

Theory of Change

To improve food insecurity we must increase access to nutritious meals and disrupt the cycle of spending trade-offs that perpetuate instability. We believe to support family stability we must strengthen communities by engaging families and cross-sector partner organizations in a structured approach to improve health, income/employment, housing, and food security outcomes in a community.

Theory of Action

Community Collective Impact Process					
	Exploring	Emerging	Sustaining	Systems Change	Proof Point (majority of indicators are consistently improving)
Pillar 1: Shared Community Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene cross-sector leadership table. • Determine geographic scope. • Develop shared community vision, including the goals and needs that low-income families identify for themselves and their communities. • Develop identity statement for the collaborative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share baseline data on need and for results and indicators identified in the Exploring Phase among partners and the community members. • Publish identity statement of the collaborative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate with roles and identified accountability structure. • Communicate consistent messages across partners. • Engage community and partners on progress towards results and indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create partnerships that continue even with leadership change. 	
Pillar 2: Evidence- Based Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and conduct a community assessment of both assets and needs or update/augment previous assessments. • Set community results and indicators for the partnership to address. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine a continuous quality improvement plan and collect base-line data for performance measures. • Research evidence-based policy, systems change and programmatic interventions that have demonstrated effectiveness in improving identified indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine indicators to improve validity and reliability. • Collect and connect programmatic data to core indicators to enable continuous improvement among the action networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share data with community stakeholders appropriately in a timely manner to enable continuous improvements to improve outcomes. 	
Pillar 3: Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership table gets input from community on shared vision and results, including key community informants and those with lived experience of the issues being addressed. • Determine community readiness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative action networks get input and feedback on action plans from community, including from key community informants and those with lived experience of the issues being addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seek feedback on successes, challenges and emerging issues from community. • Mobilize community around advocacy agenda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize community stakeholders around advocacy agenda. • Implement regular feedback loops that support meaningful communication between community and collaborative action networks. 	
Pillar 4: Collaborative Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine approach for collaborative action networks and engagement of additional stakeholders moving forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create collaborative action networks. • Collaborative action networks create action plans to effect change in results and indicators (draw on evidence-based interventions when available). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative action networks participate in continuous improvement process by lifting up successes and removing barriers for action plans to be implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use continuous improvement and community feedback loops to identify and spread practices that improve indicators related to community level outcomes. 	
Pillar 5: Investment and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish anchor entity(s) with capacity to support the partnership moving forward. • Engage funders to support the initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a structure and ensure capacity to support daily functions of the initiative (i.e. facilitation, data analysis, communication and community engagement). • Motivate funders and leverage resources to support the initiative and the work of the collaborative action networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve results and indicators by mobilizing the community behind what works, allocating and aligning resources to where there is evidence of what works. • Establish advocacy agenda based on policy changes that would advance outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align financial and other community resources to what works to improve outcomes. • Secure sustainable funding. • Shape policy to enable and sustain improvement. 	

Adapted from StriveTogether's Theory of Action: <http://www.strivetgether.org/strive-approach/theory-of-action>

Glossary of Terms

Gateways:

EXPLORING

Partnerships are working on the beginning pieces of formulating a partnership.

EMERGING

Partnerships are focused around accessing and collecting data and putting in place the supports necessary for data-driven decision making.

SUSTAINING

Partnerships are focused on using data in a continuous improvement process to identify improvements and interventions to impact an outcome.

SYSTEMS CHANGE

Partnerships focus on navigating the necessary evolutions, transitions, and continuous improvement a partnership goes through to improve outcomes.

Pillar 1: Shared Community Vision: Partners come together around a vision for improving outcomes.

- **Partnership:** A group of organizations, systems and stakeholders who come together to jointly move an agenda in their community. Several sectors need to be represented within the partnership including: community-based organizations, philanthropic, civic/government, business, and low-income families.
- **Geographic scope:** Needs to be sufficient to impact population level outcomes, policy and funding decisions.
- **Leadership Table:** Group of cross-sector CEO-level members of the organizations participating in direction setting of the partnership, should include: non-profits, philanthropic, business leaders and community leaders.
- **Accountability Structure:** The organizational framework that depicts the different teams within the partnership and outlines the roles and responsibilities of each.
- **Messages:** Formalized statements about the partnership developed for a specific audience to effectively communicate a common understanding of the vision, purpose and work.
- **Baseline Report:** Initial report to the community that provides recent data for each of the partnership's community level outcomes and the outcomes for key subpopulations.
- **Community:** Individuals in the defined geographic scope who are directly affected, and therefore must be clearly understood, actively involved, and eventually satisfied by the impact of the partnership.

Pillar 3: Community Engagement: Work with community to identify aspirations and use public knowledge to drive the vision of the partnership.

- **Lived Experience:** Individuals with first-hand knowledge of the problems or challenges that have been identified needing improvement to achieve a shared vision.
- **Collective Advocacy Agenda:** Shared plan for influencing public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic and social systems and institutions.

Pillar 5: Investment and Sustainability: Initiating or redirecting resources (time, talent and treasure) toward practices that have proven to demonstrate results on an ongoing basis.

- **Anchor Entity:** An organization or entity that commits to acting as the fiscal agent and ensuring the partnerships' long term stability. Can provide additional functions such as housing partnership staff.

Pillar 2: Evidence-Based Decision Making: Partners organize around outcomes, identifying indicators for the outcomes and collecting local data to determine areas of need and promising practices/activities.

- **Population/Community Level Outcomes:** Key issue areas that need to be improved to achieve the vision and goals of the partnership for a specific geographic area.
- **Core Indicators:** The specific measures that are being used to track progress on moving the community level outcomes and have been agreed upon to be the main metric, or one that directly measures an outcome.
- **Baseline Data:** Data that is gathered as an initial data set that will be used later to provide a comparison for assessing improvement on community level outcomes.
- **Evidence-Based Interventions:** Programs or treatments that have been demonstrated some effectiveness through outcome evaluation.
- **Timely Manner:** Access to data is not delaying the decision making or action-taking of parties relying on it to work effectively.

Pillar 4: Collaborative Action: Community stakeholders come together to collectively move an outcome.

- **Continuous Improvement Process:** The on-going effort to use local data in a disciplined manner to improve efficiencies and effectiveness of processes and action.
- **Collaborative Action Networks:** Groups of appropriate cross-sector practitioners and individuals who organize around a community level outcome and use a continuous improvement process to develop an action plan with strategies to improve that outcome.
- **Action Plan:** A document that outlines the strategies that a Collaborative Action Network will work on collectively during a given time frame. This is a 'living' document that should be updated regularly and contains the following components: Long and Short-term Targets, Measures, Projects and Action Steps.

Potential Food Bank Roles & Definitions

There are different roles a food bank can play in multi-sector collective impact approaches. It's important to think about the capacities of your organization in order to assess the appropriate role(s) for the food bank.

1. **Convener:** Bring key leaders to the collaborative and move the group towards a cohesive, collective strategic direction.
2. **Facilitator:** Manage the day-to-day work to support the community collaborative; accountable for getting things done between meetings; guides the meetings, with a specific eye towards moving the group to consensus and action.
3. **Participant:** Serve on action teams focused on specific goals. Participants recommend, then implement and track interventions to move outcomes.