A Campaign of the Partnership for Strong Communities

Collective Impact and Workgroup Management Handbook

Updated September 2021

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I. Foreword

Reaching Home is the collective impact campaign to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut. With more than 200 partners representing a variety of systems and sectors, Reaching Home is working to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.

As an active participant in the Reaching Home Campaign, you are joining a successful, dynamic, collective impact effort that has been hard at work since 2004. The Campaign has evolved and grown through multiple phases of progress. Starting with the goal of ending chronic homelessness, we only imagined a time when we could more aggressively target solutions to families with children, youth and other populations of people experiencing homelessness in the state. In seven years, the Campaign built strong public/private partnerships, greatly elevated the political and civic will, and advocated for the creation of over 5,000 units of permanent supportive housing.

After a year of extensive planning, the Campaign launched Opening Doors in CT in 2012 with a statewide road map and set timeframes for how to end homelessness for Veterans, families with children, youth, and individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. We worked to reach these milestones and set a path to end all forms of homelessness –and begun to focus more heavily on preventing homelessness from occurring in the first place.

We know that we will never be able to solve the complex social problem of homelessness if we don't address the structural issues that cause it, including the increased demand for and decline in available affordable housing options, structural and systematic racism, housing and employment discrimination, residential segregation, and inadequate access to mental health and substance use services to name a few. In addition to serving as the backbone organization for the Reaching Home Campaign, the Partnership for Strong Communities (PSC), launched the HOMEConnecticut Campaign in 2006. HOMEConnecticut works to address Connecticut's affordable housing shortage. Both campaigns employ complimentary strategies to ensure that everyone in Connecticut has a safe, stable home that is affordable to them in an equitable community of their choice where they can thrive.

By 2019, both statewide campaigns reached some major milestones, including an end to Veteran homelessness, near end to chronic homelessness, historically low rates of homelessness overall, creation of the Incentive Housing Zone Program to expand housing options, and affordable housing planning grants to more than 70 municipalities.

In 2020, Reaching Home entered its third and current phase. This included the launch of a new statewide goal to **make all homelessness in Connecticut rare, brief, and one-time by 2023**, along with work to implement a new streamlined campaign structure with a deeper focus on preventing individuals and families from becoming homeless through partnering with and driving change in other systems. Prevention approaches to effectively target those at risk of becoming homeless will help to ensure families avoid homelessness and remain stably housed.

Housing cost burdened families at risk of eviction and homelessness are disproportionately people of color. Housing instability and homelessness disproportionally impacts marginalized

communities, leaving lasting impacts on families and entire communities. We cannot reach our joint goals unless we focus on the root causes of homelessness including the racial inequities that have been historically perpetuated. We must continue to increase partnerships with community-based organizations that serve and represent people of color and have participation by people of color at all levels. The Campaign has also made a commitment to create more meaningful partnerships with people with lived expertise.

Only together, can we develop and advocate for long-term solutions that address the systemic issues that place people at high risk of homelessness. Thank you so much for being a part of this important work – we look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

Kiley Gosselin, *Executive Director*

Chelsea Ross, *Deputy Director*

Carline Charmelus, *Collective Impact and Equity Manager*

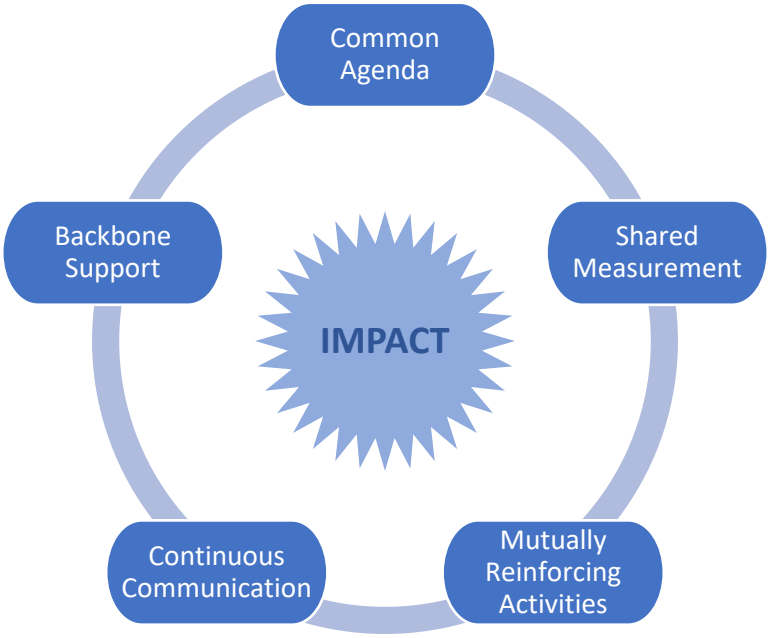
Danielle Hubley, *Policy Analyst*

II. Collective Impact Model

A. Why Collective Impact Works

"Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem, using a structured form of collaboration."[1]

Collective impact supports partners from across systems to come together, build trust, share ideas, and find the solutions to complex social problems. Collective impact initiatives involve a common understanding of the problem and a shared vision for change. Collective impact initiatives use a structured process to develop shared measurement and accountability, and a commitment to mutually reinforcing activities—coordinating differentiated activities through a joint plan of action. Successful initiatives require consistent open communication and trust between partners, and an organization with dedicated staff and the resources and skills to convene and coordinate participating organizations.



Effective collective impact initiatives also require centering the work through an equity lens and by intentionally engaging and valuing the leadership of individuals with lived experience in the policies, practices, structures, the initiative seeks to impact.

[1] Kania, J. & Kramer, M. (2011). Collective Impact: Large-scale social change requires *broad cross-sector Coordination, yet the social sector remains focused on the isolated interventions of individual organizations.* Stanford Social Innovation Review.

B. Your Role in Collective Impact

Homelessness is a complex issue that requires the involvement of a broad spectrum of individuals and organizations. The Reaching Home Campaign works to improve coordination between partners and dissolve the barriers that inhibit large-scale change. As an active participant in the Reaching Home Campaign, your organization has committed to the collective impact model. You have committed to:

- Being an active part of the statewide effort to prevent and end homelessness and operating under the collective impact model.
- Weighing in and agreeing on the shared goal to prevent and end homelessness and are willing to work collectively and collaboratively with partner organizations to define and execute strategies to achieve this goal.
- Serving as the liaison for the views and beliefs of your organization to the larger statewide efforts to end homelessness.
- Providing insight on the expertise/perspective you and/or your organization brings to our collective efforts.
- Participating in advocacy efforts during the CT General Assembly's legislative session, to the extent as advocacy is permitted within your organization.
- Sharing information back with your organization to inform them of efforts being developed/discussed by the Campaign.
- Active participation in monthly meetings.
- Utilizing Basecamp--a way to stay connected and share information with partners in-between meetings.

For example:

In a 100 Day Challenge to end Youth homelessness, a group of organizations can focus on different aspects of the initiative.

One organization could take responsibility for organizing grassroots support and engagement, a second organization could provide training and technical assistance, and a third could focus on the policy and advocacy.

Although each organization has its own focus and expertise, they are able to bring their unique strengths together, remain consistent with the common agenda and informed by the shared measurement of results.

The power of collective action comes not from the sheer number of participants or the uniformity of their efforts, but from the coordination and alignment of their unique efforts toward a shared desired outcome. Each organization and their representative bring a unique perspective, skills, and abilities and covers a different aspect of the work.

III. Reaching Home Campaign

A. Campaign Overview

The Reaching Home Campaign is a dynamic community of stakeholders drawn together around the singular mission of ending homelessness in Connecticut. With more than 200 partners across 120 organizations representing a variety of sectors, Reaching Home works to develop policies, community support, and resources that will bring an end to homelessness in Connecticut.

The goal of the Reaching Home Campaign is to make homelessness in Connecticut rare, brief, and one-time by 2023.

To achieve this goal, we must:

- **Ensure identification of all people experiencing homelessness**, **that no one experiences unsheltered homelessness, and that people don't enter homelessness in the first place.** This requires comprehensive, coordinated approaches for homelessness prevention, outreach and diversion across the housing, criminal justice, child welfare, education, workforce, early childhood, health care, mental health systems, etc.
- **Reduce the length of time people stay in homelessness and continue to increase the number of people exiting homelessness into stable housing**. This requires the resources and capacity to triage and connect people to permanent housing options quickly.
- **Strengthen supports to individuals and families that help them maintain housing stability by fostering income growth, and positive health and employment outcomes**, so that they don't ever have to return to homelessness again.
- **Ensure meaningful partnership with people who have experienced homelessness, with a focus on racial equity, in all work** and strategy development related to ending homelessness.

i. Role of the Backbone Organization

The collective impact model has been proven to be most successful when there is a backbone organization that helps to operate the management and logistics of the Campaign structure. The Partnership for Strong Communities (PSC) has been in this role since Reaching Home's inception. We are here to help! In addition to offering technical and logistical support, the role of the backbone includes six key components:

1. Guide vision and strategy
2. Support aligned activities
3. Communicate shared measurements
4. Coordinate building public will
5. Advance policy
6. Mobilize funding

PSC also serves as a key partner and support to workgroup co-chairs and facilitators. PSC staff are available to assist in agenda setting, relationship management and help facilitate continuous communication between workgroups and partners. PSC also serves as a partner and leader in specific policy activities, supports the work of the Campaign through research and education opportunities, and is committed to improving our practices and structures to ensure equitable outcomes. Along with key partners, PSC helps lead and support legislative advocacy efforts throughout the year on behalf of the Reaching Home Campaign.

The Reaching Home staff team includes:

Carline Charmelus, Collective Impact and Equity Manager- Carline is responsible for coordination and leadership for the Reaching Home Campaign and works in collaboration with the coalition of organizations established to end homelessness in Connecticut. Carline also guides and supports PSC and Reaching Home's equity efforts to ensure that every aspect of our work is conducted through an equity lens. Carline currently provides staffing support to the Reaching Home Coordinating Committee as well as the Prevention, Sustainability, and Data and Accountability Workgroups and several task groups.

Danielle Hubley, Policy Analyst- Danielle provides support to multiple committees and working groups convened by the Campaign. Danielle examines local, state, and federal housing policy and collaborates with staff, campaign partners and community stakeholders to identify and implement policy solutions, including supporting the advocacy activities of the Campaign. Danielle currently provides staffing support to the Reaching Home Resources and CAN Homeless Delivery System Workgroups and several task groups.

Chelsea Ross, Deputy Director- Chelsea oversees PSC's collective impact initiatives, including Reaching Home and HomeCT, and aspects of organization operations.

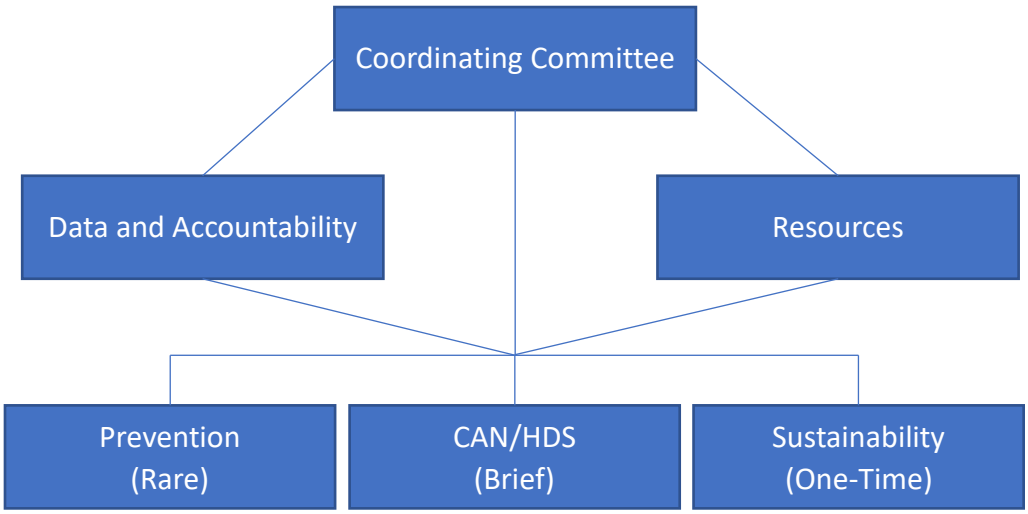
Kiley Gosselin, Executive Director- Kiley maintains overall strategic and operational responsibility for PSC's staff, programs, and execution of its mission.

B. Campaign Structure and Roles

i. Campaign Structure

The Reaching Home Campaign structure is comprised of a Coordinating Committee, five core Workgroups, and issue-specific time limited Task Groups. The structure of the campaign brings partners together to drive creative and collaborative solutions to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time in Connecticut.

Campaign Structure



All Campaign Work and Task Groups are inclusive spaces that encourage the participation and leadership of individuals with lived expertise and partners at any level of their organization.

If you have someone in your network who is interested in joining any aspect of the Campaign, please share the ongoing, rolling participation application form with them.

ii. Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee directs the Reaching Home Campaign and provides guidance to Reaching Home Workgroups. Additional functions include:

- Approving major policies
- Finalizing funding recommendations
- Assisting Workgroups with agenda and direction
- Coordinating information flow between Workgroups
- Disseminating information
- Setting legislative agendas and priorities for sessions

Membership and Meetings

- The Reaching Home Coordinating Committee includes between **20 and 30 members** total. Membership includes representation from:
  - **(5) Reaching Home Workgroups Representatives**- *including* 1 chair from each standing workgroup
  - **(9+) Community Partner Representatives**- *including* but not limited to:
    - (6+) Housing/Service providers
    - (2+) Individuals who identify as persons with lived expertise
    - (1+) Private Philanthropy
  - **(4+) Statewide Partner/Advocacy Organizations Representatives**- *including* but not limited to:
    - (1) Partnership for Strong Communities
    - (1) Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness
    - (1) Corporation for Supportive Housing
    - (1) United Way
  - **(2) Continuum of Care Representatives**- *including* 1 from each CoC:
    - (1) CT Balance of State (BOS)
    - (1) CT Opening Doors Fairfield County
  - **State Agency Representatives** (one rep per agency)
  - **Federal Agency Representatives** (one rep per agency)

- Coordinating Committee membership is 3 years, after which members can re-apply for the Committee.
- Reaching Home Coordinating Committee members, with support from PSC, will continuously identify any gaps in representation in Committee membership and actively and thoughtfully recruit members to participate in the Committee.
- The Coordinating Committee includes a Membership Subcommittee that reviews all renewals and new membership requests and makes recommendations to the full Committee.

All Workgroup meeting schedules and membership can be accessed here. Coordinating Committee meetings are open to non-Committee members. Please contact Carline@pschousing.org if you would like to attend. Meetings include a non-member input period at the beginning and/or end of the meeting based on the content of the agenda.

iii. Workgroups

The Reaching Home Campaign structure includes **five core Workgroups**.

Resources	Making the best use of existing federal and state funding streams and the expansion of existing/pursuit of new resources to meet statewide goals.
Data and Accountability	Providing strategic leadership on the use of data to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time, and to use data to inform decisions on providing equitable access to resources and housing stability across all Connecticut populations.
CAN/Homeless Delivery System	Aligning the Coordinated Access Networks (CANs) and continuing to improve our crisis response system, shorten length of stays and increase positive exits.
Prevention	Preventing individuals and families from becoming homeless by partnering with and helping to drive change across multiple systems.
Sustainability	Sustaining our successes by preventing those who have exited homelessness from becoming homeless again and sustaining permanent housing.

Workgroups determine their priorities and corresponding work plan. Workgroups establish projects and coordinate with any task groups as well as the Coordinating Committee. Additional functions include:

- Coordinating work between partners
- Identifying metrics to measure progress
- Establish and monitor project task groups
- Drafting legislative recommendations

Membership and Meetings

Membership of Workgroups is limited to 20-30 participants who represent key aspects of the area of work the Workgroup is focused on. It can be harder to coordinate larger numbers of people for meetings, and information can get lost if attendees do not have clear expectations for participation or the flow of communication.

All Reaching Home Workgroup meetings are open to the public. All Workgroup meeting schedules and membership can be accessed here. If you have someone in your network who is interested in joining one of the Campaign's Workgroups, please share the ongoing, rolling participation application form with them. Please note that the Resources Workgroup membership is limited to local, state, and federal funding agencies and statewide intermediaries.

iv. Task Groups

Workgroup members may decide to form time-limited Task Groups focused on resolving a specific, established problem with a key set of deliverables and expected outcomes. Task Groups may be formed to identify system efficiencies and barriers, identify funding needs and funding allocation recommendations, etc. Membership of Task Groups can include members from any Workgroup as well as other relevant stakeholders with subject matter expertise.

Task Group Formation and Charter:

If a Workgroup plans to form a new Task Group, members should utilize the Task Group Charter Template, which collects the following information:

- Problem Statement *(Why group needs to be convened)*
- Executive Summary *(Charge of the group)*
- Deliverables *(Outline, scope of project and outcomes)*
- Timeline *(When to check in and begin planning for next steps/iterations of project)*
- Participants *(Could be exact names, or just relevant agencies they'd like at the table)*
- Convener *(Point person to contact around project Task Group)*

Task Groups convene on their own schedule and determine their group process (facilitation, etc.) Task Groups provide final deliverables/recommendations to the designated Workgroup(s).

v. Advocacy

We know that making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time requires investments and policy changes across systems. A major aspect of the Campaign's work includes developing an annual unified legislative agenda built by and supported by Campaign members, that seeks the funding and systems change necessary to reach our goal.

Each year, Workgroups discuss their most pressing legislative recommendations based on conversations with and input from task groups, and the communities and sectors Workgroup members represent. Workgroups share top legislative priorities with the Coordinating Committee. The Coordinating Committee works to integrate the recommendations of each Workgroup to form a cohesive unified legislative agenda.

To help ensure the advocacy efforts of the Campaign are thoughtfully coordinated and aligned, the Coordinating Committee developed an Advocacy Strategies Group tasked with:

- Supporting the Campaign by organizing opportunities to gain data and input from communities, providers, and individuals with lived expertise to support the development of policy and advocacy priorities.
- Supporting the Campaign by coordinating advocacy strategies, shared messaging, and focusing on grassroots activation.
- Soliciting and digesting input from multiple existing groups to coordinate strategies and messaging that is informed by a wide group of stakeholders.

To learn more about current advocacy work and opportunities taking place within the Reaching Home Campaign, click here.

C. Campaign Membership

i. Member Expectations

Members are expected to:

- Communicate regularly with the organization, agency, or community they represent, and other stakeholders when requested, to seek input, ideas, and keep them informed about the process and issues being discussed.
- Attend and actively participate in all meetings for the Workgroup/Task Group. Meetings may be held in-person or virtually. Attendance and participation is a critical to ensuring discussions, work, and priorities include all perspectives and meeting times are as productive as possible.
- Notify co-chairs, meeting facilitator and backbone staff person (if applicable) if you are unable to attend.
- Provide timely written or verbal feedback on issues or documents under discussion by the group.
- Attend relevant technical training offered for members.

ii. Membership Selection and Ratification

- Anyone interested in joining one of the Campaign's Workgroups should complete the participation application form. Before submitting the form, prospective members should review this Handbook in entirety. If they have questions or concerns related to committing to collective impact, they should reach out to PSC for more information.
- Once an application is submitted, PSC staff will outreach to applicant and schedule a time to connect with the prospective member.
- The submitted participation application form is shared with the relevant workgroup co-chairs/or membership subcommittee for review and discussion.
- Applicants are invited to attend the workgroup meeting as prospective members, introduce themselves, their interest in joining, and share their commitment to working collaboratively through collective impact.
- Pending group capacity and any feedback from current members, applicants may be invited to become a member of the group.
- Invited members are presented to the Reaching Home Coordinating Committee to be formally ratified.

As we continue to diversify and increase the membership composition of the Campaign, we want to ensure that there's a process in place to create opportunities for building relationships

among the workgroup members. We know each individual brings a different perspective, value and sets of skills to this work and that existing members of the Campaigns have a wealth of historical knowledge that may be beneficial to share with new stakeholders. PSC will facilitate the initial connection between the new and existing workgroup members, work with the leadership of each workgroup to identify a member that can serve as a colleague to new members, and make a formal introduction.

IV. Meeting Structure & Facilitation

The collective impact model is designed around the ideals of cross-system, collaborative, and integrative processes. Within the approach of collective impact, the voice and experience of everyone at the table matters.

A. RESULTS BASED FACILITATION (RBF)

People who must work together to address urgent and important issues need a way to hold productive meetings that lead to positive outcomes. Reaching Home has embraced Results Based Facilitation (RBF). *"Results Based Facilitation is a competency-based approach to* ***participating in and facilitating meetings that get results****. [RBF focuses] on meeting results by developing an accountability framework for commitments to aligned action. RBF skills ensure that participants, conveners, and facilitators work together,* ***entering a meeting with results in mind and leaving with action commitments in hand.****"*[2]

RBF helps participants develop capacity to address differences across boundaries of sector, gender, race, ethnicity, and world view to building and sustaining relationships and achieve equitable outcomes.

Workgroups intentionally have a limit on the number members to allow for each member to have a distinct and relevant voice in the group. Using RBF skills leads to active participation, clearer communication, and stronger communication. RBF can also better facilitate shared learning, creative problem solving, and effective conflict resolution.

PSC staff are trained in RBF and have offered formal RBF training to workgroup co-chairs. Meetings that utilize RBF result in effective decision making, commitments to action, and the follow-through required to produce results.

As a Campaign participant, you can learn more about how to use the RBF core competencies in Workgroups and Task Group meetings here. If you are interested in being trained in RBF, please reach out to a Reachinghome@pschousing.org.

iii. Role of Facilitators

A critical component of RBF is that **groups own and act on decisions**. To ensure that the decision-making authority is exercised by the group and not inappropriately held by a facilitator, RBF has a specific set of skills that help facilitators hold neutral in meetings. Neutral results-based facilitators:

[2] – Pillsbury, Jolie- Results Based Facilitation Book 1: Foundation Skills (p.3)

- Support the group's meeting results and purpose
- Create a space for participants to speak without personal preference or other factors
- Give the work back to the group and does not use their authority to pursue a personal agenda
- Refrain from using their expertise or authority to influence group decisions
- Help the group make its own decisions
- Do not express agreements or disagreement verbally or nonverbally
- Announce to the group when they are no longer able to hold neutral

iv. Role of Co-chairs

The role of co-chairs is critical to guiding the work of the group, facilitating conversations, and allowing a space for all members to share their voices and expertise.

Co-chairs are responsible for engaging in the following roles[3]:

- **Leading the development of the content and agenda** for each standing meeting – coordinating with the backbone staff member and relevant members/partners for the conversation
- **Managing members and nurturing relationships** within the Workgroup, including addressing member concerns outside of meetings, learning about member roles and expertise to help inform strategies, encouraging multiple perspectives, and helping to move conversation along if/when it gets stuck
- **Cultivating a focus on equity** by fostering conditions for inclusion and trust, engaging the community, and using data to understand disparities and inform strategies
- **Serving as a bridge** between the Coordinating Committee and any Task Group and Workgroup projects, seeking input from community members and key stakeholders, and updating members on the work their groups are engaged in.
- **Drafting and submitting quarterly workgroup updates** to the Coordinating Committee and Campaign Stakeholders.

[3] Uribe, D., Wendel, C., and Bockstette, V. (March 2017). How to Lead Collective Impact Working Groups*: A Comprehensive Toolkit*; FSG Reimagining Social Change

v. Meeting Agenda

The meeting agenda should help co-chairs, facilitators and participants organize thoughts, strategies, and processes. The agenda is broken up into **five standing categories:**

1. Additional Agenda Items *(A new development that is important to flag/discuss at the meeting or future meetings. Facilitator will add additional items to the New Business Category.)*
2. Progress/Updates *(Discussions of existing activities, projects or previously held events.)*
3. New Business *(New topics or ideas being discussed for the first time; it may/may not require a decision.)*
4. Action Commitments/Decisions *(Any pending decision that needs to be made by the group.)*
5. Non-Member Comment *(Open the floor for members of the public to comment on current/future meeting content.)*

vi. Meeting Format

Starting in March 2020 as a result of the pandemic, all Reaching Home meetings moved to a virtual format. Like all virtual meetings there have been some drawbacks, but also some key benefits:

Drawbacks

- Inability for members to informally check-in
- Loss of body language and facial expressions to gauge members participation
- Need for shorter meetings to reduce fatigue
- Some tasks take longer to resolve virtually

Benefits:

- Reduced travel time and more opportunities for participation of members who may not have had access to transportation/conflicting meeting times
- Allowed members to stay safe while continuing to move work forward
- Learned new tools/resources to engage members in discussions

PSC in partnership with the workgroup co-chairs, facilitators, and members, will work to ensure future meeting formats that maximizes the benefits we've learned through operating virtually, as well as addressing the drawbacks. We are also committed to working to keep everyone in the same meeting space. This may include:

- Scheduling in-person meetings when major decisions need to be made (i.e., deciding a unified legislative agenda)
- Designing virtual meeting agenda to include designated technology, informational check-in, and decompression time

B. Campaign Communication

Internal and external communication is critical to keep everyone informed and engaged in the work of the Campaign. PSC supports the sharing of information regarding the Campaign's via an array of communication channels.

Internal Communication

Each Workgroup will be responsible for monitoring and overseeing Task Groups. At the meeting, co-chairs should build in a space to discuss the project charter, deliverables, and issues Task Groups may be experiencing, and provide guidance.

PSC supports a monthly co-chair and facilitator meeting to encourage and coordinate sharing between Workgroups. Workgroups also submit quarterly updates to the Coordinating Committee. Coordinating Committee membership includes a co-chair from each Workgroup to ensure information sharing up, down, and across the Campaign.

Basecamp

Reaching Home utilizes Basecamp as a communication and task management tool for the Campaign. Reaching Home participants can access the Reaching Home Campaign Members Basecamp Project here. Each Workgroup has a designated Project space they can use to:

- Schedule meetings
- Share updates, materials and resources (including agendas)
- Organize and edit documents
- Ask and answer questions
- Propose new ideas, and
- Stay on top of projects and to-dos
- Check in with Workgroup/Task Groups on project deliverables by utilizing the automatic check-ins

All Workgroup members will be invited to join their Workgroup Basecamp Team/Project and the Reaching Home Campaign Members Basecamp Team/Project. Task Group leads can create free Basecamp project spaces.

External Communication

To support the sharing of Campaign progress on a regular basis, PSC includes Reaching Home content in PSC's Newsletter, website, and news blasts. PSC also often supports events which highlight the work of the Reaching Home Campaign including public forums, stakeholder convening and educational webinars.

Workgroup members should make a concerted effort to regularly share Campaign updates in their respective communication channels and networks.

V. Appendices

A. Collective Impact Article
B. Collective Impact Principles of Practice
C. How to Lead Collective Impact Working Groups
D. Reaching Home Meeting Agenda Template
E. Task Group Charter Template
F. Legislative Recommendations Template
G. Results Based Facilitation Handouts

Collective Impact

LARGE-SCALE SOCIAL CHANGE REQUIRES BROAD CROSS-SECTOR COORDINATION, YET THE SOCIAL SECTOR REMAINS FOCUSED ON THE ISOLATED INTERVENTION OF INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS.

By John Kania & Mark Kramer

Illustration by Martin Jarrie

The scale and complexity of the U.S. public education system has thwarted attempted reforms for decades. Major funders, such as the Annenberg Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Pew Charitable Trusts have abandoned many of their efforts in frustration after acknowledging their lack of progress. Once the global leader—after World War II the United States had the highest high school graduation rate in the world—the country now ranks 18th among the top 24 industrialized nations, with more than 1 million secondary school students dropping out every year. The heroic efforts of countless teachers, administrators, and nonprofits, together with billions of dollars in charitable contributions, may have led to important improvements in individual schools and classrooms, yet system-wide progress has seemed virtually unobtainable.

Against these daunting odds, a remarkable exception seems to be emerging in Cincinnati. Strive, a nonprofit subsidiary of KnowledgeWorks, has brought together local leaders to tackle the student achievement crisis and improve education throughout greater Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. In the four years since the group was launched, Strive partners have improved student success in dozens of key areas across three large public school districts. Despite the recession and budget cuts, 34 of the 53 success indicators that Strive tracks have shown positive trends, including high school graduation rates, fourth-grade reading and math scores, and the number of preschool children prepared for kindergarten.

Why has Strive made progress when so many other efforts have failed? It is because a core group of community leaders decided to abandon their individual agendas in favor of a collective approach to improving student achievement. More than 300 leaders of local organizations agreed to participate, including the heads of influential private and corporate foundations, city government officials, school district representatives, the presidents of eight universities and community colleges, and the executive directors of hundreds of education-related nonprofit and advocacy groups.

These leaders realized that fixing one point on the educational continuum—such as better after-school programs—wouldn't make much difference unless all parts of the continuum improved at the same time. No single organization, however innovative or powerful, could accomplish this alone. Instead, their ambitious mission became to coordinate improvements at *every* stage of a young person's life, from "cradle to career."

Strive didn't try to create a new educational program or attempt to convince donors to spend more money. Instead, through a carefully structured process, Strive focused the entire educational community on a single set of goals, measured in the same way. Participating organizations are grouped into 15 different Student Success Networks (SSNs) by type of activity, such as early childhood education or tutoring. Each SSN has been meeting with coaches and facilitators for two hours every two weeks for the past three years, developing shared performance indicators, discussing their progress, and most important, learning from each other and aligning their efforts to support each other.

Strive, both the organization and the process it helps facilitate, is an example of *collective impact*, the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem. Collaboration is nothing new. The social sector is filled with examples of partnerships, networks, and other types of joint efforts. But collective impact initiatives are distinctly different. Unlike most

collaborations, collective impact initiatives involve a centralized infrastructure, a dedicated staff, and a structured process that leads to a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication, and mutually reinforcing activities among all participants. (See "Types of Collaborations" on page 39.)

Although rare, other successful examples of collective impact are addressing social issues that, like education, require many different players to change their behavior in order to solve a complex problem. In 1993, Marjorie Mayfield Jackson helped found the Elizabeth River Project with a mission of cleaning up the Elizabeth River in southeastern Virginia, which for decades had been a dumping ground for industrial waste. They engaged more than 100 stakeholders, including the city governments of Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Virginia Beach, Va., the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Navy, and dozens of local businesses, schools, community groups, environmental organizations, and universities, in developing an 18-point plan to restore the watershed. Fifteen years later, more than 1,000 acres of watershed land have been conserved or restored, pollution has been reduced by more than 215 million pounds, concentrations of the most severe carcinogen have been cut sixfold, and water quality has significantly improved. Much remains to be done before the river is fully restored, but already 27 species of fish and oysters are thriving in the restored wetlands, and bald eagles have returned to nest on the shores.

Or consider Shape up Somerville, a citywide effort to reduce and prevent childhood obesity in elementary school children in Somerville, Mass. Led by Christina Economos, an associate professor at Tufts University's Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, and funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, and United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley, the program engaged government officials, educators, businesses, nonprofits, and citizens in collectively defining wellness and weight gain prevention practices. Schools agreed to offer healthier foods, teach nutrition, and promote physical activity. Local restaurants received a certification if they served low-fat, high nutritional food. The city organized a farmers' market and provided healthy lifestyle incentives such as reduced-price gym memberships for city employees. Even sidewalks were modified and crosswalks repainted to encourage more children to walk to school. The result was a statistically significant decrease in body mass index among the community's young children between 2002 and 2005.

Even companies are beginning to explore collective impact to tackle social problems. Mars, a manufacturer of chocolate brands such as M&M's, Snickers, and Dove, is working with NGOs, local governments, and even direct competitors to improve the lives of more than 500,000 impoverished cocoa farmers in Cote d'Ivoire, where Mars sources a large portion of its cocoa. Research suggests that better farming practices and improved plant stocks could triple the yield per hectare, dramatically increasing farmer incomes and improving the sustainability of Mars's supply chain. To accomplish this, Mars must enlist the coordinated efforts of multiple organizations: the Cote d'Ivoire government needs to provide more agricultural extension workers, the World Bank needs to finance new roads, and bilateral donors need to support NGOs in improving health care, nutrition, and education in cocoa growing communities. And Mars must find ways to work with its direct competitors on pre-competitive issues to reach farmers outside its supply chain.

These varied examples all have a common theme: that large-scale social change comes from better cross-sector coordination rather than from the isolated intervention of individual organizations. Evidence of the effectiveness of this approach is still limited, but these examples suggest that substantially greater progress could be made in alleviating many of our most serious and complex social problems if nonprofits, governments, businesses, and the public were brought together around a common agenda to create collective impact. It doesn't happen often, not because it is impossible, but because it is so rarely attempted. Funders and nonprofits alike overlook the potential for collective impact because they are used to focusing on independent action as the primary vehicle for social change.

ISOLATED IMPACT

Most funders, faced with the task of choosing a few grantees from many applicants, try to ascertain which organizations make the greatest contribution toward solving a social problem. Grantees, in turn, compete to be chosen by emphasizing how their individual activities produce the greatest effect. Each organization is judged on its own potential to achieve impact, independent of the numerous other organizations that may also influence the issue. And when a grantee is asked to evaluate the impact of its work, every attempt is made to isolate that grantee's individual influence from all other variables.

In short, the nonprofit sector most frequently operates using an approach that we call *isolated impact*. It is an approach oriented toward finding and funding a solution embodied within a single organization, combined with the hope that the most effective organizations will grow or replicate to extend their impact more widely. Funders search for more effective interventions as if there were a cure for failing schools that only needs to be discovered, in the way that medical cures are discovered in laboratories. As a result of this process, nearly 1.4 million nonprofits try to invent independent solutions to major social problems, often working at odds with each other and exponentially increasing the perceived resources required to make meaningful progress. Recent trends have only reinforced this perspective. The growing interest in venture philanthropy and social entrepreneurship, for example, has greatly benefited the social sector by identifying and accelerating the growth of many high-performing nonprofits, yet it has also accentuated an emphasis on scaling up a few select organizations as the key to social progress.

Despite the dominance of this approach, there is scant evidence that isolated initiatives are the best way to solve many social problems in today's complex and interdependent world. No single organization is responsible for any major social problem, nor can any single

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TYPES OF COLLABORATIONS

Organizations have attempted to solve social problems by collaboration for decades without producing many results. The vast majority of these efforts lack the elements of success that enable collective impact initiatives to achieve a sustained alignment of efforts.

Funder Collaboratives are groups of funders interested in supporting the same issue who pool their resources. Generally, participants do not adopt an overarching evidence-based plan of action or a shared measurement system, nor do they engage in differentiated activities beyond check writing or engage stakeholders from other sectors.

Public-Private Partnerships are partnerships formed between government and private sector organizations to deliver specific services or benefits. They are often targeted narrowly, such as developing a particular drug to fight a single disease, and usually don't engage the full set of stakeholders that affect the issue, such as the potential drug's distribution system.

Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives are voluntary activities by stakeholders from different sectors around a common theme. Typically, these initiatives lack any shared measurement of impact and the supporting infrastructure to forge any true alignment of efforts or accountability for results.

Social Sector Networks are groups of individuals or organizations fluidly connected through purposeful relationships, whether formal or informal. Collaboration is generally ad hoc, and most often the emphasis is placed on information sharing and targeted short-term actions, rather than a sustained and structured initiative.

Collective Impact Initiatives are long-term commitments by a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem. Their actions are supported by a shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities, and ongoing communication, and are staffed by an independent backbone organization.

organization cure it. In the field of education, even the most highly respected nonprofits—such as the Harlem Children's Zone, Teach for America, and the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP)—have taken decades to reach tens of thousands of children, a remarkable achievement that deserves praise, but one that is three orders of magnitude short of the tens of millions of U.S. children that need help.

The problem with relying on the isolated impact of individual organizations is further compounded by the isolation of the nonprofit sector. Social problems arise from the interplay of governmental and commercial activities, not only from the behavior of social sector organizations. As a result, complex problems can be solved only by cross-sector coalitions that engage those outside the nonprofit sector.

We don't want to imply that all social problems require collective impact. In fact, some problems are best solved by individual organizations. In "Leading Boldly," an article we wrote with Ron Heifetz for the winter 2004 issue of the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, we described the difference between *technical problems* and *adaptive problems*. Some social problems are technical in that the problem is well defined, the answer is known in advance, and one or a few organizations have the ability to implement the solution. Examples include funding college scholarships, building a hospital, or installing inventory controls in a food bank. Adaptive problems, by contrast, are complex, the answer is not known, and even if it were, no single entity has the resources or authority to bring about the necessary change. Reforming public education, restoring wetland environments, and improving community health are all adaptive problems. In these cases, reaching an effective solution requires learning by the stakeholders involved in the problem, who must then change their own behavior in order to create a solution.

Shifting from isolated impact to collective impact is not merely a matter of encouraging more collaboration or public-private partnerships. It requires a systemic approach to social impact that focuses on the relationships between organizations and the progress toward shared objectives. And it requires the creation of a new set of nonprofit management organizations that have the skills and resources to assemble and coordinate the specific elements necessary for collective action to succeed.

THE FIVE CONDITIONS OF COLLECTIVE SUCCESS

Our research shows that successful collective impact initiatives typically have five conditions that together produce true alignment and lead to powerful results: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support organizations.

Common Agenda | Collective impact requires all participants to have a shared vision for change, one that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions. Take a close look at any group of funders and nonprofits that believe they are working on the same social issue, and you quickly find that it is often not the same issue at all. Each organization often has a slightly different definition of the problem and the ultimate goal. These differences are easily ignored when organizations work independently on isolated initiatives, yet these differences splinter the efforts and undermine the impact of the field as a whole. Collective impact requires that these differences be discussed and resolved. Every participant need not agree with every other participant on all dimensions of the problem. In fact, disagreements continue to divide participants in all of our examples of collective impact. All participants must agree, however, on the primary goals for the collective impact initiative as a whole. The Elizabeth River Project, for example, had to find common ground among the different objectives of corporations, governments, community groups, and local citizens in order to establish workable cross-sector initiatives.

Funders can play an important role in getting organizations to act in concert. In the case of Strive, rather than fueling hundreds of strategies and nonprofits, many funders have aligned to support Strive's central goals. The Greater Cincinnati Foundation realigned its education goals to be more compatible with Strive, adopting Strive's annual report card as the foundation's own measures for progress in education. Every time an organization applied to Duke Energy for a grant, Duke asked, "Are you part of the [Strive] network?" And when a new funder, the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation, expressed interest in education, they were encouraged by virtually every major education leader in Cincinnati to join Strive if they wanted to have an impact in local education.[1]

Shared Measurement Systems | Developing a shared measurement system is essential to collective impact. Agreement on a common agenda is illusory without agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported. Collecting data and measuring results consistently on a short list of indicators at the community level and across all participating organizations not only ensures that all efforts remain aligned, it also enables the participants to hold each other accountable and learn from each other's successes and failures.

It may seem impossible to evaluate hundreds of different organizations on the same set of measures. Yet recent advances in Web-based technologies have enabled common systems for reporting performance and measuring outcomes. These systems increase efficiency and reduce cost. They can also improve the quality and credibility of the data collected, increase effectiveness by enabling grantees to learn from each other's performance, and document the progress of the field as a whole.[2]

All of the preschool programs in Strive, for example, have agreed to measure their results on the same criteria and use only evidence-based decision making. Each type of activity requires a different set of measures, but all organizations engaged in the same type of activity report on the same measures. Looking at results across multiple organizations enables the participants to spot patterns, find solutions, and implement them rapidly. The preschool programs discovered that children regress during the summer break before kindergarten. By launching an innovative "summer bridge" session, a technique more often used in middle school, and implementing it simultaneously in all preschool programs, they increased the average kindergarten readiness scores throughout the region by an average of 10 percent in a single year.[3]

Mutually Reinforcing Activities | Collective impact initiatives depend on a diverse group of stakeholders working together, not by requiring that all participants do the same thing, but by encouraging each participant to undertake the specific set of activities at which it excels in a way that supports and is coordinated with the actions of others.

The power of collective action comes not from the sheer number of participants or the uniformity of their efforts, but from the coordination of their differentiated activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action. Each stakeholder's efforts must fit into an overarching plan if their combined efforts are to succeed. The multiple causes of social problems, and the components of their solutions, are interdependent. They cannot be addressed by uncoordinated actions among isolated organizations.

All participants in the Elizabeth River Project, for example, agreed on the 18-point watershed restoration plan, but each is playing a different role based on its particular capabilities. One group of organizations works on creating grassroots support and engagement among citizens, a second provides peer review and recruitment for industrial participants who voluntarily reduce pollution, and a third coordinates and reviews scientific research.

The 15 SSNs in Strive each undertake different types of activities at different stages of the educational continuum. Strive does not prescribe what practices each of the 300 participating organizations should pursue. Each organization and network is free to chart its own course consistent with the common agenda, and informed by the shared measurement of results.

Continuous Communication | Developing trust among nonprofits, corporations, and government agencies is a monumental challenge. Participants need several years of regular meetings to build up enough experience with each other to recognize and appreciate the common motivation behind their different efforts. They need time to see that their own interests will be treated fairly, and that decisions will be made on the basis of objective evidence and the best possible solution to the problem, not to favor the priorities of one organization over another.

Even the process of creating a common vocabulary takes time, and it is an essential prerequisite to developing shared measurement systems. All the collective impact initiatives we have studied held monthly or even biweekly in-person meetings among the organizations' CEO-level leaders. Skipping meetings or sending lower-level delegates was not acceptable. Most of the meetings were supported by external facilitators and followed a structured agenda.

The Strive networks, for example, have been meeting regularly for more than three years. Communication happens between meetings too: Strive uses Web-based tools, such as Google Groups, to keep communication flowing among and within the networks. At first, many of the leaders showed up because they hoped that their participation would bring their organizations additional funding, but they soon learned that was not the meetings' purpose. What they discovered instead were the rewards of learning and solving problems together with others who shared their same deep knowledge and passion about the issue.

Backbone Support Organizations | Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization and staff with a very specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative. Coordination takes time, and none of the participating organizations has any to spare. The expectation that collaboration can occur without a supporting infrastructure is one of the most frequent reasons why it fails.

The backbone organization requires a dedicated staff separate from the participating organizations who can plan, manage, and support the initiative through ongoing facilitation, technology and communications support, data collection and reporting, and handling the myriad logistical and administrative details needed for the initiative to function smoothly. Strive has simplified the initial staffing requirements for a backbone organization to three roles: project manager, data manager, and facilitator.

Collective impact also requires a highly structured process that leads to effective decision making. In the case of Strive, staff worked with General Electric (GE) to adapt for the social sector the Six Sigma process that GE uses for its own continuous quality improvement. The Strive Six Sigma process includes training, tools, and resources that each SSN uses to define its common agenda, shared measures, and plan of action, supported by Strive facilitators to guide the process.

In the best of circumstances, these backbone organizations embody the principles of adaptive leadership: the ability to focus people's attention and create a sense of urgency, the skill to apply pressure to stakeholders without overwhelming them, the competence to frame issues in a way that presents opportunities as well as difficulties, and the strength to mediate conflict among stakeholders.

FUNDING COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Creating a successful collective impact initiative requires a significant financial investment: the time participating organizations must dedicate to the work, the development and monitoring of shared measurement systems, and the staff of the backbone organization needed to lead and support the initiative's ongoing work.

As successful as Strive has been, it has struggled to raise money, confronting funders' reluctance to pay for infrastructure and preference for short-term solutions. Collective impact requires instead that funders support a long-term process of social change without identifying any particular solution in advance. They must be willing to let grantees steer the work and have the patience to stay with an initiative for years, recognizing that social change can come from the gradual improvement of an entire system over time, not just from a single breakthrough by an individual organization.

This requires a fundamental change in how funders see their role, from funding organizations to leading a long-term process of social change. It is no longer enough to fund an innovative solution created by a single nonprofit or to build that organization's capacity. Instead, funders must help create and sustain the collective processes, measurement reporting systems, and community leadership that enable cross-sector coalitions to arise and thrive.

This is a shift that we foreshadowed in both "Leading Boldly" and our more recent article, "Catalytic Philanthropy," in the fall 2009 issue of the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. In the former, we suggested that the most powerful role for funders to play in addressing adaptive problems is to focus attention on the issue and help to create a process that mobilizes the organizations involved to find a solution themselves. In "Catalytic Philanthropy," we wrote: "Mobilizing and coordinating stakeholders is far messier and slower work than funding a compelling grant request from a single organization. Systemic change, however, ultimately depends on a sustained campaign to increase the capacity and coordination of an entire field." We recommended that funders who want to create large-scale change follow four practices: take responsibility for assembling the elements of a solution; create a movement for change; include solutions from outside the nonprofit sector; and use actionable knowledge to influence behavior and improve performance.

These same four principles are embodied in collective impact initiatives. The organizers of Strive abandoned the conventional approach of funding specific programs at education nonprofits and took responsibility for advancing education reform themselves. They built a movement, engaging hundreds of organizations in a drive toward shared goals. They used tools outside the nonprofit sector, adapting GE's Six Sigma planning process for the social sector. And through the community report card and the biweekly meetings of the SSNs they created actionable knowledge that motivated the community and improved performance among the participants.

Funding collective impact initiatives costs money, but it can be a highly leveraged investment. A backbone organization with a modest annual budget can support a collective impact initiative of several hundred organizations, magnifying the impact of millions or even billions of dollars in existing funding. Strive, for example, has a $1.5 million annual budget but is coordinating the efforts and increasing the effectiveness of organizations with combined budgets of $7 billion. The social sector, however, has not yet changed its funding practices to enable the shift to collective impact. Until funders are willing to embrace this new approach and invest sufficient resources in the necessary facilitation, coordination, and measurement that enable organizations to work in concert, the requisite infrastructure will not evolve.

FUTURE SHOCK

What might social change look like if funders, nonprofits, government officials, civic leaders, and business executives embraced collective impact? Recent events at Strive provide an exciting indication of what might be possible.

Strive has begun to codify what it has learned so that other communities can achieve collective impact more rapidly. The organization is working with nine other communities to establish similar cradle to career initiatives.[4] Importantly, although Strive is broadening its impact to a national level, the organization is not scaling up its own operations by opening branches in other cities. Instead, Strive is promulgating a flexible process for change, offering each community a set of tools for collective impact, drawn from Strive's experience but adaptable to the community's own needs and resources. As a result, the new communities take true ownership of their own collective impact initiatives, but they don't need to start the process from scratch. Activities such as developing a collective educational reform mission and vision or creating specific community-level educational indicators are expedited through the use of Strive materials and assistance from Strive staff. Processes that took Strive several years to develop are being adapted and modified by other communities in significantly less time.

These nine communities plus Cincinnati have formed a community of practice in which representatives from each effort connect regularly to share what they are learning. Because of the number and diversity of the communities, Strive and its partners can quickly determine what processes are universal and which require adaptation to a local context. As learning accumulates, Strive staff will incorporate new findings into an Internet-based knowledge portal that will be available to any community wishing to create a collective impact initiative based on Strive's model.

This exciting evolution of the Strive collective impact initiative is far removed from the isolated impact approach that now dominates the social sector and that inhibits any major effort at comprehensive, large-scale change. If successful, it presages the spread of a new approach that will enable us to solve today's most serious social problems with the resources we already have at our disposal. It would be a shock to the system. But it's a form of shock therapy that's badly needed. ■

Notes

1 Interview with Kathy Merchant, CEO of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, April 10, 2010.

2 See Mark Kramer, Marcie Parkhurst, and Lalitha Vaidyanathan, *Breakthroughs in Shared Measurement and Social Impact*, FSG Social Impact Advisors, 2009.

3 "Successful Starts," United Way of Greater Cincinnati, second edition, fall 2009.

4 Indianapolis, Houston, Richmond, Va., and Hayward, Calif., are the first four communities to implement Strive's process for educational reform. Portland, Ore., Fresno, Calif., Mesa, Ariz., Albuquerque, and Memphis are just beginning their efforts.

Collective Impact Principles of Practice

We have been inspired watching the field of collective impact progress over the past five years, as thousands of practitioners, funders, and policymakers around the world employ the approach to help solve complex social problems at a large scale. The field's understanding of what it takes to put the collective impact approach into practice continues to evolve through the contributions of many who are undertaking the deep work of collaborative social change, and their successes build on decades of work around effective cross-sector collaboration. Accomplished practitioners of collective impact continue to affirm the critical importance of achieving population-level change in the five conditions of collective impact that John Kania and Mark Kramer originally identified in the *Stanford Social Innovation Review* in winter 2011. (For an explanation of the conditions, see the end of this document.) Many practitioners tell us that the framework developed in the original article has helped to provide the field with a shared definition and useful language to describe core elements of a rigorous and disciplined, yet flexible and organic, approach to addressing complex problems at scale.

Successful collective impact practitioners also observe, however, that while the five conditions Kania and Kramer initially identified are necessary, they are not sufficient to achieve impact at the population level. Informed by lessons shared among those who are implementing the approach in the field, **this document outlines additional principles of practice that we believe can guide practitioners about *how* to successfully put collective impact into action.** While many of these principles are not unique to collective impact, we have seen that the combination of the five conditions *and* these practices contributes to meaningful population-level change. We hope that these principles help funders, practitioners, and policymakers consider what it takes to apply the collective impact approach, and that they will bolster existing efforts to overcome challenges and roadblocks in their work. We also hope these principles can help guide those who aspire toward collective impact, but may not yet be implementing the approach fully, to identify possible changes that might increase their odds of success. As we continue to apply the conditions and principles of collective impact, we fully expect that, over time, our shared understanding of what constitutes good practice will evolve further.

1. **Design and implement the initiative with a priority placed on equity**. For collective impact initiatives to achieve sustainable improvements in communities, it is critical that these initiatives address the systemic structures and practices that create barriers to equitable outcomes for all populations, particularly along the lines of race and class. To that end, collective impact initiatives must be intentional in their design from the very outset to ensure that an equity lens is prominent throughout their governance, planning, implementation, and evaluation. In designing and implementing collective impact with a focus on equity, practitioners must disaggregate data and develop strategies that focus on improving outcomes for affected populations.

2. **Include community members in the collaborative**. Members of the community—those whose lives are most directly and deeply affected by the problem addressed by the initiative—must be meaningfully engaged in the initiative's governance, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Community members

can bring crucial (and sometimes overlooked) perspectives to governance bodies and decision-making tables, can contribute to refining the collective impact initiative's evolving goals, strategies, and indicators, can help co-create and implement solutions that are rooted in lived experience and have the potential for significant uptake, can participate in building communities' capacity to lead and sustain change, and can participate in data interpretation and continuous learning processes. Sometimes, decision-makers or other stakeholders may inadvertently face power dynamics or other structural barriers that can hinder particular partners from participating candidly and fully; true inclusion requires intentional examination of group needs and processes to ensure that all stakeholders have full opportunity to contribute to the process. Engaging community in these ways helps collective impact efforts address the issues most important to those most directly affected, builds capacity and enables community participation in and ownership of solutions, and helps embed the work in the community so that it will be more effective and sustainable.

3. **Recruit and co-create with cross-sector partners**. Collective impact collaboratives are created by and composed of actors from across sectors and parts of the community, including nonprofits, government, private sector, philanthropy, and residents. While not all initiatives will engage *all* sectors actively at the same time, collaboratives made up of only one or two types of actors (e.g., all nonprofits, all funders) do not have the diversity of actors required to create the systems-level view that contributes to a robust collective impact initiative. These cross-sector partners, who all have a role to play in the solution, share in co-creating the common agenda, identifying shared measures, and implementing the work required to achieve the effort's goals.

4. **Use data to continuously learn, adapt, and improve**. Collective impact is not a solution, but rather a collaborative problem-solving process. This process requires partners to remain aware of changes in context, to collect and learn from data, to openly share information and observations with others, and to adapt their strategies quickly in response to an evolving environment. To accomplish this, initiatives should have clear learning priorities, build strong structures and processes for learning, and create a learning culture that enables the group to use meaningful, credible, and useful qualitative and quantitative data for continuous learning and strategic refinement. Many initiatives find it valuable to use a disciplined and formalized process to guide their use of data.

5. **Cultivate leaders with unique system leadership skills**. For collective impact initiatives to achieve transformational change, leaders must possess strong facilitation, management, and convening skills. They must be able to create a holding space for people to come together and work out their disparate viewpoints, they must possess the capacity to foster shared meaning and shared aspirations among participants, they must be able to help participants understand the complexity and non-linearity of system-level change, they must be dedicated to the health of the whole and willing to change their own organizations in service of the group's agenda, and they must be adept at building relationships and trust among collaborators. These system leadership skills are essential for the backbone, and also other leaders in the collaborative such as steering committee members, community leaders, and action team leaders.

6. **Focus on program *and* system strategies**. The mutually reinforcing activities that the initiative takes on to achieve its goals should focus on collective program and system change strategies rather than individual programs or organizations. System strategies include strategies that increase communication and coordination across organizations, change the practices and behavior of professionals and beneficiaries, shift social and cultural norms, improve services system wide (by spreading techniques that already work within the community across organizations, or by bringing a new evidence-based practice into the community), and change policies.

7. **Build a culture that fosters relationships, trust, and respect across participants**. Collective impact partnerships require participants to come to a common understanding of the problem and shared goals, to work together and align work in new ways, and to learn from each other. Authentic interpersonal relationships, trust, respect, and inclusion are key elements of the culture that is required for this difficult work to occur. The backbone and other initiative leaders must be proactive in their efforts to create this culture.

8. **Customize for local context**. While the five conditions are consistent across collective impact initiatives, and initiatives benefit a great deal by learning from each other, customizing the initiative for the local context is essential. Initiatives can do their best work when they deeply understand the problem they are trying to solve locally—both from the data and input from the community and from understanding the existing work and coalitions that may be working on similar issues. Customizing the work to fit the local community context enables the coalition to honor, build on, and/or align with existing work and pursue system and program strategies that are most relevant to local needs.

These principles of practice were identified based on the work of the field of practitioners by the Collective Impact Forum in partnership with the Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions, FSG, the Forum for Youth Investment, Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, Living Cities, PolicyLink, the Tamarack Institute, and United Way Worldwide.

Five Conditions of Collective Impact

While our understanding of how to put collective impact into practice has deepened and expanded, the five conditions outlined in the original article *Collective Impact* remain the core of the approach.

- Common Agenda: All participants have a shared vision for change that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving the problem through agreed-upon actions.
- Shared Measurement: Agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported, with a short list of common indicators identified and used across all participating organizations for learning and improvement.
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities: Engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders, typically across sectors, coordinating a set of differentiated activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.

- Continuous Communication: Frequent and structured open communication across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.
- Backbone Support: Ongoing support by independent, funded staff dedicated to the initiative, including guiding the initiative's vision and strategy, supporting aligned activities, establishing shared measurement practices, building public will, advancing policy, and mobilizing funding. Backbone staff can all sit within a single organization, or they can have different roles housed in multiple organizations.

How to Lead Collective Impact Working Groups

A Comprehensive Toolkit

DANIELA URIBE, CARINA WENDEL, VALERIE BOCKSTETTE

FSG REIMAGINING SOCIAL CHANGE

About FSG

FSG is a mission-driven consulting firm supporting leaders in creating large-scale, lasting social change. Through strategy, evaluation, and research we help many types of actors—individually and collectively—make progress against the world's toughest problems.

Our teams work across all sectors by partnering with leading foundations, businesses, nonprofits, and governments in every region of the globe. We seek to reimagine social change by identifying ways to maximize the impact of existing resources, amplifying the work of others to help advance knowledge and practice, and inspiring change agents around the world to achieve greater impact.

As part of our nonprofit mission, FSG also directly supports learning communities, such as the Collective Impact Forum, Impact Hiring Initiative, and Shared Value Initiative, to provide the tools and relationships that change agents need to be successful.

Learn more about FSG at www.fsg.org.

CONTENTS

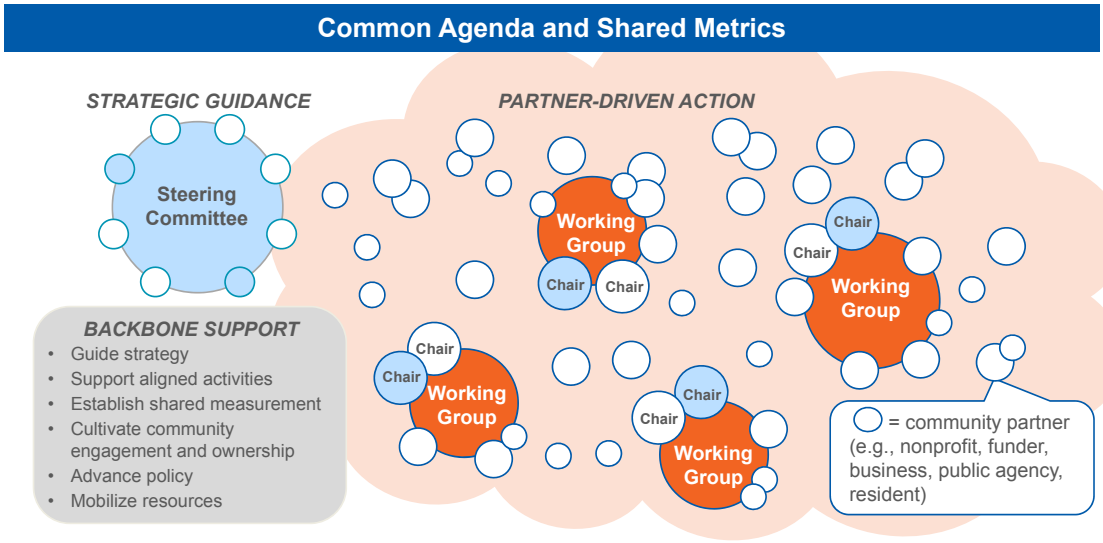
THE CRITICAL ROLE OF WORKING GROUPS AND THEIR CO-CHAIRS

WHY A KIT FOR WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS?

As illustrated in Figure 1 below, Working Groups are the heartbeat of collective impact: where action occurs and goals are brought to life. These groups (also called work groups, task forces, community action networks, strategy teams, and a variety of other names) are where practitioners come together to contribute their time, expertise, passions, and lived experiences to help develop and implement strategies. Much has been written about the role of Backbone staff in fostering collective impact. However, we know that one of the reasons Backbones can be leanly staffed is that they rely on select Working Group members who go the extra mile and volunteer to be Working Group co-chairs. Over the years we have seen how critical these co-chairs are to the success of collective impact, and yet, not much has been written about or explicitly for these important figures. Thus, this kit is dedicated to these co-chairs because without them collective impact would not be possible.

FSG developed this kit for a collective impact initiative funded by the Hampton Roads Community Foundation in Virginia. We are grateful it has encouraged us to share this resource. Moreover, while we created this kit specifically for Working Group co-chairs, the contents may also be helpful for Backbone staff, Working Group members, and co-chairs of any form of collaboration.

FIGURE 1. TYPICAL COLLECTIVE IMPACT STRUCTURES[1]



1 Adapted from *Listening to the Stars: The Constellation Model of Collaborative Social Change* by Tonya Surman and Mark Surman, 2008.

WORKING GROUPS AT A GLANCE

WHO? 15 to 25 people[2] who represent key aspects of the system the Working Group is focused on

HOW? Facilitated by Backbone staff and Working Group co-chairs

WHAT? Meet regularly[3] to drive implementation by engaging in **3 ACTIVITIES** over time:

1. Determining the **SCOPE** of the Working Group, grounded in data on the local situation (e.g., historical context, assets, and needs) and local or national best practices
2. Developing **STRATEGIES** (see Appendix A for samples), which may include the following:
   - **Better understanding the current situation:** aligning or overlaying existing data sets or systems with one another
   - **Learning by trial:** identifying an opportunity to start small with willing partners, learn from the experience, and then expand or replicate
   - **Increasing coordination:** finding ways to realign existing programs, protocols, and stakeholders to work together differently to maximize efficacy
   - **Enhancing services:** adopting a previously unnoticed proven practice from inside or outside the community to enhance existing services or programs
   - **Identifying policy-change opportunities:** looking for opportunities at local or state levels and relaying these to a Steering Committee and/or a policy and advocacy Working Group
3. Driving the **IMPLEMENTATION** of the strategies by:
   - **Identifying resources** (e.g., community leaders, funding) required to put ideas into action
   - **Inspiring change** in their own organizations and networks in accordance with the strategies
   - **Determining how to measure** the Working Group's progress and success
   - **Providing updates** to Steering Committee and community and responding to feedback

2 Enough people to represent the whole system, but not so many that meetings become unwieldy.

3 We recommend monthly meetings to ensure sustained momentum and progress.

ROLES OF WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

Working Groups typically have 2 to 3 co-chairs, ideally one of whom also serves on the Steering Committee, playing the following roles:

- Contributing to the development of the **agenda and content** for each Working Group meeting—including serving as thought partners to Backbone staff and helping contribute content expertise
- **Facilitating discussions** and decision making in meetings—including speaking up if conversation gets stuck, encouraging multiple perspectives, and reporting out on smaller group discussions
- Contributing to Working Group **member management**—including addressing member concerns outside of meetings or learning more about members' roles and experiences to help inform strategies
- **Nurturing relationships** among Working Group members—including ensuring each member's unique assets and contributions are supported and valued
- Cultivating a **focus on equity**—including seeking diverse membership, fostering conditions for everyone to be included, engaging in community, and using data to understand disparities and develop strategies
- **Serving as a bridge** for the initiative's work in the community—including seeking input from key stakeholders, speaking at community events, and updating community members on progress

MODULE 1:

HOW TO BUILD MEMBERSHIP

WHY
THIS MATTERS

Working Groups are called *working* groups for a reason. Just as the Steering Committee is tasked with steering the direction of the initiative, Working Groups are responsible for the work that will drive the impact of the initiative. Finding effective people to fill the role of Working Group members (including the co-chairs) may be the first big step to achieving impact down the road.

HOW
TO APPROACH IT

Collective impact initiatives create opportunities for many people to be involved through various groups and levels of engagement; Working Group participation is one such opportunity. Being part of a Working Group may create new leadership opportunities for staff or community members, which can be energizing. Here are some helpful characteristics for identifying Working Group members:

CHARACTERISTICS OF ALL MEMBERS *(15 to 25 members)*	ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS FOR CO-CHAIRS *(Typically 2 to 3 co-chairs)*
• Have firsthand experience with the issue (e.g., members of the community, frontline staff of organizations working on the issue) • Are genuinely interested in affecting the issue, including a commitment to reducing disparities in outcomes experienced by key population[4] • Are action-oriented "doers" who commit to attending meetings and reviewing preread materials; for continuity, we recommend a norm of not sending substitutes to meetings • Have the authority and trust to represent and influence their organizations, agencies, peers, and/or neighborhoods	• Can commit time (~2 to 3 hours monthly in addition to regular meetings) • Represent different perspectives among the co-chair group • Are collaborative leaders and facilitators, fostering an inclusive culture rather than serving as the deciders • Are willing and able to perform key tasks (e.g., facilitate meetings, take notes, write meeting synopses, plan meeting agendas, etc.) • Are not simply symbolic leaders; the success of the initiative hinges on the commitment of the co-chairs to pitch in during and between meetings

4 Reducing disparities in outcomes experienced by key populations may mean focusing on race in some contexts and socio-economic dynamics in others, as well as considering issues of immigration status, sexual identity, language, disability, etc.

In many cases there will already be an engaged community of leaders, practitioners, residents, and many other types of stakeholders devoted to improving outcomes in the issues that Working Groups will focus on. This presents an opportunity to tap into existing networks, affinity groups, and collaboratives that might exist as a source of Working Group members. While every community will have different dynamics and assets, the following list provides ideas for identifying Working Group members:

- Hold community-wide meetings or information sessions
- Advertise opportunities at existing community meetings
- Ask Steering Committee members to recommend staff from their organizations
- Recruit one Steering Committee member to serve as one of the co-chairs
- Source names from existing lists of stakeholders that emerged as the initiative formed (interviewees, focus-group participants, actors that may have been identified if an actor mapping was conducted)

MODULE 1 TIP SHEET

MAKE THE CASE	Remember to stress what you are offering to participants in exchange for their expertise, be it an opportunity for professional development, new content knowledge, new connections for their organization, etc.
STRIVE FOR DIVERSITY OF PERSPECTIVES	Actively seek out members from many segments of the community, including those who bring deep issue experience but may not always be heard; for example, residents from neighborhoods that are disconnected from the mainstream, members of the business community, racial and ethnic minorities, youth, and other stakeholders who are not commonly represented in formal change initiatives. It is good to seek out people who may have conflicting perspectives.
ENABLE PARTICIPATION	For Working Group members who are employed in organizations that work on the issue, participating can be considered as part of their day job. For some members, for example community representatives, who are not directly compensated for their time, it will be important to work with the Backbone staff to come up with a system of support, which might include stipends, transportation, translation, training and coaching on working with data or contributing in large group meetings.
CULTIVATE SHARED OWNERSHIP	Once the Working Group begins to take shape, transition from relying solely on the Backbone staff to relying on fellow co-chairs or other members to lead and manage group activities.
ALLOW MEMBERSHIP TO EVOLVE	While an underlying issue focus of each Working Group is initially determined, the specific areas of focus and goals will change over time. As groups form and settle and as members' availability changes or new issue expertise is needed, it is possible that Working Group membership will evolve.

MODULE 1 RESOURCES

- "**Promoting Participation Among Diverse Groups**" (Community Tool Box from the University of Kansas)
- "**Committing to Collective Impact: From Vision to Implementation**" (Collective Impact Forum)

MODULE 2:

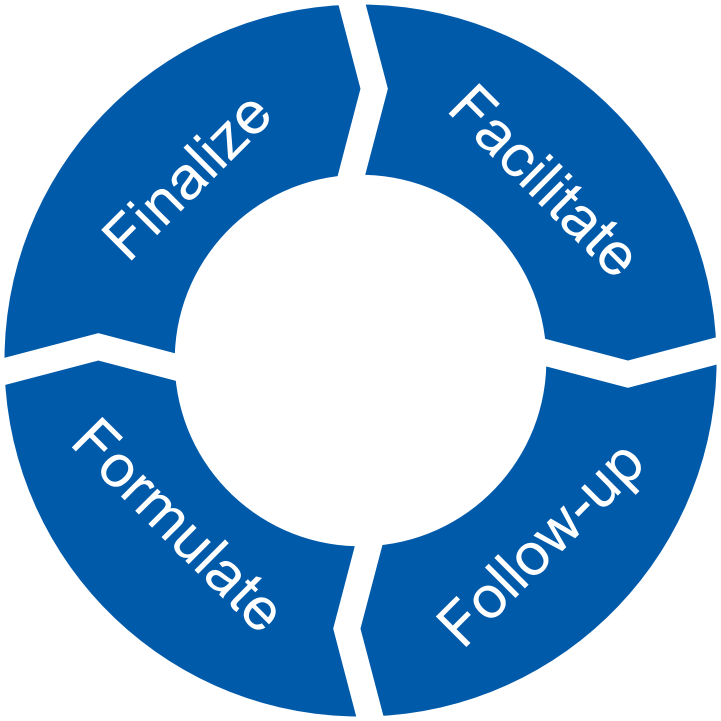
HOW TO PLAN FOR AND RUN AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

WHY
THIS MATTERS

Once Working Group members have been recruited, the goal is to keep them coming back to meetings. Even more important is making sure that the meetings are effectively making progress towards the goals of the group. Co-chairs should see meeting management as crucial to the process of creating impact.

HOW
TO APPROACH IT

Preparation, facilitation, and follow-up are critical to effective meetings. See the Appendices for templates on tactical aspects of running meetings, such as anticipating what strategies might look like, staying on schedule, taking notes, planning the agenda, and summarizing action items. For example, a typical work plan may have a four-part cycle:



See Figure 2 on the following page for a detailed description of each component of the cycle.

FIGURE 2. TYPICAL WORK PLAN

CO-FACILITATE WORKING GROUP MEETING	• Backbone: take responsibility for overall meeting logistics and flow, and play the facilitation role determined for the meeting. • Co-chairs: play predetermined facilitation role and make note of members who require attention between meetings (e.g., have content expertise, expressed a concern, may benefit from coaching).
FOLLOW-UP, IDEALLY WITHIN A WEEK	• Backbone: synthesize the discussions and decisions from the meeting and send a follow-up email to the Working Group and Steering Committee (see Appendix D and E). • Co-chairs: provide feedback on meeting synthesis and make time to speak with Working Group members who require additional attention.
FORMULATE AGENDA AND CONTENT FOR NEXT MEETING	• Backbone: draft and iterate on agenda and materials for the next meeting (see Appendix B and C). • Co-chairs: provide feedback on the agenda and materials, especially ensuring the group is moving forward at the right pace and flagging parts of the agenda that may be contentious and require careful moderation.
FINALIZE ALL MATERIALS ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE	• Backbone: finalize the content (e.g., data, research, presentation) and facilitation plans for the next meeting. • Co-chairs: volunteer to take on a specific role (e.g., welcome and ice breaker, facilitation of specific agenda items and breakout groups, note-taking, closing).

MODULE 2 TIP SHEET

BE FASTIDIOUS ABOUT WORK PLANNING	Establishing a good system to prepare for and execute meetings will save you time down the line. With a clear system in place, staying organized and on track will be easier, even if it requires an upfront investment.
GIVE FACILITATION AND MATERIALS EQUAL IMPORTANCE	Spend as much time (or more) planning the facilitation approach as preparing the materials for the meeting. Good facilitation means it is creative, inclusive, and geared toward decision making.
ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING DURING EVERY MEETING	Make sure there is something to check off or decide on during every meeting, and note these decisions at the end. This drives progress, and it also motivates members to continue their participation with enthusiasm and commitment when they see constant, even if small, achievements.
MAINTAIN A LONGER-TERM PLAN	When you draft an agenda, have the next two agendas in mind, and preview these in the meetings so each member sees the long-term plan.

MODULE 2 RESOURCES

We have found the following road map for the first five meetings to be a helpful guide:

Meeting 1: Introduce members, share motivations for participating, discuss how the addressed issue connects to the overall collective impact initiative.

Meeting 2: Identify data (e.g., on the magnitude of the issue, a list of what is working, an actor map of system, etc.) that will help define a concrete scope of work.

Meeting 3: Make sense of the collected data to develop potential strategies for the issue as well as criteria for prioritizing these (See Appendix A for sample strategies).

Meeting 4: Using the criteria and any newly collected data, choose 1 or 2 short-term strategies (likely to deliver results within a year) and 1 or 2 long-term strategies.

Meeting 5: Align on an action plan for short-term strategies (e.g., partners to engage, activities to pursue, measuring results) and next steps for long-term strategies.

Acquiring and improving facilitation skills can be particularly beneficial for co-chairs to run meetings in productive and creative ways. Resources exist online, such as:

- Liberating Structures—These are 33 adaptable "mini-structures" that can be used to facilitate collaboration. The **Liberating Structures website** provides a wealth of examples.
- Interaction Institute for Social Change—This organization provides in-person facilitation training with a focus on social change. Their **blog** is a good resource to learn about facilitation and collaboration in the social sector.

MODULE 3:

HOW TO BUILD A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

WHY
THIS MATTERS

Working Group members may come from different sectors, communities, and backgrounds. Past collaborative experiences may be limited or even disappointing. There is, however, an opportunity to build a culture of candor and trust in the Working Groups, one where there is respect and commitment to creating positive change. Setting the stage for the Working Group's dynamics and tone is critical and begins with the very first meetings. Ideally, Working Group members feel inspired, connected, and motivated to bring their full selves and energy to the work.

HOW
TO APPROACH IT

Building a culture of collaboration is ongoing work. It is never "done" and entails creating cultural norms and expectations that create a safe space for participants to develop trust. This trust is a critical ingredient when developing shared goals, strategies, and ownership. Here are some things to keep in mind before, during, and after meetings that will help cultivate a culture of collaboration:

BEFORE

ANTICIPATE TENSION AND USE DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES TO BUILD A PRODUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT

- Anticipate topics that might be sensitive to members and have pre-conversations to clear the air and address concerns, or let members who might be shy about speaking up brainstorm with you in advance to get them more comfortable.
- Consider and act on ways to give all members equal voice and authority, engaging them differently where appropriate to adapt to personalities and needs.
- Consider who might have a hard time participating. Plan exercises that create safe environments, such as pair-sharing in addition to large-group conversations.
- Consider different learning styles. Share content via various mediums when possible (e.g., visual, verbal, guest-speaker testimonial).
- Plan ahead if there is a thorny topic to address. Try to pair difficult conversations with something lighter so the meeting is not challenging throughout.

DURING	**FACILITATE INSPIRING MEETINGS THAT FOSTER CONNECTIONS AMONG PEOPLE** • During the first meeting and throughout, ask questions like, "Why is this work personally important to you?" to provide opportunities to open up to the group. • Use ice-breaker exercises provided in the Resources section below. • Provide ground rules that encourage respect and appreciation of all experiences, ideas, and people. See sample ground rules in the Resources section below. • Observe tensions, political dynamics, how people are engaging with information, and whether people feel comfortable sharing as part of a group. Respond to these observations live if possible, and plan accordingly for future meetings.
AFTER	**LEARN FROM MEETINGS TO CONTINUOUSLY BUILD TRUST AND OPENNESS** • Make use of observations from the previous meeting to improve future meetings. • Understand who needs what kind of support in between meetings based on concerns or tensions that surfaced, and schedule a brief call with them. • Consider instating an "offline comment collector" to gather thoughts from those who did not feel comfortable sharing during the meeting and/or an online shared workspace for Working Group members.

MODULE 3 TIP SHEET

FOSTER DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES	When creating small discussion groups, be intentional about putting people with different perspectives together. It helps each person gain a broader understanding of the system and develops unlikely relationships. Show appreciation for the ideas and perspectives of each member.
AVOID BINARY CHOICES	Provide a spectrum of choices rather than either/or options. For example, instead of choice "A vs. B", provide choices such as "I could live with A if…." Frame difficult decisions as consensus-building rather than a vote, allowing room for give and take.
GIVE THINKING SPACE	Provide space for everyone to think individually and participate in a smaller and more accessible environment before launching into a large-group conversation. Don't rush to decisions if many Working Group members are not present—frame meeting results as pending feedback from more of the group.
RECOGNIZE THAT COLLABORATION IS A PROCESS	Continually reiterate the value of improving the collaborative *process* (not just the initiative's outcomes) to cultivate camaraderie and shared purpose. Even small changes in mind-sets lay the groundwork for sustained work together.

MODULE 3 RESOURCES

These sample ground rules, which can be customized, may help create constructive conversations:

1. Listen actively and do not interrupt if someone is speaking (allow people to be heard)
2. What is said here, stays here; what is learned here, leaves here (share lessons learned or insights with people who weren't present, while honoring confidentiality)
3. No one knows everything; together we know a lot (recognize each individual cannot possibly have the full picture)
4. Notice your experiences, emotions, and feelings (examine how you are reacting, and do your best to respond mindfully)
5. Speak from the I, not for the group (remember we can only speak from our own experience)
6. We cannot be articulate all the time (note that cognitive functioning can go down when conversations are challenging or stressful, particularly when emotions are involved)
7. Expect and accept a lack of closure (appreciate that you are working to solve complex challenges; fostering an open dialogue may mean building and learning over time)

These relationship-building and small-group conversation exercises can provide valuable opportunities for bonding and creating a more relaxed atmosphere, especially during the first few meetings:

- "**Collective Impact #ToolBox: Icebreakers**" (Living Cities)
- **Moving Beyond Icebreakers: An Innovative Approach to Group Facilitation, Learning, and Action** (Stanley Pollack with Mary Fusoni)
- "**Compendium of useful, purposeful introduction/warm-up/icebreaker exercises**" (Collective Impact Forum)
- **Facilitating Intentional Group Learning: A Practical Guide to 21 Learning Activities** (FSG)

MODULE 4:

HOW TO PUT SYSTEMS THINKING INTO PRACTICE

WHY
THIS MATTERS

Collective impact is challenging work that requires coordination among players from many sectors, and deep collaboration among people who may traditionally work in isolated efforts and organizations. It is critical, then, to ensure that Working Groups consider the system in which they are driving change, and not just its disparate parts. When embraced, systems thinking allows collective impact initiatives to better understand the context around an issue or organization(s), the connections among actors and organizations within a system, the patterns that seem to influence how a system works, and the diverse perspectives of those that influence and are influenced by a system. This perspective leads to more effective problem solving.

HOW
TO APPROACH IT

Everything in a system (a collection of organizations, people, and rules that share a purpose) is connected; events in one part of the system affect all or some of the other parts. "Systems thinking" is defined as the ability to see how social systems, subsystems, and their parts interact with and influence each other, and how these systems create and contribute to specific problems.[5] This cannot occur without "system thinkers" who, per Peter Senge,[6] embody these characteristics:

1. A willingness to challenge your own mental model—accepting your own role in problems and being open to different ways of seeing and doing
2. Always including multiple perspectives when looking at a phenomenon
3. A consistent and strong commitment to learning

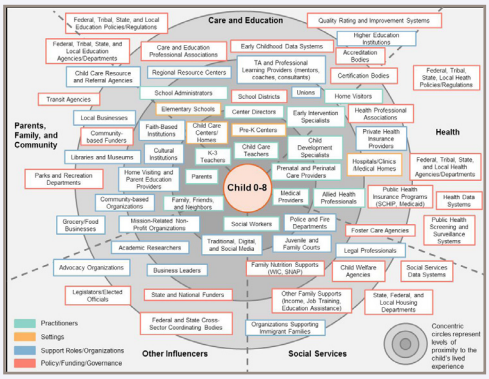
5 Adapted from **Systems Thinking: How to Lead in Complex Environments**. Robert Bullock, 2013.

6 **http://www.mutualresponsibility.org/science/what-is-systems-thinking-peter-senge-explains-systems-thinking-approach-and-principles**

As a co-chair, it is important to embody these systems-thinker characteristics in how you plan for and show up for meetings. Moreover, over time these characteristics are ideally nurtured in all Working Group members. There are numerous tools co-chairs can use to put the ideas behind systems thinking into practice. Using these tools (see the Resources section in this module for examples), you can help Working Groups members:[7]

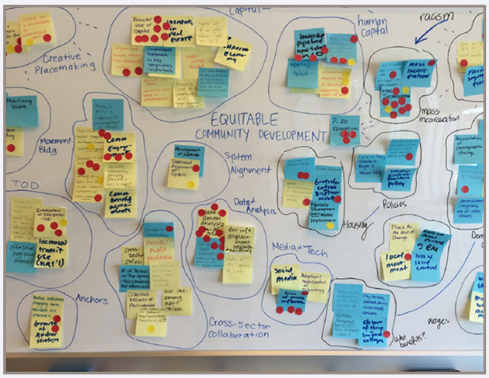
SEE THE WHOLE SYSTEM, NOT JUST ITS PARTS

1. Include diverse perspectives.
2. Map the various players and influencers in the system.
3. Understand gaps and opportunities in the system.



SHIFT THE COLLECTIVE FOCUS FROM REACTIVE PROBLEM SOLVING TO CO-CREATING THE FUTURE

4. Identify the key trends and momentum in the system.
5. Identify the interconnectedness of existing and future collective activities.



7 Graphic adapted from "**The Dawn of System Leadership"** (2015) Peter Senge, Hal Hamilton, John Kania. *Stanford Social Innovation Review.*

MODULE 4 TIP SHEET

KEEP THE WHOLE SYSTEM AT THE FOREFRONT	Try to move out of the day-to-day mind-set of "what can I do?" and towards "what can we all do together?" This includes avoiding exercises that focus on individual organizations and programs and, rather, designing exercises that stimulate conversation on how working together can help everyone achieve more. It also helps to remind the group of "the big picture," which may be as simple as writing the shared goal of the whole collective impact initiative on a whiteboard during every meeting, or placing it at the top of every agenda.
REMEMBER: IT'S ABOUT THE JOURNEY, NOT JUST THE DESTINATION	There is significant value in the process that systems-thinking tools facilitate and the conversations they stimulate—not just in the products they yield. In other words, the powerful conversations and connections that come from using the tools are critical outputs of engaging in this way.
EMBRACE AND ENCOURAGE DISCOMFORT	It is healthy to have deep debate in Working Group meetings and to get members with different opinions to understand each other's viewpoints. Successful systems-thinking exercises allow groups to productively engage with, rather than circumvent, these tensions. In fact, if meetings don't get slightly uncomfortable at times, then the membership likely includes perspectives that are not diverse enough.

MODULE 4 RESOURCES

Many **system mapping and other systems thinking exercises** are available, including:

- **Trend Mapping**. A visual depiction of relevant trends influencing the system around a given topic. It is developed using the collective knowledge and experience of a group familiar with a given system and its context.
- **Actor Mapping**. A visual depiction of the key organizations and/or individuals that make up a system, as well as their connections and relationships to one another and to a given issue, project, or goal.
- **World Café**. A method designed to create a safe, welcoming environment to intentionally connect multiple ideas and perspectives on a topic by engaging participants in several rounds of small-group conversation.
- **Timeline Mapping**. A process of arranging important events, actions, activities, achievements, and other milestone markers in chronological order to see them in temporal relationship to one another and to key contextual factors (e.g., social, economic, political, demographic, and cultural events and trends).
- **Habits of a Systems Thinker**. A collection of ways of thinking about how systems function and how systems leaders can problem-solve creatively (Waters Foundation).

MODULE 5:

HOW TO ENGAGE WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

WHY
THIS MATTERS

Engaging and working with a community (or "community engagement")[8] in collective impact is a critical part of creating effective and sustainable strategies to drive change. It is by centering on the wisdom, voice, and experience of community members who are closest to the challenges that collective impact is able to create opportunities for greater equity. Engaging a full range of voices is critical and rewarding, and may also be challenging. The Resource section in this module includes ways to equip co-chairs with the mind-set, vocabulary, and willingness to engage in difficult and deeply necessary conversations.

HOW
TO APPROACH IT

Before launching into specific community-engagement activities, check with the Backbone staff to ensure they fit with the overall community engagement plan for the initiative, and think carefully about the Working Group's goals for engaging the community. These goals could include:

1. **Understand system challenges:** Learn about the root causes of the issue and barriers to change
2. **Co-create solutions:** Spark problem-solving rooted in the lived experience of people most directly affected
3. **Verify the direction:** Get feedback on strategies, particularly from those most impacted by implementation
4. **Expand reach:** Spread the word on the initiative and widen the scope of those who will help implement it
5. **Build community capacity to lead change:** Empower community to engage in strategy implementation

See Figure 3 on the following page for specific activities for each goal, at different levels of depth.

8 While there can be significant differences among terms like community engagement, participatory process, and stakeholder participation (among others), what matters most is the *why* and *how* the work is done, and not *what* it is called.

FIGURE 3. MATRIX OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Increasing Level of Community Engagement

		Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Co-Lead
1	*Understand system challenges*		Surveys or interviews about lived experience	Engage new voices in Working Groups as members or speakers		
2	*Co-create solutions*		Interviews about strategies for change	Participatory design of solutions		Recruit community members to lead Working Groups
3	*Verify the direction*		Public meeting to solicit reactions to Working Group action plans	Advisory group to vet solutions and findings		
4	*Expand reach*	Press/ad campaign	Soliciting perspectives of underrepresented populations		Cultivate community partners	
5	*Build community capacity to lead change*	Provocative media campaign; community training		Enlist as spokespersons; enlist as trainers	Engagement in a pilot	Offer a training to build capacity on a new practice

Source: IAP2; adapted by the Tamarack Institute and FSG.

MODULE 5 TIP SHEET

INTERROGATE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT COMMUNITY NEEDS	Unconscious biases may inform our assumptions about the needs and priorities of the various communities involved in a collective impact initiative. Lay assumptions aside and engage community members—early, openly, and frequently—to help guide the Working Group's direction.
TREAT THIS AS A VALUE, NOT AN EVENT	Community engagement is more than a single meeting; it is a commitment to impact that is a constant element in all the work of the initiative. To be effective, make sure all engagement is authentic (the conversation is valued and acted on), inclusive (culturally competent and respectful interactions), and always inform participants of how their input is used (by sharing insights back with the community).
MAKE IT EASY TO ENGAGE	Keep in mind the realities of those you are engaging: carefully select who extends invites to community members; schedule meetings at convenient times and locations and meet people where they are (this could be at the bus stop or the laundromat); customize materials and facilitation to ensure they are user-centric; and provide food, childcare, transportation, translation, and/or stipends as appropriate.
ONE VOICE DOESN'T REPRESENT THE WHOLE	A community is not one entity. It is made up of many perspectives/sub-communities. Remember that one member of a community or group cannot speak for the whole.

Note: While the tips above reflect FSG's experience, some have been largely adapted from a Living Cities **blog post**.

MODULE 5 RESOURCES

Collective impact practitioners and supporting organizations have written extensively about community engagement and equity. Some of these resources include:

- "**How to Talk About Race**" and "**Race Matters-Community Building Strategies**" (Annie E. Casey Foundation)
- "**Listening to Those Who Matter Most, the Beneficiaries**" and "**Roundtable on Community Engagement and Collective Impact**" (Stanford Social Innovation Review)
- "**Why Involve Community in Collective Impact at all?**" and "**5 Ways collective impact partnerships can advance equity**" (Living Cities)
- "**Equity and Collective Impact**" (Lumina Foundation)
- "**Putting Community in Collective Impact**" and "**Bringing an Equity Lens to Collective Impact**" (Collective Impact Forum)

A comprehensive resource on community engagement practice is the Living Cities e-Course "**The Why and How of Working with Communities through Collective Impact**" including:

- "**Assessing Your Engagement Strategies**"
- "**Distinguishing your work: outreach or community engagement? An assessment tool**"
- "**Applying business concepts to community engagement**"

MODULE 6:

HOW TO BE DATA-DRIVEN AND LEARN ALONG THE WAY

WHY
THIS MATTERS

Using data is critical in collective impact because it allows Working Groups to ground their conversations and decisions in evidence. Learning from data in an intentional and structured way is essential because it enables assessment of progress towards goals, and catalyzes continuous improvement of strategy. Without data, Working Groups may find themselves "working in the dark": hard at work and committed to impact, yet unable to determine the best path forward or the impact of their actions.

HOW
TO APPROACH IT

While the Backbone staff, the Working Group, and/or local data experts will take the lead on the overall data activities of a collective impact initiative,[9] Working Groups can use data in tangible ways throughout their work. It is important to remember that data are a means to an end, not an end in itself. Data collection, analysis, and discussion can take a lot of time, so it needs to be clear what question it will help answer, or what decision it will help the group make. Here are four ways Working Groups may use data:

1. **To identify opportunities**—data create a common understanding of where the system is and is not working, as well as where there are opportunities for intervention.

2. **To inform the strategies to be pursued**—insights from data can be an important puzzle piece as Working Groups design strategies and prioritize among potential interventions.

3. **To learn and course correct**—the ongoing collection and evaluation of data allow for continuous course correction, as Working Groups understand what works and what does not in the strategies rolled out.

4. **To demonstrate impact and remain accountable**—tracking progress over time enables Working Groups to demonstrate impact, foster excitement, and create a mechanism to hold each other accountable.

9 Initiatives often develop a *shared measurement system* (SMS), a common set of indicators to monitor the initiative's performance and track its progress toward goals.

As a co-chair, it is important to remember that using data can be intimidating for members of the group, but it does not need to be; it can be a fulfilling and rewarding activity. Start by identifying what data are most needed (balancing a desire for meaningful and quality input with a desire to minimize time and resources required for data collection and analysis), stressing that qualitative data are as powerful and valid as quantitative data, and celebrating that there are likely many existing data sources in the community:

- Externally collected population-level data (e.g., third-grade reading scores, state obesity rates)
- Samples (e.g., birth weights in one hospital, percent of seniors receiving at-home care in a district)
- Community survey (e.g., 100 responses to a survey designed by the Working Group)
- Notes from focus groups or interviews
- Results from research and evaluation studies

Working Groups also need to pay attention to the context and conditions that influence their strategies. To create such a learning culture, co-chairs can foster an openness to surprise, a willingness to admit "failure," and a hunger for feedback. This means that new reports, data, or statistics are not seen as evaluating or judging the activity that has happened, but as the ingredients for the next wave of action. New information can be discussed with a forward-looking mind-set so Working Group members reflect openly and effectively. This ensures a culture that challenges and tests assumptions so new ideas emerge and current approaches can be refined. And while learning can always be happening in the Working Groups, the focus of learning changes over time. At first, learning is focused on new ways of understanding and seeing the issue; over time the focus is on improving results, course correcting, and evolving the group's scope and strategies.

MODULE 6 TIP SHEET

DISAGGREGATE DATA	When reviewing data, look beyond averages and generalities and seek to understand data for different population subgroups. More importantly, if the Working Group is looking at data about different subgroups, yet those subgroups are not part of the discussion, then the group will likely not reach the best conclusions. Ask Working Group members to bring context to the data that are being presented if the data relate to their day-to-day work or personal experiences, and if no one in the group can provide that context, seek out those who can.
LEAD WITH CURIOSITY	Strive to bring open questions, rather than answers, to the conversation; for example, instead of saying, "The data tell us we should focus on X," ask, "As we look at the data, what areas need most attention?"
INCORPORATE A FUN FACTOR	People don't engage deeply when data are simply presented. Find ways to spark interest and insight; for example, print posters with the data and pin them up on a wall, and ask small groups within the Working Group to discuss what the data mean. Moreover, complement statistics with thought-provoking quotes to complement quantitative data and spark discussion.
AVOID "DATA DUMPS" AND "ANALYSIS PARALYSIS"	Sending lots of data as a preread isn't effective if it is not then built into the meetings. Data need to be tied to discussions and decision making. Data do not make the decision for you, nor will data improve strategies if action is not taken. Utilize data to shape decisions.
DON'T REINVENT THE WHEEL OR HOARD IT	Look for opportunities to promote partnerships for data collection, analysis, funding, and sharing within the broader community.
EMBRACE THE FACT THAT PLANS OFTEN CHANGE	Working Groups grapple with complex problems, so strategy experimentation, learning, and tweaking are crucial parts of the work. Don't be afraid to be responsive and flexible as new data illuminate further understanding of what (and how) the group could be focusing on.

MODULE 6 RESOURCES

- Blog series: "**What Does it Take to Use Data to Change Behavior in Collective Impact?**" (Living Cities)
- Case study: "**Evidence-Based Decision-Making- Engaging Parents & Principles to Cure San Antonio's Chronic Absenteeism**" (Strive Together)
- **Community Check Box Evaluation System** (University of Kansas)
- "**The Three Elements of Continuous Learning: Priorities, Plans, and Culture**" and "**Building in Continuous Learning into Collective Impact**" (Collective impact Forum)

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE WORKING GROUP STRATEGIES

FOCUS OF INITIATIVE	SPECIFIC WORKING GROUP ISSUE AREA	SAMPLE WORKING GROUP STRATEGIES
EARLY CHILDHOOD	Increasing access to high-quality childcare	• Creating a guide in multiple languages of available childcare options, with information including neighborhood, opening hours, ability to offer subsidy, and languages spoken by staff • Creating a common enrollment form among all childcare providers • Conducting a gap analysis to determine which neighborhoods are lacking availability, and advocating for new capacity to be built where needs are highest
ASTHMA	Creating healthier physical environments	• Identifying schools with high levels of allergens and implementing EPA indoor air-quality tools • Working with city inspectors to add environmental questions to day care checklists • Enacting anti-idling policies in areas frequented by children and families • Coordinating high-ozone day programs (flags, billboard warnings) with messages for citizen action, using new technology as possible
JUVENILE JUSTICE	Reducing school-related delinquencies	• Mapping root causes of truancy and early warning signs of absenteeism to create more tailored action plans for at-risk youth • Updating school discipline policies to counteract overreliance on involving law enforcement • Building the capacity of teachers to cope with classroom disturbances to reduce involvement of school resource officers • Connecting schools with high arrest rates to those with low arrest rates to enable shared learning of proven practices
SUBSTANCE ABUSE	Better equipping parents and guardians to raise healthy drug-free children	• Creating and supporting social marketing campaigns geared to parents • Providing research-based parent education to parents/caregivers of children aged 9–18 years • Educating families about the importance of family connectedness, and the role that family dinners can play in nurturing connection
ACHIEVEMENT GAP	Support positive identity and primary language development	• Ensuring social studies, English, science, and other curricula are inclusive and culturally relevant • Ensuring school environments reflect students' cultural and linguistic heritage • Ensuring that schools hire/develop instructional staff and leadership that reflect diversity and language of student population

APPENDIX B

MEETING PLANNING STEPS FOR CO-CHAIRS

BEFORE MEETING	
Schedule meeting date and location (schedule 3–4 months of meetings at a time so members can plan to attend)	Several months before meetings
Maintain current contact list of Working Group members, including reaching out to members with low attendance	Ongoing
Ensure someone has sent calendar invites to members that include meeting location and any directions for parking	3–4 weeks before meeting
Help with creating meeting agenda (see Appendix C for a template and planning questions for creating a meeting agenda)	2–3 weeks before meeting
Participate in call with Backbone staff to discuss agenda and facilitation plan (for each agenda item, who is facilitating, who is taking notes, etc.)	1–2 weeks before meeting
Help with the creation of meeting material (may be a PowerPoint presentation, written memo, copies of reports, etc.)	1–2 weeks before meeting
Email any preread material/meeting reminder to Working Group (including asking for or reminding of homework assignments)	3–5 days before meeting

DURING MEETING	
Take attendance	During meeting
Play the role that has been determined in the facilitation plan	
Help ensure an inclusive environment where everyone can participate	
Outline clear next steps at end of meeting for Working Group to agree upon	

IMMEDIATELY AFTER CLOSE OF MEETING	
Take photo of whiteboard/flip charts for reference, if needed	Day of meeting
Debrief with Backbone staff to capture reactions and next steps	
Write down: 1. Key topics discussed and decisions made in the meeting 2. Questions and who is taking the lead to answer them 3. Requests for the Steering Committee	

WITHIN A WEEK AFTER MEETING	
Email follow-up to Working Group members with thanks, next meeting date, homework, material, etc. (See Appendix D for a sample email)	2–5 days after meeting
Contact those who didn't attend or may need follow-up	2–5 days after meeting
Develop report to Steering Committee (see Appendix E for a sample email): 1. Key topics discussed and decisions made 2. Progress highlights 3. Requests for Steering Committee 4. Next steps	1 week prior to Steering Committee meeting
Document Steering Committee response to the report (e.g., answers to questions, suggestions, feedback) to share at next Working Group meeting	Within 1 week of Steering Committee meeting

APPENDIX C

MEETING AGENDA TEMPLATE

SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA	QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU PLAN THE MEETING
1. Meeting goals, welcome, introductions *(10 minutes)* • Review goals of meeting • Introductions (if applicable) • Task management	• What do we want to accomplish during this meeting? • Is there anyone new to the group we should introduce? • Are there major developments or elephants in the room that we need to address at the outset? • What other tasks need to be cleared?
2. Review *(15 minutes)* • Decisions made at last meeting • Progress since last meeting (including homework contributed and feedback from/action by Steering Committee)	• What decisions did we make during the previous meeting? (note: this language should be consistent with what you put in the follow-up email after the last meeting) • What are some exciting accomplishments from the past month? (success, anecdotal, or quantitative) • What can we report back on homework assignments? • What can we report back from the Steering Committee meeting?
3. Discussion *(70 minutes)* • Overview of key topics to discuss this month • If applicable, data that inform these topics • Interactive discussion of the key topic (could be in small groups)	• What big topics do we have to discuss? • What data do we want to bring to these discussions (e.g., lessons from outreach, new data, findings from initial implementation of ideas, national best practice, story from a community member or guest speaker, etc.) • How should we facilitate the discussion to ensure inclusivity?
4. Decision making *(15 minutes)* • Noting key decisions • Agreeing on next steps (homework to be done before the next meeting, what we want to share or ask of the Steering Committee)	• What is our hypothesis on where the group will land? • What challenges do we foresee with this and what can we do now to address them?
5. Closure *(10 minutes)*	• What is an inspiring way to end the meeting?

APPENDIX D

MEETING FOLLOW-UP EMAIL TEMPLATE—WORKING GROUP

Dear XXX Working Group members,

Thank you so much to all of you who attended our last meeting. Below please find the key points discussed, decisions made, questions and requests for the Steering Committee, and next steps. There is also a more detailed list of meeting notes at the end of the email. The meeting materials are all attached to this email. As a reminder, our next meeting will be on XXX at XXX in location XXX.

Key topics discussed and decisions

- We discussed the viability of XXX strategy in light of XXX. The group decided to investigate the trends in XXX and have conversations with XXX before moving forward with the strategy. We will be discussing this topic further during our next meeting.
- Small groups crafted 3 potential policy opportunities at the state level to pursue in 2017. These included XXX, XXX, and XXX. The group decided to pursue XXX as a "quick win" opportunity with significant momentum within the legislature this cycle.

Requests for Steering Committee

- The Working Group is asking the Steering Committee for introductions to XXX and XXX to help with the policy opportunity described above.

Next steps

The following Working Group members volunteered to take on "homework" assignments to help answer questions that came up during the meeting:

- XXX will be researching XXX. She will share high-level findings with us during next month's meeting.
- XXX will bring some data on XXX to facilitate our conversation about XXX.

Later this month you will receive the following items as inputs to meeting #_:

- Prereads
- Draft final policy XXX
- XXX annual report data to analyze together during the meeting

We are so excited to have all of you engaged in this important work. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Warm regards,

Names of Working Group co-chairs

[Insert high-level summary of meeting notes at the bottom of the email]

APPENDIX E

MEETING FOLLOW-UP EMAIL TEMPLATE—STEERING COMMITTEE

Dear Steering Committee,

We had a successful meeting of the XXX Working Group on [date]. Below please find the key points and decisions discussed during the meeting, progress made, requests for the Steering Committee, and next steps.

Key topics discussed and decisions

- We discussed the viability of XXX strategy in light of XXX. The group decided to investigate the trends in XXX and have conversations with XXX before moving forward with the strategy. We will be discussing this topic further during our next meeting.
- Small groups crafted 3 potential policy opportunities at the state level to pursue in 2017. These included XXX, XXX, and XXX. The group decided to pursue XXX as a "quick win" opportunity with significant momentum within the current legislative session.

Progress highlights

- Since our last Working Group meeting, we have shared progress on our work with XXX, which resulted in an op-ed being written about our strategies in newspaper XXX.

Requests for Steering Committee

- The Working Group is requesting your help with the policy opportunity described above. If any of you has contacts at XXX or XXX, we would greatly appreciate an introduction to begin conversations and create our advocacy plan. Please contact **abc@abc.org** if you have suggestions or follow-up thoughts on this matter.

Next steps

- During the next month, we will …

We are so excited to have all of you engaged in this important work. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Warm regards,

Names of Working Group co-chairs

NOTES

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Making Homelessness in Connecticut Rare, Brief, and One Time

[Name of Workgroup/Taskgroup] Agenda

Date and Time of meeting
Meeting Location/Virtual Meeting Link

I. **Welcome and Introductions**
   - Check-in
   - Purpose of meeting

II. **Additional Agenda Items?**
   - A new development that is important to flag/discuss at the meeting or future meetings. Facilitator will add additional items to the New Business Category

III. **Action Commitments/Decisions**
   - Any pending decision that needs to be made by the group.

IV. **Progress/Updates**
   - Discussions of existing activities, projects or previously held events.

V. **New Business**
   - New topics or ideas being discussed for the first time; it may/may not require a decision.

VI. **Non-Member Comment**
   - Open the floor for members of the public to comment on current/future meeting content

VII. **Next Steps**

Agenda Key

Additional Agenda Items: New development to discuss at the meeting or future meeting; facilitator will add items to New Business

Action Commitments and Decisions: Pending decisions that needs to be made by the group

Progress and Updates: Discussion of existing activities, projects, or previously held events

New Business: New topics or ideas being discussed for the first time; may or may not require a decision

Non-Member Comments: Open comment period for non-members

Next Steps: Facilitator will review next steps from the meeting

Next meeting date:

Reaching Home [WORKGROUP/ TASK GROUP NAME]
Purpose:
Membership:
Chairs:
Facilitator:

Role	Representatives	Reaching Home Affiliations	Organizational Affiliations

Making Homelessness in Connecticut Rare, Brief, and One Time

TASK GROUP FORMATION CHARTER

Summary of the Issue:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____.

Executive Summary/Proposed Solution:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____.

Deliverables/Impact:

A) _____
B) _____
C) _____
D) _____

Proposed Timeline for Action: _____

Participants/Stakeholders:

_____
_____
_____
_____.

Convener: _____

Reaching Home Campaign
Legislative Recommendation Template

20XX Session

Recommendation Short Title:

Workgroup:

Workgroup Contact Name:

Recommendation Target Population: (*Families, those experiencing chronic homelessness, Veterans, Youth, all populations, etc.*)

Summary of the Issue:
Some questions to consider for this section include:

- *What is the problem we are trying to address?*
- *Who is most impacted by this issue? Look at impact by race and ethnicity. Is there a disparate impact (look at race/ethnicity)?*
- *What geographic area(s) are impacted? How does it differ geographically?*

Recommended Legislative Action(s):
Some questions to consider for this section include:

- *What is the proposed legislative action to address this issue? (Budgetary change, administrative change, legislative change, interagency agreement, etc.)*
- *Who holds the ultimate decision-making authority/power/resources to address this issue?*
- *Can this issue be resolved through non-legislative actions?*
- *Who benefits and who is burdened from the proposed solution?*
- *How do our biases/privileges impact this proposed action?*

Timeframe for Proposed Action:
Some questions to consider for this section include:

- *When does this action need to take place by?*
- *Can the timeline for action accommodate gathering more information if needed?*

Fiscal Impact:
Some questions to consider for this section include:

- *What are the resources required for this action? What will the hard costs be?*
- *What other capacity is needed for this action (time, energy, skills, etc.)?*

Partners and Advisers
Some questions to consider for this section include:

- *Who are the stakeholders? How will you engage them/how have they been engaged in this process?*
- *Were BIPOC and individuals with lived experience part of developing the proposed action/how was their input utilized?*
- *Are there opportunities to partner with other coalitions/networks that are advocating for similar action?*

Impact:
Some questions to consider for this section include:

- *How would this action work toward making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time?*
- *How would this change be sustained over time?*
- *How does this action empower marginalized communities/further equity?*

Other Important Information/Considerations/Notes:

What is Results Based Facilitation (RBF)?

Results Based Facilitation[1] is a specific, hands-on method that enables people to practice the skills for getting different and better results in their meetings and conversations. The method is useful in one-on-one conversations, small groups, and large groups whether you are a meeting participant or meeting facilitator.

Skills/Competencies

1) Hold Roles Become aware of how people hold roles in meetings and choose to develop the skill of holding the neutral role (when beneficial) as a participant or as an authorized facilitator.	○ Use Boundary of Authority Role and Task (B/ART) to define and differentiate roles ○ Use B/ART to understand group dynamics and achieve meeting results ○ Hold neutral facilitator role ○ Give work back to the group
2) Hold Conversations Become aware that conversations are the focus of collaborative work and to choose to participate in conversations with an appreciation of and openness to other people and their point of view.	○ Demonstrate appreciative openness ○ Use Context Statements, Effective Questions, Listen Fors
3) Hold Groups Become aware that groups are composed of diverse individuals. As a result, they choose to understand each individual's perspectives, preferences, and interests using methods to facilitate and support groups to have one conversation at a time.	○ Use flip chart to display group's work ○ Sequence, Summarize & Synthesize ○ Check-in and Check-Out
4) Hold 3R Meetings Become aware of the structure and process of conversations and choose to master and apply methods that will help you design and execute meetings that produce results.	○ Use concept of Relationships + Resources = Results (3R) to design meetings and in meetings to achieve results.
5) Hold Mental Models Become aware of the range of mental models and choose to master and apply mental models that contribute to moving groups from talk to accountable, aligned action.	○ Use Proposal Based Decision Making to move groups from talk to action ○ Use conversations to develop convergence ○ Name and address barriers to convergence ○ Make and help others make action commitments ○ Observe and respond to group dynamics ○ Assess and address conflict
6) Hold Action and Results Become aware, that in meetings, groups can commit to aligned action and choose to work toward achieving meeting results that lead to results within programs, organizations, and communities.	○ Be accountable in role for contributions to results ○ Use RBF skills to work collaboratively to accelerate progress toward results

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model for RBF integrates approaches from Heifetz[2] (adaptive leadership), the White Institute (interaction of person, role, and system), Meyers Briggs Type Indicator (use of type preferences to understand differential impact and to respond to group dynamics), Ury, Fisher and Patton[3] (interest based negotiation), Moore[4] (conflict resolution), and Senge[5] (systems thinking). At the core of RBF is the concept of results accountability. RBF is compatible with most results frameworks, and is particularly suitable for supporting the implementation of Friedman's Results Accountability Framework.[6]

The following hypotheses integrate these approaches into a facilitative model of how groups move from talk to action that produce results:

- The work of meetings occurs through conversations and can be thought of as a series of conversations that create meaning and movement to action and results.
- Group conversations can be designed, prepared for, and flexibly supported by someone with a set of listening and speaking skills.
- A facilitator who holds a neutral role, working in support of the group is a key element of success.

RBF is a competency-based approach to participating in and facilitating meetings in order to get results. The six RBF competencies used by participants and facilitators move groups from talk to action that produces results within programs, organizations and communities. This is done by focusing on meeting results and by developing an accountability framework for commitments to align action.

The central organizing concept of RBF is that of achieving results and accountability for results.

Endnotes

[1] Excepts with permission from Jolie Bain Pillsbury, PhD. (2013). *Results Based Facilitation Moving From Talk to Action, An Introduction*. Sherbrooke Consulting Inc. www.sherbrookeconsulting.com

[2] Heifetz. (1994). *Leadership Without Easy Answers*. Belknap Press.

[3] Fisher, Ury, and Patton. (1991). *Getting to Yes* (2nd Edition). Penguin Books.

[4] Moore. (1986). *The Mediations Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict*. Jossey-Bass.

[5] Senge. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline the Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. Doubleday.

[6] Friedman. (2005). *Trying Hard Is Not Good Enough*. Trafford Publishing.

With appreciation to Building Changes for creating this summary: http://www.BuildingChanges.org