TOOL | Assessing Readiness

Convening a collaborative community change effort can be challenging. The White House Council on Community Solutions evaluated 12 Collective Impact initiatives. Through this research, they determined a set of five questions which community partners need to consider to help evaluate their readiness to embrace Collective Impact as the framework that makes the most sense for what they are trying to achieve.

Tool Description:

These five questions can be used as a diagnostic tool for project leaders to identify areas where their work can be strengthened. It can also be used as an assessment tool with Boards and organizational partners to assess readiness to embrace Collective Impact as a framework. Experience suggests that if a group finds itself unable to say yes to at least 3 of these 5 questions, more groundwork may be needed to create shared readiness to embrace a full Collective Impact approach.

Step 1 – Invite people to complete the questionnaire on the next page individually. This can even be done electronically. (15min)

Step 2 – Tabulate and share the results of the responses. Use the responses as a starting point for more in-depth discussion and understanding.

Step 3 -- For further discussion you may want to look at the risk and rewards. To what degree will we benefit from the rewards or be challenged by risk.

Tool Debrief:

If you have consensus on fewer than three of the five questions, it is likely that you do not have the necessary support to undertake a full Collective Impact approach. However, the results can be useful in informing and focusing your community education and engagement efforts.

Source

White House Council on Community Solution's Community Collaboratives Toolbox.

Step #1 **Readiness for Collective Impact Tool**

Collective Impact Framing Questions	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Don't Know N/A
1. Do we aim to effect —**needle-change** (i.e., 10% or more) on a community-wide metric?						
2. Do we believe that **a long-term investment** (i.e., three to five-plus years) by stakeholders is necessary to achieve success?						
3. Do we believe that **cross-sector e**ngagement is essential for community-wide change?						
4. Are we committed to **using measurable data** to set the agenda and improve over time?						
5. Are we committed to having **community members as partners** and producers of impact?						
Step #3 Assessing the Risks and Rewards of Engaging in a Collective Impact Effort						
Reputational Impact – Will our organizational reputation be enhanced or damaged by our involvement in this partnership or if the partnership fails?						
Loss of Autonomy: Are we comfortable if working collaboratively means that there may be less organizational independence in areas of joint work?						
Conflict of Interest: Are we prepared for times when our organization may be pushed to settle for an uncomfortable compromise or be required to support a policy which it does not agree with?						
Drain on Resources: Are we comfortable with the fact that partnerships typically require a heavy front end investment (of time and human capital) in advance of any return?						
Implementation Challenges: Are we prepared to continue our involvement in the face of challenges (such as moving from planning to implementation)?						

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