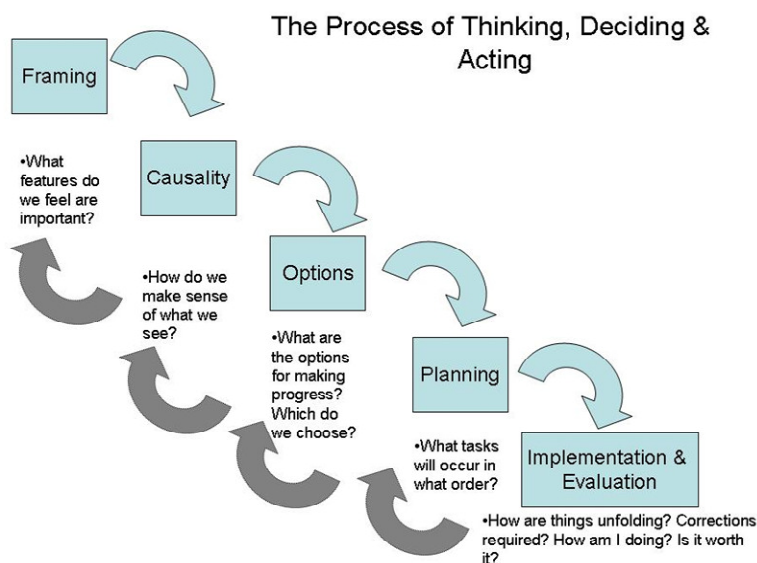


Developing a Framework for Change

What is a Framework for Change?

A **Framework for Change** is a collaborative group's shared working hypothesis of how a group intends to change the system.

Elements of a Framework for Change



More than a summary account of the community's plan of action, the Framework is meant to surface the guiding ideas behind the initiative so that they can be critically examined as the work unfolds: Are the community's key ideas about poverty reduction being borne out in practice? Based on the initiative's practical experience, in what ways does its thinking need to be revised? By making its ideas explicit from the outset, the community establishes a foundation for its own learning. The lessons it draws from its experience will help build the body of knowledge for the wider field.

Learning and Evaluation for
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Why should a collaborative develop a Framework for Change?

- To communicate the group's 'strategic thinking' about how the systems will be shifted as a result of the project – rather than the particular strategies, plans or activities that reflect that thinking.
- To help a collaborative make more explicit and deliberate choices about strategies and activities.
- To better understand what to evaluate and how to assess progress.
- To ensure formal reflection sessions as part of the development and delivery process.
- To help people inside and outside the collaborative get a sense of what is happening in the community.
- As key resource in exploring overall patterns of effectiveness in doing the work.

Framework for Change Questions

Area	Questions to Address
Framing the Issue <i>Who are we?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the issue/challenge/problem your collaboration is trying to address? • What does your collaboration see as the key factors or root causes contributing to issue/challenge/problem in your community?
Aspiration <i>What is the change we want to see?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your group's aspirations? • How many individuals do you expect to benefit and in what ways? In what timeline? • What concrete changes will be made in the community's willingness and capacity and in the systems and policies underlying the issue, challenge or problem?
Approach <i>What is our theory of change?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the leverage points or drivers to focus on to bring about change? • What specific strategies will your initiative pursue in order to achieve these goals? What are the key roles that your collaboration will play? • What key principles or beliefs will guide you as you work on this approach?
Capacity <i>What is our capacity for the change we desire?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is involved in your collaboration? How representative are they are of the different sectors in the community? How are they involved in your collaboration? • Do your partners have the commitment, resources and influence required to successfully unfold your framework for change? • What are the financial, technical and human resources required? To what extent are these in place?
Signs of Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you know if you are making progress? What are the key indicators of progress you anticipate seeing as your initiative unfolds? What are the signs that your initiative is not making progress?
Summarizing the Overall Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stepping back from the details of your plan, how would you sum up in a phrase or two the essence of your approach? • Is this description accurate? Compelling? Reflect a realistic approach?

Reviewing and Renewing the Framework for Change

At least annually, or at regular intervals, the Framework for Change should be reviewed and renewed. A group's Framework for Change will and should shift as its efforts unfold. The Framework for Change allows collaboratives to adapt to an ever changing landscape (e.g. learnings, community changes, new players, etc.).

Factors prompting the review of the Framework for Change are:

- New perspectives emerging from learning and/or arrival of new participants
- Feedback on the current approach
- Shifts in the environment in which the group operates
- Combinations of the above

Resources

- **Learning and Evaluation for Vibrant Communities Trail Builders: A Pan-Canadian Process.** http://tamarackcommunity.ca/downloads/vc/VC_Learning_Evaluation_092110.pdf
- **Community-Based Strategies. Measuring Community Change.** <http://tamarackcommunity.ca/g3s26.html>