



TOOL | Collaborative Governance Framework

The backbone infrastructure of a Collective Impact effort is focused on six core roles. These are: guide vision & strategy; support aligned activities; established shared measurements; build public will; advance policy; and, mobilize funding. An in-depth study of successful backbones by FSG, revealed that: their value is unmistakable; backbones shares strengths in guiding vision and strategy and supporting aligned activities; backbone organizations shift focus over time; need ongoing assistance with data; external communications, building public will, and advancing policy.

Tool Description:

The core elements of collaborative structure and governance include:

- Working through a host/convener
- Managing overlapping roles in the governance structure
- A leadership group
- A backbone organization with staff
- A fiscal/legal agent
- Executive or Coordinating Committee
- Working Groups and/or Action Teams

There is not one right answer for how best to establish a collaborative governance model. Instead, models are shaped by the following factors: local context; member attributes; magnitude and pace of change desired; the style and spirit of the leadership; the group's framework for change; the preferences of the convener or fiscal sponsor; and the flexibility and adaptability your initiative requires. A good design for collaborative governance is one in which:

- The group is making satisfactory progress;
- The effort and conflict required to make progress is reasonable;
- Members are achieving some personal or organizational objectives;
- Everyone involved is learning much more about the complex issue; and,

The overall process is self-re-fueling, leading to greater ambition and capacity for the initiative.

Collaborative Governance Principles

- **Transparency and Accountability:** Decisions take place in the public eye.
- **Equity and Inclusiveness:** All interests who are needed and willing contribute to solution.
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency:** Solutions are tested to make sure they make practical sense.
- **Responsiveness:** Public concerns are authentically addressed.
- **Forum Neutrality:** Different perspectives are welcome; the process itself has no bias.
- **Consensus-Based:** Decisions are made through consensus rather than majority rule.

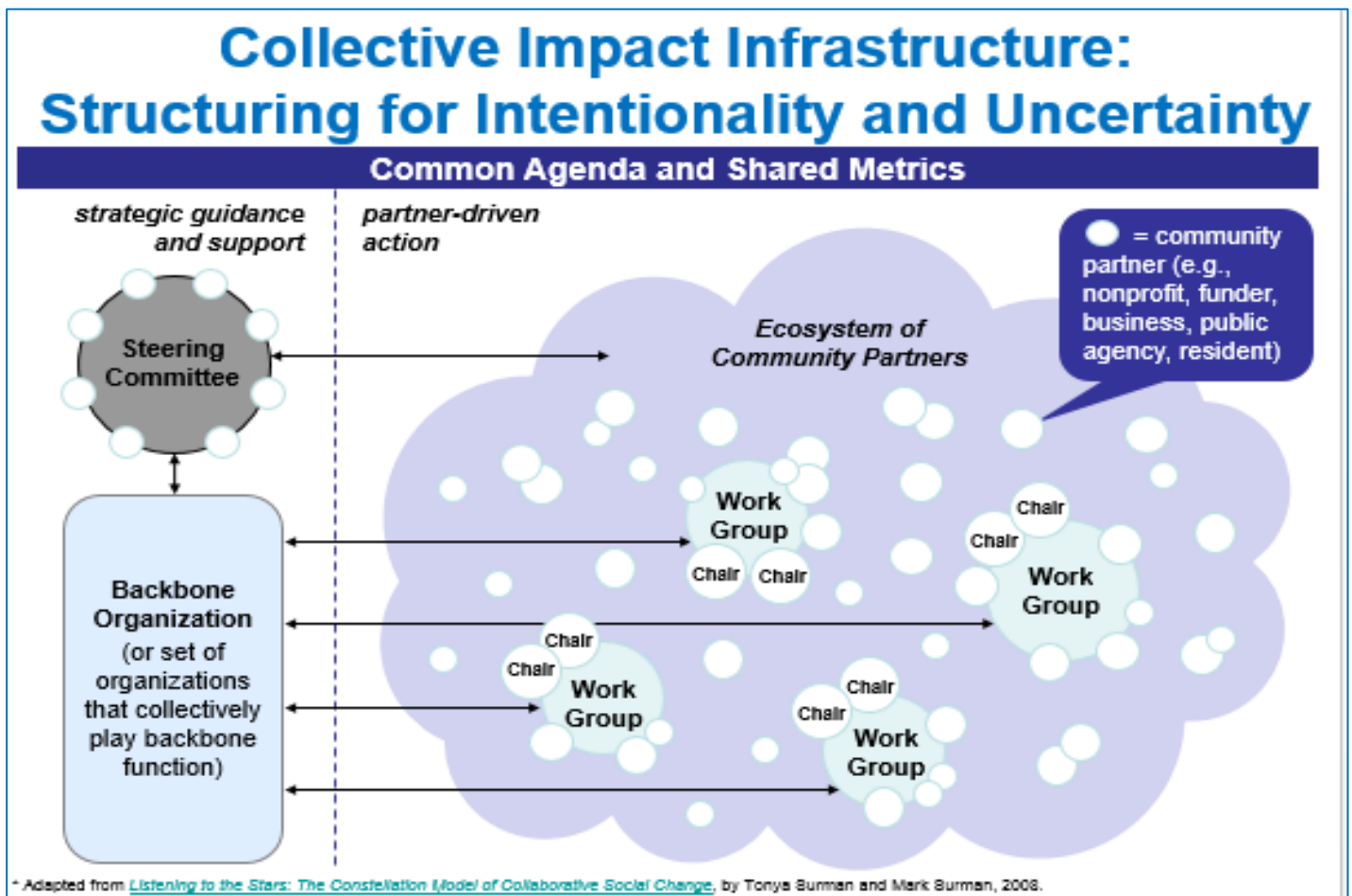
Step 1 — Use the information and framework in this exercise to guide a dialogue amongst your Collective Impact Initiative’s leadership.

Step 2 — Assess the strengths and gaps within the initiative’s governance structure and develop an action plan

Tool Debrief:

Debrief questions can include:

- What actions are needed based upon our reflection?
- Who will do what and by when?



Collaborative Governance Framework Worksheet

Role	Who Can Fill this Role?	Current Strengths/Weaknesses	Next Steps
Host & Convener			
Managing Overlapping Governance Roles			
A Leadership Group			
Backbone Infrastructure with staff			
Fiscal Agent			
Executive Committee			
Working Groups or Action Teams			
Citizen Engagement & Participation			