


The Collective Leadership Framework

A Workbook for Cultivating and Sustaining Community Change





“ *The real story is that building community is hard work. There can be friction. It can be uncomfortable and downright painful. Our hands may become weary, red, chapped and calloused while our hearts become softened, workable and gracious. In the end, our worn, weathered hands raise in victory to join with others.* ”

— *Diana “Dee” Martin, fellow, KLCC One, Northwestern Wisconsin.*

This workbook is a publication of the
W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2007.

Introduction

The leadership development field is rich with theories, models, techniques and tools designed to nurture and prepare individuals to lead. Organizations, institutions and communities are perpetually in search of those who can guide them toward new and improved states of wellbeing. Few of the approaches to preparing today's leaders, however, were developed in the 21st century. Most are based upon the social, economic, cultural and community norms of earlier times.

Twenty-first century community leaders face new challenges and opportunities. The very concept of community is defined in numerous ways. Our communities are more complex and more interconnected. Increasingly, diverse populations must find ways to share power and resources. Many groups have experienced discrimination and oppression and are, therefore, committed to social movements devoted to shifting that reality. When we understand our interdependence it can help us act effectively to create sustainable change that serves everyone in our communities.

In today's environment, community leaders must be capable of crossing many boundaries: those between individuals and groups, those among organizations, and those fostered by issues that divide the population. They need to bring people together in ways that heal old rifts and ruptures, they must know their own values as well as those of their culture, and they must be willing to challenge their assumptions—to unlearn and relearn.

Effective leadership in the 21st century requires a collective, shared effort for the greater good. Community leaders must, therefore, be encouraged to expand their perspectives from an emphasis on the "I" to emphasizing both "I" and "We."

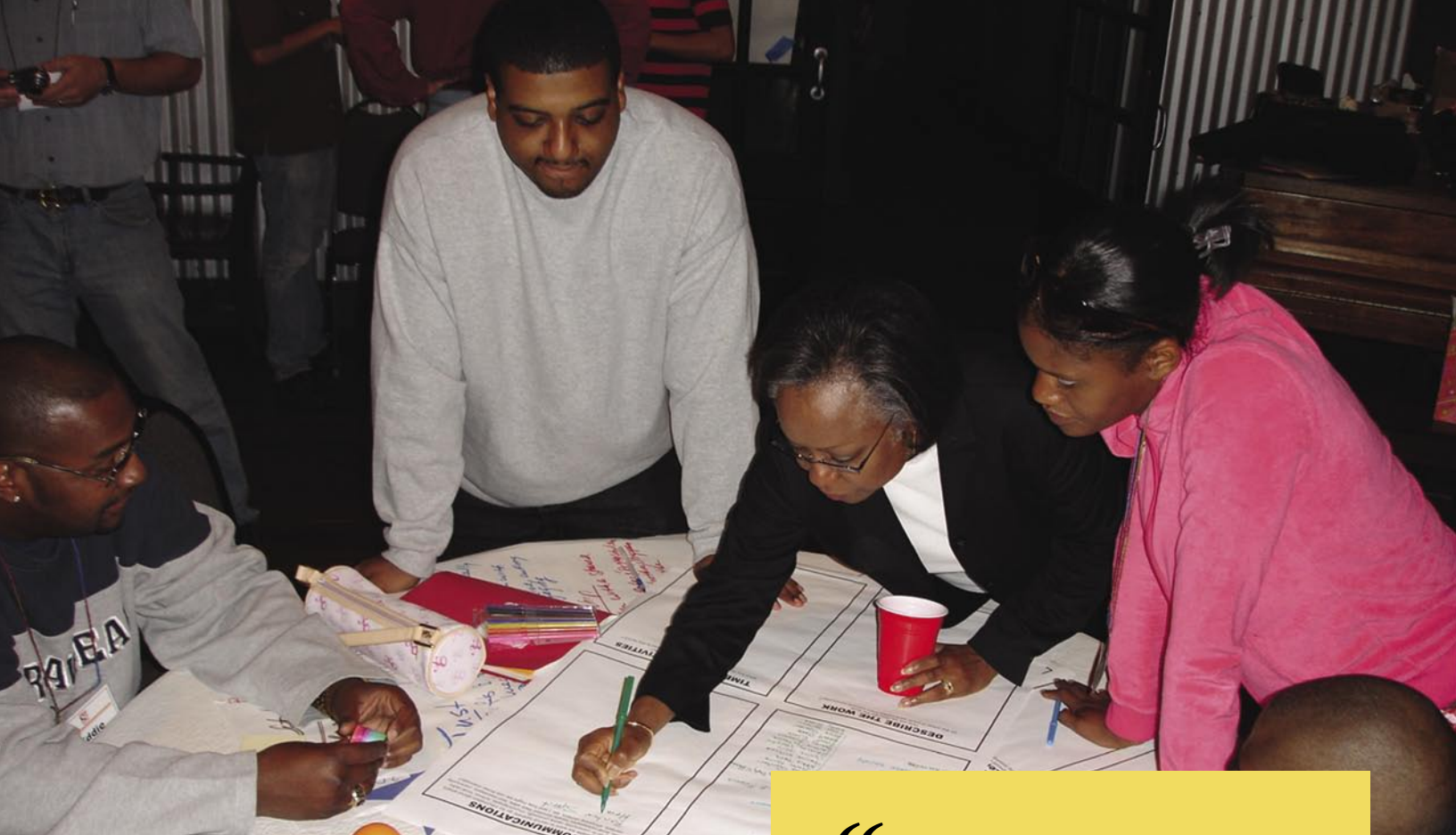
The following workbook is a primer to using The Framework, a new tool designed to cultivate and sustain collective leadership for community change. The Framework was pioneered by the Leadership for Community Change (KLCC) program of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. KLCC was established in 2001 in response to the question: "What kind

of leadership is needed in our communities to address the challenges of our time?" Today, KLCC helps community-based organizations develop leadership that is collective, shaped by a keen understanding and love of place, and committed to creating sustainable community change.

The Framework is based on the assumption that communities have the wisdom they need within themselves to make the changes they need. By asking questions that help the local community assess where they are and what is needed to advance their work, The Framework acts as a guideline for developing an ongoing program for achieving community change through the process of collective leadership.

The Framework was created by the Center for Ethical Leadership and the Institute for Educational Leadership, which together comprised the KLCC Coordinating Organization for Session One. Although the original plan was to create a leadership development curriculum, the coordinating organization strongly felt that a framework for change was more appropriate, particularly since each community's approach to change was informed by different local contexts. With help from Session One communities and in cooperation with the Foundation, the Framework has been a work in progress and continues to be refined based on the experience of the new communities and Coordinating Organization for Session Two: the Center for Ethical Leadership and the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development.

This workbook is intended to help organizations use community-based collective leadership as a tool for making community change. Along the way, you will also increase individual participants' leadership ability and increase their life choices and opportunities. We are pleased to introduce The Framework and invite you to visit our Web site, www.klccleadership.org, for a more detailed blueprint of the tool and additional resources for its use.



“ Young people cannot just be given ‘good feelings’ about their potential, they have to ‘know’ that without their input, we will not be a successful community. ”

— Gentry Philips, project leader,
KLCC Two, Benton Harbor, Michigan

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“ I want to share this photo because it symbolizes the concept of gracious space that KLCC has brought to our community. Through introducing and acting upon the concept of gracious space, KLCC and its members have affected how members of the community relate to each other in a more positive manner. KLCC was able to bring a wide range of community members together to address issues of teaching and learning. Without this ability to bring people together and identify their common desires, the public will to bring change would not have taken place. ”

— Anita Big Spring, fellow and community coach, KLCC One, Flathead Reservation, Montana.

What is community-based, collective leadership?

Collective leadership is still an emerging field, so there is not one, common definition. It is, however, about embracing and marshalling human, cultural and technological resources in ways that enable local people to work together to improve their communities for the collective wellbeing.

Collective leadership is the cornerstone of the Kellogg Leadership for Community Change program, established in 2001 by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. KLCC helps community-based organizations develop leadership that is collective, shaped by a keen understanding and love of place, and committed to creating sustainable community change.

In KLCC, we see that collective leadership becomes possible when the members of a group, motivated by a common purpose, begin to build relationships with each other that are genuinely respectful enough to allow them to co-construct their shared purpose and work. This is about expanding from the solo perspective of “I” to include the “We.” Having a shared purpose, vision and passion enables people to understand each other across their differences, and to build toward a common goal. It taps into their shared love of a common place in order to mobilize the wisdom of the group into collective action.

The collective leadership process brings together a diverse community of people to influence the work and outcomes of a particular community institution. The process begins with a shared dream that forms the heart of a group of passionate individuals with diverse skills. As relationships are formed around a shared purpose, the group creates a common awareness of challenges and develops ownership of creating new approaches/solutions. This type of leadership engages communities in

activities that can effect sustained and systemic change. It connects those who are often seen as “outside” of an institution with those who are on the “inside.”

Fully living into this type of leadership requires exploring the community context. This includes understanding the history, the cultural communities, the politics, etc. It means being willing to be pushed and pulled as a result of being in relationship with others who share the dream. It means developing group and individual potential. It means finding what will be most effective in making needed changes in a specific place and time.

Building collective leadership is a cyclical process; it does not happen once and end. Instead, it continues evolving as communities change. As groups grow and move, they continue to learn and relearn about their community as they change and it changes.

KLCC communities have identified three underlying principles of collective leadership:

1. Collective leadership is relational: the group as a whole is a leader in the community just as members within the group can be leaders within the group.
2. Collective leadership is fluid: it emerges out of specific situations, the process of defining vision and setting direction, as well as exercising influence over other people and organizations; it becomes a shared function of the group.
3. Collective leadership is transformational: it begins with a belief in and a commitment to social advocacy and social justice.

What are some key lessons we have learned about developing collective leadership?

1. Most importantly, for a group to move into collective leadership, *all those involved must be genuinely open to learning and willing to change themselves*. One of the most powerful aspects of this approach is that as people open up to seeing the world from different perspectives, previously unimagined possibilities for action present themselves.
2. *Those who succeed take the time to learn about the community and its cultures*. Groups that know the cultures around them are better able to identify and assess relevant community issues and needs. Group members who become more aware of cultural differences are better able to use culturally appropriate means of communicating and engaging others in action. Getting to know the community also becomes a way to build alliances with others who share common goals.
3. For collective leadership to emerge, *it is critical to build trusting relationships*. Attention must be paid to understanding and appreciating differences among all those who are in the group. To do that, each member needs to be able to understand and articulate his/her own area of competence and passion, communication style, and view of the community. Building trusting relationships includes helping each member find his or her own voice. This will help all the members become comfortable communicating with one another in reinforcing and constructive ways. As members get to know and accept each other, they develop a strong sense of belonging. This sense of belonging supports individual risk taking.
4. Successful KLCC groups *involve as many members in the direction-setting process as possible and find ways to handle membership changes easily*. It is important for the group to be clear about their shared purpose – how their work will benefit the community and the group. Once group members have a sense of the whole, then individuals and smaller groups can act to move the work forward. Respectful discussion and dialogue can help with clearly defining roles and responsibilities and making explicit shared expectations of each member's participation. In collective leadership, roles will often be shared and may shift as the project moves along. It helps to have frequent and easily accessible communication; a positive group attitude; and a "no-titles," non-threatening climate in which unique experiences and expertise are acknowledged while checking egos at the door.
5. *People new to community-change work need hands-on opportunities to learn tactical leadership skills* that are part of implementing community change. These include learning and using strategic-planning, sharing decision-making practices, learning policy and political assessment processes, employing participatory evaluation methods, and using effective facilitation and community organizing strategies.



What kinds of group structures can enhance collective, community-based leadership efforts?

In cases where KLCC participants have been most satisfied with their learning, leadership and social-advocacy experiences, the organizational structure has been flat (non-hierarchical). Key decisions are made and implemented in a collaborative manner. In addition, group members report a deep sense of ownership of the values and ideals that guide the work of the organization. They have agreements about how they will work together and what they expect from each other and the organization.

The organic and participatory nature of successful organizations has been achieved by having:

1. Clearly defined and frequently articulated roles and responsibilities
2. Transparent distribution of resources
3. A set of defined expectations that holds each member accountable to one another and the overall project goals
4. Open avenues of communication across all levels of the organization.

Are you ready to do this work?

Truly living into the concepts of collective leadership takes time and a genuine openness to reflection and learning. All the KLCC groups have reported that in the beginning of their work there was frustration around issues of time. It took a lot of time they felt they didn't have to develop new ideas about leadership, to change the ways they worked together, and to learn about their communities' cultures. They struggled with the seeming inactivity of building relationships within the groups and learning about themselves, the groups and the communities. They had the desire to **do**, to **work** and to **change their communities**.

However, once the groups took the step of learning about themselves and each other and then used that to create a shared vision, they ended up with a robust and holistic perspective of their community that influenced the content and process of their change work. The KLCC groups consistently repeated in their final evaluations that it was highly effective to take the time to build relationships before they started on their change work. The insights it provided informed the process and made them more aware of each step they were taking, and why they were taking it.

You are ready to do this work if you are ready to invest the time it takes to make a transformational shift in how you work together with those who share your passions.

Understanding the Framework

Change does not happen in a linear way. Instead, people learn and progress, take a step or two backward and then move forward again. The work spirals as people build on what they have learned, include new people and repeat certain experiences. Even so, there are four predictable stages that are part of most community change work. These stages (listed across the top of the framework summary chart) are:

1. Build Trust
2. Co-Construct Purpose and Strategic Plan
3. Act Together
4. Deepen, Sustain and Make the Work a Way of Life

It is tempting for groups to skip the first stage, Build Trust. What KLCC communities have found, however, is that skipping this stage ultimately leads to a watered-down change effort. The fourth stage (Deepen, Sustain and Make the Work a Way of Life) emphasizes that the purpose of this work is to create a community that wants to continue making needed changes, long after the initial objective is met. It is not just

about doing one or two needed projects.

As you undertake the work of each stage, there are four elements which, as you act on them, will shape the outcome of your efforts. The four elements are the same for each stage and can be summarized as:

- A. Know Community
- B. Build a Strong Team
- C. Develop the Individual
- D. Make the Change

Think of these elements as four strands that when woven together create a strong rope. If any one of the strands is missing, the rope is not as strong. In the same vein, though each element is presented individually, if you view them as intertwined—a rope, not individual strands—you will find ways they affect your work synergistically.

To use the Framework summary chart, start at the top with the stage and read down that column to consider what is needed to develop each of the elements while working in that stage. Remember, by considering all four of these elements together, the work becomes more nuanced and much more powerful.

The Framework: A Summary Chart

Four Stages		Stage 1: Build Trust	Stage 2: Co-Construct Purpose and Strategic Plan	Stage 3: Act Together	Stage 4: Deepen, Sustain, Make Work a Way of Life
Four Elements	A. Know Community Understand the power of place, culture and history.	Be grounded in your place: Learn the stories of the different groups within your community. Explore your history and how successful change has happened.	Learn from Community Understand the different meanings of community; co-construct a new, shared language about your community.	Make Allies Build a network of community allies who will join the work. Include others in the experience of deep relationships around a shared passion.	Work Becomes part of the Community Fabric Expand the capacity of the network to engage in other issues. Keep welcoming others to expand the work to new arenas.
	B. Build a strong team Cross boundaries to find the power of collective leadership.	Know the Others Discover the gifts, wisdom, strengths and resources of group members. Agree on how to work together, honoring differences.	Create Shared Purpose Co-construct a shared vision that keeps members connected during tough times.	Collective Action Strengthen collective leadership by acting collectively to advance your work. Hold each other accountable.	Include new partners Create a process and structure to support continuing work. Invite and nurture new members; share your lessons.
	C. Develop the individual Tap into the power of giving your best gifts.	Know your own story and values Take the time to know who you are and what you have to offer. Commit to doing the work to develop your own leadership capacity.	Name your passion Within the vision of the group, know your own passion. What will you do to contribute to the work of the group? What do you need to learn in order to do that?	Contribute your gifts Make a commitment to stick with the work and follow through on what you said you would do. Stay open to learning as you go.	Help develop others Reflect on what you have learned. How will you stay connected to the work? How will you share your learning?
	D. Make the change Find the power in taking on a community initiative that advances your community.	Define the work Explore community concerns and values relating to your group's work. Collect data. Look for opportunities.	Make a plan Analyze data, consider best practices, select a community initiative and create a plan for action.	Implement the plan Work with partners to implement the plan. Keep adapting the plan as you learn from your work.	Sustain the work Work with community partners, funders and others to sustain the work toward the shared vision.



“ Once in a while, I feel like I’m asking myself for too much. [Then], I slow down a bit. We have a great team, we back each other up. ”

*— Misty Oldham, co-evaluator,
KLCC Two, Bellingham, Washington.*

Misty, now a college student, volunteered with the Lumi CEDAR Project while in high school. She became a KLCC Fellow in 2005 and has since helped dozens of youth realize their leadership potential. She shared this collective leadership work with several other youth facilitators who grew to rely on and trust one another to get the job done.

Stage 1 – Build Trust

Element A. Know Community: Understand the power of place, culture and history.

The Task at Hand: Be grounded in your place. Learn the stories of the different groups within your community. Explore your history and how successful change has happened.

As a convener of a group developing collective leadership, it is important to ask: what does it mean to know the people in your community as members of different cultures? It is powerful for your group members to hear the stories about what other people have experienced because they are members of different groups in your particular community (distinct by race, gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, economics, politics, and identity). What has happened to people because of the way those in power have acted over time? What are the present-day conditions? What is the future they see for themselves? And how do those futures differ by membership in certain groups? Keep in mind that people are always members of multiple groups.

Because we are all interconnected, it helps to understand the complexities of community context (history, culture, demographics, politics, economics, etc.). The more complete the picture you have, the more effective your group will be in understanding what is needed and what will work. Without knowing this big picture, your group could unintentionally alienate community members who may have otherwise participated or given good feedback. People and place must be cared for. Sometimes

this includes making room for some healing to occur.

Typically the system or institution that you want to improve has deep roots. Knowing those who have come before and how change has happened in the past will create good foundations for the work. Who knows how to work successfully in your community? Who else cares about your issue? Who has the power to make decisions and how can you reach them?

As your group goes out to listen to the stories of others, they are beginning to develop social capital and to identify potential allies.

What you need to complete the task:

- Time
- Sensitivity and empathy
- Listening skills
- Curiosity and openness
- Patience
- Willingness to explore community history
- For some groups, a facilitator to guide the discussion.



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What else do you think is needed?



Outline your approach:

Element B. Build a strong team: Cross boundaries to find the power of collective leadership.

The Task at Hand: Discover the gifts, wisdom, strengths and resources of group members. Agree on how to work together, honoring differences.

Who are the people in your group? What are their strengths, wisdom, gifts and resources? What do they need to learn? To continue to build trust in one another, the group needs to know each other's stories and build relationships that are rooted in knowing each other as people. What makes collective leadership particularly powerful is that there is room for everyone to offer his or her gifts and talents. It is important to create the kind of space that encourages people to learn together in public.

It is also useful to explore the difference between behavior that comes from different cultural experiences and behavior that comes from different personalities and styles. People come with built-in differences—some like to plan and set the direction; some like to sit back and analyze data; some like to pay attention to relationships; and some just want to get to work. Some are optimists and some are pessimists. One way is not better than another, all are needed to move to action. It is all too easy to believe that someone is acting because of a cultural prejudice or bias when what is actually going on is a difference in personality or style. If you create an environment where everyone is willing to believe in the good intent of each other and ask questions, then you can find out what is actually going on when people bump into each other.

Even if you think that you know the group, it is important to go through this process. You will discover something you didn't know. One KLCC group had many members that already knew or were aware of one another, and they skipped the work of building trust so that they could go right to action. They ended up getting stalled in their work and wishing that they had taken the time to learn to trust each other.

In contrast, the success of another KLCC group hinged on their recognizing the need to build relationships before they could begin to act. If the group members had not first worked to heal the same old wounds they shared with the rest of the community, they could not have been successful in working together. Because the group was ethnically diverse, developing clear communication channels and spending time together became priorities. This helped them feel comfortable with one another and build loyalty across boundaries.

This is not an easy task and it will take a while. Many people have had to work in processes that do not reflect an understanding of their cultures, histories or life experiences. Asking people what they need and listening to them is important as the group agrees on how they will work together. How they will make decisions. How they will check in with each other about how the work is going.

What you need to complete the task:

- Understanding and empathy
- A sense of humor
- Ability to recognize differences in personality as natural, healthy, and, most importantly, beneficial to the strength of the group
- Listening skills



- Willingness to try new approaches that are comfortable for someone else
- Willingness to take the time to really get to know other people
- Ability to ask questions that open up learning and reflect appreciation for others
- Reflection time to process what is being learned.

What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:

Element C. Develop the individual: Tap into the power of giving your best gifts.

The Task at Hand: Know your own story and values. Take the time to know who you are and what you have to offer. Commit to doing the work to develop your own leadership capacity.

Collective leadership is a great catalyst for individual development. The support of a group that cares for each other really helps individuals take chances and learn from mistakes. Even as you help your group build trusting relationships, you can create the space for individuals to do their own personal soul-searching. Questions that may help them reflect and learn about themselves include:

- What are your strong points?
- What are your core values and how do you want them to show up in your behavior?
- What about you do you think needs to grow?
- Do you have biases or judgments about others that you need to unlearn?

It is helpful for group members to share their reflections with each other so that they can learn about each other and offer feedback and new perspectives. This can help make it okay for individuals to ask for help and offer help.

Many participants from KLCC who were serious about this process of introspection and individual growth have gone on to surprise themselves by staying involved with the work, learning a new skill, going on for more or higher education, or running for public office in their communities.

What you need to complete the task:

- Honesty
- Discipline
- Willingness to get outside your comfort zone
- Compassion for yourself and others.



What else do you think is needed?

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Outline your approach:

Element D. Make the change: Find the power in taking on a community initiative that advances your community.

The Task at Hand: Define the work. Explore community concerns and values relating to your group's work. Collect data. Look for opportunities.

The basic premise in developing collective leadership is that the learning is grounded in doing. This is not about developing leadership as an end in itself. The goal is to make a difference in your community and to develop leadership as a tool for making needed change. Because your work is in service to the community, it is important to know what kind of change the community values. Your group needs to collect data to understand current conditions affecting the institution or system you wish to change. How do community needs and values relate to the work your group is interested in doing? Where are there opportunities in the community that match what your group cares about? Are there other groups and organizations you can partner with as you work on your community initiative? Who are your allies and how can you reach them?

One KLCC group working on improving teaching and learning in its community demonstrated the importance and effectiveness of youth involvement. This group involved youth in every step of the project, allowing them to change the work and be changed by it. Youth were inspired as a result and developed community change projects of their own that they wanted to pursue. They learned skills that

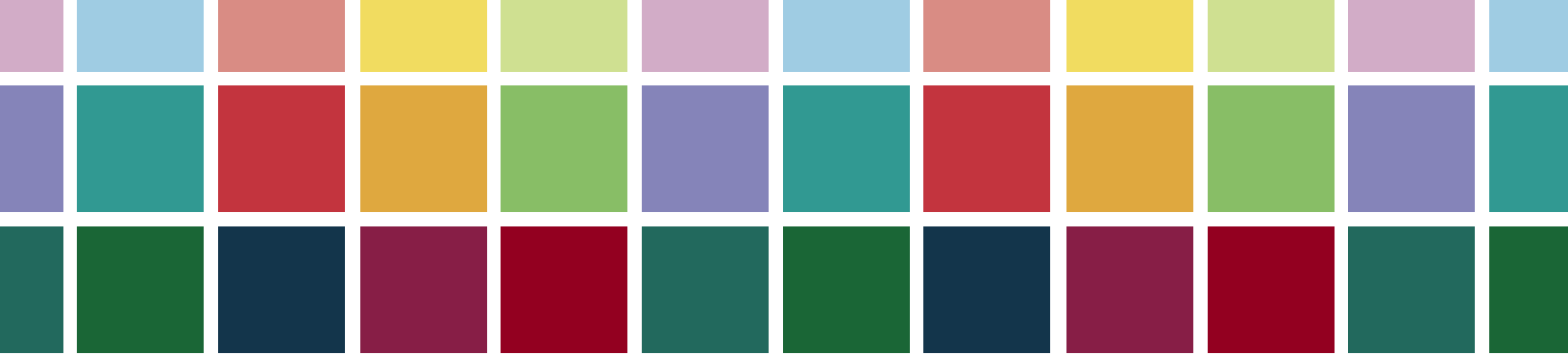
helped them go on to successful college experiences.

This group understood that you cannot change a system or institution without involving the people who are its core. In addition to including youth, they reached out to teachers, administrators and community members. This site accomplished its goals and achieved sustainability because they had the trust of the community members they were reaching out to—they had taken the time to learn about them, and followed up with action.

This is the time to begin working on your evaluation plan as well. How will you know whether you are meeting your goals? What information can you collect that will help you learn and reflect as you move through the stages of community change? Participatory evaluation has been a powerful leadership tool in KLCC. The effective evaluation process has ongoing reflection and learning built into every stage. How can evaluation help you do better while you are working on your project?

What you need to complete the task:

- Listening skills
- Curiosity—openly approach learning about the concerns and values of the community
- Awareness of your own biases and assumptions about what is going on and openness to changing them
- Acceptance of perspectives that are different from what you had imagined—you may learn things that are contradictory to what you had previously thought
- Ability to gather information and make sense of it.



What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:



“ As the [KLCC] fellows worked on developing an action plan, identifying the criteria that define a school dropout, and learning about factors that influence students to leave school in Ronan, the group changed its focus away from the negative factors that influence dropping out and began to concentrate on the creation of activities that help to promote a positive school climate. ”

— Harry Goldman, project leader, KLCC One, Flathead Reservation, Montana.

Stage 2 – Co-Construct Purpose and Strategic Plan

Element A. Know Community: Understand the power of place, culture and history.

*The Task at Hand: Learn from Community.
Understand the different meanings of community; co-construct a new, shared language about your community.*

Collective leadership is about learning new ways of thinking and doing (and unlearning others!). Sometimes people forget that certain perspectives that they take as a given are not understood in the same way by people who come from different cultures (again, think race, gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, economics, politics and identity). For example, people new to this country may have very different ways of thinking about parenting, police or the proper way for people to work together. Unless people take the time to explore what behaviors, words and ideas mean to different participants, you may think that you have a common understanding when, in fact, you are working for very different outcomes. Sometimes people use the same words but mean very different things by them.

Using what you have learned in the Build Trust stage, really listen to what others in the community care about and dream about. You need to create a shared understanding about what is happening in the community and what is needed. That may require defining the words you are using or discussing what common terms mean to different people. For example,

having group members describe what respect and trust look like in a concrete way can help to ensure that all members feel secure.

This may be a time to encourage group members to put aside personal preferences about the way they think your community should be to accept the way that it is. You have to start your change work grounded in the community's current reality.

It is also a time to think about what you are creating, not just what you want to stop. In one KLCC community, the group changed their goal from reducing the drop out rate of one group to creating a school system where all youth would succeed. This fundamentally changed how they approached their work. And, in the end, the drop out rate was reduced for the group that they sought to serve.

As members of a community, you are served by public institutions that are supposed to be working in your best interest. However, members of the institution's formal, "insider" network often resist those outside the system. Sometimes those in institutions believe that they know best about what is needed and aren't sure that all the complex realities of their system can be understood by those outside it. Sometimes institutions believe that they are open, but the way that they function makes it hard for those who care about them to be part of making change. How should members of a community-based leadership group handle outsider/insider tensions, especially if they are deeply ingrained?

Based on KLCC experiences, groups working to change institutions:

1. Begin by learning how those organizations function
2. Establish trust by building alliances with people in the organization one at a time
3. Recognize the need to build alliances with other groups that have influence on the governance of those targeted organizations
4. Learn how to question critically, yet respectfully, while presenting ideas
5. Present their ideas through both informal, conversational venues and more formal, meeting-like forums.

All of these approaches will help you continue to build social capital to spend on your change project.

What you need to complete the task:

- Patience
- Willingness to express your own ideas clearly and to speak your own truth
- Ability to discuss differing ideas with your team in a respectful and honest manner
- Ability to know when to compromise
- Ability to ask good questions to understand another's beliefs.



What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:

Element B. Build a strong team: Cross boundaries to find the power of collective leadership.

*The Task at Hand: Create Shared Purpose.
Co-construct a shared vision that keeps
members connected during tough times.*

Your group needs to be in agreement about what the work actually is before you can work collectively. To begin with, focus on your group's vision and purpose. Why are you all here? What is it that you care about and want to achieve? When you are clear about what difference you want to make, then you can start identifying the necessary steps to move in that direction. Creating a shared purpose will help keep all of you connected and supporting each other during the tough times that will eventually crop up as you get on with your work.

This step of creating your shared purpose is part of what makes collective leadership different from other leadership approaches. This is not about following through on someone else's idea. It is finding out what gives everyone 'juice' to keep coming back and to offer his/her creative gifts. This doesn't mean that everyone has to agree on one project or that everyone has to agree on everything before you can get started. It does mean that everyone understands what you are trying to do together so that each person can figure out how to contribute his/her gifts. Flexibility and openness to letting people try out their ideas is critical.

For example, in one KLCC community, the goal was to improve the school's culture so that all youth could succeed. Once that was agreed upon, smaller groups came up with ideas about

what they could do to help make the culture better. The leadership team kept track of all the activities to make sure that they added up to movement in the right direction. At the same time, there was a lot of creativity that flowed from individual passions, so there were people committed to doing everything that needed doing—from passing out cookies, to involving parents, to creating a mentoring program, to connecting students to the community.

Continuing to have people share their stories is a great way to increase awareness so people working together can keep deepening the relationships and connecting with one another and the community at large. This will foster open communication, continued learning, and high, but realistic, expectations of one another.

This task is about building strong relationships that can support difference and disagreement—that help individuals expand from the perspective of "I" to include the perspective of "We." It can be hard work. So don't forget to celebrate the progress and have fun along the way. Getting together to do something fun is an excellent way into learning about each other and crossing boundaries.

What you need to complete the task:

- Ability to listen to multiple visions and find the thread that connects them all
- Ability to engage in respectful dialogue in order to arrive at a shared meaning for the group
- Listening skills
- Decision to encourage extroverts to listen first and introverts to come forward with their ideas
- Passion



- Interest in someone else's ideas
- Ability to know when to compromise
- Sensitivity—sharing visions and dreams is very personal
- Reflection time to process what you are learning
- Ability to synthesize what everyone has said and distill it into a simple and compelling statement of shared purpose.

What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:

Element C. Develop the individual: Tap into the power of giving your best gifts.

The Task at Hand: Name your passion. Within the vision of the group, know your own passion. What will you do to contribute to the work of the group? What do you need to learn in order to do that?

Encouraging your group members to give their best to the work will be easier if individuals are clear about how the work of the collective connects to them and what they care about. Taking collective action doesn't mean that a person gives up individual opinions or identity. Just the opposite is true. In KLCC communities, individuals who have never thought of themselves as leaders have taken risks because they could see it would help achieve outcomes they wanted for a community they cared about. As people learn more about what they are capable of doing, they become stronger and that makes the whole group stronger.

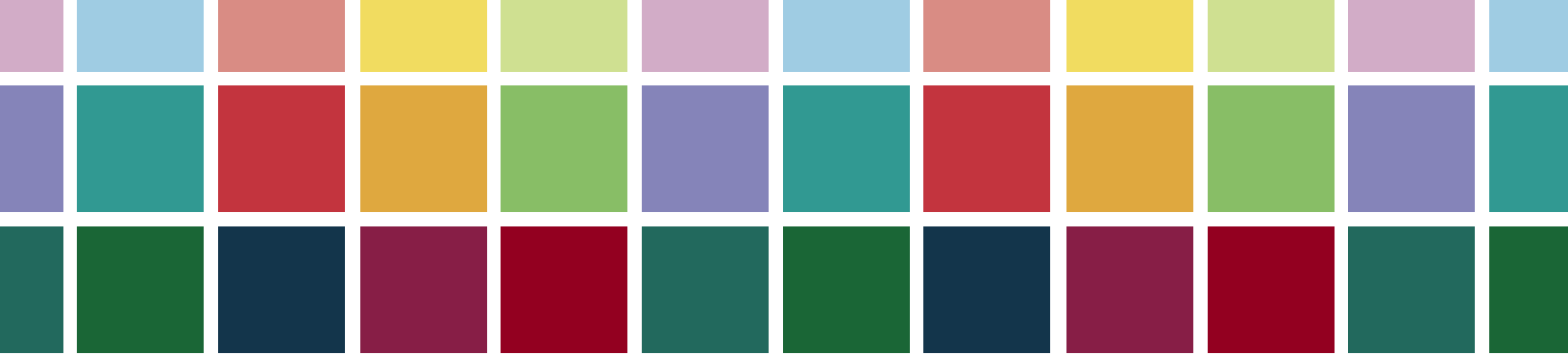
Individuals learn by doing. Working in a group can increase the learning. Once the team

has strong relationships, you can encourage individuals to say that they don't have an answer and that they need help. Grounded in strong relationships, group members can share what they know and help each other find their answers. In collective leadership, people are not just doing tasks; they are contributing their gifts and talents.

During KLCC Session One, several people who had not thought of themselves as leaders ran for a wide range of elected offices and/or stepped into positions of authority. With the support of the group, they felt comfortable taking on new roles.

What you need to complete the task:

- Willingness to share your ideas and gifts
- Ability to allow others to add to or change your ideas
- Willingness to speak the truth to those you see as being in power
- Desire to learn and grow and develop your gifts and talents
- Willingness to show others who you really are



What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:

Element D. Make the change: Find the power in taking on a community initiative that advances your community.

The Task at Hand: Make a plan. Analyze data, consider best practices, select a community initiative and create a plan for action.

The actual community change work of a group should not be considered as separate from the other elements of the Framework. People learn about themselves and others as they come to understand the community's dreams and create shared purpose for their work. At this point your group has done its research and determined what you want to create in your community. Now is the time to develop your plan for what you want to do to make a difference. This is the time to reflect on your group's theory of change. Given what you want to do, what actions are most likely to get you there?

To plan the work, you, as a group, must analyze the data you have gathered, consider what you have learned from what has worked, and then select a focus for your community action. The plan will include the kind of outcomes you want to see and strategies for how to address the change that you care about. Again, begin with what you know and what is open. Don't over plan by trying to figure out everything in advance. Choose activities

that are winnable that move you towards your outcomes. Early wins give people energy to keep working.

Everyone doesn't have to agree on everything to get moving. If the tasks are directly connected to the shared purpose then those tasks will advance you towards your purpose. Make room for people to do what they care about rather than trying to get them to do what other people think is important.

A powerful tool one KLCC group used to advance its goals is digital storytelling. Students, parents, educators and others in the community were trained to document the conditions, history, and problems of their community using digital video technology. These digital stories were then used to persuade policy makers, philanthropists, and others in positions of power that conditions could and must change. Digital stories became a way to connect those telling the stories (helping them feel heard) with the broader community that hadn't heard from those voices (educating the community).

The digital stories instilled pride in the community and inspired residents to expand upon their legacy by taking action. Creating digital forms of communication was planned into the work and played a major role in helping the group achieve their shared purpose.

This underlines the importance of communication as a tool for social change. As you develop your work plan, it is important to consider who it is you want to know about your work; what message you want to send to them; and how you are going to deliver that message.



What you need to complete the task:

- Ability to find an achievable goal and then go after it
- Ability to make sense out of all the data you have collected
- Ability to create a work plan that taps into all the gifts and talents of the group
- Ability to keep dialogue constructive as well as critical
- Patience.

What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:



“ I was a kid that really let things happen to me and I did not fight back. I [now] know I have a voice that needs to be heard. This experience helps me because I’m trying to make a just nation, that’s what we’re doing, putting out this idea we’re all in this together. ”

— Rafael Arvizu Derr, fellow, KLCC Two, Denver, Colorado. He shared these comments following his role as one of several KLCC youth serving as community organizers of a march on the Colorado State Capitol in May 2006.

Stage 3 - Act Together

Element A. Know Community: Understand the power of place, culture and history.

The Task at Hand: Build a network of community allies who will join the work. Include others in the experience of deep relationships around a shared passion.

Networks of allies are essential to community work. The time you spend learning about and understanding your community will pay off when you start to reach out to community members. This is both about building and spending social capital. Each member of your group brings his/her own contacts and networks. How can your group be intentional about connecting and creating networks to build alliances with influential community members and organizations? When you can find the mutual ways to support each other in advancing all your goals, then you will have a stronger alliance. As you begin to see how your work creates a win-win situation for you and those you are working with, the power of your collective action increases.

Communication with the general community must be frequent so that people know what the group is working on and what the successes are. This can increase community awareness and help to build public will for your project; people like to be involved in successful endeavors. In Stage 2, your group thought about the key messages that you wanted to communicate. If your group can use those

key messages to describe your shared purpose and desired outcome, it will be easier for those coming into the network to find their place in your work. Repeating core messages to the public will increase the likelihood of people hearing about (and remembering) your work and wanting to join.

One KLCC group has focused on making sure there is abundant communication among their group, which has led to all of them feeling connected to one another. That same constant communication has also brought formal and informal networks of people to the group as allies. They learned that all the time you spend building group relationships “pays off” in the sense that your fellowship’s experience of deep relationships will extend to others in the community.

What you need to complete the task:

- Networking skills
- Strong relationships within your group
- Communicating internally with your group and externally to the community
- Clear articulation of your work so that it makes sense when you share it with others outside the group
- Willingness to find mutuality in working with others.



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What else do you think is needed?



Outline your approach:

Element B. Build a strong team: Cross boundaries to find the power of collective leadership.

*The Task at Hand: Collective Action.
Strengthen collective leadership by acting collectively to advance your work. Hold each other accountable.*

Taking collective action does not mean that everyone does everything together or that all decisions have to be made together. It means that you know what each person's gift is and have created the room for all of those gifts to be used and valued. Some people are good at inspiring others to join. Some people are good at creating strategies for action. Some are good at organizing a meeting and figuring out everything that is needed to make an activity work well. Some people are good at setting up chairs and cleaning up the room. All of these contributions are equally valuable and needed for success. When you have a clear enough shared purpose so that people can act individually and still know how their work is adding to the collective action, then you are "in the flow." Think of a jazz band: everyone is playing the same song and they are doing it in their own creative way, adding their own instrument to the whole. The song is both unique and the same every time it is played.

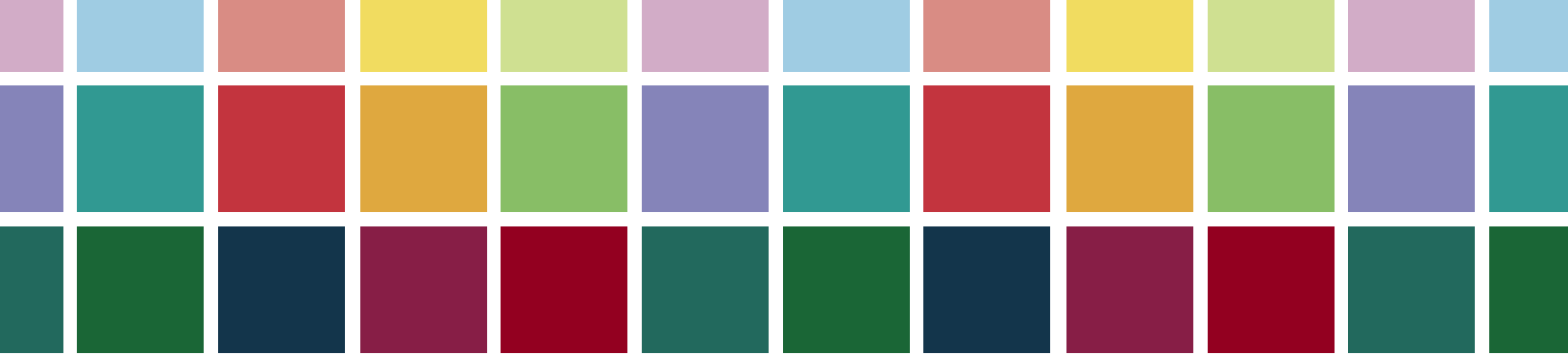
We have seen that some groups have difficulty moving into action because, having built strong relationships, they don't want to split up and they want to make sure that everyone is heard. Moving to action is going to require that individuals and small groups move forward with their parts. Creating equality is

not about making equal demands of everyone, it is about valuing what everyone brings and letting them do what they do well. It is about offering opportunities to take risks, and about it being okay for action-oriented folks to skip planning meetings.

This is the time when all of the different assumptions, different cultural approaches to doing work and different life experiences come in to play. This is also when differences cause people to bump into each other. If you have not done the work of creating strong bonds, then this is when people start to disappear because they feel hurt or unappreciated. If you have done the work of creating strong bonds, then you can use those bonds to help you work through the differences. During this period your group needs time to reflect about what is happening and to listen to each other to check out perceptions and feelings. Is all of the work adding up and moving in the right direction? Individual phone calls or visits may be needed to keep people connected to the group.

Sometimes when everyone owns the work no one owns the work. In that case, critical tasks go undone. This was a lesson learned through hard knocks in one KLCC group. They sorely needed a person/small team to shoulder logistical management of the project to coordinate tasks and check in on agreed-upon responsibilities. It was only after they addressed this missing piece that they became more efficient and successful.

Collective leadership thrives in adaptive and open organizations. A fairly flat (non-hierarchical) structure invites creativity and connections more than traditional hierarchies. KLCC groups have provided multiple opportunities for emergent leadership which, in several instances, has ensured follow-through of projects. There is a tension between developing the group's



leadership capacity and acting; members are often tempted to act before relationships have been cultivated. These groups have learned that part of acting is development, and action is best when carried out by a unified, trusting force. Once a group understands the dynamic tension between the two components, they can come together and accomplish their goals.

Outline your approach:

What you need to complete the task:

- Courage to hold others accountable
- Humility to be held accountable
- Commitment to responsibilities and follow-through
- Time for reflection
- Willingness to adapt.

What else do you think is needed?

Element C. Develop the individual: Tap into the power of giving your best gifts.

The Task at Hand: Contribute your gifts. Make a commitment to stick with the work and follow through on what you said you would do. Stay open to learning as you go.

It is hard to keep coming back to what is needed, especially when the work gets difficult and may not be as exciting as meeting new people and dreaming of what is possible. For individuals, it can feel like there are enough others to do the work. However, the group is made up of individuals—and every person matters and is needed! This may be the time to take stock and help each person remember why he or she joined. This is the time to help each person remember what attracted him/her and why he/she cared enough to join in the first place.

Are you still being intentional about how each person's passion and gift connects to the work? What does each person need to learn in order to do the work better? How can work be structured so that people can try out some new skills and take some new risks? What are the learning edges that can bring some excitement and feeling of accomplishment?

And, sometimes, people just need a break to get refreshed so that they can come back energized. For those who need to step away for some rejuvenation, make sure that they know they will be welcomed back when they are ready.

What you need to complete the task:

- Discipline
- Breaks to avoid burn-out, if necessary
- Ability to ask others for help
- Patience.



What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:

Element D. Make the change: Find the power in taking on a community initiative that advances your community.

The Task at Hand: Implement the plan. Work with partners to implement the plan. Keep adapting the plan as you learn from your work.

You have been preparing to make the shift, advance the new policy, offer the new program, or work for the different outcome that brought your group together. You have dreamed and planned and now it is time to act. It is time for all of that passion to show up and move your collective action forward.

Whose support is crucial for your work to advance? How are you engaging them and keeping them connected? Now that you are acting, which of your allies have resources that can help you to reach your goal? As you progress, keep checking in with your allies to know where they are and how they are feeling.

Look for the new opportunities that you didn't plan on, but that are present now and ready to be used. When something doesn't work in the way that you expected, stop and look again. Take time to reflect and be honest about what is happening and what needs to be adjusted. Gather the collective wisdom of your group to assess whether you need to stay with the original plan of action or whether you need to adapt the plan based on your new learning. Having Plan A, Plan B and Plan C can help your group be open to what is changing and what is needed in this moment to move forward.

One of the KLCC groups always "goes where it is open." This means looking for

the place that is ready to make the shift or try something different rather than hammering away at the place that doesn't want to budge. The main point is to stay on top of what is actually happening and be intentional about the next step.

In earlier sections we talked about the importance of patience. In one KLCC community, a school board member said that a particular policy key to the work of the group would be adopted "over his dead body." The group kept working with the school and this board member, patiently developing a deep relationship and shared understanding of the issue. Eventually the school board member recommended the major change in policy to the rest of the school board. Patience and persistence paid off. There are also times when what is called for is to act now! Pay attention to which of these approaches will help your group reach its long-term goals.

As you do this work, keep capturing the stories of the people who are involved. Keep sharing the stories of your progress within your group and with the community. This is no time to be shy about your victories and your steps forward. Keep looking for the signs that the change you seek is actually doing what you thought it would. Is the new program/policy/action making a difference in the lives of people you care about? Include your community allies in the conversation, and make sure that the lines of communication are open both within and without the group.

AND CELEBRATE YOUR VICTORIES—EVEN THE SMALL ONES! Often, people are so engaged in the work that they forget where they started and how far they have come. Take a moment to look back and be proud of your achievements.



What you need to complete the task:

- Listening skills
- Ability to provide and receive constructive criticism
- Gusto for the work
- Community allies on board with the shared purpose
- Flexibility to adjust the plan and/or willpower to get back on track.

What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:



“ *The complexity of sustainability for a collective leadership exercise like KLCC is actually very exciting because you’re talking about examining change on four dimensions: the individual, the organization, the community, and then the particular projects or initiatives that served as vehicles for growth and change. For each [Session One site] there was a measure of progress or success in every dimension, but each community has been careful to understand which pieces of the longer-term puzzle need to be brought forward and sustained and which pieces do not. This is the challenge of sustainability.* ”

— *Kwesi Rollins, Institute for Educational Leadership and a member of the KLCC One Coordinating Organization.*

Stage 4 – Deepen, Sustain, Make Work a Way of Life

Element A. Know Community: Understand the power of place, culture and history.

The Task at Hand: Work Becomes part of the Community Fabric. Expand the capacity of the network to engage in other issues. Keep welcoming others to expand the work to new arenas.

Engage, engage, engage. Engage everyone in the community in as many creative ways as you can imagine to reach and to involve them. Very few people will show up to every meeting and every event. Even so, they will stay interested if you keep them informed of what you are doing and give them opportunities to contribute in ways that work for them. People who don't come to meetings are often waiting for you to tell them what to do.

The impact KLCC groups have achieved lies partly in their success in motivating community people to be involved in their projects. In the experience of the KLCC fellowships, when people don't show up, it is not that they are apathetic; many do not know how to get involved or do not feel connected. Following are some places to start that may help with increasing involvement:

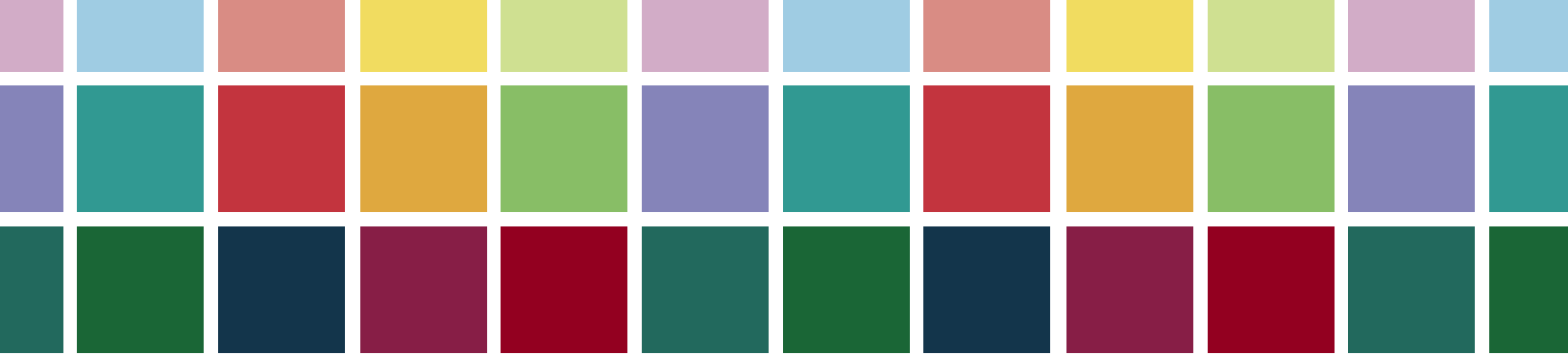
1. Many of the people that you want to include in community change are still working to secure basic survival needs. It is hard to find energy for community change when you are hungry or worried about shelter. Providing support for child care, transportation costs and providing food at meetings can make the difference for some people in being able to participate.
2. The process of successfully building public will to act often begins with building the personal will of group members. In the process of getting clear about why it matters to do this work, group members develop and define relationships that then move towards building public will for the change.
3. Articulate your common goal. It is easier for people to get behind a focused group whose purpose is clear.
4. Be clear about what community need you are addressing and how people can be involved; how they can act to support the change.
5. Part of networking and learning about the community is figuring out where the fire in the community is located. What do people really care about? Once you have found the fire's locus, it becomes your group's job to direct that passion by articulating these hot issues. This draws people out and fuels their spirit to serve.

6. Take note of who is already involved, and ask: Who is missing? Make it your mission to locate these people and reach out for their ideas and energy. Sometimes all it takes is an invitation.
7. Create community conversation about change so that people can get used to the idea of things being different.
8. Don't be discouraged; understand that it will take time to cultivate public will because it often means changing deeply rooted attitudes.
9. The sense of belonging, bonding, finding common ground, and sharing passion leads to the "we will" movement that engages community change. As your movement grows, the more numbers you have, the more people will join. People enjoy being a part of something.

Your group staying positive and passionate will be the best draw. Others will want to be with you when you present a positive energy focused on a deep belief that you can make the change that you care about.

What you need to complete the task:

- Memory of what you learned about the community
- Sensitivity
- Listening skills
- Energy
- Hope
- Ability to clearly articulate your group's purpose and work.



What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:

Element B. Build a strong team: Cross boundaries to find the power of collective leadership.

The Task at Hand: Include new partners. Create a process and structure to support continuing work. Invite and nurture new members; share your lessons.

How are you going to keep the group together in order to continue the work? The reality is that even though each member has made a personal commitment to the work, life happens. People move on both physically and interest-wise, and the timeframe for individual commitments varies.

The advantage of collective leadership is that it provides a framework to support people coming and going. It is important to be intentional about continuing to invite and nurture new members as well as welcoming back members who are ready to return. It helps to have a defined process to share what you are learning. As your group grows and evolves, the cyclical nature of collective leadership will become evident. You will likely find the group returning to the Build Trust and Co-Construct Purpose stages. This is a healthy process as it allows the new members to become part of the group and gives the old members a natural way to check in and make adjustments to the direction of the group.

A persistent concern among those involved in community change is sustainability. Burn-out, evaporating funding, and the transition of people leaving and joining the group are all common challenges. Recognizing and working with this reality helps to ensure that your work

will continue once the original funding is gone or the original people have moved on.

Leadership for sustainability:

1. Invites new people. They bring new ideas, new energy, and new networks.
2. Maintains a position of fluidity and inclusiveness. This helps to build new alliances and allows people to take breaks and come back to help once they are refreshed.
3. Ensures that information is disseminated so the community is aware of what is happening and what the group's needs are. KLCC fellows in rural areas often have found word of mouth to be better than the written word.
4. Engages in and offers community-based leadership training programs to continue expanding what community members can do.
5. Keeps inviting new allies and finding the mutual purposes that keep everyone excited and energized.

What you need to complete the task:

- An open and inclusive attitude to newcomers
- Ability to let others leave when the time is right for them
- A party! It's important to take time to celebrate your successes.



What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:

Element C. Develop the individual: Tap into the power of giving your best gifts.

The Task at Hand: Help develop others. Reflect on what you have learned. How will you stay connected to the work? How will you share your learning?

As the work goes forward, build in time for people to reflect on the lessons learned from the group experience. Questions could include:

- What have you been exposed to that you want to bring to other aspects of your life?
- What skills have you picked up that you can apply elsewhere?
- What do you have to offer others based on what you have learned?

Perhaps participants' personal involvement means something different now than it did when they first started the work—maybe it's time to continue formal education or run for a public office. Many members of KLCC groups have found this to be the case. Once they have had an experience that let them see their own talents, they have wanted to develop them more and have felt comfortable stepping into more formal leadership roles.

What you need to complete the task:

- Time for each of you to reflect on your life
- Compassion for yourself
- Someone to listen to your ideas and give you feedback
- Willingness to share what you have learned with others.



What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:

Element D. Make the change: Find the power in taking on a community initiative that advances your community.

The Task at Hand: Sustain the work. Work with community partners, funders and others to sustain the work toward the shared vision.

Now that you have had some success in one area of need in your community, you can apply what you have learned to new areas of need. The relationships with allies, funders, friends and collaborators that you've cultivated throughout the work can be a great basis for moving on to tackle other issues of concern. Be creative in how you work with your partners and how you consider using funding sources. One KLCC community got funding from federal programs to reduce drug and alcohol use to pay for the continuation of their mentoring program.

You need an ongoing evaluation process to support the leadership in attaining their goals as the plan continues to evolve. A key element that has contributed to some KLCC groups' success has been their emphasis on participatory evaluation as a learning and feedback tool. This type of evaluation enables people to make adjustments as they go based on what they see is and is not working.

KLCC groups that have succeeded in continuing their work have learned to effectively disseminate information and develop interest in the community. When these groups informed others, they did not merely tell people about the work, but actively showed people how to become involved and invited their participation.

Communication with the general community must be frequent so that people know what the group is working on and what the successes are. This can increase community awareness and help to build public will for your project because people like to be involved in successful endeavors.

Communication is absolutely integral to keeping your group viable for the long-term. The successes of your group, who the members are, and the group goals all need to be conveyed. For community-based leadership to work, the community must know you exist.

Your leadership group should:

1. Consider how to best continue broadening your audience. Who else do you want to know about your work?
2. Be able to capture the essence of the organization in a short, clear description—short enough to be in a press release.
3. Make your communication educational. What will an audience have learned from reading or listening to your message?
4. Be frequent and consistent in messages. There are a lot of messages competing for your audience's attention. If you don't want to be forgotten, don't let your organization slip out of view by neglecting communication opportunities. Don't confuse your audience by sending out conflicting information.



What you need to complete the task:

- Tenacity and perseverance
- A process and plan for evaluation
- Communication skills
- Ability to clearly articulate your group's purpose and work
- Open and inviting attitude
- Follow through with people to keep relationships alive.

What else do you think is needed?

Outline your approach:



“ *KLCC was the seed that was planted. Now the tree is bearing fruit. Our list of successes through collective leadership is many and varied. Our partnerships across communities have grown and will continue to grow. Indeed our strength has come from these relationships and the chance to share ideas and resources. As a result, we have youth leadership and youth mentoring; community business and school partners in the implementation of a school store; more parents active in the life of the school; connections with community artists and students in the implementation of an arts program; environmental learning opportunities; expanded opportunities for life-long learning through the community education programs and the list goes on. What started as a timid little tree of participants has grown and blossomed.* ”

— *Sherry Timmerman-Goodpaster, project leader, KLCC One, Northwestern Wisconsin*

A Final, Welcoming Thought:

The KLCC model demands the hard work of transformation and, in turn, offers its surprising, gratifying rewards. One of the most powerful messages from several of the KLCC groups has been that their work is not a project or a program—it is a way of life. They formed to enrich the lives of their community and all their work is directed towards this goal. People come and go; projects complete and new ones get started; but, always, the work is about creating the relationships and space to keep coming back to the deep purpose they share and letting that deep connection direct them to their next endeavor. We wish you the same.



“ We are working together for a good cause, getting to know each other and having fun while we work towards our innovative goal of impacting the future of American Indian education. With our work in education through the Kellogg Foundation, our work at our jobs and our work at home we can help to make our community’s dreams possible ... If the community and its people can work together, there is nothing that we cannot do together. ”

— Nichelle DeCora, fellow, KLCC One, Twin Cities, Minnesota



About Kellogg Leadership For Community Change

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation established the Kellogg Leadership for Community Change (KLCC) initiative in 2001 in response to the question: “What kind of leadership is needed in our communities to address the challenges of our time?” KLCC is about community-based organizations developing leadership that is collective, shaped by a keen understanding and love of place, and committed to creating sustainable community change. KLCC explores how we can improve the institutions and systems that provide services in communities by engaging those often left out of decision making. KLCC is based on a profound belief that to address the significant challenges of our time, we need to use every person’s gifts and talents. When the whole range of voices is included in community processes and making decisions, the quality of the decisions is improved.

KLCC was envisioned as a 15-year program with five, three-year sessions. The inaugural session focused on Strengthening Public Will and Action Towards Quality Teaching and

Learning. Six communities from around the country participated in that session. Session Two of KLCC began in 2005, includes five communities, and is focused on Valuing and Building Youth and Adult Partnerships to Advance Just Communities.

A host agency is selected for each participating KLCC community. The host agencies are expected to expand their boundaries by developing a group of individuals drawn from all sectors of the local community who will support each agency in its efforts to advance real change in the community. Each host agency also creates a leadership team to guide the participants in a learning journey as they work on community change projects. The host agencies also become part of a national learning community, which reflects on each group’s collective leadership experiences and learns how they might work together in new ways. For more information about KLCC, its participating communities and partner organizations, visit: www.klccleadership.org

Additional Resources

Additional KLCC Framework resources are available on the KLCC Web site. You may wish to consult these as you explore more deeply how The Framework tool might be applied to your situation. Primary among these resources are expanded blueprints of The Framework (one for each KLCC Session). The expanded Framework grids are more comprehensive than the summary version featured in this workbook. They feature detailed questions that are asked during each of the stages and a series of expected outcomes. Also available online are an assortment of activities and tools that groups can use as they work through the various Framework stages. You'll find these items and more at: www.klccleadership.org.

Acknowledgements

Living into the spirit of collective leadership, the KLCC Framework and workbook are examples of what can emerge when a diverse group of people, working under shared objectives, comes together to create something new that advances their work. We are pleased to acknowledge the contributions of those who helped breathe life into the Framework and this publication.

While many people at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation have been instrumental in conceiving and supporting KLCC, we extend special gratitude to Teresa Behrens, Rick Foster, Valorie Johnson, Robert Long, Christine Kwak, Gail McClure, Frank Taylor and Ali Webb, without whose wisdom and support none of this work would have been possible. As partners in the KLCC One Coordinating Organization, The Center for Ethical Leadership (www.ethicalleadership.org) and the Institute for Educational Leadership (www.iel.org) worked together to develop the Framework tool and amass its content. Particular thanks to Marty Blank, Betty Hale, Dale Nienow, Kwesi Rollins and, most especially, Karma Ruder who served as lead writer and shepherded the project through to completion.

Elayne Dorsey, Hartley Hobson Wensing and Wendy Wheeler, at The Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development (www.theinnovationcenter.org), provided invaluable input and a trove of resource materials, particularly those pertaining to youth-adult partnerships. The Innovation Center is a partner in the KLCC Two Coordinating Organization.

Abundant appreciation goes to workbook authors Stephanie Pierce and Karma Ruder, to Ruder's colleagues at CEL, IEL and the Innova-



tion Center who provided editorial feedback, and to Anneliese M. Bruner, Cheryl D. Fields, Heather Boucher, Michael Boucher, Myrna Schlegel, Ali Webb and Zara Snapp who helped conceptualize, edit and design the workbook. Additional thanks are extended to Maenette Benham for lending her insights and resources as a member of the KLCC national evaluation team; and to our Web designer James Platz at Online Architecture.

Thanks to our photographers: Rafael Arvizu Derr, Anita Big Spring, Jim Blow, Nichelle DeCora, Cheryl Fields, John Guthrie, Patrick Halladay, Veronica Rivera and Issac J. Singleton, Sr.

Finally, our deepest gratitude extends to the 11 communities and nearly 300 participants involved in the first two sessions of KLCC:

Session One

- Public Policy and Education Fund of New York – Buffalo, New York
- The New Mexico Community Foundation and the Pueblo of Laguna Department of Education – Eastern Cibola County, New Mexico
- Llano Grande Center for Research and Development – Edcouch-Elsa, Texas
- MIGIZI Communications – Twin Cities, Minnesota
- New Paradigm Partners – Northwestern Wisconsin
- Salish Kootenai College – Flathead Reservation, Montana

Session Two

- Big Creek People in Action – Caretta, West Virginia
- Boys & Girls Club of Benton Harbor – Benton Harbor, Michigan
- Lummi CEDAR Project – Bellingham, Washington
- Mi Casa Resource Center for Women – Denver, Colorado
- Roca – Chelsea, Massachusetts

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Additional Notes:



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Sometimes, the very act of coming together is an important first step toward crafting and sculpting a shared vision. In KLCC Session One, New Mexico evaluator Shelly Valdez recalls that developing a shared vision was essential for her group to begin working together as a team.

“ I think we all believed it was very necessary because of our historical boundaries and especially with the issue of education We didn't want our kids to suffer and we needed to break down those barriers. ”

— Shelly Valdez, evaluator, KLCC One, Eastern Cibola County, New Mexico

