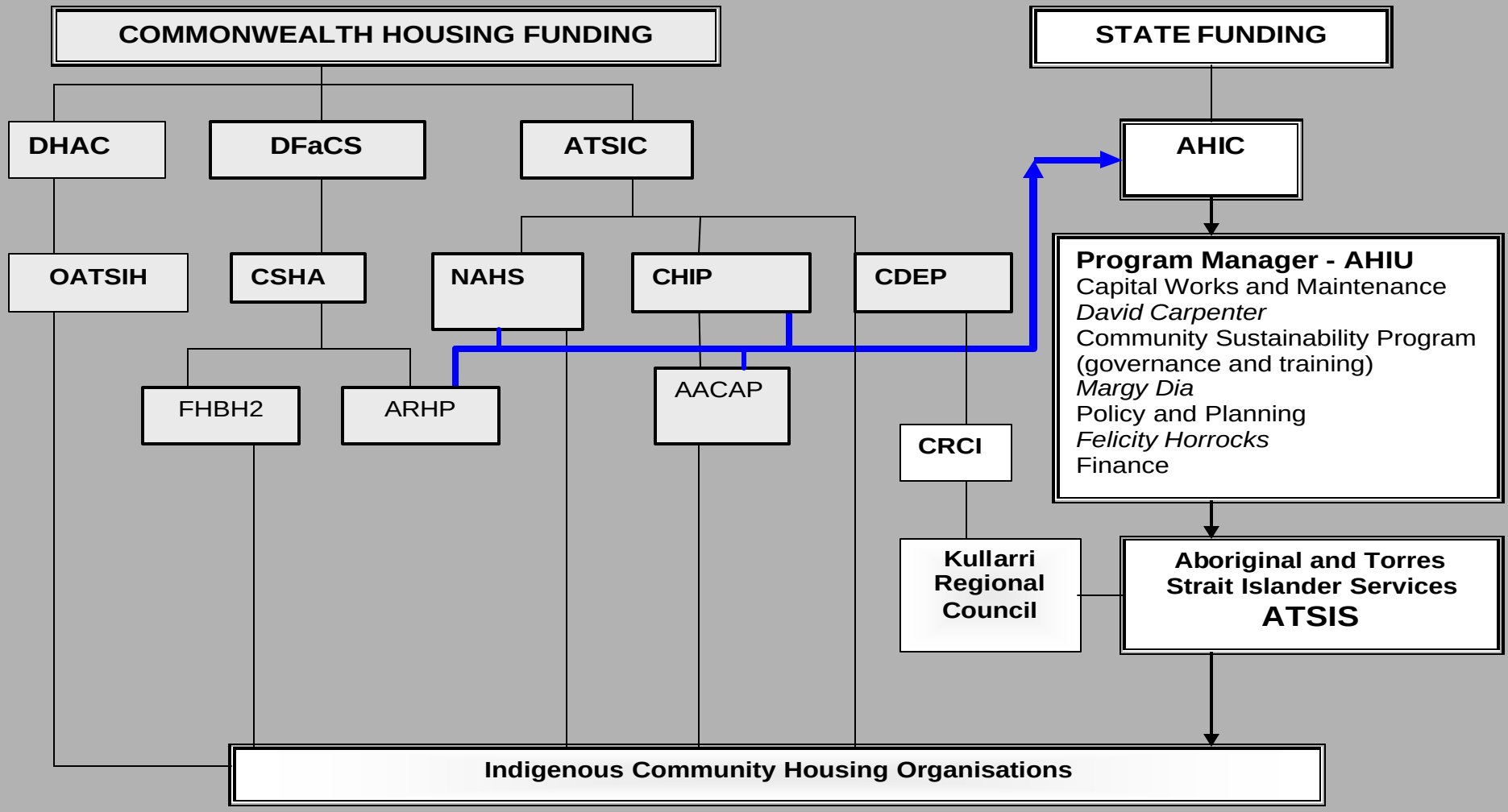
Institutional Maps

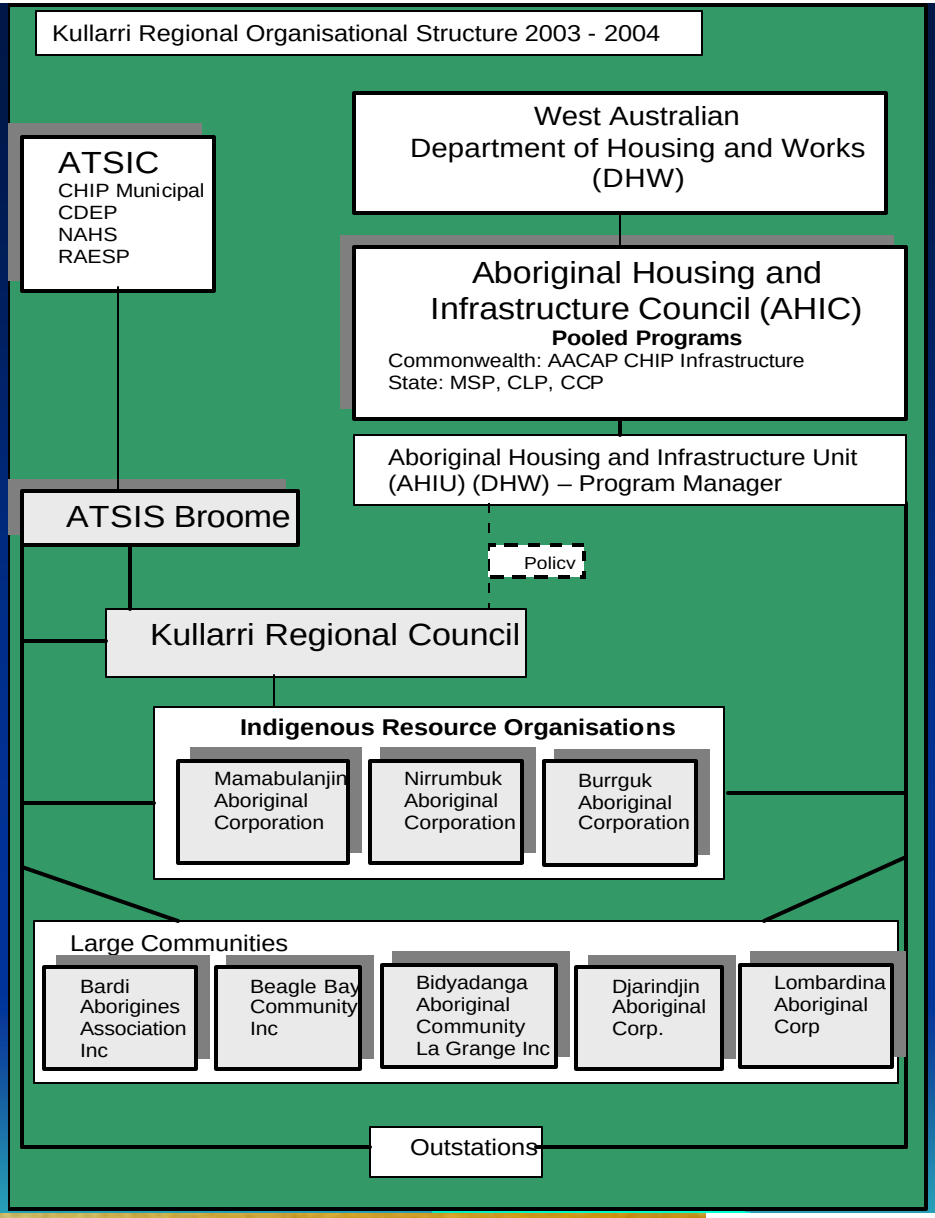
- Interpreting the institutional complexity
  - Different layers and relationships explicit
    - Essential for understanding institutional structure
  - Different purposes
    - existing structures and relationships and
    - research participants' alternative views
- Different types of maps
    - Organisational maps
    - Process maps e.g. flow of funding
- Starting point for discussions, updated
- 4 Examples


KEY
Commonwealth Funding
State Funding
COMMONWEALTH HOUSING FUNDING
DFaCS
ATSIC
SAAP
CSHA
CHIP
Home Ownership Program
Housing for Health
FHBH2
Crisis Accom
Communit y Housing
Public Housing
Aboriginal Housing Rental Program
Housing Program
NAH S
AACA P
STATE FUNDING
Northern Territory IHANT
Western Australia AHIC
ATSIC Regional Councils
Northern Territory Indigenous Housing Programs
West Australian Indigenous Housing Programs
Regional Indigenous Organisations
Indigenous Communities and Individuals

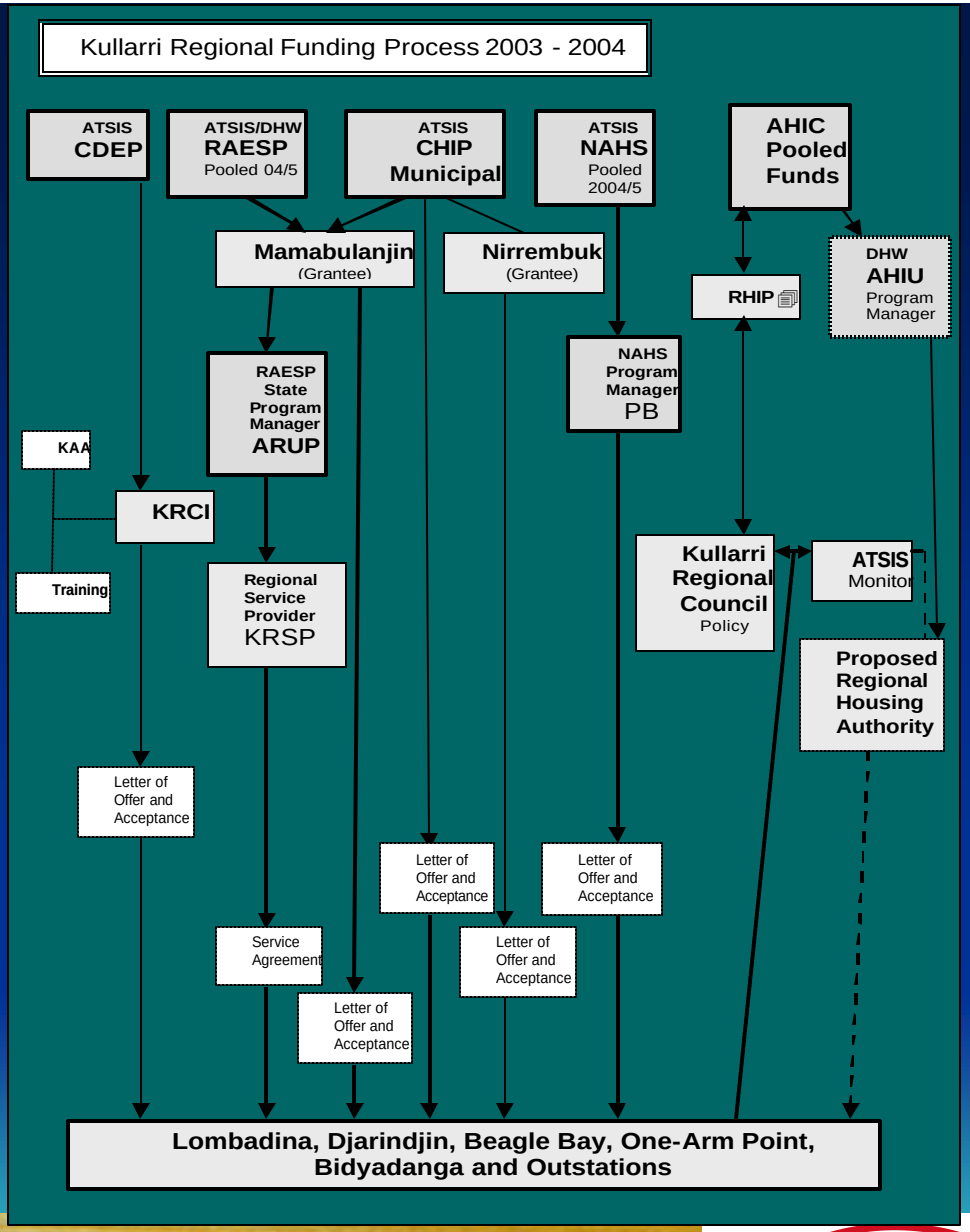
Commonwealth and State Flow of Funds



Regional Organisational Diagram



Regional Funding Flow Diagram



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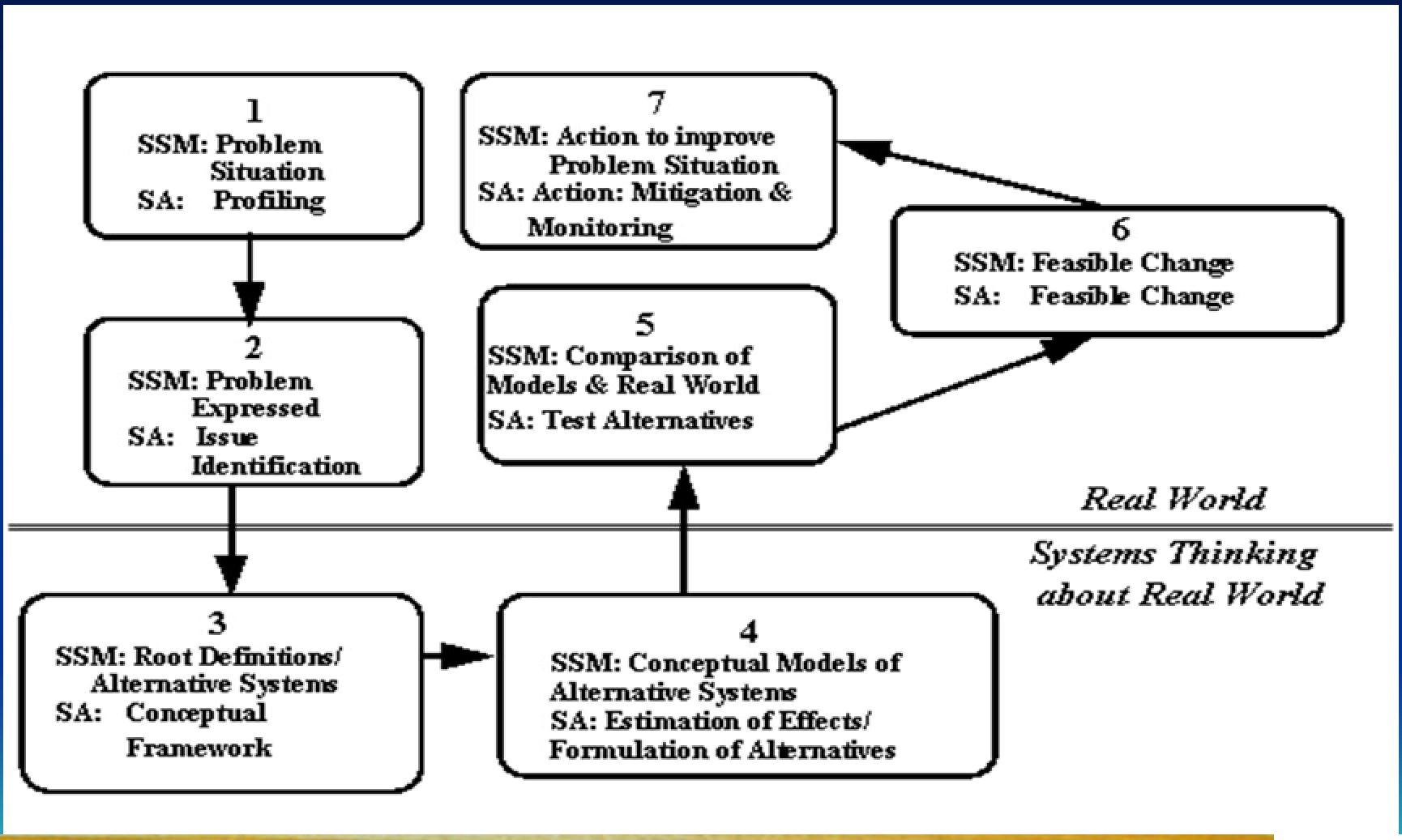
SSM and Social Assessment

- Systems thinking – complex entities with interrelated parts
- 1970's 'Hard' Systems applied to 'messy' problems = new field of "Soft Systems"
- Peter Checkland
- Flexible tools – many applications
- Overlap between issues-orientated SA and SSM

Soft System Methodology Tools

- **C**ustomers of the system
- **A**ctors in the system
- **T**ransformation that occurs in the system
- **W**eltanschauung or world view
- **O**wners of the system
- **E**nvironmental constraints
- **E1** efficacy; **E2** efficiency; **E3** effectiveness

SA and SSM


1
SSM: Problem Situation
SA: Profiling
2
SSM: Problem Expressed
SA: Issue Identification
3
SSM: Root Definitions/ Alternative Systems
SA: Conceptual Framework
4
SSM: Conceptual Models of Alternative Systems
SA: Estimation of Effects/ Formulation of Alternatives
5
SSM: Comparison of Models & Real World
SA: Test Alternatives
6
SSM: Feasible Change
SA: Feasible Change
7
SSM: Action to improve Problem Situation
SA: Action: Mitigation & Monitoring
Real World
Systems Thinking about Real World

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Research Project

- Remote Indigenous Housing
- Two Competing views - continuum
  - Prevailing housing supply approach
  - Alternative housing demand approach
- CATWOE and 3 E's applied to each
  - Made problems inherent in 2 approaches explicit
  - Different world views clear
  - 3 E's – neither ideal given constraints
- Workable solution – combination of 2

SA, SSM & Research Project

- SSM Useful tools
  - Use as needed
- Tools – assist in structuring alternatives and making implicit issues explicit
- Particularly useful in ‘wicked’ problems -
- See paper for detailed analysis

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Conclusion

- Social Assessments applicable in many contexts
- Valuable input to examination of complex 'wicked' problems
- SSM provides useful tools for SA to use in complex situations