TAMARACK
An Institute for Community Engagement

Game-Changer Objectives and Process Tool

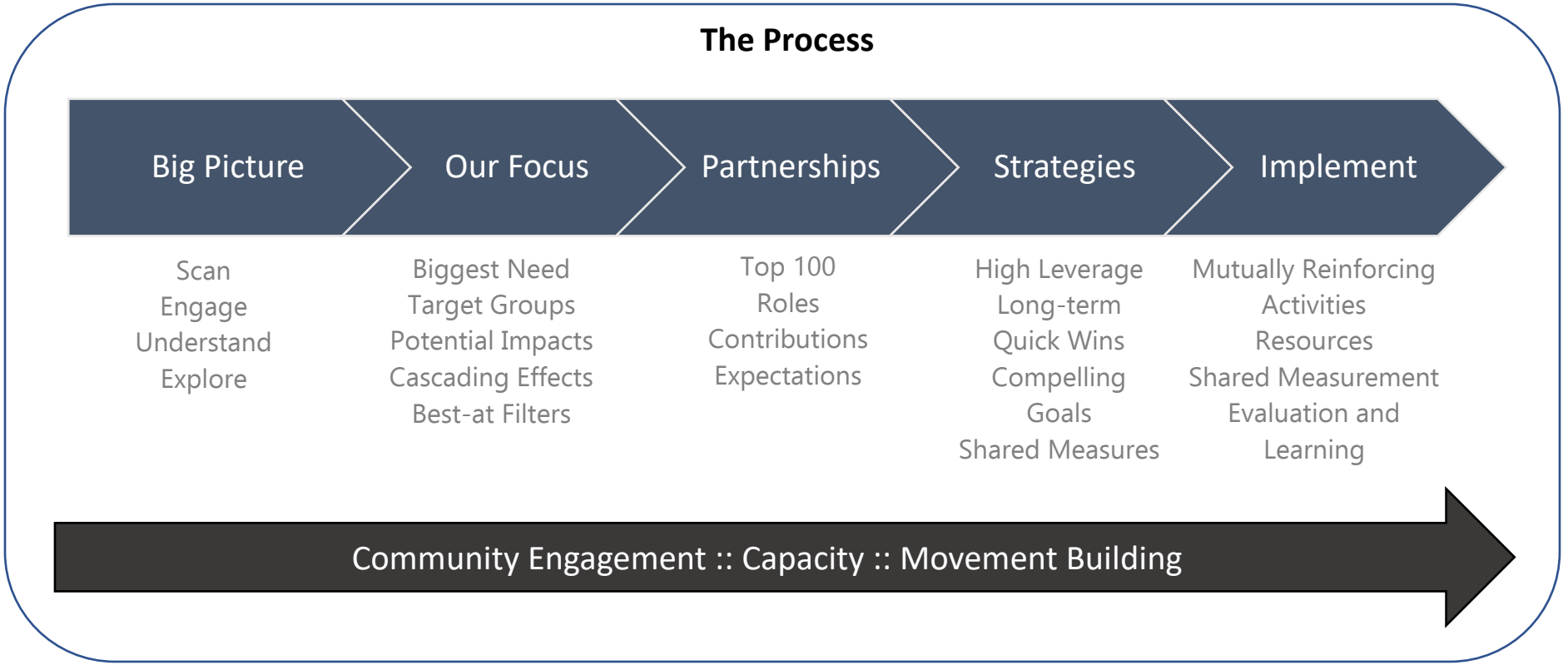
The purpose of this tool is to help poverty reduction collaboratives to identify poverty reduction strategies and in the process identify key elements of the evaluation work they will be required to undertake to assess progress and performance. This approach emerged during the evaluation work being done collaboratively with the Vibrant Communities team at Tamarack with our 50 member communities in 2016.

Its goals as a methodology include the following:

- ✓ Create focus on priorities and actions that matter the most in local poverty reduction efforts and that offer cascading (or high leverage) potential for benefits beyond the priority area's specific outcomes.
- ✓ Offer optimal synchronicity between evaluation goals and pressures with the group's capacity to deliver on intentions and the evaluation of performance.
- ✓ Enable Vibrant Communities Canada to report on poverty reduction strategies and evaluation results as a network of autonomous groups, each working with different capacities, contexts, governance, expertise, and community relationships.
- ✓ Deepen Tamarack's understanding of the challenges and barriers to effective strategy formulation and evaluation methods experienced by members, so that we can consider how to best support their work.
- ✓ Provide support and assistance in collecting and analyzing data in reliable and relevant ways.
- ✓ Advance understanding of Attribution and Contribution Analysis and how to deploy each in the work to reduce poverty
- ✓ Offer funders and policy makers helpful information and data that they can add to their thinking and funding programs and to assist with the identification of best practice, research needs, and the capacity challenges faced by funded groups to perform evaluations to funder expectations.
- ✓ Foster the understanding of poverty reduction as a long-term undertaking which calls for the reasonable ability of poverty reduction groups to identify and report on the progress they are making.
- ✓ Foster the ability of stakeholders to learn and adapt what they are doing based on evaluative work about their engagements in community and the results they are delivering and/or contributing to.

What is a Poverty Reduction Game-Changer?

A priority area or strategy that not only aims to deliver on its own specific goals or outcomes, but also elicits an array of other significant, positive outcomes that cascade both within and outside of its area of emphasis, and consequently profoundly impacts the course, character, or extent of poverty.



When considering what the biggest needs are for which target groups and the potential impacts your collaborative might achieve is when you begin thinking about Game-Changers and their cascading effects along with your group's sense of where you can best have impact (what can you be best at).

High leverage strategies are those that combine the know-how, influence, and resources of partners toward resolving the needs and problems you want to address collectively.

Shared Measures are those "participants feel are important to track to assess the overall progress of their work."*

Shared Measurement is "a set of techniques or processes that require diverse organizations to employ the same techniques for gathering, analyzing and reporting data."*

* See Mark Cabaj's paper, *Shared Measurement | The Why is Clear, The How Continues to Develop* - https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/hubfs/Resources/Publications/Shared%20Measurement%20Paper.pdf?t=1506016146523

GAME-CHANGER IDENTIFICATION

Step One: Big Picture
What problems/issues are people living in poverty experiencing in the community that require systems change, policy change, or improved or scaled up programmatic interventions? Sources to help include: environmental scans, community engagement findings, learnings from "clients," as well as your own knowledge and awareness of the problem/issues.

Step Two: Focus Areas		
Describe the Issue/Problem Area	**Who is the target population(s) and what knowledge do you have of their culture and ways of seeing the world?**	**Where can we have Maximum Impact (Game-Changers)?**

Step Three: Partnerships		
Who?	**What do we need them to bring to the table?**	**Why should they want to be there?**

Step Four: Strategy Development			
Goals/Outcomes	**How (The Strategy)**	**Time-Line**	**Key Measures (Attribution/Contribution)**

Step Five: Implementation			
Who does what…	**For Whom…**	**By When…**	**What are the Capacity Implications?**

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