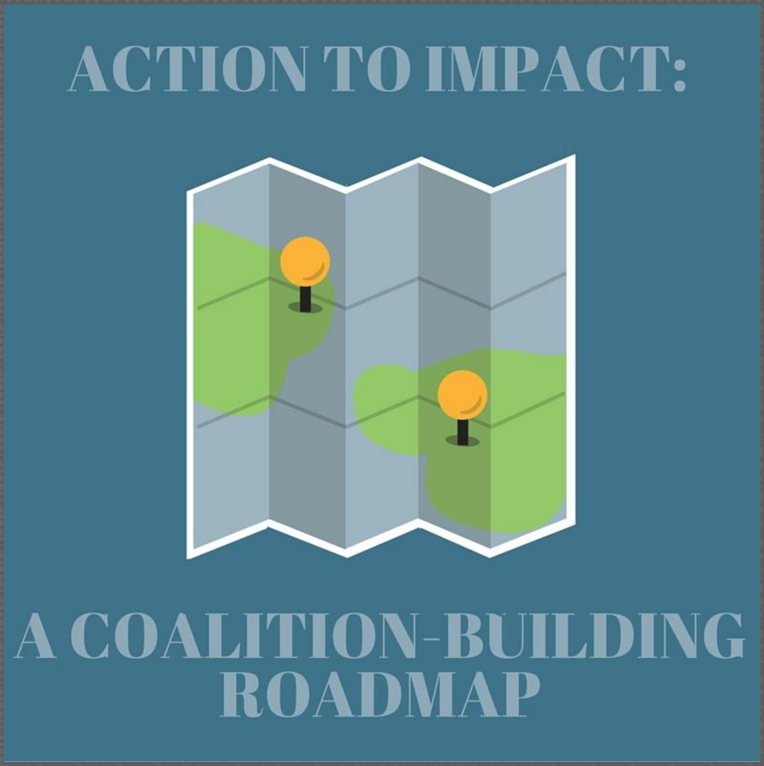

Action to Impact:

A Coalition-Building Roadmap

SET

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SET

SET

Once you are ready to build a coalition, what do you need to do to actually make it happen? There are key building blocks that coalitions need in order to find success. It is important to give due diligence to setting the stage so that your coalition can be effective and efficient. Several questions to consider include:

- How do you create a shared purpose and common goals?
- What are the essential structures, processes and people that need to be in place to drive success?
- How do you develop a coalition that can demonstrate its value?
- How do you ensure the trust, accountability and transparency required for coalition members to work effectively together?

The information in this section describes the essential building blocks coalitions need for success, including: how to frame the work of coalition, understanding what you want to achieve through focus on impact and practical advice on building a strategy, leadership structure and resource development.

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SETTING A FRAME

Just like individual organizations, agencies working together in coalition must define: a shared purpose, which includes identifying a *community-level problem* which the coalition seeks to impact (see *CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT* in the READY section of the Roadmap), a common *vision* towards which the coalition is striving, a *mission* stating how the coalition plans to achieve that vision and *specific, measurable, goals* that specify how that mission will be achieved.

COMMUNITY-LEVEL IMPACT

VISION

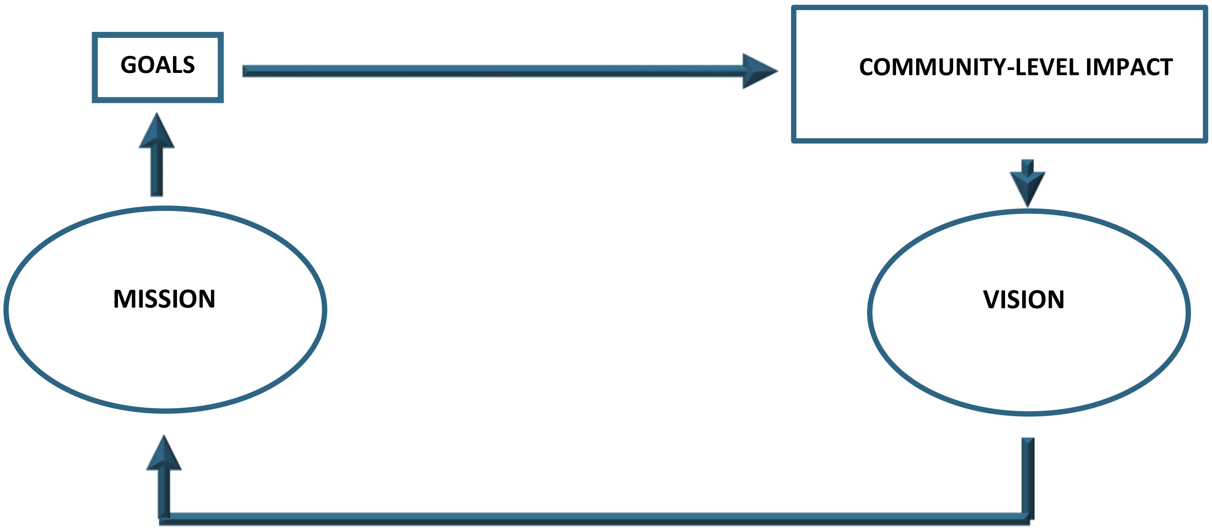
MISSION

GOALS

Agreement on the problem to be addressed, the vision, the mission and the goals inform both the strategic direction of the coalition and how impact will be measured. Together, these elements ultimately create the frame for what the coalition will do and what change will result (e.g. THEORY OF CHANGE or LOGIC MODELS which is discussed in PLANNING FOR IMPACT below). Strategic planning and impact measurement are guided by this frame; what you do (i.e. coalition activities and productivity) fits within this frame. Therefore, this is also where you can begin to develop a STRATEGIC IMPACT MAP®, a visual tool to help guide the overall work of your coalition.

- The coalition is formed to achieve a *COMMUNITY-LEVEL IMPACT* to reach a *VISION* for how the world could be better.
- To do this, the coalition implements a *MISSION*.
- To achieve this mission, the coalition will focus on attaining specific *GOALS*.

Figure 1: Frame for Strategic Planning



Whether you are a new or an existing coalition, it is important to prioritize establishing a frame. In some cases, coalitions set an initial frame early. However, it is possible to outgrow or lose track of a frame. The environment may also shift to require a revision of the frame.

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ When the Center for Nonprofit Excellence and Partnerships for Strategic Impact™ began consulting with the Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC), the original goal was to build the structures and capacity needed for evaluation of coalition impact. However, once a Coalition Health Survey (see *SURVEYING COALITION HEALTH* in the GO section of the Roadmap) was administered, it became clear that as the coalition evolved over time, there was not a clear consensus about the specific scope of the community-level *problem* that the CMHWC should be addressing. For example, should the coalition focus on only adult mental health issues or children, as well? What should the *mission* be? What *goals,* or specifically, what overarching strategies did the CMHWC want to engage in to meet its mission? While the CMHWC had a mission statement and several documents reviewing and recommending strategic directions and activities, the group requested initial support in re-affirming the frame for their efforts. The frame was then used to clearly articulate and sort the CMHWC-specific activities and impact. The re-affirming process was critical to establishing the clarity needed to refine coalition scope and build an evaluation plan.

COMMUNITY-LEVEL IMPACT

The community-level, truly collective impact you are ultimately trying to achieve, often identified via some type of needs assessment, is the change you are seeking to make through coordinated coalition action. Community-level impact is usually reflected by public health data. These data may be something that the coalition chooses to track over time in a visual dashboard of some kind.

When thinking about making community-level impact, "moving the dial", or eliminating a problem, it is therefore critical to measure the impact most immediately and directly related to the *mission* and *goals* identified for the coalition.

Community-level impact is difficult to achieve!

1. **Community-level impact takes time**: Very occasionally, community-level impact may be evidenced immediately after an intervention or change. However, most of the time,

community-level impact is not evident until five to ten years *after* an intervention or change.

2. **Community-level impact is the collective impact** of many, many efforts – linked and unlinked, planned and unplanned. Coalitions are the closest you get to strategically bringing together "all" the efforts aimed at a problem. Nonetheless, it is impossible to have *everyone or everything* that impacts this problem as part of, or influenced by, the coalition. There are always forces beyond the coalition's control which are at work to address (or worsen) the problem. For example: changes in federal policy or law, an economic recession, or a natural disaster inevitably impact the issue, as well.

Figure 2: Examples of Community-Level Impact Using Public Health Data

Graduation Rates
- Reflecting educational outcomes and future success.

Obesity Rates
- Reflecting nutrition and health.

Teen Pregnancy Rates
- Reflecting teens not well-engaged in afterschool activities.

Arrest Rates
- Reflecting community safety.

Arrest Rates for Domestic Violence
- Reflecting safety in the home.

Drunk Driving Tickets
- Reflecting community health.

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ After struggling with identifying common, agency-level indicators of mental health and wellness—a challenge not uncommon to coalitions in which individual agencies track different measures based on their own strategic goals—and after hiring a coalition coordinator with expertise in public health data, the Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) turned its focus to sifting through newly available public health data on mental health. As part of its 2016 participation in the Thomas Jefferson Health District's MAPP (Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships) community health needs assessment, the coalition identified a range of Healthy People 2020 public health indicators that it could capture and track to determine if coalition efforts are changing the indicators for the better. These indicators include: suicide rates, opioid overdose rates, hospitalization days for substance abuse disorders, and behavioral health hospitalization rates for serious mental illness. The CMHWC data committee also plans to continue to track and analyze agency-level data from five direct service agency members to identify utilization trends and gaps. With the May 2017 launch of a new local stigma reduction campaign, to include an informational website, transit advertisements and a referral hotline, CMCHC will in addition track hotline call data to detect changes in service utilization and potential service gaps.

Essential Resources for measuring community-level impact**:**

- ✓ Let's Be Realistic About Measuring Impact, Alnoor Ebrahim, Harvard Business Review
- ✓ Facilitation for Community Change[1], Bridging RVA
- ✓ Using Different Types of Evidence in Decision Making, Center for Disease Control and Prevention

[1] Bridging RVA, Facilitation for Community Change, Saphira M. Baker, Author; Jason W. Smith, Contributing Editor, (Richmond, VA: Virginia Commonwealth University, 2014.)

VISION

Once you have a clear understanding of the problem everyone is coming together to address, it is important to envision what the world would look like if the problem were solved: the long distance, future reality that is just out of reach. This will become your coalition's vision statement. The best vision statements are short, to the point, and memorable. If well-written, vision statements can become the slogan or guiding statement for the work of the coalition.

Local Spotlight:

✓ The Charlottesville Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) created this vision statement:

Healthy minds. Healthy community.

In creating this vision, CMHWC identified the problem: a lack of services and access to services for people with moderate mental health problems. They then agreed that ensuring that people could achieve mental health and wellness equated to a healthy community.

MISSION

There are several ways to address a problem. Fortunately, most communities have many dedicated organizations tackling community challenges from multiple angles. When a group of organizations comes together in a coalition to collaborate so that the sum of their collective efforts can be larger than its parts, real change can happen. It is essential, however, that the coalition adds value *beyond* what the partner organizations can do on their own. The mission statement of the coalition should succinctly summarize the way the coalition is tackling the problem:

1. *Who* or *What* will receive the benefit of services [target population]?

2. Through *what set of actions* [activities] will the problem be tackled?

3. Toward what *desired outcomes* [impact]?

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ The Charlottesville Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) created this mission statement:

  Collaborating to promote behavioral health and wellness [impact] *through planning, advocacy and access to effective service delivery* [activities] *in our region* [target population].

  While the CMHWC focuses on adult mental health needs in Charlottesville and Albemarle, in designing this mission, the partner organizations felt it was important to leave open the possibility of expanding to children's mental health and extending the reach more regionally. They also discussed the importance of making sure that the term "behavioral health" was used to encompass emotional, behavioral and substance issues and that the word "wellness" was used to indicate the priority of prevention.

GOALS

> Do not be confused! The *goals* described here broadly state which activities are expected to lead to which specific outcomes. On the other hand, as described later in the PLANNING FOR IMPACT section of the Roadmap, strategic goals, objectives or priorities are the specific things the coalition is working on, over a defined period of time, to enhance activities or leverage resources so that productivity and impact can be improved.

Goals articulate *how* the coalition intends to meet its mission. They should include reference to what community-level impact the coalition expects to achieve when the goal is reached. In other words, goals broadly state which activities are expected to lead to which specific outcomes. Goals may be thought of as distinct program areas or strategies used to implement the various parts of the mission to create community-level impact. The following list provides tips for creating goals:

1. To maintain coalition focus and manageability, aim for no fewer than two, and no more than five goals.

2. Goals should overlap as little as possible. Each goal should direct its own set of activities, programs, strategies, work product and impact.

3. Implicit in the concept of creating a coalition, one of the coalition goals should be to nurture a *healthy coalition* where the benefits of participation clearly outweigh partner agencies' costs of participation.

Essential Resources for strategy development**:**

- ✓ Coalition Vision, Mission & Goals, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ The Strategic Planning Process, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ Facilitation for Community Change[1], Bridging RVA
- ✓ An Overview of Strategic Planning, or "VMOSA" (Vision, Mission, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Plans), Community Tool Box
- ✓ Proclaiming Your Dream: Developing Mission and Vision Statements, Community Tool Box
- ✓ Coalition Vision, Mission & Goals, The Immunization Partnership

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ The Charlottesville Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) created these four goals:

<u>Community Service Capacity</u>
Strengthen service infrastructure and coordination in behavioral health and wellness.

<u>No Wrong Door</u>
Facilitate access to behavioral health and wellness services that ensure individual wellness.

<u>Advocacy and Information</u>
Advocate, collect and share data and knowledge to promote behavioral health and wellness.

(cont.)

Healthy Coalition

Support a collaborative, engaged, planning coalition for behavioral health and wellness.

Through their goals, it can be seen how the CMHWC intends to implement the "*planning, advocacy and access*" in its mission (language is carried through), as well as what community-level problems it seeks to address (i.e. access, lack of services, lack of information about services and wellness). Of course, CMHWC also wants the coalition to be healthy as evidenced by partners being engaged and working together.

- ✓ Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless (TJACH). In 2013, TJACH re-evaluated its focus and efforts in response to internal and external challenges. State and federal policy-makers and funders in the world of homelessness significantly altered their expectations of local coalitions, shifting responsibility for local funding decisions to established coalitions and creating baseline operational standards for those coalitions. This, combined with the challenge of maintaining a policy and community-level focus on homelessness while operating a large, busy direct service component, led TJACH to revise its governance charter, divest from The Haven, and create a new governing board structure.

  While the coalition had operated as a best-practice approach to addressing homelessness in its early years, it was without formal support or authority from policy-makers or funders. The 2013 change authorized the coalition, and others like it, to determine which local providers would be prioritized for city, state and federal funding based on national benchmarks and standards. This change in practice gave the community a big boost in creating a true continuum of service providers working in concert towards the same outcomes. Area providers that engaged evidence-based practices were selected for funding and support. This shift in practice was lauded by many and lamented by some. It changed the tenor of the coalition from one where all approaches were welcome to one where specific, prescribed collective action was rewarded. As TJACH was intended to take a specific action - *end homelessness* - this shift reflected its mission.

  (cont.)

During this same time, the TJACH board was challenged by the dual demands of creating an effective continuum of services that addressed the needs of many different populations of people experiencing homelessness and running a direct service operation that focused on a specific subpopulation of the homeless. Providing adequate oversight and financial support for The Haven competed with the coalition's needs for board and leadership resources. As a result, TJACH decided to divest from The Haven, supporting it in its successful pursuit of independent 501(c)3 status. This shift away from a formal relationship with one service provider allowed TJACH to operate freely in its oversight role, eliminating any appearance of favoritism. The TJACH board determined that this activity - seeding a service that addresses a gap in the continuum and then launching the provider - was an appropriate use of coalition resources and might be engaged again in the future.

TJACH took bold action to address its challenges, exercising its leadership role to move toward collective impact. However, this activity shifted the style of the coalition away from one of convener or consensus builder towards oversight and collective accountability.

PLANNING FOR IMPACT

When the rubber hits the road, it is all about impact. Everything the coalition sets out to do in their strategic plan, every hour spent in meetings, all the resources raised, assembled and created, all the relationships built and nurtured and all the efforts of every coalition partner are aimed at moving toward the specific *vision* by realizing *IMPACT* as outlined by the *mission* and *goals.*

Once your coalition has set the frame for what you intend to accomplish– you are ready to fill in what you are going to do to accomplish your goals and how you will measure your success at accomplishing those goals. There are several tools that coalitions can use to communicate this, all of which are described in this section of the Roadmap.

All too often, coalitions pull together data – and conceptualize goals – in response to a funding opportunity, when they are asked to show how they will use funding to make a funder-defined impact. In these cases, leadership usually cobbles together existing data that most closely approximates what the funder is looking for. We call this the *Sea Shell Collage* method of reporting impact: you look around and stick together the data you have into an Annual Report, brochure, news bite, etc.

A more effective and proactive approach is the *Mosaic* method of communicating impact – which starts with telling the overall story of what the coalition was brought together to accomplish. When the impact story is approached this way, you can use your data to tell the story of your organization *and* you are able to pull out relevant data to tell mini stories asked for by funders and other stakeholders.

- **How to Tell a Data Story:** THEORIES OF CHANGE and LOGIC MODELS are often requested by funders and used by organizations and coalitions to conceptualize and articulate how they intend to reach their vision – how they plan to make an impact. STRATEGIC IMPACT MAPS®, a product of Partnerships for Strategic Impact™, weave together both Logic Models and Theories of Change into a single, coherent and powerful graphic. This graphic holistically communicates what an organization does, to what end and why it is important. All three models can be used to quickly describe different aspects of what you do and why. Logic Models and Strategic Impact Maps® should be used to guide data collection.

This section of the Roadmap provides a description of these three tools, as well as links to key resources for learning to build them. In different ways, and to different ends, these tools guide which data to collect to show impact. They are the bedrock of evaluation. Developing at least one is an important first step in articulating your data story. Without such a tool you risk collecting too much data—or worse, the *wrong* data.

WHY DATA FEELS HARD

THEORY OF CHANGE

LOGIC MODELS

STRATEGIC IMPACT MAP®

KEYS TO MAXIMIZING YOUR DATA

WHY DATA FEELS HARD

Evaluation is the term most often used to describe the process of measuring impact. It is often the last thing that gets done and the first thing to be dropped when resources are stretched. Once all the governance, funding, strategic planning and staff issues have been resolved, assuming there are any energy and resources left, a volunteer data committee is often charged with figuring out how to measure impact. The data committee generates a miscellany of data that is put together into an Annual Report, news bites and potential donor brochures (e.g. the *Sea Shell Collage* method). By measuring impact in this way, the overall, big picture story (e.g. the *Mosaic* method) about what is being done and why it matters is often lost or obscured.

No organization would think of running effectively without financial management, and even if not everyone in the organization is focused on the daily financial transactions and the bottom line, no one would argue that carefully tracking finances is a luxury or outside the scope of solid organizational practice. In the last several years, tracking productivity and impact have risen to the importance of financial management—after all, how can you be sure you are spending all those dollars effectively and doing all the right activities if you cannot demonstrate your impact?

Here are some of the biggest barriers to conducting an evaluation:

COALITION BUY-IN TO EVALUATION
UNDERSTANDING COMPLEXITY-BASED EVALUATION
INVESTMENT REQUIRED
PROTECTING PEOPLE (CONFIDENTIALITY, HIPAA, FERPA)
BUILDING TRUST
AVOIDING OVERWHELMING PARTNERS

- **<u>Coalition Buy-In to Evaluation:</u>** Before embarking on evaluation, you must assess the readiness of the coalition to collect data. Transitions are not a good time to invest in evaluation. Looking at data requires a great deal of collective trust, persistence and bravery. Gathering and using data require substantial leadership and a meaningful investment of resources.

  Buy-in for any degree of evaluation must be broad, *especially* in a coalition where agencies usually have vastly different resources, constraints, foci and pressures. Without broad buy-in, it is difficult (if not impossible) to build the backbone support needed to collect and analyze the data. Further, without the necessary buy-in, partners may become overwhelmed by the data or even distrust the way the data will be used. Relationships must be built, each partners' data must be assessed and considered and education about data and the value of data must be provided, including discussion about building the data infrastructure and how the data will be interpreted and eventually used. Simultaneously, leadership must build an *inquiry-based culture* which includes:

  1. Using data to *support building lines of open and supportive communication and trust* across and within areas.

  2. *Creating feedback loops and access to information* so that information is efficiently and accurately shared and understood.

  3. *Building data-driven decision-making processes* throughout the coalition.

  4. *Dedicating resources to, and building partner confidence and competence* in using data to drive decision making.

  5. *Adapting new information, conditions, ideas or policies* into the data-driven decision-making process.

  6. *Using data as a springboard for discussions* about values, mission, and hidden assumptions in practices.

  7. *Using strengths identified by data to build energy* for addressing challenges as the next priority.

For evaluation in the coalition context to be successful, it must be rooted in strong leadership, a community of trust, a willingness to give up the search for successes and failures and a focus on uncovering new insights about the nature of the problem. This is nicely described in Mark Cabaj's Evaluating Collective Impact: Five Simple Rules. He notes:

> *"The only way to move the needle on community issues is to embrace an adaptive approach to wrestling with complexity. This means … a new style of leadership that encourages bold thinking, tough conversations and experimentation, planning that is iterative and dynamic, and management organized around a process of learning-by-doing….[This means abandoning] simplistic judgements of success and failure and instead [focusing on tracking] progress toward ambitious goals, uncover[ing] new insights about the nature of the problem they seek to solve, and figur[ing[out what does and does not work in addressing it. [This means giving] up on fixed evaluation designs for ones that are flexible enough to co-evolve with their fast-moving context…"*
>
> *"…. accountability in adaptive context requires [coalition partners] to be accountable to each other for achieving results over the long-term, a deep commitment to robust evaluation and learning processes, and the ability and courage to quickly change ideas, plans, and direction when the data tells them they are headed in the wrong direction…"*

Essential Resources for evaluating complexity**:**

- ✓ Evaluating Complexity: Propositions for Improving Practice, FSG
- ✓ Evaluating Collective Impact: Five Simple Rules, Collective Impact Forum
- ✓ Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- **Understanding Complexity-Based Evaluation**: When people think about evaluation, a process of enumerating successes and failures immediately comes to mind. Traditionally, academic-based research can identify successes and failures because it is designed to identify specific interventions that work and weed out those that do not. However, the work of non-profits, not to mention complex, collaborative, community-change initiatives, are far and away more multifaceted than interventions studied in academia. When a researcher conducts an academic evaluation, the environment is controlled, either through experimental design or randomization. However, in the real world nothing is controlled. You do not get to randomize your clients into those that get the intervention and those that do not, there is rarely a single, measurable outcome being sought, leadership changes, resources wax and wane, political priorities change and partners come and go. Therefore, evaluating real-world work, especially the dynamic community-change level work of a coalition, is an exercise in evaluating complexity.

Luckily, evaluating complexity does not have to be complex, *per se*. However, the process and goal of measuring impact are different than in traditional, academic evaluations. Michael Patton, a very well-respected evaluator, developed the following table, illustrating the differences between traditional and complexity-based evaluations. Creating an *inquiry-based culture* and conducting a complexity evaluation are one in the same. The following table is from Michael Quinn Patton's, *Evaluation for the Way We Work* article.

Figure 3: Comparing Traditional and Complexity-Based Development Evaluations.

Traditional Evaluation	Complexity-Based, Developmental Evaluations
➢ Render definitive judgments of success or failure.	➢ Provide feedback, generate learnings, support direction or affirm changes in direction.
➢ Measure success against pre-determined goals.	➢ Develop new measures and monitoring mechanisms as goals emerge and evolve.
➢ Position the evaluator outside to assure independence and objectivity.	➢ Position evaluation as an internal, team function integrated into action and ongoing interpretive processes.
➢ Design the evaluation based on linear cause-effect logic models.	➢ Design the evaluation to capture system dynamics, interdependencies and emergent interconnections.
➢ Aim to produce generalizable findings across time and space.	➢ Aim to produce context-specific understandings that inform ongoing innovation.
➢ Accountability focused on and directed to external authorities and funders.	➢ Accountability centered on the innovators' deep sense of fundamental values and commitments.
➢ Accountability to control and locate blame for failures.	➢ Learning to respond to lack of control and stay in touch with what's unfolding and thereby respond strategically.
➢ Evaluator controls the evaluation and determines the design based on the	➢ Evaluator collaborates in the change effort to design a process that matches philosophically and organizationally.

evaluator's perspective on what is important.	
➢ Evaluation engenders fear of failure.	➢ Evaluation supports hunger for learning.
Source: Patton, Michael Quinn (2006). Evaluation for the Way we Work. *Nonprofit Quarterly, 13(1), 28-33.*	

Local Spotlight:

✓ The impact data for the Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) was developed right before (1) Thrive, which acted as the fiscal agent for the coalition and supported the Coalition Coordinator, closed, (2) both co-chairs changed and (3) the coalition went without a coordinator for 6 months. During this period of upheaval, there was not a lot of capacity to foster an inquiry-based culture. While an initial set of program-level impact indicators were identified, there was limited opportunity to fine tune data collection or integrate the data into the fabric of coalition discussions and communications during the transition. As a result, the coordinated evaluation project lost steam. Once the new coordinator came on board, the coalition regained its footing and the leadership *and* partnership evolved. With this evolution, came a shift in data focus from coalition-level data to community-level, public health data which had become more readily available. As a result, new efforts emerged to identify the most informative impact data.

➢ **Investment Required:** Collecting and using data takes investments in relationship building, skill building, and staff time *and* often requires dedicated funding. Few people ask if it is worth the investment to track their finances, because measuring the cost of doing business is more intuitive than measuring the impact of doing business. Perhaps this is because in *business,* it is all about sales: if people like your product, they buy it. However, what happens when you are not selling something, but rather giving it away? What if what you are giving away is not a product, but rather an opportunity for someone to have a better life? How do you prove you provide a valuable service without solely relying on testimonials?

Data, though challenging to collect, understand and use, can be used not only to demonstrate impact, but also to provide accountability, improve program quality, determine where to allocate resources, promote successful programs, argue for policy change, deliver public health messages, ground critical discussions and catalyze change.

Importantly, evaluation is an iterative, dynamic and growing process. Every year, the coalition can look at the data, talk about what the story behind the data is, and use those stories to promote change.

- The **first year** will result in some great data, tools and processes, and in discovering some data that simply does not work, or that certain data collection plans are too cumbersome or right-out failed.
- The **second year** will result in a better process and data.
- By the **third year** you should have a valuable and relatively automated evaluation process.
- In the **fourth year**, maybe the coalition's priorities change and new data is desired.
- In the **fifth year**, you might start to see changes in the data that likely resulted from policy or programming shifts implemented in the first year.
- In the **tenth year**, you can start looking at statistical trends in the data over time.

Questions data are asked to answer:

1. Is the program working?
2. How, and in what ways, are the people being served getting better?
3. Is the program worth the investment?
4. Why should more funding go towards this effort?
5. What more is needed to get the desired impact?

To ensure that your evaluation efforts are sustainable, some level of expertise and the use of some basic data management tools are necessary. At a minimum, you need paper for surveys and a computer loaded with Microsoft Excel. Surveys can also be collected with on-line survey collection tools, such

NOTE: The benefits of evaluation *must* outweigh both the real and perceived costs of conducting it. Value is added when the data can be leveraged to build support for the coalition, to raise necessary resources and to improve programming for even better outcomes. The process of designing and building out evaluation and data systems often requires both a cultural shift in thinking about resource allocation and strong, dedicated leadership.

as *Survey Monkey*. Further tools such as Social Solutions' *Efforts to Outcomes*, *Apricot* or the *Results Scorecard* can be used to customize data collection efforts. Links to these customizable data collection tools can be found in the ESSENTIAL RESOURCES section below.

Figure 4: Tips for Data Management

Use *Microsoft Excel*

- Use *Microsoft Excel* to its fullest potential before having something custom made or investing in a pre-fabricated system. Custom data management requires costly maintenance and may require adjustments as your data needs change. Pre-fabricated systems are often either too limiting and frustrating or too flexible and confusing. Further, the set-up time for learning to use these is often more than the time you could invest in learning *Excel*.

Assign a Data Manager

- One person should serve as the data manager, making sure the data is collected, entered into a system and graphed. The data manager must know how to manipulate and graph the data. While each agency will have a person who is the most versed in the agency data, it is important to have a single mind bringing all the partner data together for the coalition. This might be a person sitting on the coalition, a consultant or the coalition coordinator. It is also critical that the data collection processes be documented and that at least one other person is familiar with the data collection and analysis processes (so that if the data manager leaves suddenly, there is some coherence and consistency).

Create a Data Committee

- This committee should meet regularly, just like a Finance Committee, to master understanding and interpreting the data, make recommendations for action and present conclusions and recommendations to the leadership and other stakeholders. For more information on Data Committees, see The Art and Science of Effective committees in the GO section of the Roadmap.

Essential Resources for tracking outcomes**:**

- ✓ Essential Mindset Shifts for Collective Impact, Stanford Social Innovation Review
- ✓ Survey Monkey, Creating Online Surveys
- ✓ Efforts to Outcomes, Software for Measuring Outcomes
- ✓ Apricot, Software for Case Management, Client, Donor and Volunteer Tracking and Measuring Outcomes
- ✓ Results Scorecard, Reporting and Analysis Tool
- ✓ Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, The World Bank

- **Protecting People (Confidentiality, HIPAA, FERPA)**: Often, the first thing that comes up in a discussion of data is how to protect the confidentiality of the people directly being served. The easiest way to ensure confidentiality is to have coalition partners provide aggregated data (e.g., summary data on all the people served rather than individual client's data). Generally, aggregated data is all that coalitions need. Sometimes, however, the goal is to link people across agencies and/or over time. In these cases, you need to get a Release of Information from each person being served at each agency.

Essential Resources for protecting privacy with shared data**:**

- ✓ Sharing Data for Better Results: A Guide to Building Integrated Data Systems Compatible with Federal Privacy Laws, National League of Cities
- ✓ Data Sharing Resources for Afterschool and Expanded Learning Programs and Systems, Harvard Family Research Project
- ✓ Navigating Information Sharing: You *Can* Share Information to Help Youth Involved in Multiple Systems, Promote Prevent, National Center for Mental Health Promotion

Local Spotlight: Talk to local experts who have tackled and overcome the challenges of protecting confidentiality and still getting needed data:

- ✓ United Way Thomas Jefferson Area – The United Way is leading the Outcome Collaborative, which is a collaborative of the two home-visiting programs, the public and private pre-kindergarten programs and the City and County Public Schools. These groups are getting releases of information from the people they serve so that their data can be individually combined across service providers and the partners can eventually understand what continuum of services helps which children.
- ✓ City of Promise – The City of Promise is a cradle-to-college and career initiative that uses individual-level student data to track academic progress so that supports and resources can be put in place to ensure student success. City of Promise provides intensive services to some children and community-based services to all children living in the footprint. Academic success and program participation are tracked for all children.

> Helping people approach evaluation at their own pace and hearing their concerns along the way are a big part of pulling data together across multiple agencies. Having a powerful champion for the process is critical to ensuring that the resources and expertise needed are available.

- **<u>Building Trust</u>**: It can be hard to imagine how the data can be used in a strengths-based way to promote positive change, rather than to judge or undermine specific organizations. Part of any Memorandum of Understanding between coalition partners needs to specify how data will be reviewed and published. Pooling data can be frustrating, and at times, lead to the discovery of data problems. Not only can finding errors require additional agency-level resources to address, it can be embarrassing to the agencies involved. The coalition leadership *must* foster a culture of strengths-based collaboration and support among its partners. It is important not to punish partners who are transparent about, and accountable for, their data, regardless of what it shows. This is at the core of creating an *inquiry-based culture* needed for evaluating complexity in a way that promotes curiosity, understanding and, most critically, growth. The Memorandum of Understanding for the Community Mental

Health and Wellness Coalition can be viewed here. City of Promise's Memorandum of Understanding may be found here.

- **Avoid Overwhelming Partners**: Agencies, and the people in them, have different tolerances for thinking about and sifting through data. Some people have a natural comfort with data and can look at a set of graphs and pull out conclusions. Other people cannot imagine anything worse. However, be careful not to underestimate the abilities of the partners to learn to understand and value data. Walking people through the data collection, interpretation and analysis processes is essential to getting the coalition to tell its own data story, building capacity and supporting members in realizing their power. In order to manage natural differences in how much data people are comfortable digesting, always start small and with the cleanest and easiest data to collect. Also, review often with coalition members how good data can make their work more efficient and effective in achieving community impact. Approached this way, people's tolerance of and appetite for data will emerge. Try to simultaneously empower people who are not intimidated by the data to think ahead towards how the data collection efforts can grow in the future.

> Once people start looking at data, deeper questions are generated and the energy, will and resources to expand data collection emerge. It is much, much easier to build and expand an existing data system than it is to force overwhelmed people to bite off more than they can chew from the beginning.

A few tips for data collection:

1. **ALWAYS START WITH LOW-HANGING FRUIT**. Do not exceed the coalition staff's capacity to collect data. Once you have clearly identified the coalition's *vision, mission, goals* and *activities*, look to see what data are already being collected. Plug that into a LOGIC MODEL or STRATEGIC IMPACT MAP®.

2. **SOMETIMES COALITION-SPECIFIC DATA** (e.g., data collected as part of the coalition activities, such as number of meetings, number of attendees, attendees' satisfaction with meetings, etc..) **ARE THE EASIEST TO OBTAIN**. Data that reflect coalition health are described in the GO section of the Roadmap. Other times, the capacity or backbone support to collect that data may be lacking, therefore, agency-specific (e.g. data collected by each agency through surveys, etc.) or public health data (e.g. community-level impact data) may be most appropriate. These types of data are described in the needs assessment section of the READY section.

3. **PUBLIC HEALTH DATA IS ALMOST ALWAYS AVAILABLE AND, BECAUSE OF THIS, CAN BE A GREAT PLACE TO START**. However, as described in the needs assessment section of the READY chapter of this Roadmap, it can take a long time for changes in programming, practices and policies to be reflected in shifts in public health. Additionally, since public health data are so far removed from on-the-ground work, the complexity (described above) is often missed, and not well reflected in public health data. On the other hand, there are usually institutions in place to collect public health data and, while it is not always collected well, it can be collected in a relatively uniform manner; decision-makers often support the collection of public health data because it has been generally decided that it reflects something real and important.

Lesson Learned:

- ✓ Two factors are critical to developing an effective evaluation plan: 1) Take coalition partners' capacity for collection into account in designing the system; and 2) Identify data points that are easily accessible and most relevant to the coalition partners to start. Once the initial data is successfully collected, lead the partners in learning to use data and, when you've build the competency within the coalition, add additional data to the mix, all in the context of nurturing an inquiry-based culture.

<u>THEORY OF CHANGE</u>

Theory of Change is used to describe *why* you think what you do will have an impact. Theory of Change is often requested by funders as a way to get applicants to describe why what they do is important. A Theory of Change is similar to *Setting a Frame,* described in this Roadmap, and essentially makes a case for why what you do is expected to make a meaningful impact.

A Theory of Change states what effect your strategy (or activities) will have on the people served and how they will use what they get from you to improve their lives.

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Figure 5: Example of a Theory of Change statement

Strategy: Provide education to low-income individuals wanting to start small businesses → **So That** → People have the information needed to start small businesses → **So That** → Businesses are more likely to succeed → **So That** → Low-income people have an avenue out of poverty

The usefulness of a Theory of Change statement in guiding evaluation is very limited. There is clearly value in articulating why what your organization does is meaningful, but there is no built-in guide for how to assess whether your coalition ultimately accomplished what it set out to in its Theory statement. A Theory of Change statement also offers no specific articulation of the impact indicators that will be measured. Therefore, a Theory of Change statement usually stands on its own as a statement of why you do what you do, and can be a useful exercise to begin to articulate your definition of success.

RESOURCES

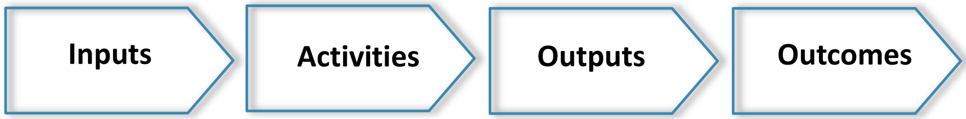
Essential Resources for creating Theory of Change:

- ✓ Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results and Learning, Organizational Research Services, Prepared for: Annie E. Casey Foundation
- ✓ What is Theory of Change?, Center for Theory of Change

LOGIC MODELS

Logic Models are often requested by funders so that they can understand specifically what their funding is being used to achieve. They want to know: what is going *in* to programming (inputs), what the programming *is* (activities), what is coming *out* of programming (outputs) and *to what end* (outcomes). Logic Models help funders make a judgement about whether funding the inputs and activities is worth the value of the outputs and outcomes.

Figure 6: Parts of a Logic Model



Logic Models are the historical bread and butter of evaluation. They are a place to articulate what you plan to do and to what end. There is no hardcore standard for how a Logic Model should look, although all Logic Models include Inputs, Activities, Outputs and Outcomes (which are most often divided into Short-, Intermediate- and Long-term Outcomes). Numerous examples can be found on the internet and a detailed description of each of the parts of a Logic Model can be found in the ESSENTIAL RESOURCES listed below.

Figure 7: Simple Logic Model

Inputs	1. Expert Staff 2. Volunteer Mentors 3. Office Space and Supplies
Activities	1. Provide one-on-one mentoring to at-risk youth 2. Provide after-school care for at-risk youth
Outputs	1. Number of mentors 2. Number of youth mentored 3. Number of mentoring hours
Outcomes	1. Mentored youth stay out of trouble 2. Mentored youth feel connected to adults

Essential Resources for building Logic Models:

- ✓ Logic Models: Inputs, Partnerships for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Logic Models: Activities, Partnerships for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Logic Models: Outputs, Partners for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Logic Models: Outcomes, Partners for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Logic Model Development Guide, W. K. Kellogg Foundation
- ✓ Logic Model Workbook, Innovation Network
- ✓ Enhancing Program Performance with Logic Models, Free On-Line Course, University of Wisconsin-Extension

There are a few challenges that Partnerships for Strategic Impact™ has encountered while helping non-profits and coalitions build and use Theories of Changes and Logic Models.

1. The language of Logic Models is very different from the day-to-day language of running a non-profit and can be confusing (e.g., "what's the difference between an output and an outcome again?")

2. There is no clear method for integrating Theory of Change with Logic Models.

3. Mission and Vision are not clearly integrated into Theory of Change or Logic Models.

4. Theories of Change and Logic Models do not clearly show agency-specific outcomes or collective impact.

5. Especially since Logic Models are often written in response to a specific funder, they are rarely used in guiding data-driven decision making, strategic planning or performance management. Additionally, Logic Models provide no guidance for how outcome data would be used in these processes.

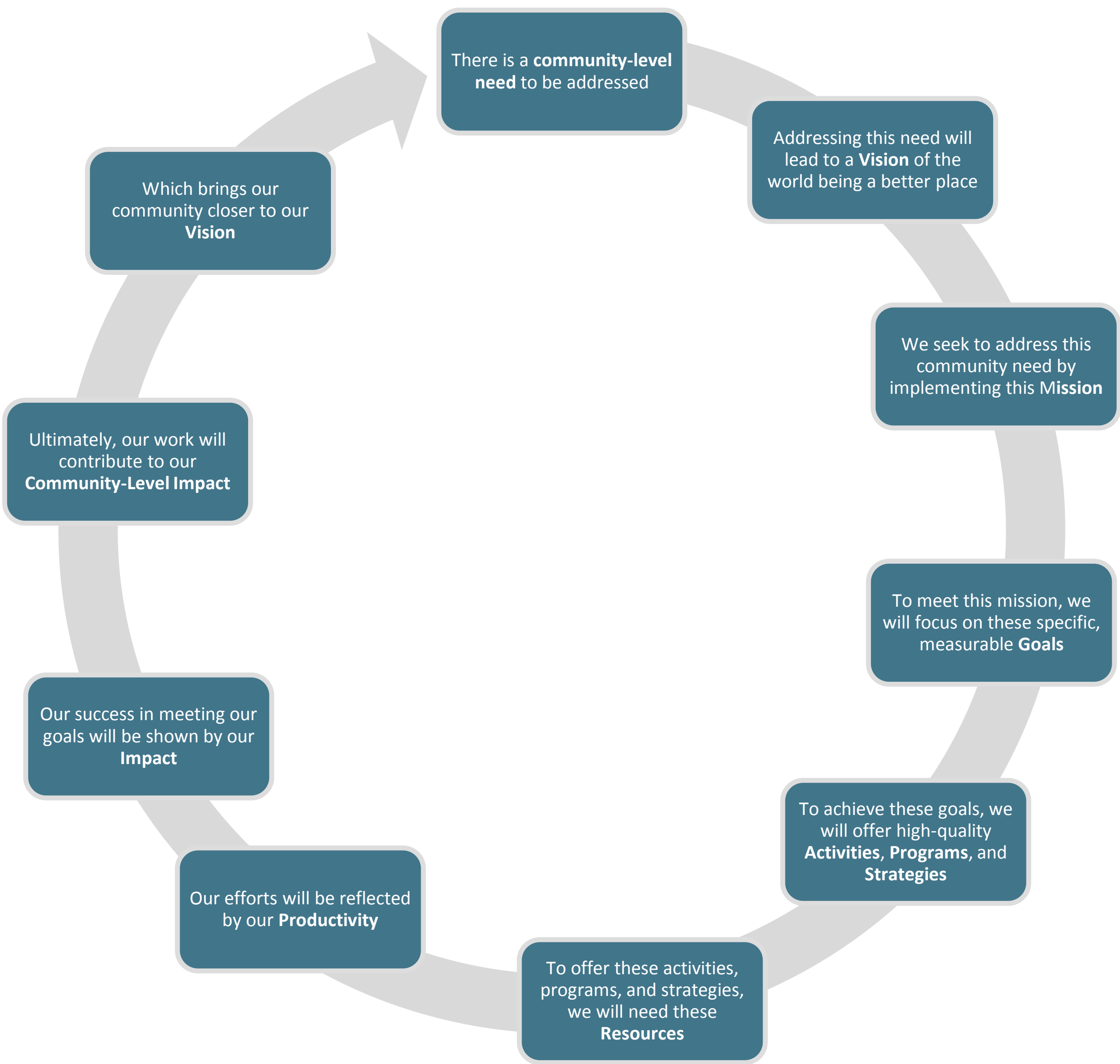
For these reasons, Partnerships for Strategic Impact created the STRATEGIC IMPACT MAP® tool and process for linking THEORY OF CHANGE and LOGIC MODELS and providing a guide for both collecting and using data.

STRATEGIC IMPACT MAP®

The Strategic Impact Map® is a tool which uses simple, clear language relevant to organizations, to integrate Logic Models, Theory of Change and organizational strategic planning. A Strategic Impact Map® is used to communicate organizational impact, as well as to guide data collection, focus evaluation, structure strategic planning and promote discussion.

- **Starting a Conversation**: You can use a Strategic Impact Map® to talk about what you do and why you do it. For example:

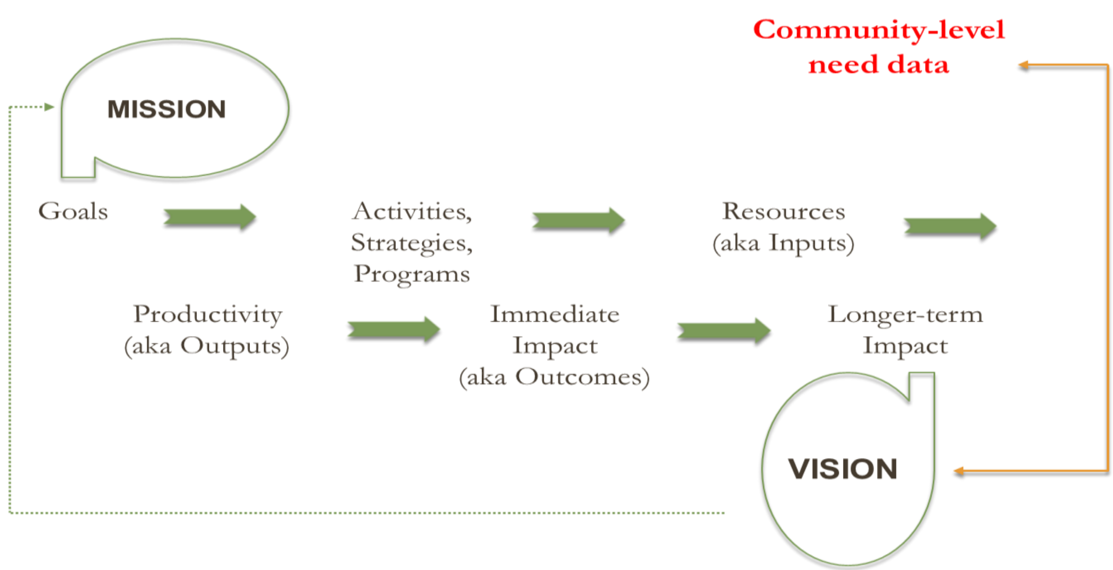
Figure 8: The Strategic Impact Map® Conversation



- **<u>Building a Strategic Impact Map®</u>**: A Strategic Impact Map® starts in the same place that a coalition starts, with an articulated, measurable, community-level *need* to be addressed. From this need emerges a *vision, mission* and *goals*. Together these things *set the frame* for the coalition, as well as for the Strategic Impact Map®, and are held and guided by the *coalition leadership*.

The <u>Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition</u> Strategic Impact Map® presented in this Roadmap is a revised Strategic Impact Map® that might have developed if the CMHWC had decided to build on the original map. The Strategic Impact Map®, like any strategy, works best as a living document—one that is revisited each year to ensure that it still reflects the work of the coalition. Again, make sure to start with the one or two indicators which are low-hanging fruit, including what is already easily collected (review <u>*Why Data Feels Hard*</u>).

Figure 9: Strategic Impact Map® Components



Building on this frame, the Strategic Impact Map® fills in how the coalition will achieve its *goals* and fulfill its *mission.* More specifically, it details how the coalition can make progress toward "moving the dial" and making a *community-level impact* by reducing a community-level need; ultimately, reaching its *vision*.

The Strategic Impact Map® is like a Logic Model, however, it uses more agency-friendly language to describe what the coalition does and what productivity and impact the work has.

Figure 10: Strategic Impact Map® (Logic Model language in parentheses)

Resources **(Inputs)**	These are all your human resources policies, procedures and job descriptions; accounting practices; staff and volunteer manuals; website; outreach materials; fund raising information and donor databases; organizational documents (memorandums of understanding, charters, etc.); committee memberships, charges and minutes; etc.
Activities/ Strategies/ Programs **(Activities)**	These are all the evidence-based/best practice manuals; work flow documents; templates for hosting events; direct service practice manuals; etc.
Productivity **(Outputs)**	These all the ways that you capture the amount of work you do, including the fine-grained details for all the indicators (i.e., not just how many people you serve, but also the number of men and women, their age, race/ethnicity, language spoken, etc.)
Impact **(Outcomes)**	This is the impact of your work on the people you serve – most immediately what knowledge, skills, and abilities they leave your service with, and more long-term, what behavioral changes are made as a result of using the knowledge, skills, and abilities you gave them.
Community-level Impact **(Collective Impact)**	These are the indicators that you use to measure change on the issue your coalition is collectively aiming to impact. As described in the *Needs Assessment* section (see *Existing, publicly Available Data* in the Ready section of the Roadmap), these data are most often reflected in publicly available data, and it is expected that change in these data will not be seen for five to 10 years after a coalition intervention (changes in programming, policies, etc.).

The standard one-page Strategic Impact Map® is a great resource for having one-on-one conversations with stakeholders and funders about what you do, why you do it, and to what it. However, it might be a little more than you want to use on your website. A short form for the Strategic Impact Map® can be shared with the public. In this version, some of the details are removed to communicate the overall message more simply and quickly.

Essential Resources for Strategic Impact Maps™:

- ✓ Strategic Impact Map™: Resources, Partnerships for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Strategic Impact Map™: Activities, Programs and Strategies, Partnerships for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Strategic Impact Map™: Productivity, Partnerships for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Strategic Impact Map™: Impact, Partnerships for Strategic Impact
- ✓ One-Page Strategic Impact Map™, Partnerships for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Abbreviated Strategic Impact Map™, Partnerships for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Strategic Impact Map™: 3 Goals, Partnerships for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Strategic Impact Map™: 4 Goals, Partnerships for Strategic Impact

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ The Strategic Impact Map™ tool was created by Partnerships for Strategic Impact. The Strategic Impact Map emerged from working with local nonprofits and regional organizations and governments to build evaluation systems in order to assess impact. Like other evaluators, PSI started with basic Logic Models; however, as organizations asked how to actually connect their impact data to strategic planning and daily data-driven decision making, the Strategic Impact Map™ developed. Over time, the format and language were streamlined to be most efficient and useable for organizations.

  Local and regional organizations which have worked with PSI using the Strategic Impact Map include the following:
  AHIP
  Blue Ridge Area Food Bank
  Camp Holiday Trails
  Center for Nonprofit Excellence
  CFA Institute
  Charlottesville/Albemarle SPCA
  (cont.)

- Community Investment Collaborative
- Computers4Kids
- Core Knowledge Foundation
- Jefferson Area Board on Aging (JABA)
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Museum
- Laurie Mitchell Empowerment and Career Center
- Partner for Mental Health
- Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition
- Mountaintop Montessori
- Music Resource Center
- PB&J Fund
- Rives C. Minor & Asalie M. Preston Educational Fund
- Senior Center
- The Women's Center at the University of Virginia
- United Way – Thomas Jefferson Area
- Virginia Institute of Autism
- VOCAL, Inc.

For more information about the tool, or to source a consultant to develop one for your organization or coalition, contact Partnerships for Strategic Impact directly.

KEYS TO MAXIMIZING YOUR DATA

Because collecting data is hard, and requires a good bit of resources, you can save time and money by being focused and efficient from the beginning. The following sections provide guidance in how to make the most of your evaluation efforts:

FOCUS ON IMMEDIATE IMPACT/OUTCOMES
INVESTING LESS IN LONG-TERM IMPACT/OUTCOMES
COMMON METRICS
SHARED DATA SYSTEMS

- **Focus on Immediate Impact/Outcomes**

  You are most likely to capture your highest quality impact data by focusing on immediate impact resulting from direct participation in *activities*, *programs* or *strategies*. This means asking yourself: *Who are your clients? And what do they walk away with?* While the coalition is ultimately aiming for collective impact through tracking community-level, publicly collected data, the immediate impact of the partner agencies is very important to gather as well to understand how collective impact eventually happens (remember it takes five to 10 years to get collective impact!).

When thinking about coalition work, there are two kinds of ***IMMEDIATE IMPACT***:

1. The **COMBINED IMPACT THAT EACH OF THE PARTNER AGENCIES HAVE ON THEIR CLIENTS**. (Therefore, people like the idea of *shared data systems* – so that all partner agencies can measure the exact same impact across all the clients served. For more information see the SHARED DATA SYSTEMS section below).

   In our capitalist society, goods and services are for sale, and sales are the bottom line. If people buy your product, they value your product. However, in the nonprofit world, where goods and services are not for sale, you must capture the value of your activities in a different way. Most nonprofits provide clients with new *knowledge, skills* and/or *abilities* that can be used to accomplish individual goals. Therefore, the most immediate impact you can assess are the *knowledge, skills* and *abilities* clients walk out of your door with. Additionally, since clients of nonprofit services often have little choice in selecting vendors, you should always measure *satisfaction* with services. Similarly so in coalition. Sample evaluation questions include:

   HOW MUCH did they learn (*knowledge*)?
   WHAT CAN THEY DO NOW that they could not do before *(skills*)?
   TO WHAT DEGREE DO THEY FEEL THEY CAN APPLY what they learned to their life (*ability)?*
   WAS THE QUALITY OF SERVICE PROVISION ACCEPTABLE (*satisfaction*); and, are the benefits of being part of the coalition worth the costs (e.g. *time, energy, resources*, etc.)?

2. **THE IMPACT ON THE CLIENTS BEING SERVED BY THE COALITION ITSELF, I.E. THE COALITION PARTNERS**. What knowledge, skills and abilities do they get out of partnership? Are the benefits of those knowledge, skills and abilities worth the cost of their participation (in time, energy or funding)?

Figure 11: Examples of Immediate Impact Indicators

CLIENTS	COALITION PARTNERS
Wait times for obtaining mental health services are minimized.	Coalition partners report benefits of partnership outweigh the costs.
Days until appointment at Agency A.	Average response to annual coalition health survey.
Number of hours of walk-in clinics available per week.	

The three steps to **COLLECTING EXISTING IMPACT DATA FROM COALITION AGENCIES** are:

1. Clearly *articulate the overall impact indicators the coalition would like to collect* through a Strategic Impact Map® or Logic Model process; otherwise, you will find yourself all over the place and with way more data than you can handle.

2. *Start with the data that is already available*. There may be things that you also really want to capture, but unless your coalition can infuse each organization with the resources needed to build out its own data collection (or you are asking people to collect data based on the promise of getting a grant that will do just that), hold it for later.

> You do not always (or even usually) need to create new surveys or data collection processes. In fact, especially working in the collective context, it is best to start collecting data that already exists. Tell the story you can tell from the data that is already being collected – it will be valuable. Once some excitement about that data has developed, there will be energy to plan for collecting some new data using common metrics.

3. *Select impact indicators from each agency that tell the same story*, *even if it is not through the same data*. (See the section on SHARED DATA SYSTEMS) Reviewing data

Agencies have different tolerances for data and having data examined. Helping people approach data at their own pace and hearing concerns is a big part of pulling data together across agencies. Pulling together data can also be frustrating and lead to the discovery of problems with data. There is a lot of patience, relationship building and trust involved in this process. This Roadmap describes the barriers to evaluation efforts and offers suggestions for overcoming those barriers in the WHY DATA FEELS HARD section above.

across agencies and aligning the data to tell a clear, cohesive story takes dedicated resources. The task is not as time consuming as other tasks, but does require someone who is not intimidated by numbers, who can see the big picture, who is flexible and who can really grasp the similarities and differences in data across agencies.

Capacity for Data: People will undoubtedly request that fewer indicators be reflected in the Strategic Impact Map®, but then, when data are being analyzed, ask for more details so that they can understand the data. However, the capacity of the dedicated data staff or volunteer really limits what you can collect. Just like you need an accountant or even a CFO if the accounting gets more complicated than balancing a checkbook, most people get very quickly intimidated and overwhelmed by data. You will get more buy-in early on if you keep it streamlined and simple.

If your coalition has at least one dedicated data staff (i.e., a coalition coordinator or dedicated time by a partner) who is not intimidated by numbers, you can pick up to four indicators of productivity per goal. Since each indicator will have more than one specific outcome reflecting some aspect of that indicator, you will quickly end up with lots of numbers!

However, if your coalition is relying on “extra time” a volunteer has and/or the coalition coordinator does not have the background or time to manage data, then you should limit the Strategic Impact Map® to having only one key impact indicator per goal.

Essential Resources for developing surveys and libraries of surveys:

- ✓ Survey Development Primer, Partnerships for Strategic Impact
- ✓ Guide to Evaluating Collective Impact: Learning and Evaluation in the Collective Impact Context, Part 1, Collective Impact Forum
- ✓ Guide to Evaluating Collective Impact: Learning and Evaluation in the Collective Impact Context, Part 2, Collective Impact Forum
- ✓ Guide to Evaluating Collective Impact: Learning and Evaluation in the Collective Impact Context, Part 3, Collective Impact Forum
- ✓ Tools and Resources for Assessing Social Impact, Foundation Center
- ✓ Measurement Tools for Human Services Sector, Perform Well
- ✓ Data Collection and Analysis Tools, Centers for Disease Control
- ✓ Outcome Indicators Project, The Urban Institute

Local Spotlight: on coalitions that developed strategic data collection in order to maximize impact**:**

- ✓ For the Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC), the Data Committee first developed the Strategic Impact Map® in order to set goals and develop productivity and impact indicators.

- ✓ The City of Promise collects impact indicators required by the Department of Education's (DOE) Promise Neighborhood grantees. While no longer funded by the DOE, those indicators continue to be tracked as a standard part of doing business.

- ✓ The Partnership for Children, now evolved into other initiatives, led local data collection efforts by tackling how to map the agency-level data and outcomes to create a unified report, as well as tracking community indicators related to early childhood well-being.

Read more about these coalitions in the LOCAL SPOTLIGHT at the end of this section.

Survey Development: One key way to collect data is via survey. When the coalition is ready to create new surveys, there are a lot of online resource for creating survey tools, conducting interviews and doing focus groups. A summary of different types of data collection tools can be found in *Conducting a Needs Assessment* in the Ready section of the Roadmap. Additional Essential Resources are listed below for creating your own tools.

We also offer several versions of a *Coalition Health Survey*, which can be used to assess the cost/benefit of partners' participation in the coalition, overall coalition health and whether the coalition is meeting its goal of leveraging individual partner assets for collective impact. More information on *Coalition Health Surveys* can be found in *Surveying Coalition Health* in the Go section of the Roadmap.

- **Investing Less in Long-Term Impact/Outcomes**

  As described above, in human services, immediate impact often reflects the knowledge, skills or abilities that people have gained directly from participating in an activity, program or strategy. Longer-term impact (ten minutes to one year later) is measured by how clients use the knowledge, skills or abilities you gave them to *change their behavior or conditions.*

Figure 12: Examples of long-term human service impact indicators

Did your client….

Graduate from college
Save enough money to buy a house
Use a budget to manage money
Improves relationship with others
Maintains employment

Unfortunately, longer-term impact is very, *very* hard to find. This is because even if you are VERY sure that what you did would likely result in change X for your clients one year later, a lot of other things happen day-to-day that could throw that off course. The kinds of things that could happen that would reduce (or increase) the impact of your service are infinite: e.g., presidential elections, economic trends, changes in local or agency leadership, natural disasters, changes in laws, client's family issues, client's physical health, client wins the lottery, etc.

In fact, longer-term impact is so hard to find that many academic research projects fail to find them. If you measure longer-term impact at all, 90% of your efforts should go toward measuring immediate impact. The other 10% of your effort can go toward tracking down clients to see what happened to them. Because the work of coalitions is collective, however, and capacity is always limited we recommend combining data to reflect immediate impact and then tracking community-level impact, skipping longer-term impact altogether.

- **Common Metrics**

There is a lot of talk about the need for all partners in coalitions to use the same metrics for measuring impact. This is certainly ideal, but in our experience, almost never possible. In fact, there are drawbacks to shared data systems, as well, including managing confidentiality and privacy laws, loss of individual agency control over data, variability in data entry, etc. Here are some common challenges to collecting common metrics:

1. **DATA COLLECTION IS RESTRICTED**. Agencies are very often collecting the data they need to collect for their national or state parent-agency, licensing entity, grantor, etc. The way they are capturing impact is not up to them and is "hard wired" into the way they have to do their work.

2. **AGENCIES VARY IN SIZE AND CAPACITY**. Larger agencies may have invested in electronic data collection systems which may make it easier (or harder!) to collect data. Depending on the structure and service array of the organization, putting new data collection systems in place (even one, easy questionnaire) may be close to impossible.

3. **AGENCY CULTURE AND/OR THE COMMUNITY THEY SERVE MAY NOT BE READY TO COLLECT DATA**. There may be cultural barriers, philosophical barriers, or practical barriers like lack of resources to administer surveys.

The best solution to these barriers is to select impact indicators from each agency that tell generally the same story, *even if it is not through the same data*. There will always be caveats to the consistency behind the data, but, there would still be different caveats if all the agencies were collecting the same data, but entering it in separately.

*In summary: **there is no perfect way to combine data**. Do not let the lack of shared measurement keep you from pulling partners' data together to better understand the community you serve.*

Local Spotlight:

The Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) developed an ambitious set of immediate outcomes for their four goals. While they have elected not to continue to collect all of these immediate and community-level impacts, they illustrate the type of indicators that can be helpful to collect – read more about these indicators in the LOCAL SPOTLIGHT at the end of this section.

- **Shared Data Systems**

Creating shared data systems is another concept hugely popular in the collaboration world, but which is very difficult to achieve (and not always a good idea) for the same reasons it is hard to used shared metrics.

Most agencies do not want to give up the electronic platform they have, are mandated to have the electronic platform they have, or do not have the resources to invest in an electronic platform. Even fewer agencies are interested in double entering their data into two electronic platforms!

What you can do is combine the downloaded data from various platforms into one place for analysis. If data are collected in the aggregate—meaning that each agency provides summary data across all consumers (ex. total number of men, total consumers with a depression diagnosis)—then a release of information is not usually needed, because no personal information is provided (this is what Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition did). However, if your coalition needs data about individual consumer's experiences across agencies (e.g., what services Jon Doe got at agency X and outcomes, what services Jon Doe got at agency Y and outcomes), then you will need a legally binding and appropriate release of information that Jon Doe signs, allowing his information to be shared between agencies (this is what the Outcome Collaborative is doing).

The good news is that most of the time, Microsoft Excel is all you need to combine and analyze data, especially in a smaller service area, such as the Charlottesville/Albemarle County region. If you don't have a coalition member adept at using Microsoft Excel, your best bet is to recruit or hire a person who can make sure you have the spreadsheet(s) you need to combine and analyze shared data.

Essential Resources for tracking outcomes:

- ✓ Sharing Data for Better Results: A Guide to Building Integrated Data Systems Compatible with Federal Privacy Laws, National League of Cities
- ✓ A Guide to Measuring Advocacy and Policy. Prepared for Annie E. Casey Foundation by Organizational Research Services
- ✓ Measurement Tools for Human Services Sector, Perform Well
- ✓ Outcome Measurement Project, Urban Institute

Local Spotlight on communities that developed *strategic data collection* in order to maximize impact:

- ✓ For the Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC), the Data Committee developed a list of productivity and impact indicators (note: several were identified for each goal; in retrospect, a primary one should have been selected for each goal to make the data collection and analysis more simple). Partnerships for Strategic Impact had a one-on-one meeting with each service agency to figure out what data was being collected that spoke to the indicators. These meetings ranged from 30 to 90 minutes each. In each meeting, Partnerships for Strategic Impact took very detailed notes about what data was being collected for each indicator, what potential problems there were with that data, any quirks about how the data were collected or what was included, when it was available, how laborious it was to collect (i.e., was it done by hand, flipping through scheduling books or was it just downloaded from an electronic record). Sometimes agencies discovered new and better ways of collecting data in the process—usually by enhancing or extending data already being collected.

  This process worked well for gathering demographic and diagnostic data, as well as information about service delivery and capacity. However, it became clear early on that the Data Committee would have to dig in and spend some time figuring out how to best reflect the mental health and wellness of consumers being served and how to do a community-wide consumer survey.

- ✓ The City of Promise collects impact indicators required by the Department of Education's (DOE) Promise Neighborhood grantees. While no longer funded by the DOE, those indicators continue to be tracked as a standard part of doing business. Interestingly, some impact indicators have many data points (e.g., even graduation rates can be calculated a couple of different ways; Standards of Learning pass rates are broken down by grade, by subject and by "pass" and "pass advance"). Also, some of the grant-required impact indicators are not things that have been collected in Charlottesville before *(cont.)*

(e.g., how safe do kids in the neighborhood feel walking to school; how many servings of fruits and vegetables to kids in the neighborhood get each day), so neighborhood surveys have had to be developed and resources have had to be leveraged to gather these data directly from families. An evaluator was hired as part of the grant to pull all this data together; the evaluator worked in tandem with the data committee and the community to figure out how to most accurately and respectfully collect and report the data.

- ✓ The Partnership for Children, now evolved into other initiatives, was charged by the local governments to develop an early childhood strategy for Charlottesville/Albemarle. The Partnership led the local data collection efforts by tackling how to map the agency-level data and outcomes to create a unified report, as well as tracking community indicators related to early childhood well-being. At the end of the 1990s, when the Partnership was collecting data, no one had tried to pool interagency data together to understand how impact was being measured, and it was at times overwhelming. While there was a lot of good data collected, sometimes it was hard to understand what it meant, especially when looked at all together. Partner agencies also rarely used the same data to measure impact, and considered different outcomes to be most important. Nonetheless, the Partnership really laid the groundwork in the community in regard to the data collection process to spur conversation about strengthening and coordinating service provision (and data collection), as well as for identifying areas where the community needed additional resources and strengthening.

Local Spotlight on *immediate and long-term goal-setting*:

- ✓ The Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) developed an ambitious set of immediate outcomes for their four goals. While they have not continued to collect all of these immediate and community-level impacts, they illustrate the type of indicators that can be helpful to collect:
  Goal 1: Facilitate access to behavioral health and wellness services that ensure individual wellness
  - Agency-specific mental health outcomes: Employment/ Education, Crime and Criminal Justice Involvement, Stability in Housing. *(cont.)*

- Coalition Services Program: clients who complete visit #1 and #2 with mental health provider.
- Coalition partners report using and satisfaction with the warm hand-off process.

Goal 2: Strengthen service infrastructure and coordination in behavioral health and wellness.

- Partners report feeling very knowledgeable about the service system.
- Partners report feeling the service system is easy to navigate.
- Consumers report ease and adequacy of accessing behavioral health and wellness services.
- Number and type of incubated services.
- Number (and type) of new services/providers announced at each Coalition meeting.
- Number of clinical full-time equivalents available from coalition partners (psychiatric time, outpatient individual time).
- Number of clinical hours used at each agency (psychiatric time, outpatient individual time, group time).
- Length of time between initial call/screening and first appointment.

Goal 3: Advocate, collect and share data and knowledge to promote behavioral health and wellness.

- Community learning/satisfaction with community forum.
- Policy/procedural changes for which MHWC advocated.
- Service gaps identified.
- Mental Health First Aid outcome data.
- City Council and BOS rely on MHWC for information and advisement; satisfaction with the data report.

Goal 4: Support a collaborative, engaged, planning coalition for behavioral health and wellness.

- Funding leveraged from partners or other resources to support coalition infrastructure.
- Coalition partners report benefits of partnership outweigh costs.
- Coalition partners report new cooperative/ collective efforts as a result of coalition activities that would not have likely happened on their own.
- Learning/satisfaction with trainings/education. *(cont.)*

- Internal resource and infrastructure development goals met.

Community-level Impact/Outcomes

- Use of Emergency Departments for general mental health needs.
- Temporary Detaining Order (TDO) and Emergency Commitment Order (ECO) rates.
- Adult Emergency Services provided by Region Ten Community Services Board.
- Aggregate mental health and wellness data from partner agencies.

✓ In leading the Outcome Collaborative, the United Way worked with the Albemarle County Schools' lawyer to ensure that consent for parents was written that was compliant with the federal requirements for protecting school data. Luckily, both the Charlottesville and Albemarle public school systems use the same type of database, and most of the data collection is dictated by the State; therefore, there is a lot of commonality between the City and County school data. However, the two home visiting programs have very unique and very different types of databases and collect very different data. The United Way also got all the data points collected by both home visiting providers (Jefferson Area CHiP and Healthy Families at ReadyKids) and, in conversation with staff and agency data experts, created a cross-walk of where they collect the same (or nearly the same) data that can reasonably be compared. There will be caveats when trying to look at data from both home visiting programs together; however, the similarities between the databases has been maximized.

Local Spotlight on more *data collection and impact measurement*:

✓ City of Promise tackled the challenge of sharing individual student information across agencies for students receiving one-on-one academic coaching. After a year or more of discussion and making sure everyone's concerns were addressed (including those of the families!), the parents of all students with the opportunity to receiving coaching were asked if they were willing to sign a release so that City of Promise could collect school data. Families can, of course, decide not to sign and still get coaching. With a signed release, the coach *(cont.)*

can access student school data day-to-day and help the student stay on track. All the data are held in a Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) complaint cloud-based database called Efforts to Outcomes, which is funded by the Department of Education (DOE) for all current and past recipients of the DOE Promised Neighborhood grants.

Additionally, twice a year, the school system provides City of Promise aggregate data on all the students in the neighborhood; once a year, the Charlottesville Police and Department of Social Services also provide aggregate data. In this way, City of Promise leadership can track changes across the neighborhood.

- ✓ Partnership for Children. In 1998, the Charlottesville and Albemarle governments created and funded the staff for the Commission on Children and Families (CCF) that would work to strengthen and build a healthier community for children and their families. The first work group to come out of CCF was the Partnership for Children, which was charged to develop an early childhood strategy for Charlottesville/Albemarle. A state grant from Healthy Families to Children, Youth and Family Services (now ReadyKids) funded a part-time coordinator. This was our community's first collaborative, coordinated effort to unify children's services. Specifically, the Partnership led the local data collection efforts by mapping the agency-level data and outcomes and creating a unified report, tracking community indicators related to early childhood well-being, as well as coordinating and strengthening early childhood strategies across agencies through joint planning efforts and sharing of resources, creating the local Seal of Quality Child Care (the precursor to Virginia's quality rating improvement system), creating literacy tools that were shared and implemented across agencies, implementing regular trainings for agency staff to learn about early childhood and other partner organizations' services, sharing public awareness materials highlighting the importance of early childhood, and unifying the two home visiting programs under one umbrella (The Home Visiting Collaborative). As the local governments phased CCF out, the United Way was also spearheading the local branch of the state Smart Beginnings initiative, and the work of the Partnership folded into Smart Beginnings (below). *(cont.)*

- ✓ Outcome Collaborative. In 2014, a meeting was conducted with representatives from the United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area, Albemarle County Department of Social Services (ACDSS), the County Executive's Office, and the Superintendent of Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) to discuss a project that could help demonstrate the impact of early childhood experiences on student outcomes. There was also interest in connecting these early educational experiences with home visiting to determine the combined impact on later school achievement. The initial discussants decided The United Way would meet with the Coordinator of Research and Program Evaluation for ACPS to research barriers to undertaking the project as well as proposed solutions to any identified barriers and explore priorities and logistics involved with linking home visiting, preschool and school data. Subsequent meetings were conducted with the two home visiting providers, who confirmed their interest in participating in the project and shared their current data collection points. After much joint discussion, it was decided that it was most logistically reasonable and cost effective to only explore collecting data going forward (as opposed to trying to obtain consent to review archival records). This means that data analyses and reporting would be conducted three to five years after the initiation of data collection. In June and July 2014, the United Way and the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation (CACF) met to review the proposed project, and CACF joined the partnership by providing some financial backbone support. While the initial conversations about linking data started about 2010, the Memorandum of Understanding was signed in the Spring of 2016, and the first consents were signed by families that same summer. This is the only project in the state seeking to link individual children's data about early childhood interventions and preschool, with active informed consent, to their later public school success.

- ✓ In 2016, Governor Terry McAuliffe signed Executive Directive 7 to stress the importance of, and facilitate the ability to, connect agency-level data across the state. Virginia is poised to be a national leader in connecting and using agency-level data – even though this is the most difficult data to connect and use (no matter how big, small, state, national or local the *(cont.)*

agency is). The Executive Directive says "Increasing the use of shared data and analytics among Virginia agencies through a comprehensive and coordinated effort will improve the provision of services and outcomes, maximize the use of resources, and increase the return on investment of our citizens' tax dollars in their government; increasing data sharing, correlation, and analysis capacity will enable the state to achieve efficiencies in the administration of state programs and services, allow state government to more efficiently and effectively address issues related to public health, public safety, education, and quality of life."

HARNESSING RESOURCES

Now that you have set your strategy and created a coordinated evaluation plan, a coalition seeking collective impact should commit to the following actions in order to launch *and* thrive: focus on governance, adopt systems leadership and plan for resources. This section of the Roadmap outlines key issues in developing each.

FOCUS ON GOVERNANCE
COMMIT TO SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP
PLAN FOR RESOURCES

FOCUS ON GOVERNANCE

What is governance? Governance is a function of leadership. It is the way in which leaders, whether co-chairs, steering committees, advisory councils or boards, operate to ensure that a coalition is both efficient and effective. In the coalition context, governance is a tool used to structure relationships among multiple stakeholders (from coalition partners, to funders, to interested agencies) for maximum success. Highlighted below are three key governance components that can make your coalition function with maximum impact: dedicated capacity, an accountability structure and engaged partners.

- **Dedicated Capacity:** Capacity means the ability or power to achieve a goal. Capacity can come in the form of coalition leaders or conveners who galvanize the effort, an effective director or coordinator who manages the work day-to-day, policy and data analysts who track and present impact data, administrative support, as well as the capacity for fund development and external communications. In the Collective Impact model, this type of infrastructure is called *backbone support*.

  Backbone support can come in many different forms. The form it takes depends on the level of responsibility and the job duties required. It can be provided by one individual, an entire organization within the coalition or a third party agency. The best type of backbone support is determined by the specific needs of the coalition and can evolve over time. Coalition partners must either provide *free* backbone support to the coalition or the coalition must raise funds to pay for it. Often, capacity is creatively built with a combination of *both* free and funded support responsive to the resources and expertise in the coalition. When dedicated backbone support is in place, a coordinator or agency lead can provide the following types of services critical to coalition success:

1. *Administrative Support*: Ensure partner agreements are signed, arrange meetings, take minutes, manage finances, manage website, organize events, identify and manage volunteers, or maintain historical coalition documents.

2. *Capacity Development for Evaluation*: Create or adopt a coalition-wide measurement system, collect coalition health data, gather member or demographic data, identify community-level data, manage data collection, or analyze data and create useable reports.

3. *Galvanizing the Coalition:* Facilitate partner dialogue, build coalition consensus, recruit and orient new partners, or ensure healthy partner communication.

4. *Strategic Direction Guidance:* Facilitate development and iterations of *vision, mission, strategy, goals* and annual work plan, hold partners accountable for agreed-upon actions, or highlight data to guide strategy updates.

5. *Mobilization of Funding*: Advocate for coalition, meet with prospective donors, connect donors to coalition leadership, identify and write grants, or coordinate funds from diverse sources to support common purpose and strategies.

6. *Public Will-Building*: Advocate for the coalition, develop key messages, prepare outreach materials, or organize grassroots community engagement.

7. *Policy Advancement:* Use local best practice and outcomes data to educate policymakers and elected officials about effective strategies to address the identified need.

An important question to keep in mind when gauging the type of capacity you need to build an effective community-change effort is: *what resources do you already have inside the coalition?* If your coalition already has strong leadership and key cross-sector stakeholder connections, you may want to develop capacity primarily to coordinate logistical support. However, if your coalition needs a more cohesive community presence and capacity to lead the effort, you are likely in the market for higher-level strategic capacity (either as a coalition coordinator or in a coalition leadership position). Pay close attention to coalition gaps and opportunities before deciding how best to source dedicated capacity for the effort.

There are a range of approaches to developing the capacity/infrastructure/backbone support you need to achieve your coalition goals. The role can be played by an individual executive director, project coordinator, or data manager, a single agency, a network of individuals, or a collection of agencies offering shared services in their areas of expertise. The key here is creativity and foresight in assembling and reassembling the right resources, both human and financial, to jumpstart and maintain a functional coalition.

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ The Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) realized the importance of the coalition coordinator position when the position went vacant for six months. This caused the initiative to lose some organizational momentum and institutional knowledge. What was gained through the process was a better understanding of the key role that the coordinator could and should play for the coalition. In this case, the best use of the coordinator was to organize the work, galvanize partner participation and manage the evolving evaluation efforts to best align coalition activities around outcome measures that could be tracked over time.

  At the same time, the coalition transitioned into new leadership with the founding "champions" and long-time co-chairs stepping into an advisory role. Another key lesson learned through this process was the critical importance of engaging in ongoing succession planning—to groom new coalition leaders so that the coalition can effectively manage a leadership transition. As part of the succession planning, an honest discussion about the time needed to be an effective leader is critical to ensuring you have leaders in place with the right amount of backbone support who can do their best work for the coalition.

The actual *doing* of the activities, programs and strategies of the coalition usually falls with the coalition staff and is distributed among partner agencies or is completed by one or more of the working committees. This is the first place where the rubber hits the road in terms of partners having to dedicate their own resources to the coalition. This is also part of what may be considered the "cost" of coalition partnership for partners and why some partners might be reluctant to join. In order for the coalition to stay healthy and thrive, the benefits of being part of a coalition needs to outweigh the costs for each partner.

Figure 13: Weighing the Potential Benefits vs. Costs of Working in Coalition

Coalition Benefits	Coalition Costs
➢ Exchange knowledge, ideas and strategies	➢ Loss of autonomy, competitive edge or ability to individually control outcomes
➢ Share risks and responsibility	➢ Potential conflict over goals and methods
➢ Build community concern and consensus for issues	➢ Loss of resources (time, money, information, independent voice)
➢ Engage in collective action that builds power	➢ Time-intensive collective problem-solving
➢ Improve trust and communication across community sectors	➢ Shared recognition for accomplishment
➢ Mobilize diverse talents, resources and strategies	
Source: Excerpted from: Coalition Guides, Coalition Fact Sheet #1: Before You Build Your Coalition, Coalitions Work	

Why should organizations dedicate time to coalition activities and take time away from focusing on individual agency work? If you've laid the groundwork for a strategy that addresses coalition partner needs (i.e., increased knowledge, better community engagement, network-building, or enhanced mission impact), then you will have much greater success in recruiting and sustaining coalition partnership.

Essential Resources for backbone support:

- ✓ Understanding the Value of Backbone Organizations in Collective Impact, Parts 1-4, Stanford Social Innovation Review
- ✓ Backbone Support Organizations, Assessment, Ready by 21, Collective Impact Forum
- ✓ The Difference Between Backbones and Conveners in Collective Impact, Jeff Edmonson, Striving for Change
- ✓ Is this Group Really a Coalition?, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ Collective Impact Initiative Implementation Checklist, Collective Impact Forum
- ✓ Backbone Toolkit, Collective Impact Forum
- ✓ What Makes a Good Lead Agency?, CoalitionsWork

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ The Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) and a second coalition, City of Promise (CoP), both have paid staff coordinating the work of the coalition. They also have volunteer leadership from coalition partner organizations. This help is in the form of co-chairs and steering committee members. In the case of CMHWC, funds to cover a part-time coordinator were sourced initially from a coalition partner agency (as part of a larger grant) and then from the City of Charlottesville. For CoP, initial paid staff funds came from a federal planning grant. They have since been augmented by individual donations. In both cases, job descriptions were developed for coordinating staff. Further, each coalition created its own charter outlining partnership, financial investment requirements and the work of coalition leaders and their steering committees. The City of Promise 2015-2016 Steering Committee Manual can be found here.

Lesson Learned:

- ✓ Coalition leaders, whether co-chairs or coordinators, have to have the drive to achieve coalition goals, the skills to apply to the work and the time available to do each. Often, coalition work is piled on top of regular agency priorities. If you are contemplating coalition leadership, we recommend that you include the coalition work as part of your individual agency goals. Further, we recommend that you ensure that your board of directors or employer not only support the work that you will be doing, but also that it be deemed a priority in the context of other leadership goals.

- **Accountability Structure**: Regular, dynamic interactions among coalition partners (as well as in smaller work groups or committees, if the scope of work is complex) are imperative to facilitate working relationships across the coalition that will yield collaborative results. This interaction requires an organizational structure which sets clear expectations for participation and manages the collective workload.

  The organizational structure can start with a *coalition charter* or a written operating agreement among the partners. It can be enhanced through the development of specific *action plans* (once mission, vision and goals are aligned) that outline the strategy, resources, timelines and outcomes necessary to achieve the coalition's goals. An action plan incorporates the work of all partners toward the common goals and ensures accountability from those involved. Other tools that can help a coalition yield better results include developing an active *steering committee*, an overall *committee structure* and regular *communication channels*:

  1. *Coalition Charter*: A coalition charter is a written document that outlines the overall purpose and structure of the coalition. It identifies how the coalition will be governed, including committee and partnership functions and how decisions will be made. A coalition charter can, and should, evolve over time as the coalition grows and develops to ensure that it accurately reflects the current structure and expectations of those involved.

Essential Resources for coalition leader job descriptions**:**

- ✓ Sample Job Descriptions, The Immunization Project
- ✓ Coalition Roles and Job Descriptions, CoalitionsWork

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ The Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC), City of Promise (CoP), and the Early Education Task Force (EETF) each created its own charter outlining partnership, financial investment requirements and the work of coalition leaders and their steering com]mittees. The EETF charter can be found here. CMHWC and the CoP also created job descriptions for coordinating staff. A link to the CMHWC coordinator's job description can be found here. The City of Promise supervisor's job description may be found here.

  In the initial CMHWC charter, partners were required to pay annual dues to participate in order to generate funds to support coalition infrastructure. Subsequently, as the coalition's funding strategy developed, it decided to drop the partnership fee requirement so that dues are not a bar to participation. The 2016 CMHWC charter can be accessed here. And the City of Promise charter here.

2. *Action Plan:* An action plan is a tool to organize the work of the coalition. Once the coalition identifies its mission, vision, goals and desired impact, the action plan is the recipe for how to do the work. Because there are often multiple paths to achieve a common goal, the action plan holds coalition partners accountable for building the resources, as well as the activities, programs and strategies that are identified as likely to have the most impact. The action plan typically includes very specific activities, the timeline for completion, who will take the lead on implementing and supervising those activities, and what the expected outcomes of

the activities will be. The action plan is a tactical document that can and should be updated year-to-year to move the coalition closer to achieving its overall goal(s). Often, committees are responsible for implementing sections of the action plan that align with their committee charge.

An action plan articulates the coordinated efforts needed to achieve shared goals. As part of action plan development, coalitions can and should assess the following:

a. ***Where do partner activities overlap?*** These overlaps will represent opportunities for organizations to work together and streamline programs.
b. ***Where do gaps exist?*** These gaps will represent opportunities for partners to come together to collectively address a need.
c. Where are there existing resources that can be tapped, and where must new resources be sourced?
d. ***Which coalition partners have capacity*** to handle coalition work, and where and how must capacity be augmented or added?
e. ***Where do the strategic priorities of the coalition overlap with that of individual agencies*** – so that the agencies with overlap can take the lead in implementation?
f. ***Are there other stakeholders in the community that are doing similar or complimentary work*** who could be invited into the coalition to facilitate its work?

RESOURCES

Essential Resources:

- ✓ Developing an Action Plan, Community Tool Box
- ✓ Coalition Action Plan Template, CoalitionsWork

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ The [Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition] (CMHWC) has had several facilitated action planning retreats since it began – both with the full coalition and just with its steering committee. In each case, participating partners were asked to complete an online survey to test strategic objectives and priority activities, and then the survey results were used for action planning at the retreats. Coalition health has been identified as an ongoing strategic priority to ensure that the coalition has the infrastructure it needs to achieve its dual goals of improving mental health and reducing substance abuse. At the CMHWC 2017 Steering Committee retreat, members approved the creation of an ad hoc coalition health committee to: ensure the right type of coalition backbone support, develop coalition resources and increase member engagement.

3. ***Steering Committee***: A steering committee (also called executive committee) is the leadership group for a coalition. Like a board of directors, when a steering committee functions well, it focuses on three activities: (1) holding and directing the coalition's mission, vision and goals; (2) managing the coalition strategy and (3) ensuring that the coalition itself is functioning effectively. Steering committee members should reflect the diversity of key stakeholders: for example, public, private, independent, university, philanthropy and clients. Committee members should also be able to articulate and embrace the values of the coalition to the community, to their own organizations and to themselves as professionals. It is most efficient (and most effective) if the stakeholders on the committee are decision-makers for whatever constituency they represent. This ensures that coalition business can move forward, minimizing outside consultation. Steering committee members should also be active champions of, and often the strongest voices for, the collective impact effort in the community. For more information, see *The Art and Science of Committees* in the Go section of this Roadmap.

4. ***Committee Structure:*** Committees, or working groups as they are sometimes called, are groups that: take on certain aspects of the strategy, develop implementation plans, and engage the community as needed to accomplish a subset of the goals and track and report progress towards those goals. Committees typically report to the

steering committee or the group responsible for overseeing all of the coalition work. Committees can be made up of coalition partners and non-partners, depending on the committee focus and whether outside expertise is needed to achieve the goals adopted by the committee. The types of committees created should depend on the overall coalition strategy, and be tied closely to the work coming out of the action plan. Examples of coalition committees include: coalition health/governance, executive/ steering, education and advocacy, resource development, program, membership and data. There can be both ad hoc committees, for short-term projects, and standing committees for ongoing work. As part of establishing committees, it is a good practice to create written committee job descriptions which can be updated annually to make sure that the committee activity stays focused around the coalition strategy and achieves clear results. For more information, see *THE ART AND SCIENCE OF COMMITTEES* in the GO section of the Roadmap.

5. *Communication Tools*: Regular communication is a necessity for any organization and even more so with a coalition comprised of multiple committees with a collective community impact goal. If a governance structure is created, it can facilitate effective communications between committees, the steering committee and the full coalition. For example, (1) coalition committees can be charged with providing regular progress and impact reports to the steering committee. The steering committee can then identify key strategic questions and information to put before the full coalition. (2) Regular coalition meetings are a necessity to keep all participants focused, accountable and engaged. (3) Meeting minutes should be consistently distributed to confirm agreement on tasks and responsibilities. (4) Other communications tools can include: a coalition website, a regular coalition newsletter and full coalition meeting agendas that include opportunities to share information and build relationships among the coalition partners. CoalitionsWork offers a helpful Coalition Meeting Checkup Template as well as a Meeting Minutes Template that may be useful in implementing successful communication standards.

Essential Resources for *sample structural tools*:

- ✓ Facilitation for Community Change, Bridging RVA
- ✓ Model Commitment Letter, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ Coalition Roles & Responsibilities, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ Coalitions Bylaws Template, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ Sample Community Coalition Charter, Quality Insights Delaware
- ✓ Steering Committee Toolkit, Collective Impact Forum

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless has a website that provides information on the governance of the coalition, its members and the coalition's community projects. It also includes relevant data that the coalition uses to track progress in making homelessness "rare, brief and non-recurring". To keep the coalition connected, the coordinator of the Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition sends out newsletters to its members and key community partners outlining current activities, educational opportunities and next actions for the coalition.

Lesson Learned:

- ✓ It is a good idea to create a written committee job description which includes how the committee will be lead and the process for conducting committee business. This ensures that those who are part of the committee know what the expectations are and how best to focus their work to support the coalition strategy. The City of Promise work committee job descriptions can be found here. And an example of a Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition charge can be found here.

- **<u>Engaged Partners</u>**: By definition, a coalition requires more than one partner. The trick is assembling the right group of partners for the goals you hope to achieve. If the problem the coalition seeks to address is community-wide, then it requires a community-wide solution. By engaging all sectors and parts of the community (from nonprofits, to funders, to government, to business, to universities, to residents) a coalition has a higher potential to create system-wide community change. If you're considering how best to assemble a different kind of coalition, one that aims to restructure a system for a deeper result, here are a few issues to consider:

  1. *<u>Get the Right People on Board</u>*: If you want to change a system, you need all of the system agents to cooperate, even, or perhaps especially, if these agents are from different sectors and/or inexperienced in working together.

a. Map the System you want to change to identify the organizations, individuals, funders, clients and stakeholders that are necessary to engage. More information on Systems Mapping in *COMMIT TO SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP* below.

b. Be sure your coalition has not only the right partner organizations present, but also the right representative from each partner organization. Decide whether you need *deciders* (those who have authority and leverage to influence others) or *doers* (those that are the implementers), or *delegates* (those who represent key constituencies), or all three. Then recruit for the jobs.

   Coalition founders must intentionally seek out diverse skill-sets and networks of individuals within partner organizations. Ensuring that the right type of representatives are at the table is critical for buy-in with mission, activities, programs and strategies and for creating momentum that will keep the coalition strong and propel the work forward.

c. As you are considering the "right people" don't forget potential funders. Not only can funders support the coalition with financial resources, they also can help engage in strategy development with the coalition and connect the coalition to valuable research, networks and information. By including funders at the start, as partners rather than just potential inputs, a coalition often can go farther faster.

2. *Create the Right Balance*: For a successful coalition, all partners must be appropriately engaged and participatory without the needs or priorities of one organization trumping the others. Coalitions should consider setting the stage with a partnership agreement that sets expectations for full participation, and by doing regular check-ins with coalition members to test buy-in and engagement in the priorities set by the coalition. The earlier you identify when coalition members are feeling like their individual or organizational needs aren't being met, the sooner you can tackle the issue to smooth the way for continued partnership. The alternative is either that organizations leave the coalition or become low-functioning members, both of which can negatively impact the strategy. For more information on partnership agreements, see *ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE* in *FOCUS ON GOVERNANCE* above.

WHAT is an INQUIRY-BASED CULTURE? It cannot be overstated how important it is for coalition leaders – whether director, coordinator or committee chairs - to explicitly invite and encourage any and all questions about the topic under discussion. This supports building trust and respect between coalition members. Committee leaders should check in regularly with people who are not vocally participating, emphasizing that everyone can speak freely and that all perspectives are encouraged and valued. This is an important first step in creating an **inquiry-based culture**.

WHY SHOULD COALITIONS CARE ABOUT DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION?

One clear challenge in coalition work is **assembling broad and diverse representation and voice within the coalition**, and ensuring that those who need to be involved have a seat at the table: Cross-sector partners – those from the public, private, nonprofit and philanthropic sectors - yes, but also representatives from communities who are most affected by the issue, including communities of color.

> *Most efforts to achieve collective impact inevitably take place within a context of structural inequity that keeps people of different backgrounds and races from achieving equitable outcomes.* ***If participants in collective impact initiatives are to make the lasting change they seek, they must pay explicit attention to policies, practices, and culture that are reinforcing patterns of inequity in the community****.*
>
> -The Equity Imperative in Collective Impact, John Kania & Mark Kramer, Stanford Social Innovation Review

This requires intentionality and commitment to look outside the larger, more 'mainstream' organizations or leaders who are engaged in the issue and consider, with a goal of inclusion, what grassroots leaders or groups should be involved in creating the change. The phrase that most demonstrates this principle is: "**Nothing about us without us**."

This intentionality does not end when coalition partners have been assembled. To achieve equity there must be **an ongoing commitment to identifying and removing barriers to full participation** faced by leaders or organizations within such communities, such as limited capacity to fully participate because of lack of resources, voice, power or experience. Following are several strategies to consider in achieving an equitable *and* inclusive coalition: *(cont.)*

1. *Funding*: **Consider funding smaller, grassroots organizations to participate in the coalition**, whether to provide input, conduct community outreach or engage their communities in the effort, and advocate for support for the work of grassroots organizations as part of the coalition effort. **Also consider providing a stipend or childcare or meals that may allow individuals from the community to participate**. This can create equity with the agency representatives who are paid by their organizations to be at the table.
2. *Governance*: Embed into the coalition culture from the start an expectation of and transparent process for **open dialogue among partners so that all feedback, especially if challenging or uncomfortable, can be heard and respected and trust among very different partners can be built**. Asking all coalition members to complete quick meeting exit surveys can ensure that the coalition is engaging all of its members in continuous improvement.
3. *Cultivating*: It is important too to **support and mentor the voice of people who are both participating in and affected by coalition work** but may not recognize their advocacy power.

LESSONS LEARNED

Lesson Learned:

✓ Ask partners both what they want out of, and what they will bring to, the coalition. Rather than just trying to convince people to join the coalition and do what the leadership wants, gather information about what partners hope to achieve via the coalition. This way, the needs of all stakeholders can be taken into account in developing the direction, goals and strategy of the coalition. The coalition will be more likely to achieve the desired results if everyone's needs are met. To maximize investment from individual organizations, participation in the coalition must be a win-win for all partners. Coalitions should articulate the value of partnership at the outset, be clear about the role and expectations for partners and deliver on the promise of reciprocity in order to encourage active and diverse partnership.

Local Spotlight:

Creating committee structures that reflect and can execute on strategy:

✓ The Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) engaged partners via committee. It lodges its leadership in its Steering Committee, and executes the work via these committees: The Data Committee helps develop, track and report coalition and public health data to help define impact. The Public Awareness and Communications committee manages public education and outreach for the coalition. The Service Systems Committee is made up of service provider members who come together to troubleshoot access issues. Each of these committees meet in between full committee meetings to move forward the business of the coalition. Following its most recent retreat, it established a new Coalition Health committee to focus on ensuring that the coalition has the right infrastructure, resources an engagement to accomplish its strategic objectives. CMHWC also pays close attention to succession planning of committee co-chairs. In its first co-chair rotation, two new co-chairs were elected while the retiring co-chairs remained on the steering committee for institutional history. In the next rotation, only one of the two chairs was replaced. By staggering co-chair terms, it was able to maintain some leadership consistency and momentum during leadership transition.

Being intentional about inclusion:

✓ City of Promise provides a $50 stipend to its steering committee members who come from and represent the neighborhoods it serves. This stipend is intended to support their meaningful participation in the governance of the coalition. To ensure all stakeholder voices are heard, City of Promise conducts anonymous exit surveys at steering committee meetings which were open to the public. The exit surveys are administered electronically after each meeting, and highlights from these surveys are reviewed and acted on at the next steering committee meeting.

RESOURCES

Essential Resources:

- ✓ Potential Member Grid, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ Coalition Member Gap Analysis, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ Am I a High-Functioning Coalition Member?, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ Buddy Program for Member Recruitment, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ Cross-Sector Partnership Assessment, Living Cities
- ✓ Building Effective Smart Beginnings Coalitions: Building Blocks and Measurement Tools for Success, Virginia Early Childhood Foundation
- ✓ How do you Build the 'Right' Cross-Sector Partnership to Implement Collective Impact Approaches?, Living Cities
- ✓ Applying a Racial Equity and Inclusion Lens to Collective Impact, Living Cities
- ✓ Why Communities of Color are Getting Frustrated with Collective Impact, Nonprofit with Balls
- ✓ Equity Matters in Collective Impact, Collective Impact Forum Blog
- ✓ The Equity Imperative in Collective Impact, Stanford Social Innovation Review
- ✓ Three steps for Advancing Equity in Collective Impact, Forum for Community Solutions
- ✓ Promoting Participation Among Diverse Groups, Chapter 7, Section 2, Community Tool Box

COMMIT TO SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP

> *'[Systems leaders] don't try to claim the credit. It wouldn't be appropriate anyway because it is others who are delivering this on the ground. It's not helpful. Do you want to claim the credit, or do you want others to do that and stick to the values we are talking about, and deliver? You have to have a frame that excites people, and you have to co-create and develop it with them, not tell them it's yours and ask them to take it on? So it is more like helping create a social movement.'*
>
> *The Practice of System Leadership (p. 18), The King's Fund*

Cultivating leadership may well be the most critical component to the success of any collaboration. If you do not already have leaders in place, it is important to identify key actors who can serve as leaders. With foresight and a bit of luck, you will be able to cultivate more than one coalition leader. Further, those who become leaders will advance the coalition's strategy using their different and complimentary skill sets. Beyond administrative support, coalitions need leaders who operate with a big-picture, systems mindset.

Systems leaders are those who catalyze collective leadership for the collective good. Any individual in a coalition, regardless of position, can be a systems leader. If you break down a systems leader, the characteristics and skills that are essential are humility, the ability to see different perspectives, a commitment to cultivating the wisdom of the group (through direct feedback or by modeling) and an ability to attract and engage a *coalition of the willing* to maintain the momentum needed to achieve greater collective results. At their core, systems leaders keep the vision front and center, facilitate healthy conversation and give those in the coalition room to develop the strategies needed to get there.

Figure 14: Characteristics of Systems Leaders

Demonstrate ability to see the larger environment

- Help coalition partners break down silos to build a shared understanding of the whole problem which enables solutions to be jointly-developed

Foster viewpoints beyond the status quo

- Ensures that coalition partners hear different perspectives and appreciate different experiences necessary for problem-solving

Shift coalition dialogue from reactive to proactive

- And from scarcity to abundance so that coalition partners can look beyond day-to-day challenges and perceived limitations to see a common vision for the future

Help coalition partners embrace collective change

- Even if that change does not immediately or directly serve their own organization's interests, but promises payoff in the future

Some leaders naturally exhibit these skills and characteristics; others must flex to get there. For those called to lead with a systems approach but required to flex, it can be extremely helpful to *identify community mentors to provide support and guidance* along the way. Even for the natural systems leader, a mentor or leadership coach to support growth and development could be a very worthwhile investment. Coalition work is hard. Period. Coaching and support may prove to be essential for any systems leader.

Through CoLab, Center for Nonprofit Excellence's (CNE) collaboration learning lab, CNE offers several programs that help coalition leaders find support and grow in their roles. In addition to a flexible, individualized Coaching Program, we also offer Leadership Circles, small group of leaders who come together monthly with a facilitator to confidentially solve real world challenges in real time with the real world experience of those who participate.

While the knowledge, skills and abilities of individual coalition leaders are important, there also are tools that can help facilitate systems leadership, such as:

- **Systems Mapping**: This tool is used to identify all of the actors in the system you are trying to impact and their respective roles. Check out the ESSENTIAL RESOURCES at the end of this section for more information about how to initiate a systems mapping exercise.

- **Generative Conversation**: This conversation is what you often find at retreats, where those involved have permission to think creatively, raise new questions and develop new understanding around old problems. For more information about how to clear space for generative conversation, see ESSENTIAL RESOURCES at the end of this section.

- **Appreciative Inquiry**: This tool is a process for identifying and building on strengths, shifting the focus from what problem you are trying to solve to the future you are trying to create. Check out the ESSENTIAL RESOURCES at the end of this section for more information about how to use Appreciative Inquiry to develop strategy and galvanize coalition participation.

Trust can be a very difficult factor to accurately gauge in coalition where there are so many moving parts. One tool to attain a critical level of trust (and with it, engagement) within a coalition is to conduct brief meeting exit surveys and/or an annual *coalition health partner survey*.

Why does finding and nurturing systems leaders matter? **Systems leaders, and a systems leadership approach, forges trust in a coalition and in the relationships among coalition partners**. Trust is a key ingredient in any relationship. However, it is especially important when working in coalition. With a culture of trust, the question is always, how can we leverage our individual expertise to have a greater community impact? Without trust, identifying and achieving shared goals is a challenge. A culture of trust requires modesty and maturity to ensure that the work of the whole does not overshadow or devalue individual partner organizations' accomplishments.

Essential Resources for information on *Systems Leadership*:

- ✓ The Dawn of System Leadership, Stanford Social Innovation Review
- ✓ Collective Impact Principles of Practice, Collective Impact Forum
- ✓ The Practice of System Leadership, The King's Fund
- ✓ Governance as Leadership, Richard P. Chait, et al
- ✓ A Transformation of Social Systems, Academy for Systemic Change

For information on *Systems Mapping*:

- ✓ An Introduction to System Mapping, FSG
- ✓ What is a System Map and Why Should I Care?, Adaptive Action
- ✓ How do I Create a System Map?, Adaptive Action
- ✓ Mapping Coalitions and Networks, Ready by 21
- ✓ Partnering with Community Sectors, CoalitionsWork

For information on *Appreciative Inquiry:*

- ✓ Generic Processes of Appreciative Inquiry, The Center for Appreciative Inquiry
- ✓ Appreciative Inquiry, National Center for Dialogue and Deliberation
- ✓ Unpacking What Collaborative Inquiry has to Offer, Collaboration for Impact

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ The founding co-chairs of the Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) had a daunting task: to strengthen the system of mental health care so that those with mild to moderate health needs no longer fell through service cracks. They each brought complimentary skills sets to their shared leadership. One focused on data collection and management and the other prioritized building key stakeholder relationships whether coalition partners, funding partners or community leaders. What both had in common was a deep understanding of the coalition challenge, strong coalition commitment from their respective organizations and a solid working relationship. They also were able to galvanize the coalition to take a systems leadership approach to the problem – focused on how to leverage coalition partner strengths to achieve greater community impact.

PLAN FOR RESOURCES

Early on, a coalition should assess what financial resources are needed to support coalition infrastructure and activities, develop a budget and, when needed, create a plan to raise funds to fuel the work. In many cases, coalitions must source new philanthropic support, beyond the funding, expertise and networks that individual organizations develop through their own philanthropic partnerships, in order to have community-level impact. This can be challenging to navigate in an already competitive philanthropy environment, but can often present an opportunity to raise *new* funds for the problem that individual agencies, on their own, would not be able to obtain or sustain. It also offers a unique opportunity for individual philanthropists to pool resources in concert with cross-sector funders—public and private—for greater community-wide investment and impact.

- **Types of Resources:**
  1. *In-Kind Donations*: In addition to dollars, in-kind donations are incredibly valuable. These include contributions of staff time and internal resources from partner organizations such as meeting space, facilitators, data collection and analysis, technology and communications.

2. *Partner Investment*: Sometimes, coalition partners have existing funds that can be diverted to the work of the coalition if the coalition goals and activities fit well within current partner strategy. Often, coalition partners can pool together current financial resources to generate funding for the work.

3. *NEW Philanthropic Support*: A coalition may well need additional funding to support its infrastructure—a coordinator, for example—and its program activities, including community education, advocacy, data collection and analysis, and outreach. This funding could start with a public sector planning grant, for example, and gaps going forward could be filled with local community or private sector foundation grants. Individual donors with a strong interest in the issue may also be eager to get involved. The more cross-sector your coalition is, the more likely you are to have public sector, business leader and private foundation advocates that can assist in leveraging funds to achieve coalition goals.

   The best case for an infrastructure investment may be the leveraging potential of that investment in coordinating coalition partners to achieve better community results. One key question for early discussion is how to raise funds for a coalition initiative without *competing* with the fundraising done by coalition partner agencies. To combat this concern, it is important to think in terms of system-wide impact. It may help to consider how funds raised for the collective impact effort have the potential to grow resources for the community, rather than reduce them. One strategy is to *identify funders with a specific interest in resolving the complex challenge the coalition seeks to address*. Another strategy is to *devise a fundraising strategy that incorporates and builds on the expertise of all of the partners.*

NOTE: Coalition partners may well need to provide a significant amount of the infrastructure support needed for the coalition to achieve the community impact it seeks, which means partner agencies must dedicate their own resources to the coalition. This is part of the "cost" of coalition partnership for partners and why some organizations may be reluctant to join. Why should an organization dedicate funding or other material goods to the coalition (even just the value of their time to attend meetings), taking away resources from its own agency and mission? This is why the coalition case for support is so critical – to demonstrate that working in coalition can clear a path to develop new resources, new partners and to achieve community impact that could not otherwise be imagined or sought agency-by-agency. Refer to *Figure 13: Weighing the Potential Benefits vs. Costs of Working in Coalition* in the FOCUS ON GOVERNANCE section above.

- **Funder Engagement**: Philanthropic support is most often financial, but coalitions do best when they identify and cultivate philanthropic partnerships, in which the donor, whether individual, public sector, private foundation or corporate, can also help catalyze the work of the coalition by recruiting other donors, providing needed expertise and bringing the resources within their broader network to bear on the work of the coalition. Bringing philanthropic partners in early, and engaging them beyond their checkbook, can help reinforce a systems leadership approach (leveraging all resources to be had for greater community impact) and catalyze a deeper and longer financial investment.

  To grow any philanthropic partnership, it is critical to establish a strong, trusting relationship with your donors - one of transparency and accountability - as well as to develop systems to plan for, track *and* communicate impact! Consider it a *win-win* when donors and coalition partners recognize the unique skill sets that each bring to the equation. Philanthropic partners who are deeply invested in the outcome *and* take the long-view in investing in collaboration, understanding that community-level impact takes time, are more likely to support the trial and error required to figure out the right approach. Information on tracking for impact can be found in the PLANNING FOR IMPACT section.

- **Structure for Success**: Coalition partners, once brought together, may well have great ideas for how to raise new funds for the work of the coalition, whether from public funds, individual donations, corporate sponsors or private foundations. If so, the ideas will likely take research to determine fit (research can also be valuable in identifying new funding sources) and will require coordination to turn the brainstorming session(s) into action on behalf of the coalition. Like any individual organization, a coalition benefits from creating structure in order to achieve its goals, especially when it comes to raising the funds to invest in the coalition.

  1. *Committees*: The coalition *steering committee* may lead the charge, but depending on the scope of the activity, it may also be helpful to create a *philanthropy committee* to spearhead the fund development work.

  2. *Leadership*: Managing resources effectively is a critical component of solid governance. Your *coalition leaders* – whether co-chairs or steering committee or coordinator – should be in a position to determine, with guidelines from the full coalition, how best to manage coalition resources to achieve the mission. Coalition leaders also can play a key role in making the case for funding, as well as

coordinating coalition partners, all of whom can be engaged in sourcing new resources within their own networks.

3. *Case for Support*: A coalition that takes time to develop a strong, written case for support is setting itself up for success in raising the funds needed to support its work. The case for support should clearly articulate the coalition goal(s), specific strategies to achieve the goal(s), its leadership credentials, donors already at the table and metrics for tracking both coalition health and change outcomes in the community. If your coalition has utilized a Logic Model or Strategic Impact Map™ you have already created a visual representation of your case for support. More information on building a case for support can be found in the Essential Resources section below. More information on Logic Models and Strategic Impact Maps™ can be found in PLANNING FOR IMPACT.

4. *Work Plan*: Create a philanthropy work plan to include: writing the case for support, identifying new donors, writing grant applications, meeting with donor prospects and reporting to donors on coalition progress. Consider a simple chart with timelines and lead coalition partners and philanthropy goals to hold those involved accountable for raising the money needed to power the coalition.

By definition, coalitions seeking collective impact have many moving parts—coalition partners, program activities, strategy development, data management, leadership development and community outreach—all of which have to be managed, and managed well, for the coalition to make progress. Management, also called backbone support, can look different from coalition to coalition, whether it is a full- or part-time coordinator, a data manager, a fund raiser, a consultant or a facilitator. What looks the same is the need for funding to ensure the coalition can be well-managed, so that it operates efficiently and effectively to achieve the community outcome it seeks.

Essential Resources:

- ✓ Funder's Guide for Structuring Collective Impact Initiatives, Olive Grove
- ✓ How Can Grantmakers Facilitate Connections and Collaboration?, Grantmakers for Effective Organizations
- ✓ City of Promise and Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition Charters (Partner Contribution Requirement)
- ✓ Six Steps to Successful Fundraising, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ Coalition Resource Development Plan, CoalitionsWork
- ✓ A Guide to Writing your Case for Support, Ter Molens Watkins & Brandt, LLC
- ✓ Build your Case for Support, Strengthening Nonprofits
- ✓ How to Write a Case for Support for Your Nonprofit, The FundraisingAuthority
- ✓ Getting to Collective Impact: How Funders Can Contribute Over the Life Course of the Work, The Foundation Review

Local Spotlight:

- ✓ The Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC) cobbled together a variety of funding sources to build the coalition. Its first part-time coalition coordinator was funded by one of the coalition partners through a federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant. The coalition also garnered individual major donor support initially for a planning grant, and then obtained a two-year funding commitment from the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation (CACF) to support the incubation of a Coalition Services Program (CSP) aimed at improving coordination of and access to mental health services for community members with low or moderate community health needs who were falling through the cracks. In addition, as part of the coalition charter, coalition partners were encouraged to pay dues to the coalition to support coalition operations and infrastructure.

LESSONS LEARNED

Lesson Learned:

- ✓ Coalition partners may feel in conflict if there is perceived or actual competition for funding opportunities between the coalition and its partners. It is important that trust and open dialogue are key parts of any coalition culture, particularly when it comes to navigating funding issues. Without it, and even with it, it can be a difficult issue to debate. To achieve consensus, it may be helpful to have an independent facilitator for the discussion, to seek input on the issue from coalition partners via survey or individual interviews in advance of a group discussion or decision, and to establish fundraising ground rules while still forming the coalition, perhaps even as part of the coalition charter or memo of understanding between the coalition partners.