



Collective Impact is gaining popularity—but what is it really about?

“Individual effort is good but collective effort is better. We need a NETWORK of nation builders.”

Fela Durotoye

Collective Impact brings together leaders from different sectors to address complex social problems. Collective impact recognises that the most effective responses to these complex problems often rest in the coordinated efforts of organisation in the business, government and community services sectors.

Collective impact goes beyond partnerships and collaboration, and has at its core a ‘backbone’ organisation or team which adopts a servant leadership approach to bringing participating organisations together to address a wicked problem.

The following table outlines the five conditions of collective impact.

The Five Conditions of Collective Impact

Common Agenda	All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.
Shared Measurement	Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.
Mutually Reinforcing Activities	Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.
Continuous Communication	Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.
Backbone Support	Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies.

For a great example of Collective Impact in action, check out the Strive Together project in Cincinnati, a collective response to addressing poor student outcomes. Follow this [link](#) for details.

Sources: Stanford Social Innovation Review: <http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/> and http://www.ssireview.org/blog/entry/embracing_emergence_how_collective_impact_addresses_complexity