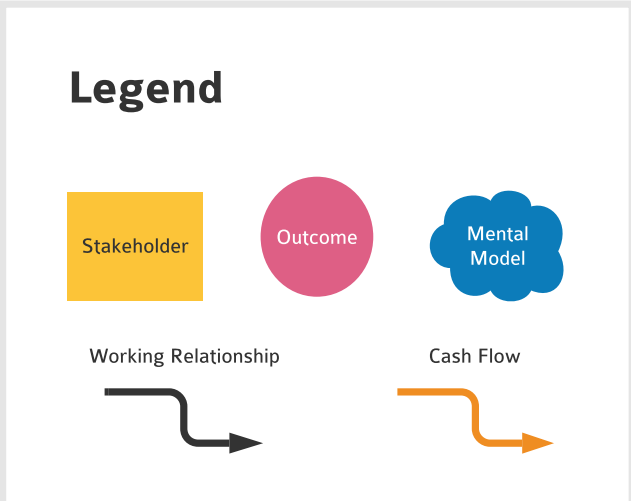
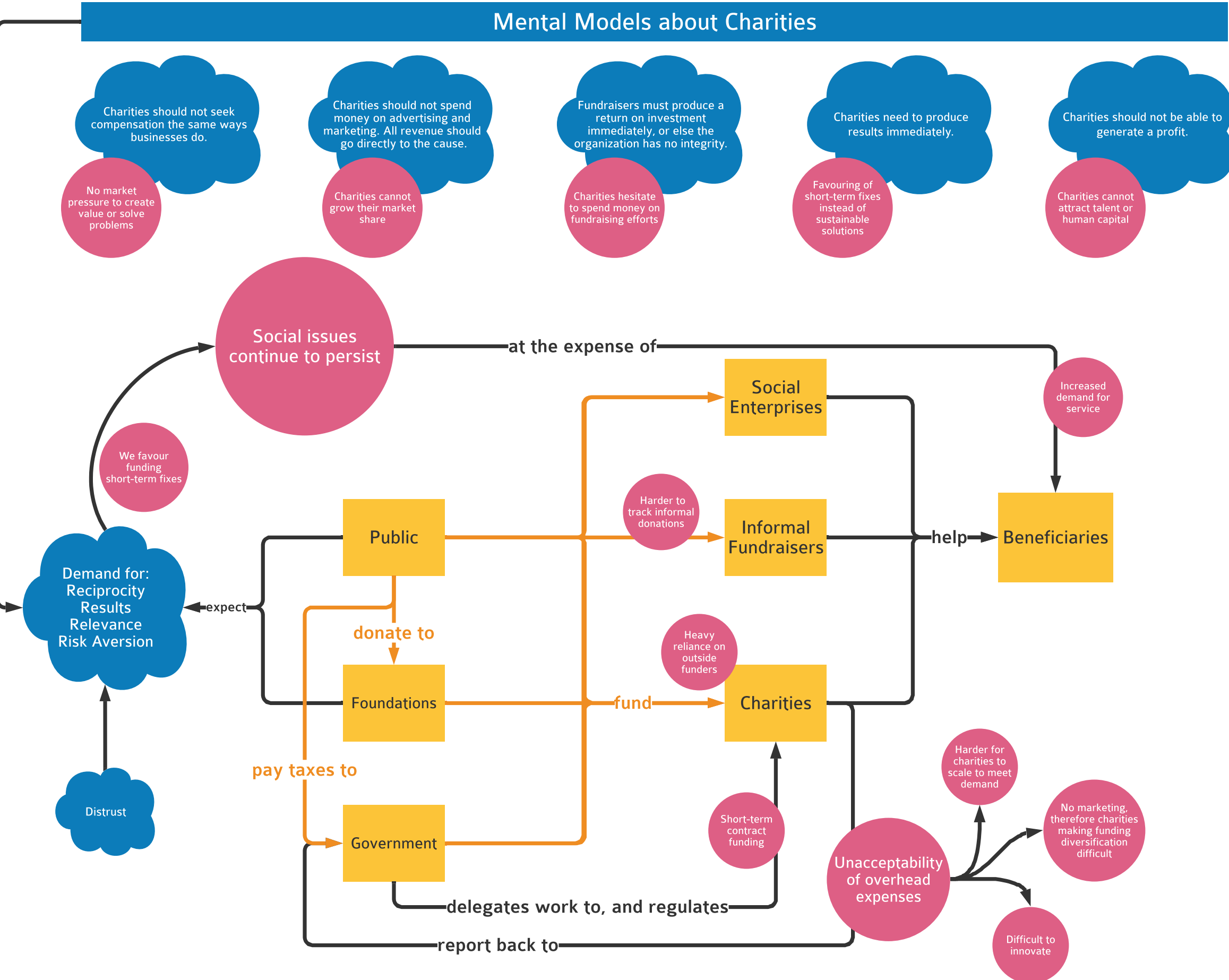


How do our mental models about charity affect its function?



Our mental models about charity have a profound impact on the ways we interact with and perceive charities. These mental models also affect how charities function.

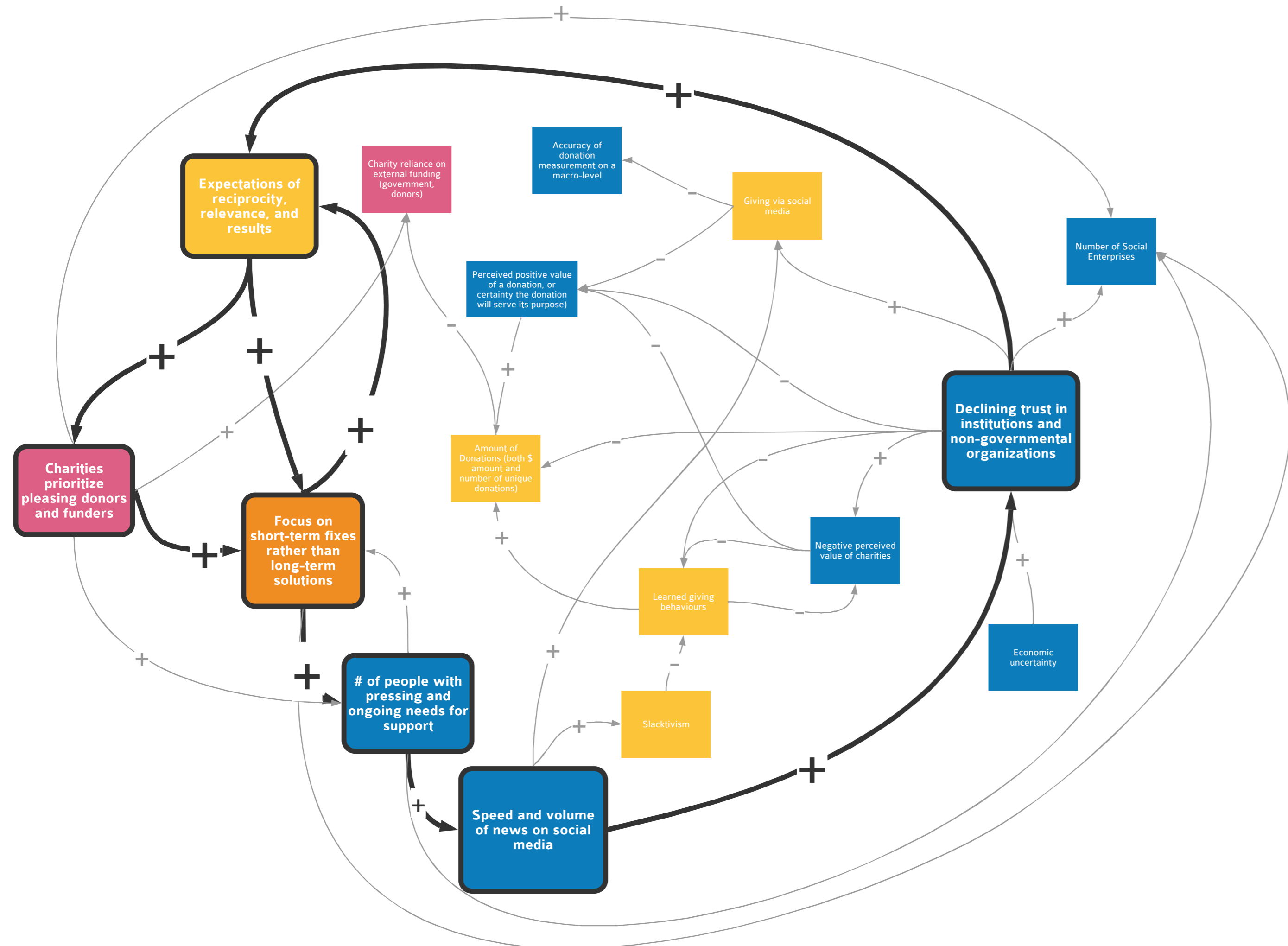
While there are many positive aspects to the charity sector, our mental models can be restrictive to charities' ability to solve problems at scale.

Instead, we prioritize fulfilling funders' expectations, maintaining balanced budgets, and responding reactively rather than focusing on how to solve problems at scale and putting the beneficiary first.

The historical legacy of the charity sector, combined with aspects of human behaviour and our ideological views of charity, make it difficult to break out of these paths.

As a result, social issues continue to persist due to charity's inability to scale, the funding of short-term fixes, and restrictions on how charities run their organizations.

Charity doesn't exist in its own world



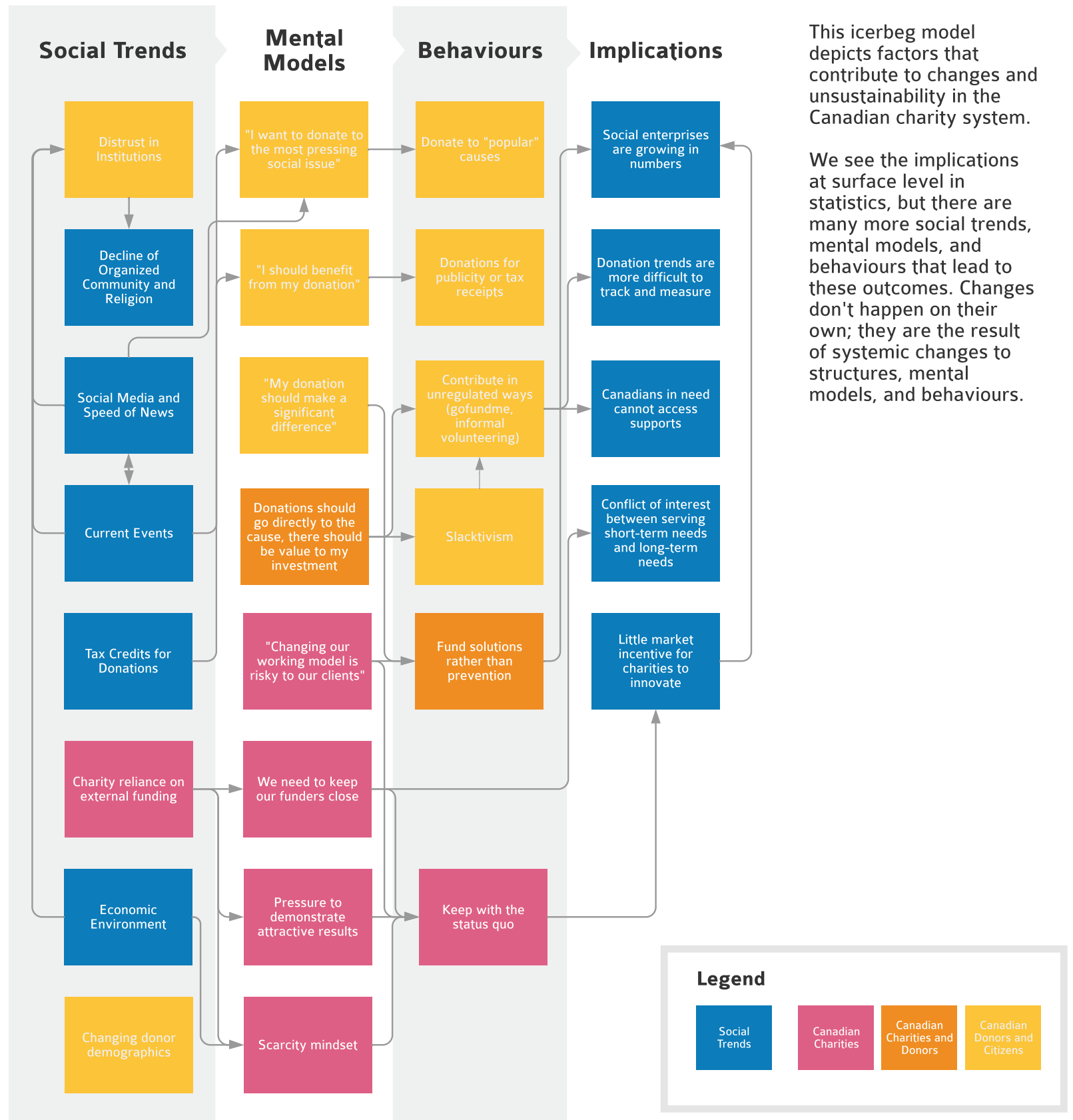
This diagram demonstrates the ways in which donors' demand for reciprocity, declining trust in organizations, the speed and volume of information, and focusing on short-term fixes contribute to a massive amount of systems change in the Canadian charity sector.

What we can take away from this system is that trust and transparency are paramount. People want to know exactly what is happening at all times, and keeping people's trust is difficult in today's world of fast news and instant gratification.

We can also infer that structures that support charities catering to meeting short-term needs (out of a need to fulfill donor expectations) can be harmful in the long term because of their effects on the public's expectations and perceptions of how charities should function.

This affects giving behaviours in turn, which decrease the perceived value of our donations, decrease our ability to measure giving, and increase the growth of social enterprises, along with a multitude of other effects.

The Canadian Charity Iceberg



Why is charity so stuck?

Our donations are informed by expectations, motivations, and mental models.

As a result, charities act to fulfill our expectations. Additionally, we build our structures and regulations to align with these mental models, deepening the path dependency.

Leaving this path is seen as a risky decision, as people in need are potentially compromised.

