The Promise of Collective Impact

UNCW FALL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION LECTURE

OCTOBER 2, 2019
About me, and why I’m excited to be here
About FSG

• Nonprofit consulting firm specializing in strategy, evaluation and research with offices in Boston, Seattle, San Francisco, DC, Geneva, and Mumbai

• Partner with foundations, corporations, nonprofits, and governments to develop more effective solutions to the world’s most challenging issues

• Recognized thought leader in social impact, philanthropy and corporate social responsibility

• Staff of 150 full-time professionals with passion and experience to solve social problems

• Advancing collective impact via publications, conferences, speaking engagements, client projects
FSG facilitates effective cross-sector collaboration in three mutually reinforcing ways

HANDS ON SUPPORT

- Juvenile justice in NY State
- Substance abuse on Staten Island
- Cradle to career in King County
- Health in the Rio Grande Valley
- Early childhood in Houston

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

LEARNING COMMUNITY

www.collectiveimpactforum.org

The Collective Impact Forum is a field-wide partnership between FSG and the Aspen Institute to help curate and disseminate knowledge, tools, and best practices that support effective collective impact
FSG has used collective impact to address a variety of complex challenges in different geographies:

- Healthy childhood in Washington state
- Diabetes prevention in Minnesota
- Economic development in Northeast Ohio
- Juvenile justice in New York State
- Teen substance abuse on Staten Island, NY
- Early childhood education in Alexandria, VA
- Children’s asthma in Dallas, TX
- Early childhood education in Houston, TX
- Grade-level reading in Raleigh, NC
- Human slavery in Brazil
- Social mobility in Israel
- Child protection in Cambodia
- Community development in Dallas, TX
- Healthcare and college success in the Rio Grande Valley, TX
- Childhood obesity in Dallas, TX
- Pre-term birth in Fresno, CA
- Cradle to career education in Seattle, WA
- Juvenile justice in Omaha, NE
- Prevention and community well-being in Nebraska
- Cradle to career in Kent Co, MI
- Early childhood education in Kent Co, MI
- Healthy childhood in Washington state
Introduction to Collective Impact
Collective impact intro video

Since the 2011 Stanford Social Innovation Review article introduced the concept, collective impact has been widely adopted as an effective form of cross-sector collaboration to address complex social and environmental challenges. Though collective impact has proven to be a powerful approach in tackling a wide range of issues in communities all over the world, many practitioners are searching for the tools they need to be successful in this work.

The thought leadership and resources below...
There are several types of problems

**Simple**
- Cooking a meal

**Complicated**
- Distributing food

**Complex**
- Eliminating food insecurity

The social sector typically treats problems as simple or complicated.
Traditional approaches are not solving our most complex social problems

- Funders select **individual grantees**
- Organizations **work separately** and **compete**
- Corporate and government sectors are often **disconnected** from foundations and nonprofits
- **Evaluation** attempts to **isolate** a particular organization’s impact
- Large scale change is assumed to depend on **scaling organizations**

Source: FSG SSIR Collective Impact Article, Winter 2011; FSG Interviews; FSG Interviews & Analysis
Imagine a different approach – multiple players working together to solve complex issues

Collective Impact

- Understand that social problems – and their solutions – arise from interaction of many organizations within larger system
- Cross-sector alignment with government, nonprofit, philanthropic and corporate sectors as partners
- Organizations actively coordinating their action and sharing lessons learned
- All working toward the same goal and measuring the same things

Source: FSG SSIR Collective Impact Article, Winter 2011; FSG Interviews; FSG Interviews & Analysis
Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem at scale.
Achieving large-scale change through collective impact involves five key elements

1. **Common agenda**
   - Common understanding of the problem
   - Shared goal and framework for change

2. **Shared measurement system**
   - Collecting data and measuring results
   - Focus on performance management
   - Shared accountability

3. **Mutually reinforcing activities**
   - Differentiated approaches
   - Coordination through joint plan of action

4. **Continuous communication**
   - Consistent and open communication
   - Focus on building trust

5. **Backbone support**
   - Dedicated staff
   - Resources and skills to convene and coordinate participating organizations
Pulse check

• Talk to someone beside you and **discuss these questions** for a few minutes:

  What is one thing that **excites** you about the concept of “collective impact”? What is one thing that **puzzles** you about collective impact?

• Raise your hand if you want to **share something interesting** from your conversation
How Collective Impact Is Distinct from Other Forms of Collaboration
Catalyzing sector-wide change requires sustained dedication to cross-sector coordination and alignment

Multi-stakeholder partnership approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Joint Project</th>
<th>Joint Program</th>
<th>Strategic Alliance</th>
<th>Collective Impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address a defined problem</td>
<td>Short-term, one-time collaborative effort among a small set of partners, often to develop or pilot an innovative product or approach</td>
<td>Collaboration among small set of partners to implement a program to address a specific aspect of a social problem</td>
<td>Platform for ongoing collaboration around one or more related social issues, aligning partners (typically more than 5 organizations) in support of a common goal and joint investments</td>
<td>Initiative based on long-term commitments to a common agenda by the group of cross-sector actors needed to realize system-wide change of a social problem</td>
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Collective impact is distinct from other forms of collaboration in several ways (1 of 2)

• **Goal and purpose of the collaboration**
  
  – Collective impact work is designed around an agreed upon *population level outcome*, **not just a common topic or program**
  
  – The partnership pursues a *range of strategies* to move the needle on the goal
  
  – Focus is on both *program improvement and systems change* (e.g., policy change, shifting resource flows, changing mental models)
  
  – Work is focused on a *complex problem*, not simple or complicated

• **Scale of the partnership**
  
  – Collective impact initiatives typically have **dozens or more organizations and individuals** engaged
  
  – Partners represent a variety of points of view, types of work, and sectors – not just the “usual suspects”
Collective impact is distinct from other forms of collaboration in several ways (2 of 2)

- **Formality of structure**
  - Collective impact initiatives have a backbone and formal structure that ensures work moves forward and that different bodies of work are aligned

- **Engagement of community**
  - The engagement and contributions of members of community and people with lived experience is central to collective impact work, and is not always the case in other forms of partnership

- **Use of data**
  - Using data to learn, improve, and hold each other accountable for progress, is a core element of collective impact and is not often present in other forms of partnership
At this point, what questions do you have about collective impact?
Collective Impact in Practice: Getting to Transformative Results
Collective Impact Practitioner Insights:
Chekemma Fulmore-Townsend, Project U-Turn

Practitioner Insights: Project U-Turn

POSTED 5 YEARS AGO AT 6:42 PM
Collective Impact Forum

Chekemma J. Fulmore-Townsend shares about Philadelphia Youth Network’s collective impact initiatives, including the initiative Project U-Turn, the impact they have had so far, and some of their key learnings.
These principles of practice are the “how” of collective impact

**Collective Impact Principles of Practice**

- Design and implement the initiative with a priority placed on **equity**.

- Include **community members** in the collaborative.

- Recruit and co-create with **cross-sector** partners.

- Use data to continuously **learn, adapt, and improve**.

- Cultivate leaders with unique **system leadership** skills.

- Focus on program and **system strategies**.

- Build a culture that fosters **relationships, trust, and respect** across participants.

- Customize for **local context**.
Collective impact requires several mindset shifts

- Technical solutions to problems
- Adaptive solutions to problems
- Focus on evidence
- Focus on evidence and relationships
- Content Expertise
- Content and context expertise
- Silver bullet
- Silver buckshot
- Credit hoarded
- Credit as shared currency

Collective impact has been successfully applied to many issue areas

**Education**
- Ready by 21
- Project U-Turn
- CCER
- Strive Together

**Health**
- Gain
- Roll Back Malaria Partnership
- Shape Up Somerville: Live Well Colorado

**Environment**
- Elizabeth River Project
- RE AMP

**Youth Development**
- Communities that Care
- New York State DCJS

**Economic Development**
- MARS
- Memphis ED

**Community Development**
- Calgary Homeless Foundation
- Vibrant Communities Canada
- Magnolia Place

Source: FSG research and analysis
When Collective Impact Has an Impact: Findings from the 2018 Collective Impact Research Study
Study Sample

Study Sites

- Colorado (2)
- Connecticut (2)
- Kentucky (1)
- Michigan (1)
- Nebraska (1)
- New Brunswick, Canada (1)
- New Mexico (1)
- Ohio (1)
- Ontario, Canada (1)
- Pennsylvania (1)
- Saskatchewan, Canada (1)
- Vermont (1)

Site Visit Sites

- California (2)
- Colorado (1)
- Connecticut (1)
- Massachusetts (1)
- Tennessee (1)
- Virginia (1)
- Wisconsin (1)

Equity Deep-Dive Sites

- Alaska (1)
- California (1)
- Texas (1)

Legend:
- Study sites
- Site visit sites
- Equity deep-dive sites
Study Highlights

Collective Impact
CONDITION

EARLY
Changes

SYSTEMS
Changes

POPULATION
Changes
For all 8 site visit sites, collective impact **undoubtedly contributed** to the desired population change.
Study Highlights

For all 8 site visit sites, collective impact **undoubtedly contributed** to the desired population change.

Systems changes sites deemed critical to achieve population change among the 8 site visit sites included:

- New or expanded **programs/services or practice improvements** (7 sites)
- Improvements resulting from **policy change** (5)
- Collectively **leveraging resources** (5)
In 2002, Franklin County had very high rates of youth substance abuse.

Communities That Care (CTC) Coalition started as a community-wide effort in 2002 to address alcohol, tobacco and other drug use among youth.

CTC engages multiple agencies to address risk and protective factors in multiple environments

All these organizations and groups across sectors get involved to implement programs, policies, practices from a collectively agreed upon plan.

Source: www.communitiesthatcarecoalition.org; FSG Interviews and Analysis
CTC’s success is driven by a collective impact structure that is both rigorous and flexible.

Backbones coordinate CTC's work, conduct bi-annual meetings.

Cross-sector members assist in decision-making, governing, meet monthly.

Workgroups implement the work of CTC, meet monthly.

Source: FSG Interview with Kat Allen
A network of independent but coordinated efforts share many common goals in the region

Source: Communities that Care Coalition
Results: reduction of teen use of alcohol, marijuana, cigarettes, and prescription drug use

Source: Communities that Care Coalition
Large group discussion

• How do you see these collective impact concepts applying to your work?

• What aspects of collective impact are consistent with what you are currently doing in your role?

• What aspects of collective impact represent a potential new area to explore with your role?

• What additional questions do you have about collective impact?
Assessing Readiness for Collective Impact
Launching a collective impact initiative has several prerequisites

Collective impact is a specific type of collaboration, and makes sense if...

...the magnitude of the population affected and the nature of system gaps demand a substantial investment in collaboration structures.

- Importance of bringing a cross-sector approach (e.g., public, private, nonprofit)
- Requires addressing elements of a “broken” system (e.g., silos, inequities in the system)
- Other collaborative tools are necessary but not sufficient (e.g., strategic alliance between several nonprofits)

...the four criteria for collective impact readiness are in place

- **Urgency for Change**: Critical, complex problem in the community where there is frustration with existing approaches
- **Available Resources**: Committed, potential funding for the collaboration process
- **History of Collaboration**: Presence of existing collaborative efforts and a foundation of trust
- **Leadership**: Champions are respected and have the ability to engage cross-sector leaders

*Take a few minutes to complete the reflection worksheet, and then we’ll discuss*
As you all go back to your day jobs, remember there are several pitfalls in collective impact to avoid

- Rushing through the common agenda development process
- Not allowing disparate views at the table
- Not celebrating quick wins along the way
- Self-declaring as a backbone and forgetting to identify existing opportunities for alignment
- Confusing program collaboration with systems change
- Not embracing that collective impact means doing things differently
Do you have other questions about collective impact?
Join the Growing Collective Impact Movement at www.collectiveimpactforum.org

The Collective Impact Forum communities features:

• **27,000 members** and growing
• **300+ resources** on collective impact, including articles, case studies, videos, and tools, **all free to access**
• **Community discussion forums** where members engage on topics and queries related to collective impact
• **News from the field**, including RFPs, job postings, workshops, conferences, and webinars

Forum Partners

Co-Catalysts
2020 Collective Impact Convening on May 6-8 in Minneapolis

- **Seventh annual convening** on collective impact
- **Opportunities for in-depth peer learning** with 800+ backbones, funders, and other practitioners
- **40+ interactive sessions** on equity, community engagement, data, narrative change, and more
- **Local site visits** to explore social change in action in the Twin Cities
- **Featured speakers** include Penumbra Theatre, Becky Margiotta (Billions Institute), Trabian Shorters (BMe Community), Tawanna Black (Center for Economic Inclusion), Trista Harris (FutureGood), Nausheena Hussain (Islamic Sisterhood for Empowerment), and Hamsi Warfa (Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development)

*Registration opens in early November 2019. Visit [www.collectiveimpactforum.org/events](http://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/events) to learn more.*
CAPE FEAR COLLECTIVE

For More Information About Collective Impact in New Hanover County:

Visit Our Website:
www.capefearcollective.org

Contact Us:
info@capefearcollective.org