



REIMAGINING SOCIAL CHANGE

# Readiness Assessment and Community Engagement in Collective Impact

PREPARED FOR SHEATUFIM / HAMIGRASH | SEPT 21, 2016

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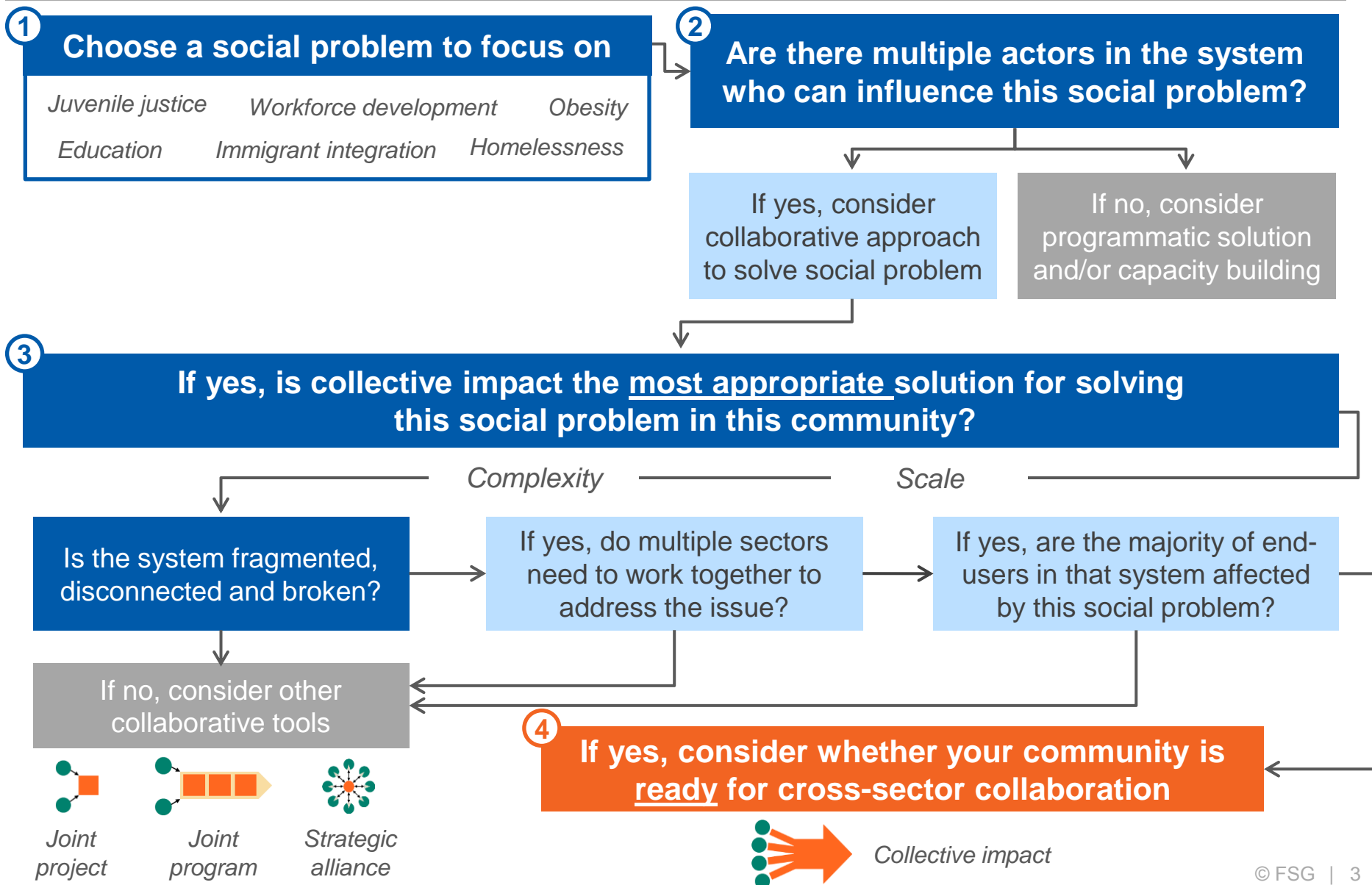
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# How can you know if Collective Impact is the right approach for you?



# Successfully launching a Collective Impact initiative has a number of prerequisites



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# Let's agree to working definitions of some community engagement terminology and concepts

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- **Community** – a group of people that share a common geography, interest, activity, sense of identity, pursuit or other aspect that constitutes a social sense of cohesion.
- **Stakeholder** – an individual with influence over or interest in a social issue or event. This interest is often due to a perceived potential impact of the issue on something that the individual values.
- **Broad-based community engagement** – Efforts to reach a large and varied set of stakeholders within a community, including the general public rather than a targeted group of experts, leaders, or special interest groups
- **Targeted engagement** – effort to engage a particular group, often one that is under-represented or otherwise not engaging in an initiative without such a specialized effort.

# Here are some reasons why it is important to engage the community in collective impact efforts

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## 1 Understand pressing systemic community challenges

- Understanding the issues
- Clarify questions that arise about the challenge

## 2 Co-create solutions

- Spark innovative problem-solving rooted in “lived experience” of the community
- Identify and spread unique solutions that exist within the community

## 3 Verify the direction

- Get feedback on specific strategies and indicators from selected communities, particularly those who will be the end users of new programs or activities

## 4 Expand the reach of strategies

- Expand the reach of adoption of initiative strategies
- Evoke and sustain the will to take aligned action

## 5 Build community capacity to lead and sustain change

- Train stakeholders in skills of effective collaboration and strategy execution
- Share resources and learning across the community to help scale best practices

# Community engagement efforts vary along a spectrum from informing to true power sharing

|                  | Inform  | Consult  | Involve  | Collaborate  | Co-Lead  |
|------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Objective</b> | To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, or solutions | To gather feedback from targeted stakeholders on the project's goals, processes, shared metrics, or strategies for change  | To work directly with stakeholders continuously to ensure that concerns are consistently understood and considered   | To partner with stakeholders in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and priorities       | To place final decision making in the hands of stakeholders so that they drive decisions and implementation of the work                                  |
| <b>Examples</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email newsletters</li> <li>Send press releases announcing progress milestones</li> </ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask for input on initiative strategies</li> <li>Invite to small group or individual presentations about initiative</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite to join Working Groups or an advisory body for the initiative</li> <li>Partner in policy advocacy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint to a leadership role on a Working Group to help shape strategies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite to join the Steering Committee and/or similar body with decision making power in the initiative</li> </ul> |

***Collaboratives should decide the appropriate level of engagement with community based on their initiative's community engagement goals***

Source: Adapted from Tamarack Institute: Community Engagement Continuum



# Collective impact initiatives often face three kinds of challenges to community engagement efforts

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Understanding Who to Engage and How    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Who</b> in the community is <b>particularly important to engage</b>?</li><li>• How can we <b>co-create solutions with stakeholders impacted by the target issue</b> as part of the Collective Impact process?</li><li>• How do we <b>meaningfully engage new stakeholders</b> in and on-going initiative?</li></ul>       |
| Balancing Efficiency and Effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do we <b>balance speed of work</b> with <b>level of engagement</b> of stakeholders?</li><li>• When are the <b>right times to invest in broad based community engagement</b> and buy-in?</li><li>• How can we ensure that community engagement is productive for the initiative? How do we measure its success?</li></ul> |
| Overcoming Obstructive Norms           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do we get <b>historically isolated or combative sectors speaking</b> to each other?</li><li>• How do we <b>overcome well entrenched, but misguided (inconsistent with data) community perceptions</b> that hinder adaptive change?</li></ul>   |

# Example: Leaders in Kent County, MI engaged the community to understand disparities in education

## Community Context

- Kent County government leaders decided to **improve cradle to career education results** through collective impact
- While overall education outcomes were strong, the **racial disparities were significant**
- The Steering Committee drafted a Common Agenda, but given past unsuccessful collaborations they wanted to **engage the public early to build trust**

## Engagement Approach

**Hosted a community forum:** Initiative leaders worked hard to make sure the right people were present at the Forum and that it was structured so that attendees could speak openly about education and disparity

- Attendance: 200 participants
- Sectors included: Non-profits, government, schools, business, community members
- Representation: Across race, gender, and geography

## Outcomes of Engagement

- “This Forum was the first time that I’ve heard **leadership come forward and frankly acknowledge the equity issues in education.** It was refreshing.”
- “**We learned that words matter-** we had to find clear ways to describe the goals so that the community could get behind them.”
- The meeting validated the need to engage the community early on **to (re)build trust with those who had been burned past coalitions.**

# In your own CI initiative, consider if you engaging all sectors and how you address power dynamics

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| Nonprofit / Service Providers | Philanthropy | Business | Government | Community Members | Other |
|-------------------------------|--------------|----------|------------|-------------------|-------|
|                               |              |          |            |                   |       |

# Discussion on community engagement

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- Is any person or organization **missing** from this list?
- How could we authentically engage with this missing voice? Do we have the right talent within our team? Should we consider cultural brokers?
- Have we disaggregated the data to really understand the nuances of the problem we are trying to solve? What about bias in our data sources?
- Have we examined contextual factors such as history, power dynamics, etc. to

**“The success of an intervention depends on the interior condition of the intervener.”**

- Bill O'Brien, CEO of Hanover Insurance, quoted by Otto Scharmer, Senior Lecturer at MIT

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