

Development,  
Delivery, and  
Assessment of  
Collective Impact at  
a Rural Liberal Arts  
College



ALLEGHENY  
COLLEGE

# Learning Outcomes

After attending this session, participants will be able to:

1. Have a greater understanding of a Collective Impact Model that was used at a specific institution.
2. Determine if a Collective Impact Model would be appropriate at their own institution.
3. Develop/Create a Logic Model plan to assess or improve collective impact at their own institution.

# Why Collective Impact?

**Definition:** “Collective impact is a network of community members, organizations, and institutions who advance equity by learning together, aligning, and integrating their actions to achieve population and systems level change.” - [source](#)

- To address grand challenges
  - Grand challenge: a problem that doesn't have a clear solution or has many solutions without a clear choice.
  - Examples of [projects](#) we have done.
- To shift beyond isolated impact
  - 1.4 million nonprofits try to invent independent solutions to major social problems, often working at odds with each other and exponentially increasing the perceived resources required to make meaningful progress. - [source](#)
- To implement a new framework that is:
  - **Inclusive:** [Five Impact Teams](#) with democratic leadership - Health & Wellbeing, Environment & Sustainability, Education & Social Development, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture
  - **Strategic:** channeling our collective energy, outcome oriented, orientation for new partnerships, long-term goals, [centered in equity](#)
  - **Organizing:** brings partners together, [provides structure](#) for new efforts, provides a “home” for projects, allows for project continuity
  - **Measurable:** outcome oriented, metrics developed and used, adaptive model
- To hold together various types of Community Engagement
  - CEL, CBR, Direct Service, Social Action Projects, Policy & Governance, etc.

# Collective Impact - How?

- **Process**
  - Allegheny College was founded in Meadville in 1815 and has been in continuous existence ever since.
- **Students as Colleagues**
  - CBLAs - Description, involvement, process
  - Demographics of Meadville - [source](#)
    - a small city of about 12,680 residents in the northern Appalachian Region
    - Race: White alone: 88.0%, Black or African American alone: 5.3%, American Indian or Alaska Native alone: 0.1%, Asian alone: 1.4%, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander alone: 0.0%, two or more races: 5.0%, Hispanic or Latino: 2.2%, White alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 87.1%
    - Median household income (in 2021 dollars), 2017-2021: \$40,694
    - Percent of people living in poverty: 19.6%
  - Demographics of Allegheny College - [source](#)
    - a small liberal arts college of about 1,200 students
    - Race of student body: White: 69.0%, Black: 7.9%, Alaska Native: 0.1%, Asian: 2.8%, two or more races: 4.1%, unknown: 2.3%
    - Percent of student body with no pell grant award: 72.8%
    - Percent of student body with no pell grant award: 27.2%
  - Community improvement efforts - things happening in Meadville
- **Creating 5 conditions** - Activity following explanation

# Collective Impact Framework: Five Conditions

**Common Agenda** | Collective impact requires all participants to have a shared vision for change, one that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.

**Shared Measurement Systems** | Developing a shared measurement system is essential to collective impact. Agreement on a common agenda is illusory without agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported.

**Mutually Reinforcing Activities** | Collective impact initiatives depend on a diverse group of stakeholders working together, not by requiring that all participants do the same thing, but by encouraging each participant to undertake the specific set of activities at which it excels in a way that supports and is coordinated with the actions of others.

**Continuous Communication** | Developing trust among nonprofits, corporations, and government agencies is a monumental challenge.

**Backbone Support Organizations** | Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization and staff with a very specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative.

# TAKE 5 - Think, Pair, Share

Think about what this may look like in your community...

- **Common Agenda**

*What is it you want to accomplish?*

- **Shared Measurement System**

*How can you measure your accomplishment effectively?*

- **Mutually Reinforcing Ideas**

*How can each involved party contribute to the same achievement?*

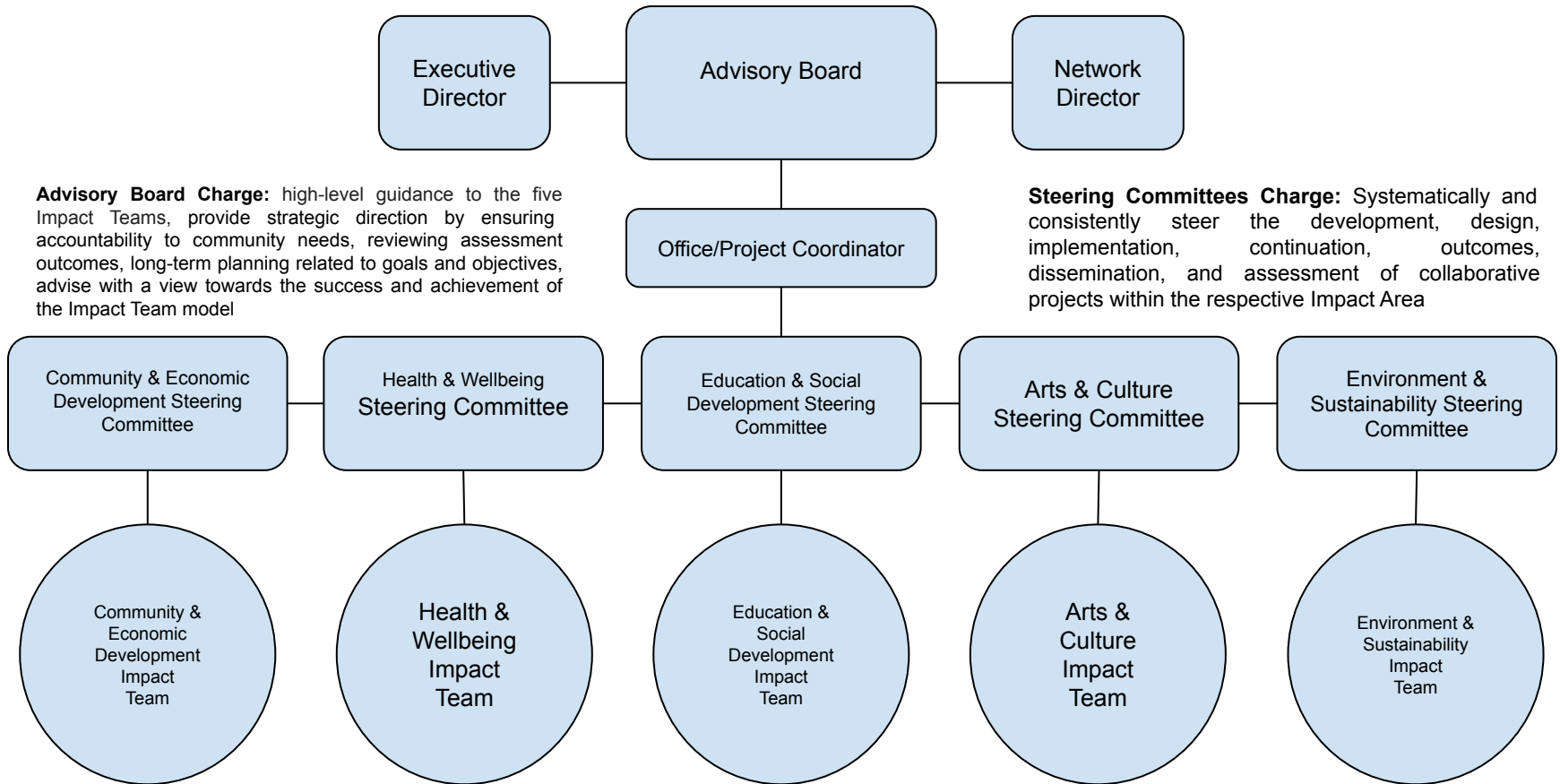
- **Continuous Communication**

*How can all parties stay up to date? How many meetings are ideal and realistic?*

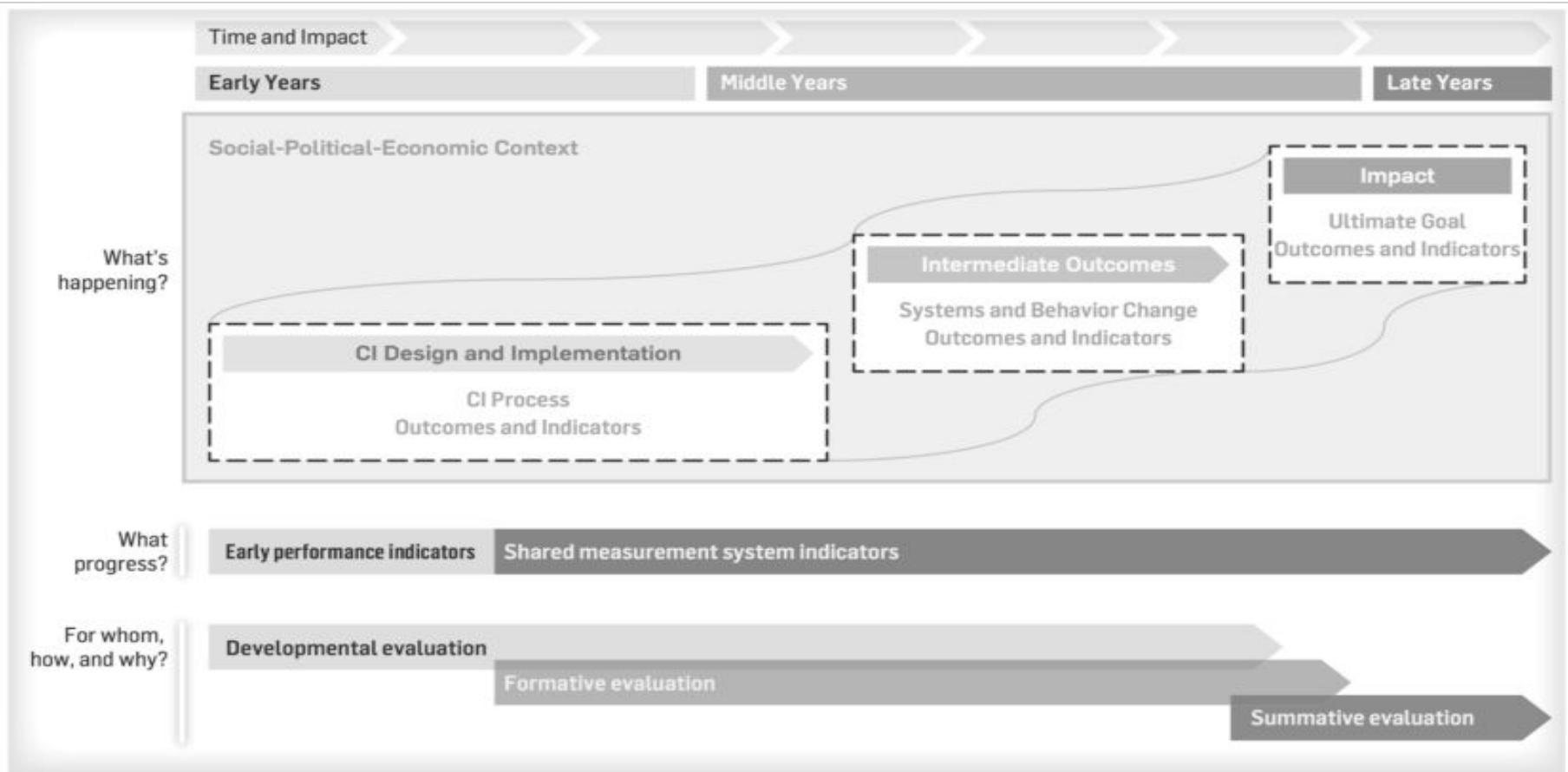
- **Backbone Support Organizations**

*What organizations could help lead the movement?*

# Impact Team Structure



# Assessing Collective Impact



Source: Collective Impact Forum and FSG



# Assessing Collective Impact

- Key Activities
- Outputs/Results
- Short-term/Intermediate Outcomes
- Long-term Outcomes
- Activity - work on your logic model

Resource: Allegheny College [Logic Model](#)

(Adapted from: “Team Effectiveness Diagnostic” created by London Leadership Academy, National Health Service)

# Challenges/Lessons Learned

- Challenges:
  - capacity of steering committee members - time to serve on impact teams.
  - Understanding roles and duties (of impact teams, of individuals, etc.)
  - How to develop a common agenda
  - Need for structure vs. Need for flexibility
  - Ensuring all projects are mutually beneficial
- Lessons Learned:
  - Better training on Collective Impact (time issue)
  - Support and Resources for Conveners/Steering Committees
    - Checklists (example), etc.
  - Stay in communication with community partners - project monitoring
  - Focus on outcomes is not obvious (challenge and need for assessment support)
  - Importance of telling the stories!

# Sources:

[https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective\\_impact#](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact#)

[https://ssir.org/articles/entry/centering\\_equity\\_in\\_collective\\_impact](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/centering_equity_in_collective_impact)

[https://ssir.org/articles/entry/evaluating\\_collective\\_impact](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/evaluating_collective_impact)

<https://collectiveimpactforum.org/what-is-collective-impact/>

<https://sites.allegHENY.edu/institutionalresearch/student-body-diversity/>

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/meadvillecitypennsylvania>

# Feedback/Remaining Questions

What are your thoughts?

Does Collective Impact make sense at your institution?

What questions do you have?

## Developing a Common Agenda

*The framework below provides a sample template structure for a Collective Impact Common Agenda, supported by a vision statement, specific outcomes, strategies to achieve those outcomes, and principles to guide the work (Source: Collective Impact Forum: Tools for Steering Committees)*

**Vision Statement: What is our “Passionate Purpose”?**

### Common Agenda Structure

Vision

**Outcomes: What outcomes would we want to see to know that our vision will become a reality?**

Outcome

Outcome

Outcome

Outcome

**Strategies: What strategies can our collaborative undertake that will lead to the desired outcomes?**

Strategies

**Principles: Which core values will guide our work as we take action on our strategies?**

Principle

Principle

Principle

Principle

## Sample Logic Model

**Project Title:**

**Problem the Project Will Address:**

<b>Inputs</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Short-term and Intermediate Outcomes</b>	<b>Long-term Outcomes</b>

**Assumptions**

**Contextual Factors**