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 160 full-time professionals with passion and experience to solve social problems

• Advancing collective impact via publications, conferences, speaking engagements, client projects
FSG works on collective impact in three mutually reinforcing ways

HANDS ON SUPPORT
- Juvenile justice in NY State
- Substance use on Staten Island
- Cradle to career in King County
- Health in the Rio Grande Valley
- Human trafficking in Brazil
- Sanitation in Uganda
- Childhood outcomes in Cambodia

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

LEARNING COMMUNITY

www.collectiveimpactforum.org

The Collective Impact Forum is a field-wide digital resource designed to help curate and disseminate knowledge, tools, and best practices that support effective collective impact.
Agenda

1. Collective impact refresher and research study findings

2. Panel Reflections

3. Table Activity
Agenda

1. Collective impact refresher and research study findings

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Collective Impact Overview
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

| Common Agenda          | • Common understanding of the problem  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>• Shared vision for change</th>
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| Shared Measurement     | • Collecting data and measuring results 
|                        | • Focus on performance management     
|                        | • Shared accountability               |
| Mutually Reinforcing Activities | • Differentiated approaches  
|                        | • Willingness to adapt individual activities  
|                        | • Coordination through joint plan of action |
| Continuous Communication | • Consistent and open communication  
|                        | • Focus on building trust              |
| Backbone Support        | • Dedicated staff                      
|                        | • Resources and skills to convene and coordinate participating organizations |

Source: Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work, 2012; FSG Interviews
Eight Principles of Practice Are the “How” of Collective Impact

1. Design and implement the initiative with a priority placed on equity
2. Include community members in the collaborative
3. Recruit and co-create with cross-sector partners
4. Use data to continuously learn, adapt, and improve
5. Cultivate leaders with unique system leadership skills
6. Focus on program and system strategies
7. Build a culture that fosters relationships, trust, and respect across participants
8. Customize for local context
Collective Impact Infrastructure: Structuring for Intentionality and Uncertainty

Ecosystem of Community Partners

strategic guidance and support

partner-driven action

Backbone Support
(single or set of organizations that collectively play backbone function)

Steering Committee

Common Agenda and Shared Metrics

* Adapted from Listening to the Stars: The Constellation Model of Collaborative Social Change, by Tonya Surman and Mark Surman, 2008.
Questions?
INTRODUCING THE STUDY
Role of The Collective Impact Forum and Funders

The Collective Impact Forum
The research study on collective impact was carried out by ORS Impact and Spark Policy. FSG, the Collective Impact Forum, and the Aspen Institute were members of an advisory committee, and did not exercise any rights or controls over the results of this study.

Study Funders

- THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION
- BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION
- HOUSTON ENDOWMENT
- ROBERT R. MCCORMICK FOUNDATION
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- W.K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION

ORS IMPACT
An independent fieldwide study was commissioned to help answer a few fundamental questions:

1. To what extent and under what conditions does the collective impact approach contribute to population level outcomes?
2. What systems changes have contributed to the population level outcomes being achieved?
3. What are the other positive or negative impacts, intended or unintended, on the community and system?
4. What evidence is there that the collective impact effort has contributed to these systems and population changes?
5. What evidence is there that the population changes would not have been achieved if the collective impact approach hadn’t been used?
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
TYPES OF CHANGES

Collective Impact
CONDITION

EARLY
Changes

SYSTEMS
Changes

POPULATION
Changes
EXPLORING THE STUDY FINDINGS
THE OUTCOMES OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT
Overall, 20 of the 25 sites showed evidence of population change. Population change occurred in a variety of focus areas including:

- Education (graduation rates)
- Health (obesity)
- Homelessness (veterans)
- Economic (jobs)
- Environmental (wetlands)
- Food (access to local food)
- Justice (youth and justice system)
Overall, 20 of the 25 sites showed evidence of **population change.**

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- Education (graduation rates)
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Barriers to population change include: shorter tenure, less strong implementation of the conditions (including Common Agenda), challenges measuring impacts, and other internal/external challenges.
For all 8 site visit sites, collective impact undoubtedly contributed to the desired population change.
For all 8 site visit sites, collective impact undoubtedly contributed to the desired population change.

There were some differences across initiatives with different types of contribution.

3 Sites with unique contribution stories

5 Sites with contribution stories that were necessary but not unique
KEY FINDINGS
UNDERSTANDING CONTRIBUTION & OUTCOMES OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Three site visit sites had compelling evidence that the collective impact approach had a strong contribution to population changes, with low plausibility of an alternative explanation for how that change could have otherwise occurred.

In each case, the study had strong evidence:

• That population level change had occurred

• Linking the collective impact conditions and strategies to the change

• That there was no plausible alternative way to explain how the population level change happened
KEY FINDINGS

UNDERSTANDING CONTRIBUTION & OUTCOMES OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Five site visit sites’ data provided compelling evidence that collective impact had been a necessary element of the population change story, but that collective impact alone was insufficient for explaining the population change achieved.

These five sites had strong evidence:
- That population level change had occurred
- Linking the collective impact conditions and strategies to the change

BUT unlike the other three sites:
- Drivers external to the initiatives made the unique contribution of collective impact less clear

The collective impact initiatives contributed and were necessary, but other significant factors also contributed population level change.
Questions?
Study sites generally evidenced stronger implementation of the Backbone Support and Common Agenda conditions and emerging or no implementation of the Shared Measurement and Continuous Communication conditions.
Sites with more mature implementation of the collective impact conditions tend to show differences in strategies and outcomes.

When sites had **mature implementation** of the following:

- **BACKBONE SUPPORT**
  - Had strong leadership structures for governance
  - Supported more diverse, complex, in-depth and multi-sector programs and services versus single programs
  - Achieved communications-related outcomes, like increased visibility

- **COMMON AGENDA**
  - Influenced policy change
  - Achieved practice improvements
  - Demonstrated multi-system changes

- **MUTUALLY REINFORCING ACTIVITIES**
  - Had strong cross-sector engagement
  - Had strong leadership
Shared measurement

• Sites were challenged by data availability, types of indicators examined, and culture of data use
• When present, important resource for facilitating and measuring change

Communication challenges center around finding effective opportunities for internal and external engagement and feedback
Definition of Equity in this Study

Equity is fairness achieved through systematically assessing disparities in opportunities and outcomes caused by structures and systems and by addressing these disparities through meaningful inclusion and representation of affected communities and individuals, targeted actions, and changes in institutional structures and systems to remove barriers and increase pathways to success.
When looking at how initiatives approach equity in their work, about a third had equity capacity/intent and focused actions, but many struggled with meaningful inclusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity to engage in equity action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 1/3 of sites (8) have strong equity capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 1/3 of sites have emerging equity capacity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equity-focused actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Often seen in a mix of data and communications strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Few sites focused on root causes of inequities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<th>Representation and meaningful inclusion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Two sites with strong grassroots organizing approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Most sites struggled with this</td>
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</table>
Initiatives with strong and emerging equity focus showed promise in their equity outcomes; those with no focus typically did not see results that advanced equity, with a few exceptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sites</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 sites</td>
<td>Darker color indicates stronger evidence of commitment; blank indicates no evidence</td>
<td>Outcomes: darker color indicates clear evidence of equity impact through system and population change; lighter color indicates some evidence; blank represents no evidence</td>
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### Emerging equity intent/action

That has yet to lead to deep equity impact change

### Key Findings

**Equity in the Context of Collective Impact**

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<td>10 sites</td>
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**EQUITY IN THE CONTEXT OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT**

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<td>4 sites</td>
<td>Equity outcomes in absence of equity approach and intent</td>
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IMPLICATIONS
Collective Impact is a long-term proposition; take the time to lay a strong foundation

Recognize that it is worth the time upfront to define the problem and target population clearly.

Don’t rush to get the five conditions in place, but rather invest thoughtfully in the two that are most foundational upfront: backbone and common agenda.

- **BACKBONE**: Credible, skilled, and ready who can built trust, convene the right people, and apply technical skills. A backbone who can support others to lead and build networks, rather than take over the role of leading change.

- **COMMON AGENDA**: A strong agenda developed using an inclusive, effective process—engaging many different types of stakeholders, from those affected by the problem to policymakers.
Equity goes beyond achieving a set of outcomes; it requires intent, shifting power, and meaningful inclusion.

- Equity is broader than simply targeting actions towards a specific group.
- Successful equity outcomes stem from capacity for equity work with the backbone and throughout the initiative partners.
- Strong equity sites are intentional about representation, inclusion, and empowerment.
Collective impact initiative’s take on different roles in driving change, so be open to different routes to making a difference

Collective impact initiatives who contribute to population level change can take on many different roles:

• Sometimes leading
• Sometimes supporting other work
• Sometimes leveraging key opportunities in the environment

Important to identify the role that is the right fit given the environment of the initiative
## IMPLICATIONS FOR FUNDERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Implications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laying a Foundation</td>
<td>• Clarify the target population&lt;br&gt;• Assess the potential of a specific initiative to influence that population&lt;br&gt;• Support credible backbone identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-Term Focus</td>
<td>• Support a strong foundation via general operating support, offsetting costs for participation, and supporting a strong planning process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iterative Nature</td>
<td>• Discuss systems change goals—why they were prioritized—and understand some will have indirect impacts on the ultimate goals&lt;br&gt;• Support data use and capacity—SMS, but also other types of data use and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancing Equity</td>
<td>• Help to define the problem to include equity&lt;br&gt;• Support increasing the initiative’s capacity and inclusion/representation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider the Role</td>
<td>• Be open to the many different roles the initiative can take on, not all of which are leading the change</td>
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STUDY TEAM

ORS Impact Team

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Consultant
Further Research

- **Equity & Collective Impact**: Deeper dive on “how to” implement collective impact focused on achieving equitable outcomes for vulnerable populations, with a focus on racial equity.

- **Use of Data in Collective Impact**: How CI practitioners are collecting and using data as a collaborative in order to advance their work – including a look at the type of data, how it is being collected and used, and how it leads to improving the effectiveness of individual organizations and the collective.

- **Applied Practice Briefs**: Deep dive on topics touched on in the original study for practitioners, and additional findings that were not squarely related to the original research questions but emerged in the data collection process.
Questions?
Generate an additional implication that you are taking away from the research study, or reflection on how this could impact your work. Take a few moments to write it down.

We will come back to this after the panel.
Agenda

1. Collective impact refresher and research study findings

2. Panel Reflections

3. Table Activity
Agenda

1. Collective impact refresher and research study findings

2. Panel Reflections

3. Table Activity
Generate an implication that you are taking away from today’s presentation or panel. Take a few moments to write it down on the paper in front of you.

1:2:4:All: Share your idea with another person; after you have both shared, come together as a table.

Large Group: A-has, themes, observations.
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)
What makes a strong backbone?

- One or more orgs with committed staff designated to perform backbone functions
- Well-functioning leadership structure established, responsible for governance & decision-making
- Backbone infrastructure coordinates & supports core initiative activities
- Backbone staff have appropriate skills & credibility to perform backbone functions

What makes a strong common agenda?

- Identifiable overarching goals & vision for initiative within clearly defined, bounded/actionable problem space
- Partners have common understanding of problem
- Partners have clearly articulated approach/set of high-level strategies to solve problem
- Partners have high level of buy-in to shared vision for change, agreed-upon goals & approaches
Changes in services and practices are the most common systems changes achieved across sites; formalized systems changes were also predominant in site visit sites.
CLOSER LOOK: SYSTEMS CHANGES

A variety of types of systems changes can advance study sites’ work over time.

1. INFORMAL
   a. Experiments or temporary strategies led by/primarily in one organization
   b. Experiments or temporary strategies undertaken by many organizations collaboratively

2. FORMAL
   a. Formal changes within a single organization
   b. Formal changes within a single organization that ripple across multiple organizations

3. FORMAL
   a. Multiple organizations making the same change
   b. Multiple organizations changing in unique, but aligned ways