Collective Impact & Community Foundations

A conversation with:

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Agenda

• Introduction to Collective Impact
• “How to” Considerations
• Collective Impact in Action
The Premise: There Are Several Types of Problems

Simple

The right “recipe” is essential but once you’ve discovered it, replication will get you almost the same result every time.

Example: Baking a Cake

Complicated

The right “protocols and formulas” are needed, as are high levels of expertise and training – experience is built over time to get to the right result, which can be repeated over time with the expectation of success.

Example: Sending a Rocket to the Moon

Complex

There are no “right” recipes or protocols that work in every situation. There are many outside factors that influence the situation, and every situation is unique. Experience helps, but in no way guarantees success.

Example: Raising a Child

The traditional approach in the social sector has been to treat problems as simple or complicated.

Source: Adapted from “Getting to Maybe”
There is a Fundamental Mismatch Between the Complexity Of Social Problems and the Traditional Focus on Disconnected Solutions

**Isolated Impact**

- Agencies and organizations select individual programs or initiatives that offer the most promising solutions
- Organizations / agencies / programs work separately and compete to produce the greatest independent impact
- Evaluation attempts to isolate a particular agency / organization / program’s impact
- Large scale change depends on scaling a single organization / program
- Agencies, organizations, and systems are disconnected from one another

**Collective Impact**

- Solving social problems requires understanding the interaction of many organizations within a larger system
- Progress depends on working toward the same goal and measuring the same things
- Evaluation measures the impact of a system and all of its players
- Large scale impact depends on increasing cross-agency and –organization alignment and learning among many actors
- Agencies, organizations, and systems are essential partners

**Collective Impact initiatives provide a structure for cross-sector leaders to forge a common agenda for solving a specific social problem**
Collective Impact Is a Unique and Differentiated Approach to Bringing Actors Across Sectors Together to Work Toward a Common Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Collaboration</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collective Impact Initiatives</strong></td>
<td>Long-term commitments by a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem</td>
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<td><strong>Funder Collaboratives</strong></td>
<td>Groups of funders interested in supporting the same issue who pool their resources</td>
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<td><strong>Public-Private Partnerships</strong></td>
<td>Partnerships formed between government and private sector organizations to deliver specific services or benefits</td>
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<td><strong>Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives</strong></td>
<td>Voluntary activities by stakeholders from different sectors around a common theme</td>
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<td><strong>Social Sector Networks</strong></td>
<td>Groups of individuals or organizations fluidly connected through purposeful relationships, whether formal or informal</td>
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*It is distinct from other forms of collaboration*
Achieving Large-Scale Change through Collective Impact Involves Five Key Conditions For Shared Success

- **Common Agenda**: All participants have a **shared vision for change** including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.

- **Shared Measurement**: Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.

- **Mutually Reinforcing Activities**: Participant activities must be differentiating while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.

- **Continuous Communication**: Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation.

- **Backbone Support**: Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies.

Source: FSG SSIR Collective Impact Article, Winter 2011; FSG Interviews
The Collective Impact Approach to Solving Complex Social Issues Is Occurring Across Many Sectors

**Education**

- Strive Together

**Healthcare**

- Shape Up Somerville: Eat Smart, Play Hard.

**Homelessness**

- Calgary Homeless Foundation

**Environment**

- Elizabeth River Project

**Economic Development**

- MARS

**Urban Revitalization**

- MEMPHIS Fast Forward
If You Are Thinking About Catalyzing Collective Impact You Should Consider the Following:

Is the Right Infrastructure in Place:

- **Credible Champions / Catalysts** exist to drive CI discussions
- **Neutral Convener** exists and is looked to by the community
- **Backbone Support Structure** exists or key staff positions can be filled

Are the Conditions Accommodating:

- Significant resources and attention are focused on addressing the problem
- Existing collaborative efforts are present that can be taken to the “next level,” and with tools and processes in place
- Funder Alignment of local funders (public and private) willing to financially support / partner on an effort
- Potential to Engage a Board, Cross-sector set of community players
- Internal and external circumstances point to Issue “Ripeness” to the urgency of the issue at hand
- Within the community, there is a shared understanding of why there is an Urgency for Change, often driven by data
- Interest exists or effort is underway to Understand the Problem, key players, and / or evidence-based strategies
Collective Impact Efforts Tend to Transpire Over Three Key Phases

**Phase I: Initiate Action**
- Hold preliminary conversations with Stakeholders
- Gather baseline data
- Map the landscape of players, strategies, and work underway
- Understand evidence-base strategies
- Facilitate outreach
- Observe and absorb current situation/landscape

**Phase II: Organize for Impact**
- Align Stakeholders
- Develop data infrastructure and indicators
- Establish common goals to build system level theory of change and action roadmap
- Root activities within evidence-base
- Invite community engagement, public will building
- Develop a community of practice

**Phase III: Sustain Action & Impact**
- Align Stakeholders
- Facilitate group processes and refine when needed
- Collect/Track/report progress
- Address ongoing data needs
- Coordinate ongoing activities
- Provide support to project / networks to innovate, scale and improve
- Expand community engagement, public will building, advocacy
- Actively promote learning from results

Source: FSG SSIR Collective Impact Article, Winter 2011; FSG Interviews
Working in Collective Impact Requires a Mindset Shift

Adaptive vs. Technical Problem Solving

- Allowing answers to come from within
- Supporting common agenda building, information sharing and coordination/alignment

No Silver Bullets…. But we do have Silver Buckshot

- Many small changes implemented in alignment can add up to large scale progress

Credibility vs. Credit

- Creating new incentives to work collaboratively vs. competitively
Funders Can Play a Unique Role in Collective Impact

✓ Focus on the overall issue, not just the individual grantees
  *Ask – how does the problem get solved? Not – what is the best project or partner to fund?*

✓ Pay attention to the relationships between organizations in addition to the capacity of a individual organizations
  *Funding coordination processes among organizations may seem less “sexy” than funding one organization’s program, however it can have deeper results long-term*

✓ Think about long term process and gradual impact rather than short term solutions
  *Long-term, systemic change takes time*

✓ Build knowledge and alignment through shared measurement systems, regular meetings, and backbone organizations
  *You can have tremendous impact by enabling the development and sharing of knowledge*
Priority Spokane Aims to Create a Vibrant Future for Spokane County Through Five Priority Areas

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<tr>
<th>Priority Area</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increase educational attainment (e.g. high school and college graduates, preparing youth for further education and 21st century jobs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Improve economic attainment (e.g. increase employment in higher paying industries)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Support families to foster a rich early learning environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Improve access to healthcare</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Increase use of alternatives to the automobile</td>
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Priority Spokane Uses a Defined Process to Identify and Address Needs

- **Identified** educational attainment as a top priority
- **Funded research** to identify proven programs and strategies
  - Focus on middle school
  - Identified strategies include early identification, high academic expectations, social support
- **Engaged partners** to implement identified strategies
- **Evaluated** progress with goal to measure impact within 5 years
Priority Spokane Engages Numerous Partners in Education Efforts
The Initiative Has Seen Improvements in High School Graduation Rates

Spokane Public Schools Graduation Rates
Percent, 2006 - 2010

Source: FSG Analysis, Priority Spokane Data
CFSA is Actively Pursuing Collective Impact in Three Priority areas

1. **Ajo Regional Food Partnership**
   - To improve the health and well-being of community residents by transforming the food system

2. **Elder Initiative: Building Communities Through the Wisdom of Ages**
   - To improve health & wellness for older adults by building neighborhood leadership and infrastructure to support older adults to age in their homes

3. **South Tucson Revitalization Partnership**
   - To strengthen, expand, connect and integrate community assets by partnering to create a neighborhood of choice within the City of South Tucson

Source: CFSA Community Collaboration Grants First Year Report
The Ajo Regional Food Partnership Aims to Strengthen The Entire Food System

Goal

To improve the health and well-being of community residents by transforming the food system

Strategies

Create a sustainable local food system

Improve community awareness and engagement in making healthy food choices

Restore the local rich cultural foods heritage

Develop new food-based economic opportunities

Programs

Ajo Grows

Ajo Cooks

Ajo Eats

Ajo Learns

Source: CFSA Community Collaboration Grants First Year Report
The Ajo Food Partnership Engages Numerous Partners Throughout the Food System

Food Partnership Collaborators

- Hia C-ed O’odham Alliance
- Tohono O’odham Cultural Center & Museum
- Desert Senita Community Health Center
- Ajo Unified School District
- Ajo Community Food Bank
- Ajo Community Garden Consortium
- UA Pima Cooperative Extension
- Pima County Natural Resources Parks & Recreation
- Ajo Botanical Company
- Pima County Health Department
- Ajo Community Supported Agriculture

Source: CFSA Community Collaboration Grants First Year Report
The Food Partnership Has Experienced Several Early Successes

The number of local backyard gardens has tripled and residents have begun to bring excess food to the food bank and the newly created farmers market.

Four committees, with participation from every relevant organization and leader in the region, are meeting monthly to implement food system projects.

A “Food Matters” media campaign has been launched with a series of ads and stories in the local newspaper.

CFSA has been able to leverage additional USDA funding, including a $63K USDA Hunger-Free Communities Grant and a $164K USDA Community Food Projects Grant.

Source: CFSA Community Collaboration Grants First Year Report
Audience Questions

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