2021 Management & Leadership Training Conference (Virtual)

Leadership for Collective Impact

Advancing Equity, Building Resilience, Sustaining Hope

Helping People. Changing Lives.
community
Action
PARTNERSHIP
AMERICA'S POVERTY FIGHTING NETWORK

Not at all Familiar

I've heard of "collective impact" but am not sure how it differs from other forms of partnership

I know about the CI approach but am not currently involved in an initiative

My organization is involved in a collective impact initiative

Collective Impact is the <u>commitment</u> of a group of important actors from <u>different</u> sectors and the community to a <u>common</u> <u>agenda</u> for solving a <u>specific social</u> <u>problem at scale</u>.

Five Key Elements

Common Agenda
- **Common understanding** of the problem
- **Shared vision** for change

Shared Measurement
- **Collecting data** and **measuring results**
- **Performance management and learning**
- **Shared accountability**

Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- **Differentiated approaches**
- Willingness to **adapt individual activities**
- **Coordination** through joint plan of action

Continuous Communication
- **Consistent** and **open communication**
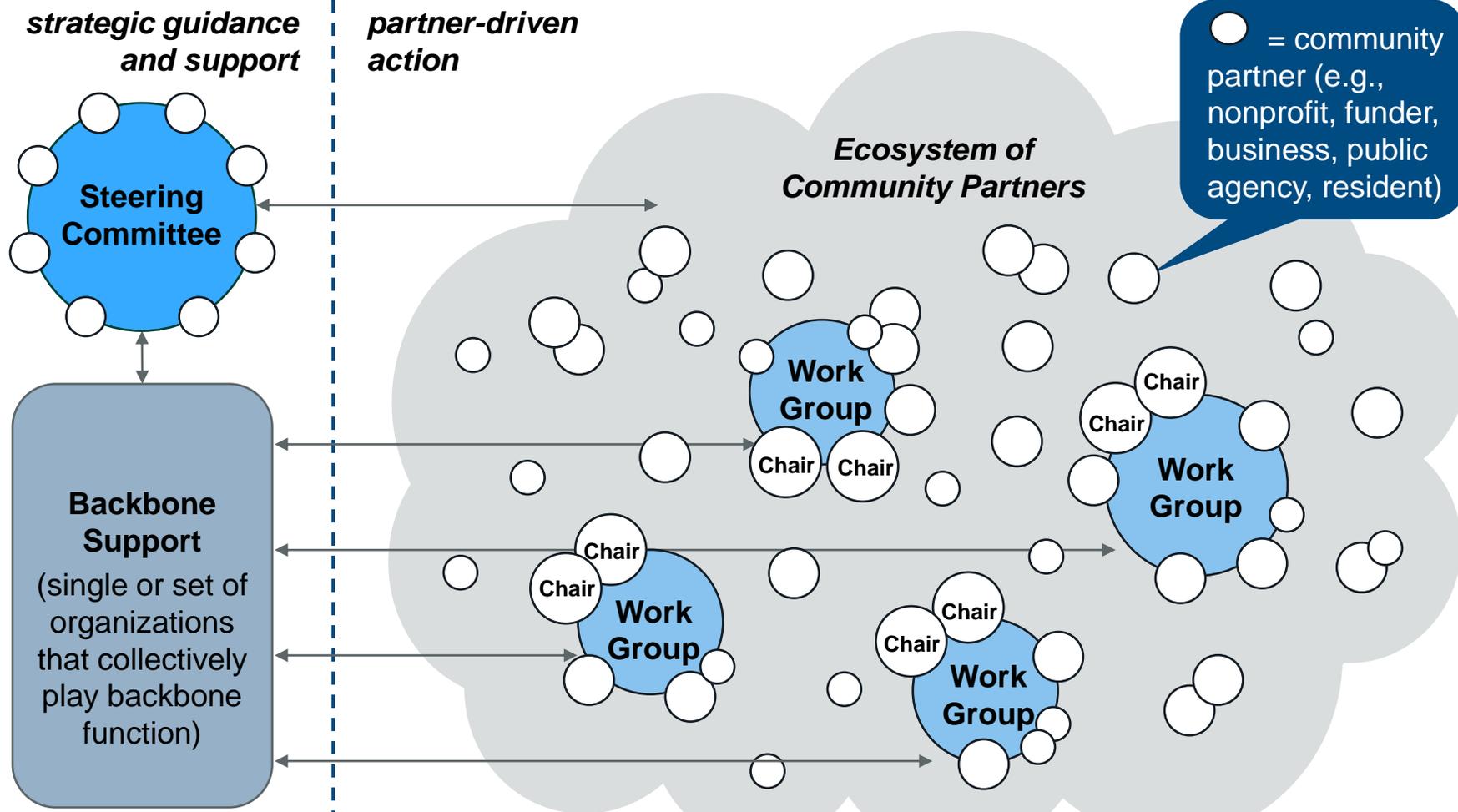- Focus on **building trust**

Backbone Support
- Dedicated **staff**
- Resources and skills to **convene** and **coordinate** participating organizations

Source: Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work, 2012; FSG Interviews

Collective Impact Infrastructure:
Structuring for Intentionality and Uncertainty

Common Agenda and Shared Metrics

strategic guidance and support

partner-driven action

Ecosystem of Community Partners

○ = community partner (e.g., nonprofit, funder, business, public agency, resident)

Steering Committee

Backbone Support

(single or set of organizations that collectively play backbone function)

Work Group

Work Group

Work Group

Work Group

Chair

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

In Collective Impact, Leadership Is Distributed Across Many Partners (Not Centralized with the Backbone)

Steering Committee	• Provides **strategic direction** for the initiative • **Champions** the work • **Aligns own work** to common agenda • Some Steering Committee members serve on **working groups**
Backbone	• Provides **dedicated staff** • Supports the work of partners by assisting with **strategic guidance**, supporting **aligned activity**, establishing **shared measurement**, building **public will**, advancing **policy**, and mobilizing **resources**
Working Group	• Comprised of **cross-sector community partners targeting particular element of common agenda** • **Typically led by co-chairs**, supported by the backbone • Designs and implements strategies**,** involving non-working group members as needed
Community partner	• **Individual organizations and members of the community** (e.g, nonprofit, funder, business, public agency, student, parent,) • Partners should have **access to a variety of opportunities to learn about and engage** in the initiative, and will be key to implementing strategies • Ultimate "power" resides within the **community at large**

Roles and Activities

Role	Activities
Initiator (Early Exploration of Approach, Appropriateness and Readiness Assessments)	Guide Exploration of Approach and Issue Focus for Community; Key informant; Interviewer; Advisor
Early Convener-Facilitator	Facilitate Meetings; Provide Space; Convening Support; Data Support; Seed Funding for Exploration
Champion/Advocate	Publicly champion and advocate for: • process (CI), strategies and outcomes • equity and resident-grassroots engagement • creation of a shared decision-making structure and new leaders supports • Recruitment of residents, grassroots leaders and CBOs to participate in, lead and support the CII
Funder/Investor	Seed/start-up funding; Backbone funding; Strategy/Intervention/Pilot/Program funding; Evaluation funding
Collaborative Leadership	Steering/Executive Committee Member; Steering Committee Chair/Co-Chair; Work Group Chair/Co-Chair
Collaborative Participant	Work Group Member; Event Participant; Event/Initiative Volunteer; Event/Initiative Donor
Backbone Support	Next slide

Successful Backbone Support Structures Have the Following Six Key Functions

Guide Vision and Strategy	• **Build a common understanding of the problem** that needs **to be addressed** • **Provide strategic guidance to develop a common agenda; serve as a thought leader / standard bearer for the initiative**
Support Aligned Activities	Ensure **mutually reinforcing activities** take place, i.e., • **Coordinate and facilitate** partners' continuous communication and collaboration **Convene** partners and key external stakeholders • **Catalyze** or **incubate** new initiatives or collaborations • Provide **technical assistance** to build management and administrative capacity (e.g., coaching and mentoring, providing training and fundraising support) • Create **paths for, and recruit, new partners** so they become involved • Seek **out opportunities for alignment** with other efforts
Establish Shared Measurement Practices	• Collect, analyze, interpret, and report **data** • Catalyze or develop **shared measurement systems** • Provide technical assistance for building partners' **data capacity**
Cultivate Community Engagement and Ownership	• Frame the problem to **create a sense of urgency** and articulate a call to action • Support **community member engagement** activities • Produce and manage **communications** (e.g., news releases, reports)
Advance Policy	Advocate for an aligned **policy agenda**
Mobilize Resources	Mobilize and align public and private **resources to support initiative's goals**

Backbones Require a Unique Skill Set

Highlights of Successful Backbones

- Have a high level of **credibility within the community**

- Serve as **honest brokers**

- Have a **dedicated staff**

- **Build key relationships** across members of the initiative

- **Focus people's attention** and create a sense of **urgency**

- Frame issues to **present opportunities and difficulties**

- Use **evaluation as a tool for learning and progress**

- Ensure **coordination** and **accountability**

- Stay "behind the scenes" to **establish collective ownership**

There Are Several Common Misperceptions about Backbones

That the backbone:

X **sets the agenda** for the group

X **drives the solutions**

X **receives all the funding**

X **is self appointed** rather than selected by the community

X **is "business as usual"** in terms of staffing, time, and resources

Considerations for Finding the Right Roles

Collaborative work requires different decision-making and leadership culture

Recognize differences between organizational roles and individual roles (people from an organization may be playing different roles and participating in different ways)

Play to organizational/individual strengths and assets

Clarify and clearly express organizational interests

Avoid conflicts of interest, especially in backbone support, leadership roles and service provision

People & organizations leave and enter CIIs and their roles change over time
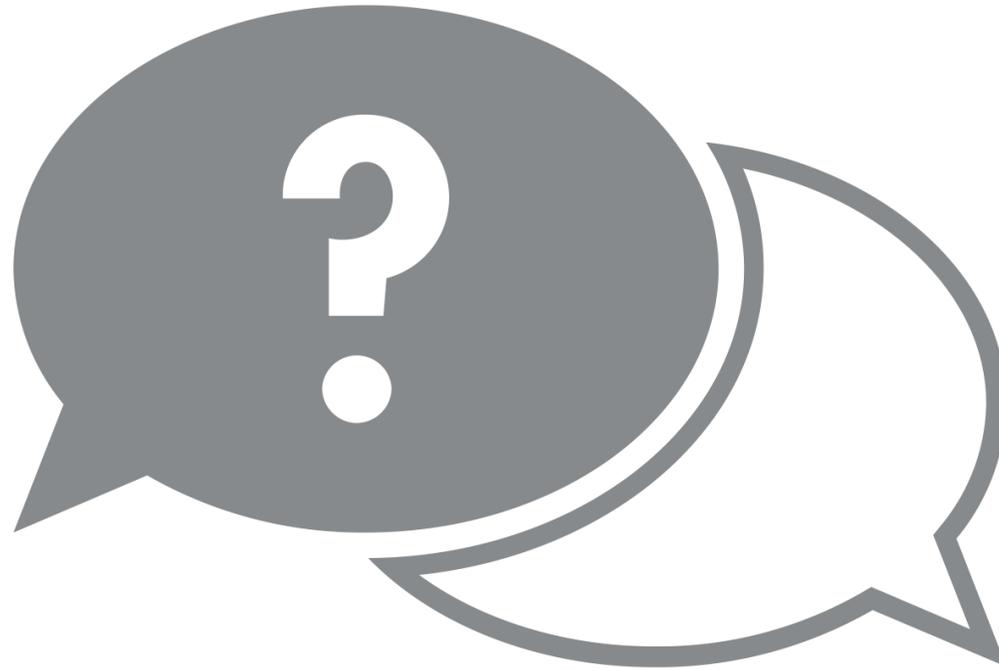
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