

Questions to Consider for Evaluations relating to the Collective Impact Process

Tip: Evaluation questions and type of evaluation depend on the stage of collective impact development.

Consider if:

- The collective impact initiative is exploring and in development (**developmental evaluation**) – questions might be centred around **what needs to happen?**

Characteristics of the collective at this stage might look like:

- Partners are assembling the core elements of the initiative, developing action plans, exploring strategies and activities
- There is a degree of uncertainty about what will work and how
- New questions, challenges, and opportunities are emerging

Questions for the evaluation might focus on the following inquiries:

- ➔ How are relationships developing among collective impact partners?
- ➔ What seems to be working well and where is there early progress?
- ➔ How should the collective impact initiative adapt in response to changing circumstances?

- The collective impact initiative is evolving and being refined (**formative evaluation**) – questions might be centred around **how well is it working?**

Characteristics of the collective at this stage might look like:

- Initiative's core elements are in place and partners are implementing agreed upon strategies and activities
- Outcomes are more predictable
- Initiatives context is increasingly well-known and understood

Questions for the evaluation might focus on the following inquiries:

- ➔ How can the initiative enhance what is working well and improve what is not?
- ➔ What effects or changes are beginning to show up in the targeted system?
- ➔ What factors are limiting progress and how can they be managed or addressed?



SAMPLE QUESTION MATRIX

Key Evaluation questions related specifically to the collective impact process ¹	Outcome of interest	Indicators Note: For each indicator, it would be recommended to identify a data source of how to obtain the information – perhaps by adding an adjacent column in the matrix. Sources of data would depend on what data sources already exist and community capacity to collect new data through surveys, focus groups, administrative records, or other methods.
What is the extent to which the process and taking a collaborative approach led to changes in the community? Or changes to the way things work in the community?	Increased collaboration in the community *marks early changes (how to measure) to the system	The extent to which the process has been taken up by sectors and organizations/the buy-in from different organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of organizations • # of sectors
Are there any identifiable characteristics within any of the partner organizations that might impact (hinder/prevent, promote/enhance) their participation in this project or in adopting a common agenda?	Identify characteristics of partner organizations that influence their participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of characteristics identified that present barriers • # of characteristics identified that present facilitators For some ideas around barriers and facilitators to partnership, see the KKHCI Provincial Scan Results
Principles of practice – are we following these?	Development of the common agenda with a diverse set of voices and perspectives from multiple sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # steering committee members per sector • # helping to shape the common agenda • % aware of collective impact goals and activities

¹ Collective impact is a data-driven process. Shared measurement is one of the 5 core conditions, requires ongoing measurement and evaluation for continuous learning. Collective impact projects take a long time to establish and a long time for outcomes to become apparent. Because collective impact projects have multiple stakeholders working together, there could be problems of attribution, and an inability to identify the outcomes of individual contributions from stakeholders.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing and implementing the initiative with a priority placed on equity • Including community members in the collaborative • Recruiting and co-creating with cross-sector partners • Using data to continuously learn, adapt, and improve • Cultivating leaders with unique system leadership skills • Focusing on program and system strategies • Building a culture that fosters relationships, trust, and respect across participants • Customizing for local context 	<p>Other outcomes of interest may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective backbone function identified and established • Quality data on a set of meaningful common indicators is available to partners in a timely manner • Committee is adopting practices conducive to relationship building and collaboration • Power dynamics within the group shift to prioritize equity and inclusiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of community members or equity seeing organizations that are part of the collective • # of opportunities created for committee members to review data as part of the decision-making process • # of leaders engaged who have system leadership skills, or # of capacity building opportunities to develop system leadership skills among the collective • # of activities specifically aimed at networking or relationship building among the members of the collective
<p>Outcomes and indicators to consider in the longer term</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective impact initiative is influencing changes in attitudes and beliefs toward desired change • Mental models start to change and begin resulting in changed behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of individual who identify viewing issues and goals of the initiative with increased importance, relevance, and sense of urgency • # of individuals who express attitudes or beliefs that support the desired change

Prepared in collaboration with Rachel Laxer, Evaluation Specialist, Health Promotion, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Program, [Public Health Ontario](#), in support of the [Keeping Kids Healthy through Collective Impact](#) project. February 2020. For more information contact Rachel.Laxer@oahpp.ca