



Framework Model

Technically, collaboration is a process of participation through which people, groups and organizations work together to achieve desired results. Starting or sustaining a collaborative journey is exciting, sometimes stressful, and even new for many people, groups, and organizations.

Initiating Collaborations



how collaborations fit



knowing the destination



ecomap

When beginning the journey, it is critical that all existing and potential members share the vision and purpose. It is this commonality that brings members together to focus on achieving a mission. Several catalysts may initiate a collaboration – a problem, a shared vision, a desired outcome, to name a few. Regardless what the catalyst may be, it is critical to move from problem driven to vision driven, from muddled roles and responsibilities to defined relationships, and from activity driven to outcome focused.

Often groups form as a result of an existing problem or perhaps a crisis. While problems may be the initial catalysts in forming a collaboration, defining the vision and desired outcomes begins to give shape and direction to the future collaboration. Moving from problem driven solutions to vision driven solutions offers greater potential for maximizing resources, developing sustainable outcomes and greater community ownership and commitment in the courses of action. Vision driven solutions also keep us from getting caught up in old stereotypes that often interfere with the ability to bring diverse membership together. Without this movement, there is a tendency to solve practical problems by grabbing at ready-made solutions that neither address the fundamental causes of a problem, nor challenge thinking in new directions.

Building relationships is fundamental to the success of collaborations. Effective collaborations are characterized by building and sustaining “win-win-win” relationships – the kind of relationships where expectations are clear and understood by all members of the collaboration and by those who are working with the collaboration. Defining relationships assists in identifying tasks, roles, responsibilities, and work plans and ultimately reaching desired outcomes.

Defining the Relationship of Collaborators



defining relationships

The first steps focus on defining existing or potential relationships. A range of relationships have been defined in the “[Community Linkages – Choices and Decisions](#)” (Figure 1) matrix. This matrix defines five levels of relationships and the purpose, structures, and processes for each level. Using “Community Linkages” in companionship with the *Framework* provides focus and clarity in the dialog supporting new relationships. Recognizing and strengthening the interrelatedness contributes to the “infrastructure” of the collaboration.



Community Linkages – Choices and Decisions

Levels	Purpose	Structure	Process
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialog and common understanding • Clearinghouse for information • Create base of support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-hierarchical • Loose/flexible link • Roles loosely defined • Community action is primary link among members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low key leadership • Minimal decision making • Little conflict • Informal communication
Cooperation or Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match needs and provide coordination • Limit duplication of services • Ensure tasks are done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central body of people as communication hub • Semi-formal links • Roles somewhat defined • Links are advisory • Group leverages/raises money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitative leaders • Complex decision making • Some conflict • Formal communications within the central group
Coordination or Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share resources to address common issues • Merge resource base to create something new 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central body of people consists of decision makers • Roles defined • Links formalized • Group develops new resources and joint budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomous leadership but focus in on issue • Group decision making in central and subgroups • Communication is frequent and clear
Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ideas and be willing to pull resources from existing systems • Develop commitment for a minimum of three years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members involved in decision making • Roles and time defined • Links formal with written agreement • Group develops new resources and joint budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared leadership • Decision making formal with all members • Communication is common and prioritized
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accomplish shared vision and impact benchmarks • Build interdependent system to address issues and opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus used in shared decision making • Roles, time and evaluation formalized • Links are formal and written in work assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership high, trust level high, productivity high • Ideas and decisions equally shared • Highly developed communication

Source: Community Based Collaborations – Wellness Multiplied 1994, Teresa Hogue, Oregon Center for Community Leadership

Figure 1



what collaboration means



community linkages



merging community linkages with the Framework



find your group



The Framework



using the
Framework

The *Framework* has been designed as a comprehensive guide to form new collaborations, enhance existing efforts and/or evaluate the progress of developing collaborations (Figure 2). The **Framework** provides common elements of collaboration. The common elements include: **Grounding**, the bedrock of collaboration is the diversity with which the people, groups, organizations and communities share an desire to collaborate; **Core Foundation**, the shared purpose and destiny of the collaborative efforts; **Outcomes**, those which are achieved by implementing a collaboration; and the **Process** and **Contextual Factors**, those which affect the everyday activities of the collaboration.

The Framework ... Grounding



importance of
grounding



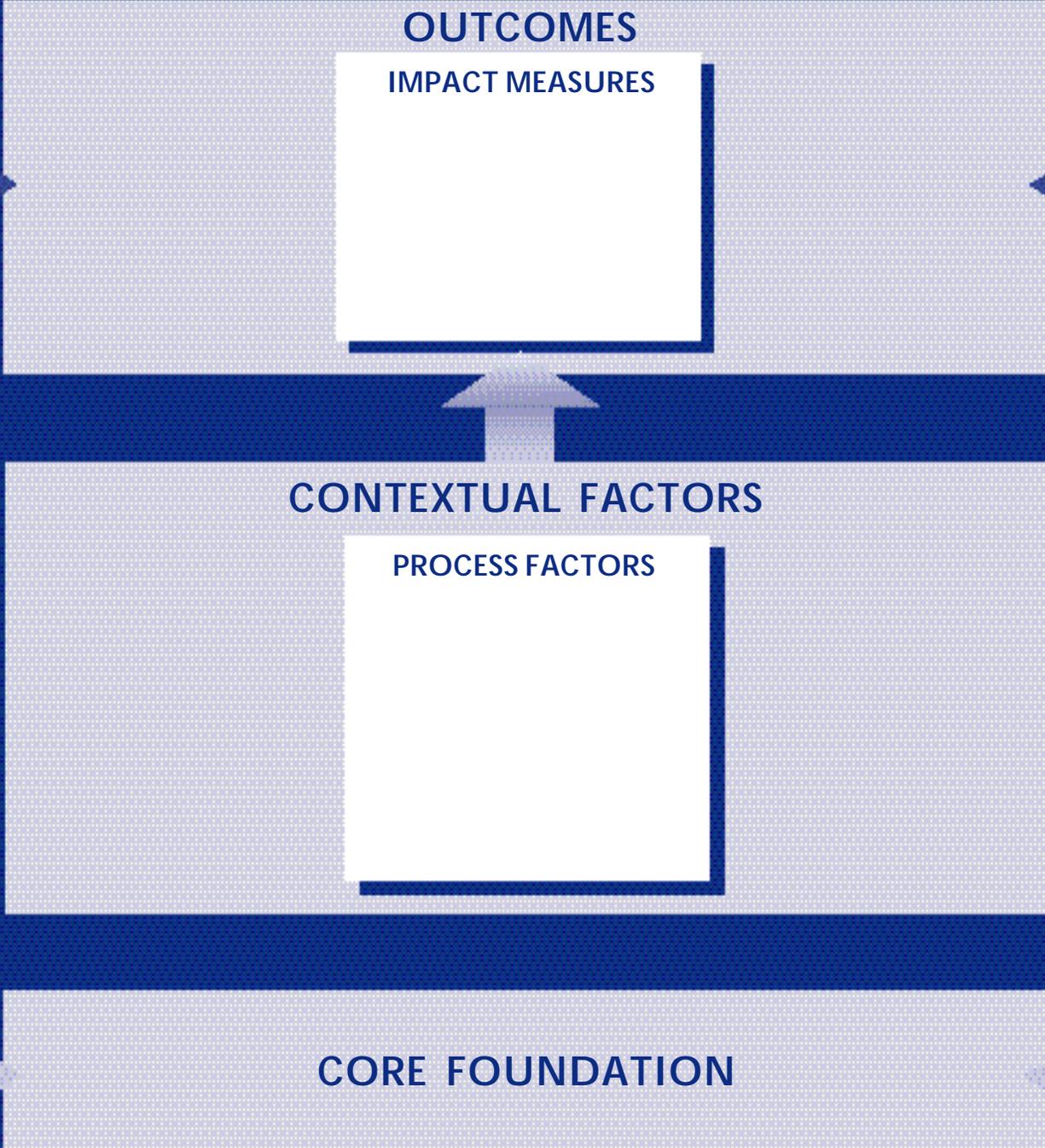
grounding

All *Framework* elements are grounded in valuing and respecting diversity. Valuing diversity honors the uniqueness, gifts, and talents each person, group, and organization brings to the collaboration. It opens the door to gaining an understanding of how all the elements fit together and how each is important to the whole. Diversity brings a critical balance to any level of collaboration. When a real diversity of people and opinion occurs in a group, a reverence for the shared vision often takes hold. It becomes easier to understand each member's perspective on current reality, and each other's ideas about courses of action. People whose lives are affected by decisions must be equally represented in the decision process.

The *Framework* fosters many opportunities to value the diversity of its individual members, organizations, and agencies. It provides the opportunity to recognize unique skills, capabilities and expectations within each *Process* and *Contextual Factor*. It encourages examining underlying stereotypes that affect capacity for change, promoting new awareness for collaboration members that shifts attitudes and beliefs about what is possible. Through inventorying research, literature and curricula, the *Collaboration Framework* emphasizes the need to consider issues of diversity when defining strategies and content for trainings, workshops or specified assignments in committees.



COLLABORATION FRAMEWORK





The Framework ... *Core Foundation*



building a core foundation



Identifying the foundation

The *Core* represents the common ground of understanding. It focuses on creating a sense of common purpose that binds people together and inspires them to fulfill their deepest aspirations. Building the *Core* takes time, care and strategy. The discipline of building a *Core* is centered around a never-ending process, whereby people in the collaboration articulate their common interests – around vision, mission, values and principles. Together, the vision, mission, values, and principles describe why the collaboration matters and how it fits in the larger world. This core is essential for any successful collaboration.

- Vision** an image of the desired future — a Vision is a picture of the future, described in the present tense, as if it were happening now.
- Mission** the purpose of the collaboration. The Mission represents the fundamental reason for the collaboration’s existence.
- Values and Principles** the beliefs individuals and the group hold. Values and Principles are the guides for creating working relationships and describe how the group intends to operate on a day-by-day basis.

The Framework ... *Outcomes*



understanding collaborative goals

Outcomes are the desired “conditions” for the community. They reflect success in working to reach the collaboration’s vision. *Outcomes* result from the behavior and actions of people, groups, and organizations. *Outcomes* may range from “communities valuing and supporting life-long learning” or “ensuring diversified livable wage jobs for families,” or “area businesses reporting a decrease in vandalism and increased public safety.” *Outcomes* do not include “increasing services” or “building a community center.” These may be strategies or actions used to attain the desired outcome.

Outcomes are often, but not exclusively, defined following the development of the shared vision. A group focusing on defining the desired *Outcomes* in the initial stage of building the collaboration is more likely to increase its effectiveness and the likelihood of engaging greater participation by a wide cross section of people and groups to create the vision.

The Framework ... *Contextual and Process Factors*



analysis of process & contextual factors

The *Contextual* and *Process Factors* represent elements that can either enhance or inhibit collaborations and ultimately the desired outcomes. *Process Factors* focus on the “how to” aspect of the collaboration and cover specific skills and components which are necessary to build effective working relationships.



Contextual Factors are conditions that either exist or are lacking within an environment which can enhance or inhibit collaborations.

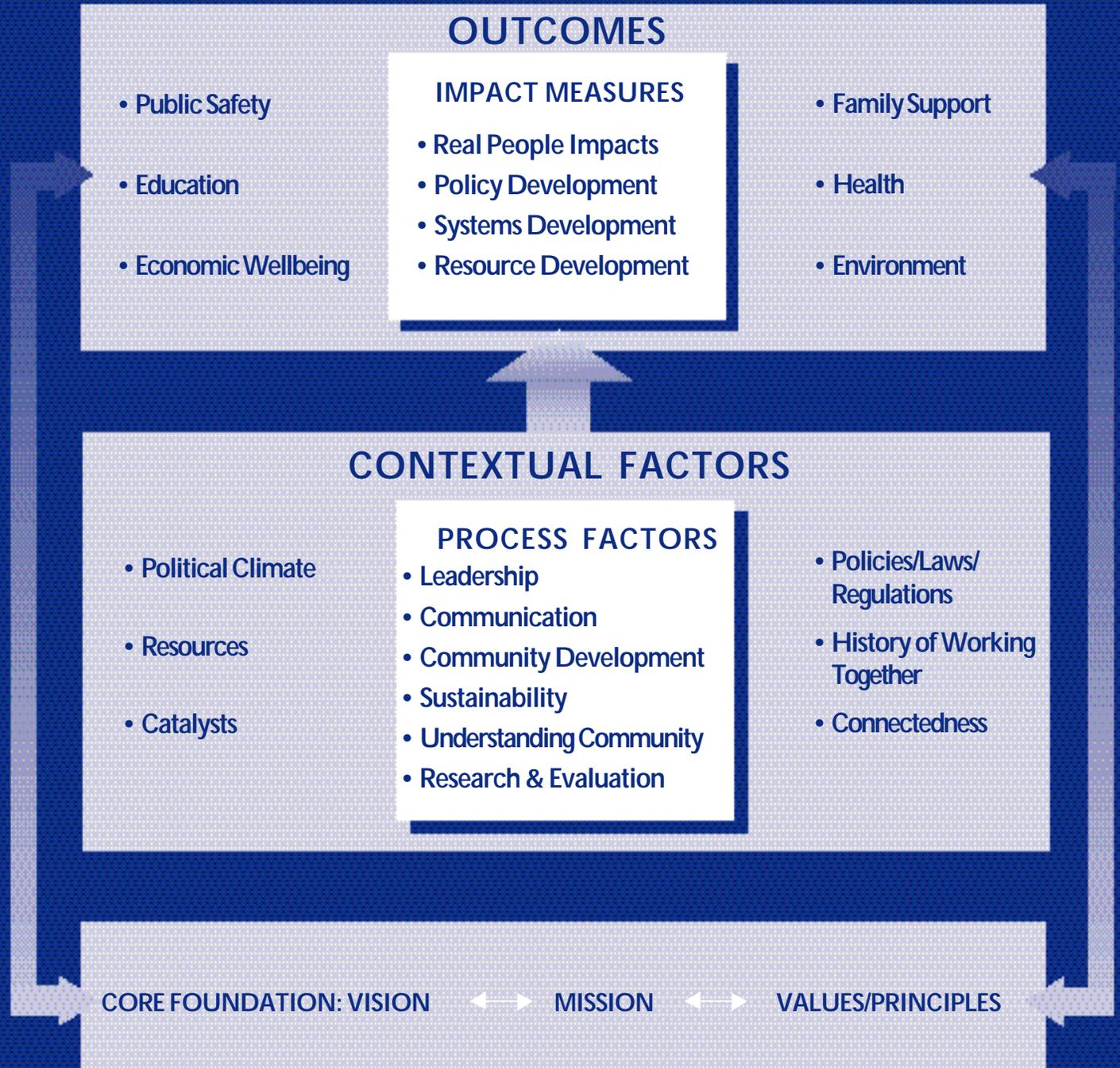
A five year collaboration which began by addressing the problem of teen mothers dropping out of high school, quickly identified underlying causes of this problem. Some of the causes included: a norm of parent and community expectations of young women to have children before 18 years of age, a norm of accepting school drop out, school policy barriers limiting student re-entry after two week absences, lack of livable wages, and lack of affordable day care.

The group initially defined three desired outcomes: 1. By 1995, school retention would be at 85% among teen parents; 2. Quality affordable day care and evening care would be available to all teen mothers and fathers enrolled in school; 3. By 1998, a minimum of 25% of all teen mothers and fathers would be enrolled in post secondary education.

The group defined the initial relationship level to be a coalition. With a group desire to merge budgets and attain a higher level of commitment, by year four the relationship moved to a collaboration level. The vision for the community continues to be “Supporting young men and women to reach their full potential in their family, school and community life.” The mission of the Teen Parent Collaboration is “to foster the environments which support young women and men who have parenting responsibility in their family, school and community lives through education, building positive relationships, and healthy environments.” Some of the group values include: realigning and utilizing all resources to maximum effectiveness; respecting and valuing all people and organizations; valuing young people, their gifts and their opinions as resources; and defining positive courses of actions through creativity, experience and research. 



COLLABORATION FRAMEWORK



GROUNDING: DIVERSITY