Tools for Lead/Backbone Agency

Backbone Effectiveness: 27 Indicators

Guide Vision and Strategy	• Partners accurately describe the **common agenda** • Partners **publicly discuss / advocate for** common agenda goals • Partners' **individual work is increasingly aligned** with common agenda • Board members and key leaders increasingly **look to backbone** organization for initiative support, strategic guidance and leadership
Support Aligned Activities	• Partners **articulate their role** in the initiative • **Relevant stakeholders** are engaged in the initiative • Partners **communicate and coordinate** efforts regularly, with, and independently of, backbone • Partners report increasing levels of **trust** with one another • Partners increase s**cope / type of collaborative work** • Partners improve **quality** of their work • Partners improve **efficiency** of their work • Partners feel **supported and recognized** in their work
Establish Shared Measurement Practices	• Shared **data system** is in development • Partners **understand the value** of shared data • Partners have robust / shared **data capacity** • Partners **make decisions** based on data • Partners **utilize data** in a meaningful way
Build Public Will	• Community members are increasingly **aware** of the issue(s) • Community members express **support** for the initiative • Community members feel **empowered** to engage in the issue(s) • Community members increasingly **take action**
Advance Policy	• Target audience (e.g., influencers and policymakers) is increasingly **aware** of the initiative • Target audiences **advocate** for changes to the system aligned with initiative goals • Public **policy** is increasingly **aligned** with initiative goals
Mobilize Funding	• Funders are asking nonprofits to **align** to initiative goals • Funders are **redirecting funds** to support initiative goals • **New resources** from public and private sources are being contributed to partners and initiative

Lead/Backbone Organization - Misperceptions

The role and functions of lead/backbone organizations can often be misunderstood, particularly in the early stage of Collective Impact initiatives. The most common misperception are:

- The backbone organization sets the agenda for the group.

- The backbone organization drives the solutions.

- The backbone organization receives all the funding.

- The role of backbone can be self-appointed rather than selected by the community.

- The role of the backbone is not fundamentally different from "business as usual" in terms of staffing, time, and resources.