



Shifting culture and systems to support active lives for all

Ben Andrews, Beyond Empower

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Joe Sarling, GM Moving

Matthew Kidd, GM System Changer

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Language, myths, metaphors, stories, imagery, assumptions, mind sets, media, belief, worldview

Socio-political, economic, environmental

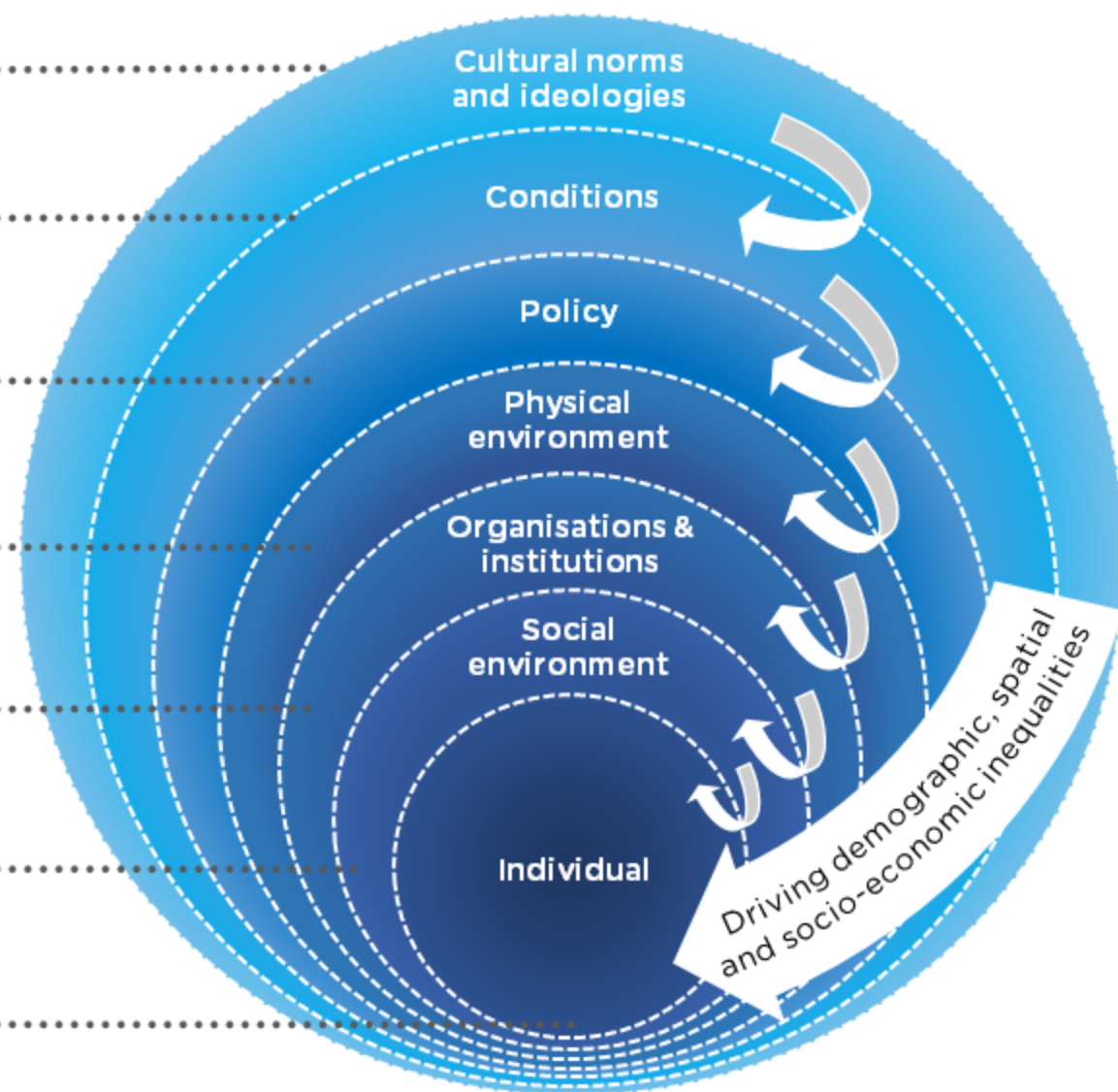
International and national guidance & laws, local laws and policies, rules, regulations, codes, times and schedules

Built environment, natural environment, green & blue spaces, transport networks, homes

Schools, healthcare, businesses, faith organisations, charities, clubs

Individual relationships, families, support groups, social networks

Individual capabilities, motivations, opportunities, knowledge, needs, behaviours, physical and mental health and wellbeing





“I am no longer accepting the
things **I cannot change.** I am
changing the things **I cannot
accept.”**

- Angela Y. Davis



Bollyfit Active: Power and System Disruption

Shamime Jan

Founder- Director



Not Hard to Reach—Hard to Ignore

The Problem: Systemic Invisibility

Too many women are excluded from movement and health spaces—not by choice, but by design.

- Systems weren't built with our languages, cultures, or lived realities in mind
- Women face racism, body shaming, misogyny, language barriers, and intergenerational trauma
- We're stereotyped as passive, dependent, unengaged—while our leadership and complexity go unseen
- Culturally safe, community-rooted spaces remain underfunded and undervalued
- **We are visible to stereotypes, but invisible to systems of care.**



Bibi/Begum Syndrome: The Catalyst

- “**Bibi/Begum Syndrome**” refers to the harmful stereotype of South Asian women as exaggerating or fabricating health issues
- It framed us as problems to fix, not people to listen to
- That report didn’t see the women I know—resilient, joyful, full of leadership
- It was in that moment I knew **we needed our own space, our own narrative, and our own power**

Bollyfit Active CIC was born from the need to dismantle “**Bibi Syndrome**”—and replace it with community, culture, and movement-led healing.





The Response: Community-Led Change

We didn't wait for permission—we built what we needed

- **Bollyfit Active** and **Afrofit** (Accredited by Active IQ) were born from community wisdom, not institutional design.
- We created spaces where women could move, heal, and lead, on their own terms.
- Our programmes address health disparities by centring cultural identity, joy, and collective empowerment.
- Through initiatives like pre-diabetes support, weight loss challenges, and trauma-informed healing circles, we tackle systemic barriers with community-rooted solutions.



This is what systems change looks like—led by us, for us.



Our Ask to the System

**We don't need fixing—
we need resourcing.**

- Invest in what's already working in our communities
- Recognise community-led programmes as professional and vital
- Trust culturally rooted leadership
- Design systems with the people they serve



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