

5 conditions, 6 backbone functions & 4 pillars of quality collective impact

This is a training tool designed to help collective impact leaders (emerging and re-trenching) to organize or re-organize collective impact initiatives

5 conditions

Common Agenda

All partners have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it

Shared Measurement

Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all partners ensures efforts remain aligned and accountable

Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Partner activities are differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan

Advancing policy: As the effort matures, the backbone often plays a role supporting policy that impacts large systems and institutions in support of the overall goal.

Continuous Communication

Communication is open and consistent across the many players to build trust and appreciate common motivation

Backbone Support

Creating and managing collective impact requires a dedicated staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate partner efforts

6 backbone functions

Guide vision & strategy: The backbone works w/ the Steering Committee (SC) to provide data, prioritize opportunities for action and adapt to changing context. It is critical that the backbone ensures that the SC and working groups keep equity at the center of strategies.

Establish shared measurement practices: The backbone manages data collection among partners and supports the use of data for learning and evaluation of the effort.

Support aligned activities: The backbone facilitates dialogue between partners, provides support for Steering Committee and working group meetings, and helps to coordinate actions across the effort.

Mobilize resources: The backbone plays a key role in developing resources for the effort's sustainability, including fundraising for the backbone, recruiting volunteers and non-monetary support, and possibly coordinating fundraising by members of the collective.

Cultivate community engagement and ownership: The backbone cultivates broad relationships throughout the community, building an inclusive effort that authentically engages and fosters ownership.

4 pillars of quality

Build continuous improvement culture

In any field, data can be intimidating. To counter pitfalls, embrace data to generate ongoing improvement. At the heart of this process lie the "Three I's": identify, interpret, and improve.

Eliminate disparities

Aggregated data masks disparities. Disaggregate data to understand what services best meet needs, and to make informed decisions.

Leverage existing assets

"Project-itis" tempts us to import new programs instead of improving the current system. Using existing assets, but applying a new focus, is essential to demonstrating that collectivism represents a new way of doing business, not an excuse to create new programs.

Engage local expertise and community voice

Effective data analysis is a powerful decision-making tool. Local expertise adds context to better understand data. Engage a broad cross-section of partners to shape the vision and use data to change the ways we "serve."

SOURCES: UMA assembled this summary using the Collective Impact Forum "Backbone Starter Guide" and the Stanford Social Innovation Review "Defining Quality Collective Impact" by Jeff Edmondson & Ben Hecht

Backbone Brainstorm & Planning Worksheet

For Emerging or Retrenching Collective Impact Initiatives

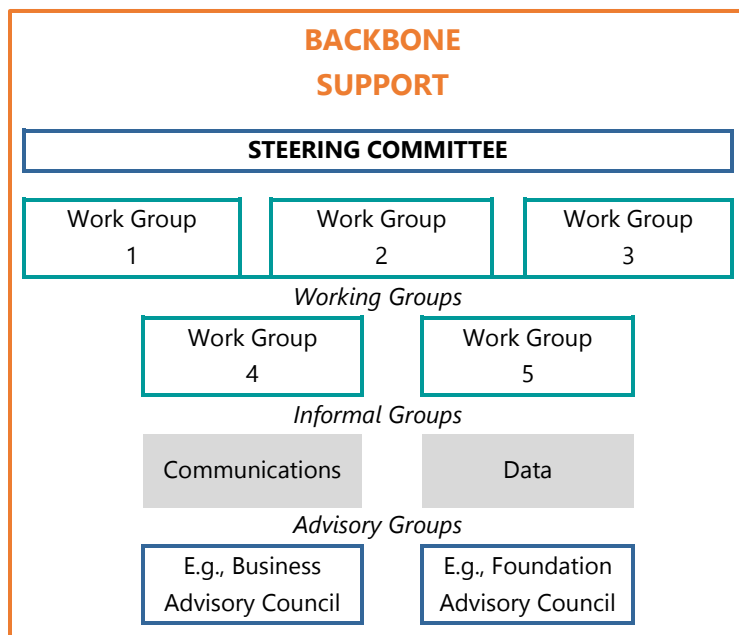
5 conditions

☛ Reflect on your vision or initiative. Use the boxes below to jot notes about organizing or re-organizing your effort.

Common Agenda, Vision or Strategy	
Shared Measurement	
Mutually Reinforcing Activities	
Continuous Communication	
Backbone Support	

Organizing Structure

☛ Reflect on your collective impact vision or initiative. Use the box at right to jot notes about organizing or re-organizing your effort.



Who Is Engaged? Who Should Be Engaged?

Backbone?

Steering Committee?

Work Groups?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Advisory Groups?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Key Function Groups?

- 1.
- 2.