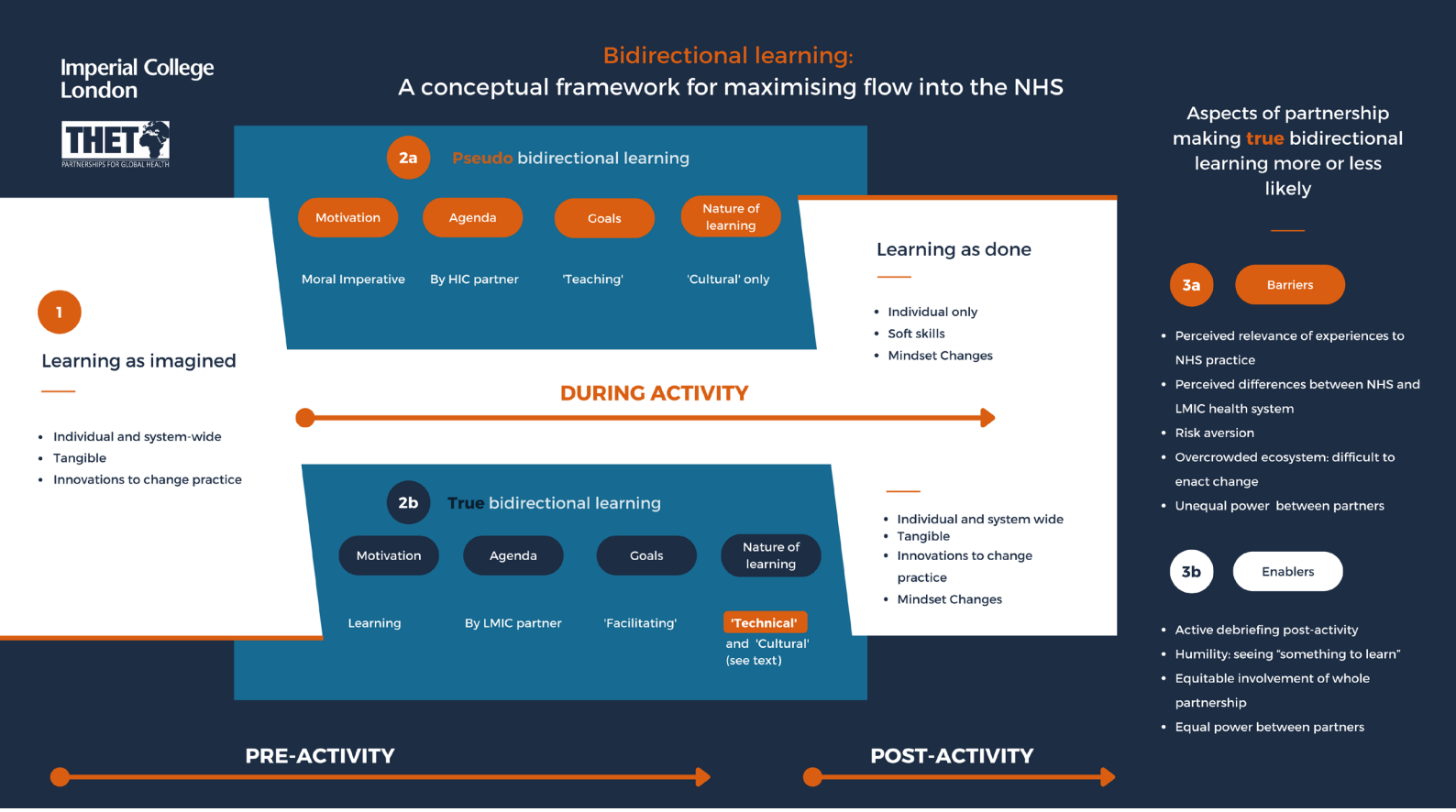

1. Bidirectional learning as imagined. The term "bidirectional learning" is conceptualized as a mutually beneficial learning relationship at the beginning of a partnership. Reports indicate that they will be contributing knowledge, but also receiving knowledge during the partnership.

2. Bidirectional learning in practice. These steps can set the tone to result in a divergence from bidirectional learning "as imagined".

a. Pseudo bidirectional learning: When participants indicate they are joining out of a sense of a moral imperative, agendas are set by HIC partners or goals involve a top-down teaching approach, this can reinforce hierarchies of knowledge and prevent the participants from seeing the LMIC partner as producers of knowledge. The resulting learning is purely "cultural", focused on the individual, and consists of soft skills and mindset changes.

b. True bidirectional learning: Conversely, when agendas are set by the LMIC partners and when goals of the partnership involve the ability and opportunity to learn from the LMIC partners, this levels the playing field and frames both partners as equal knowledge brokers. Learning is both cultural and technical, and can have impacts on a system-wide level, through innovations that can transform

3. Aspects of partnership influencing bidirectional learning.

a. Barriers: A perceived difference in the contexts (NHS vs LMIC), along with an overcrowded system that is generally seen to be risk averse, encourages participants to focus primarily on "cultural" learning. This results in a mismatch between bidirectional learning as imagined and as done, and contributes to unequal knowledge between partners.

b. Enablers: Active debriefs, cultivating a sense of humility and recognizing that everyone has something to learn and something to contribute, regardless of context, can facilitate "technical" learning of techniques, technologies and transformation of processes. Knowledge includes "cultural" and bidirectional learning as imagined.