USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Photo: Shutterstock

Photo: LINC Lesotho

Photo: UNDP

Photo: LINC Mexico

COLLECTIVE ACTION IN PROGRAMMING:

A Practical Guide for Facilitators

JULY 2022 Version 1.0.

COLLECTIVE ACTION IN PROGRAMMING:

A Practical Guide for Facilitators

JULY 2022 Version 1.0.

This practical guide is made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the sole responsibility of LINC and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Foreword

In her Georgetown University speech in November 2021, USAID Administrator Samantha Power conveyed her vision for confronting the greatest challenges of our time, advancing inclusive development, stabilization, and humanitarian partnerships, and building a more diverse, empowered, and effective USAID. Administrator Power said "We must offer people, not a vision merely of international development but a vision of inclusive development…we have to broaden our coalition to allow people from more diverse backgrounds and partners of all kinds to participate in our mission. We must make aid more accessible… we must shift our thinking to be more focused on the voices and needs of the most marginalized. We must make aid more equitable…we must listen to what our partners in the countries where we work are asking of us. We must make aid more responsive."

Collective Action — an intentional and agreed-upon process that engages interested parties to take joint actions in support of shared objectives — is critical to helping us achieve this and shift more leadership, ownership, decision making, evaluation and implementation to the local people and institutions who have the capability, connectedness, and credibility to propel change in their own communities. The Collective Action approach prioritizes engaging stakeholders directly to build cohesion and support them to lead efforts to enact their own agendas. This kind of action will lead to greater success, producing lasting change.

The Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL) is one of the USAID actors taking action to advance the Administrator's vision for localization and inclusive development. As we work to build more equitable and inclusive responses to today's global challenges, we must build upon the priorities, knowledge, lived experiences, aspirations, and expertise of the people who face them every day. The Collective Action in Programming: A Practical Guide for Facilitators represents an opportunity and a tool to advance localization. Collective Action is an intentional and agreed-upon process that engages interested parties to take joint actions in support of shared objectives. The Collective Action approach prioritizes engaging stakeholders directly to build cohesion and support them to lead efforts to enact their own agendas. This kind of action will lead to greater success, producing lasting change.

Collaborative approaches such as Collective Action have flourished in recent years at USAID and in the larger development community. Yet, until now most Mission teams have designed programs using lessons and guidance targeting settings in the United States and specific sectors, or gleaned from academic books and journals. This Collective Action in Programming: A Practical Guide for Facilitators provides a clear and practical set of resources to help USAID advance localization goals and objectives. This Guide marks the first time USAID has compiled lessons of Collective Action from within its own programs, and puts into practice the principles articulated in a range of recent USAID policies and technical resources.

This Guide is significant because it addresses the needs of both USAID programming teams and facilitators in the implementing community. It bridges funding, operations, and communications.

Recognizing that each operational context is unique, this Guide:

- Discusses the relevance of Collective Action for a given context and presents discussion questions for whether it should be considered;
- Describes the roles, relationships and skills needed for the different actors in a Collective Action and resources to build cohesion;
- Identifies types of momentum required for success and provides guidance and considerations for each; and,
- Provides illustrative tips for monitoring, evaluation, and learning for Collective Action, considerations for sustainability of such an effort, and reference materials for implementation.

This Guide provides a clear and practical set of resources to support the renewed focus on localizing development. It also puts into practice the principles articulated in a range of recent USAID policies and technical resources. The Guide's authors drew upon case studies of Collective Action from 10 USAID Missions and were guided by a Technical Review Committee comprised of representatives from PPL and the Bureaus for Management, Development, Democracy, and Innovation, (DDI), and Global Health. I am grateful to PPL's Innovative Design Team and its contractor, LINC, a U.S. small-business awarded under the Innovative Design Services Contract, for developing these tools with a commitment to quality and rigor. Recognizing that the job of engaging local stakeholders to collaborate on a common goal is complex in itself, and that programming Collective Action within USAID requires working within the Agency's unique timelines, rules, and regulations that influence how programs are designed and delivered, I give special thanks to everyone who shared their time and experience.

PPL is pleased to see this Guide help deliver on Administrator Power's vision while advancing the Bureau's commitment to elevating USAID thought leadership, shape U.S. Government and international development policy and practice, and challenge ourselves, the Agency, and our partners to achieve sustainable development outcomes.

Michele Sumilas, *Assistant to the Administrator*
Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning
April 19, 2022

Table of Contents

Module	Subsections	Page
Introduction	**Foreword** from USAID	3
	How to Use This Guide	6
	The underlying research for the guide and a **glossary of key terms**	7
Module 1: Understanding Collective Action	Background information needed before designing or implementing Collective Action, including the definition of Collective Action and how it compares to other approaches.	10
Module 2: Preparing for Collective Action	Before launching a new Collective Action effort, important topics to research and considerations to take, including potential tools, outreach and workplan, and working with existing coalitions.	16
Module 3: Roles in Collective Action	Key roles and responsibilities of organizers and participants for a Collective Action effort. Includes special attention to the role of USAID and power dynamics.	24
Module 4: Facilitating Collective Action	The need for facilitators and hubs to maintain momentum in three areas: Participation, Operations, and Results. Also discusses other foundational factors for facilitators.	28
Module 5: Planning for Success: Participation	LINC's research identified important factors common in effective Collective Action that help maintain momentum for Participation: Convening Power, Government Buy-In, Range of Actors to Engage, and Geographic Scope.	32
Module 6: Planning for Success: Operations	LINC's research identified important factors common in effective Collective Action that help maintain momentum for Operations: Capable Leadership Structure, Funding for Activities, Internal and External Communications, and Joint Planning, Decision-Making & Action.	43
Module 7: Planning for Success: Results	LINC's research identified important factors common in effective Collective Action that help maintain momentum for Results: Adaptation, Value Proposition, and Commitment to Action.	55
Module 8: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) for Collective Action	Applying complexity-aware MEL for Collective Action, and recognizing the need to measure cohesion of coalition members, including recommended tools and illustrative indicators.	66
Module 9: Sustaining Collective Action	Determining whether sustainability of Collective Action is desirable, when to begin sustainability planning, and what is included in a Collective Action sustainability plan.	70
Module 10: Reference Materials and Resources	A compilation of links to reference materials valuable for facilitating Collective Action, including background information on different models of Collective Action and tools to support Collective Action processes.	73

How to Use This Guide

In recent years and across scores of countries, USAID and its partners have increasingly employed Collective Action (CA) to bring diverse stakeholders together to take joint action toward shared complex development challenges in numerous sectors and landscapes. The Innovative Design (iDesign) team, part of USAID's Policy Planning and Learning Bureau (PPL/SPP), is dedicated to empowering USAID Missions and staff to be more innovative throughout the program cycle by supporting Missions with knowledge, tools, skills, and enabling environments. In line with this purpose, USAID's iDesign team commissioned LINC under the Innovative Design Services contract to research Collective Action through a case study approach and to develop utilization-focused tools for practitioners. This Practical Guide aims to assist organizers and facilitators to better plan for, support, and lead CA in programming.

How This Guide is Organized

This Guide is organized into ten modules, each covering a specific topic or step important for organizing and facilitating CA. They are designed to provide practical guidance and tips on how to apply CA principles in a relatively concise, easy-to-reference format that can be utilized as needed. In this way, users need not necessarily read the entire guide in sequence, but rather refer to those modules applicable in the moment. You may find that completing a step in one module may lead you to retrace your work in an earlier module, as many of the components are interrelated and, in general, development is an iterative process. Throughout the document we have hyperlinked all references to other modules to facilitate navigation and quick reference. The ten modules are:

- **Module 1**: Understanding Collective Action
- **Module 2**: Preparing for Collective Action
- **Module 3**: Roles in Collective Action
- **Module 4**: Facilitating Collective Action
- **Module 5**: Planning for Success: Participation
- **Module 6**: Planning for Success: Operations
- **Module 7**: Planning for Success: Results
- **Module 8**: MEL for Collective Action
- **Module 9**: Sustaining Collective Action
- **Module 10**: Reference Materials and Resources

Who Should Use This Guide

This Guide has been organized and developed specifically to support organizers (sometimes called "hubs" or "backbones") and facilitators of Collective Action efforts to align multiple stakeholders in their work to address a shared problem or objective. In particular, the language, guidance, tips, and recommendations are targeted to individuals or organizations that are starting to work on a USAID award that includes CA. That includes those who may be responding to a USAID solicitation for an award using CA, those who may have received a USAID award that now needs to plan and execute for CA, or those who may have been engaged through a USAID award to provide administrative, logistical, and/or facilitation services for a CA coalition. While those are the primary target audiences, the Guide advocates for a team approach to CA, so its content is relevant to USAID staff supporting or overseeing such awards, or for USAID implementing partners who may be designing or managing sub-awards that use CA. As noted below, a separate CA Practical Guide for USAID Missions provides more targeted support to USAID technical staff designing or overseeing a program that will benefit from CA.

Based on the target audience for this Guide, the content incorporates several assumptions that should not dissuade the reader from using this Guide even if the assumptions do not fit their situation.

- **The CA effort is supported directly or indirectly by USAID.** Much of the language and the recommendations included in this Guide fits with USAID's terminology, frameworks, processes, and regulations. However, the content of the Guide will be useful for any organization or individual seeking to facilitate CA for any donor (or with non-donor resources).
- **Your organization is planning to take on the role of "hub" or of "facilitator."** The recommendations and tips in this Guide assume that the reader will be taking on a role that provides organizational, administrative, logistical, and/or facilitation support to the CA coalition of stakeholders. The Guide still provides valuable information for organizations and individuals taking on other roles in the CA effort (see **Module 3** for more on roles) or seeking to learn more about CA in general.
- **Your organization is able to make design decisions for effective CA in your context.** The language and guidance around decisions for effective CA included in each module assume that your organization is in a position to make those decisions, or to facilitate them for the coalition. However, it may often be the case that USAID has already made some of the decisions discussed. In those cases, the Practical Guide for USAID Missions still recommends USAID listen to the concerns of the coalition and allow flexibility to change decisions, but you may have to negotiate that with your point of contact.

Accompanying USAID Mission Guide

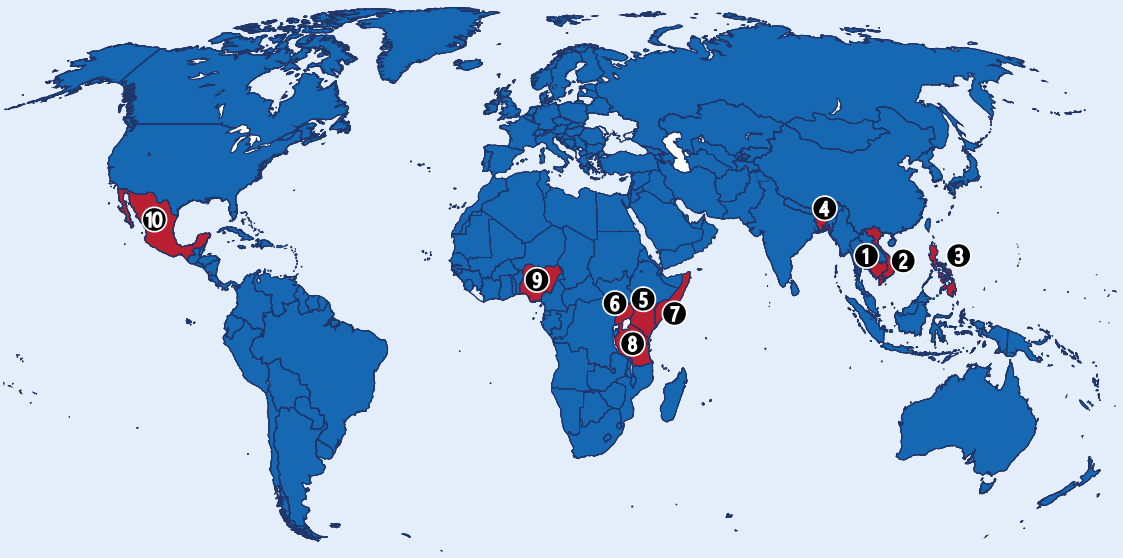
In addition to this CA Facilitator's Guide, the team has developed a second **Practical Guide for USAID Missions** targeted to staff at USAID missions who are designing or overseeing programming that uses CA. While some sections of both guides are similar, there may be valuable information in each guide that is helpful to both audiences. The contents of each guide were prepared based on research of case study examples of CA and input from USAID Mission staff, USAID implementing partners, and local stakeholders in approximately 20 countries.

Background Research and Case Studies

The guidance offered in this Guide draws on research conducted through a comprehensive literature review of CA in USAID programs, and was backed by a diverse portfolio of ten **Case Studies** conducted as part of this effort where USAID Missions have specifically applied multi-stakeholder CA methodologies and principles. These Case Studies, shown in the box below, examine the key factors, design decisions and the effectiveness of different CA approaches applied.

Case Studies

1. **Family Care First**, *Cambodia* (Child Social Services)
2. **Clean Air Green Cities**, *Vietnam* (Reducing Air Pollution)
3. **Mindanao Youth for Development**, *Philippines* (Youth)
4. **Bangladesh Livestock Coordination Group**, *Bangladesh* (Agricultural Value Chains)
5. **Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth**, *Kenya* (Resilience)
6. **Sanitation for Health**, *Uganda* (WASH)
7. **Core Group Polio Project**, *Horn of Africa* (Healthcare)
8. **Partnership for HIV-Free Survival**, *Tanzania* (Healthcare)
9. **Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement**, *Nigeria* (Advocacy and Governance)
10. **Transparency Rapid Response Project**, *Mexico* (Reducing Corruption)



Glossary of Key Terms

Before proceeding, it is worthwhile for the reader to review a brief glossary of terms for Collective Action used throughout this Guide.

Collective Action (CA)	An intentional and agreed-upon process that engages interested parties to take joint actions in support of shared objectives or a shared issue.
Coalition	A group of stakeholders participating in a CA effort.
Hub / Backbone	An organization or institution that provides the logistics, administrative functions, coordination, and/or management of the coalition's collaboration. When the hub role is undertaken by a body of representatives from multiple organizations or institutions, it is often referred to as a secretariat.
Convener	An organization, institution, or individual who invites and engages stakeholders to join a CA coalition as members. The convener may or may not be the same as the hub or the facilitator.
Facilitator	An organization, institution, or individual who helps the coalition work together, for example, to set a shared agenda or to make joint decisions. Remains neutral in discussions and decisions. The facilitator may or may not be the same as the hub or convener.
Participant / Member	The individuals, organizations, or institutions that participate as members of the CA coalition.
Stakeholder / Actor	Stakeholders or other actors with a vested interest in the shared problem, including those not participating in the coalition.
Shared Problem or Shared Issue	The development problem or challenge that brings together stakeholders to participate in CA. Note that initially not all stakeholders may define the problem or issue the same way, but through CA, the members come to a common understanding of the problem.
Shared Objective	In some cases, rather than defining a shared problem, stakeholders may agree on a shared vision or objective to which they will align their actions.
Joint Actions or Joint Decision Making	The CA coalition members agree to coordinate their actions through a joint approach to addressing the shared problem. This requires processes for coalition decision making and planning for mutually-reinforcing actions.

MODULE 1

Understanding Collective Action

IN THIS MODULE:

What is Collective Action?
Effective Collective Action
Co-creation and Collective Action
Integration with Other USAID Frameworks

Before designing or starting a Collective Action (CA) effort, it is important to understand why this approach to development challenges is valuable for your work and what CA entails. USAID and its partners have been supporting and implementing CA for many years and this Guide is based on a review and lessons learned from example cases in USAID programming. At the end of this module, you should have a better understanding of what Collective Action is, how it is defined by USAID, and how it differs from other collaborative approaches and from direct implementation.

WHAT IS COLLECTIVE ACTION?

Collective Action is *an intentional and agreed-upon process that engages interested parties to take joint actions in support of shared objectives or a shared issue*. This definition highlights key points that differentiate it from other approaches in development. The CA process identifies and actively involves relevant stakeholders to address the development challenges and opportunities of interest. Engaging stakeholders consists of a coordinated, deliberate effort - and involves aligning and integrating the actions of the coalition.

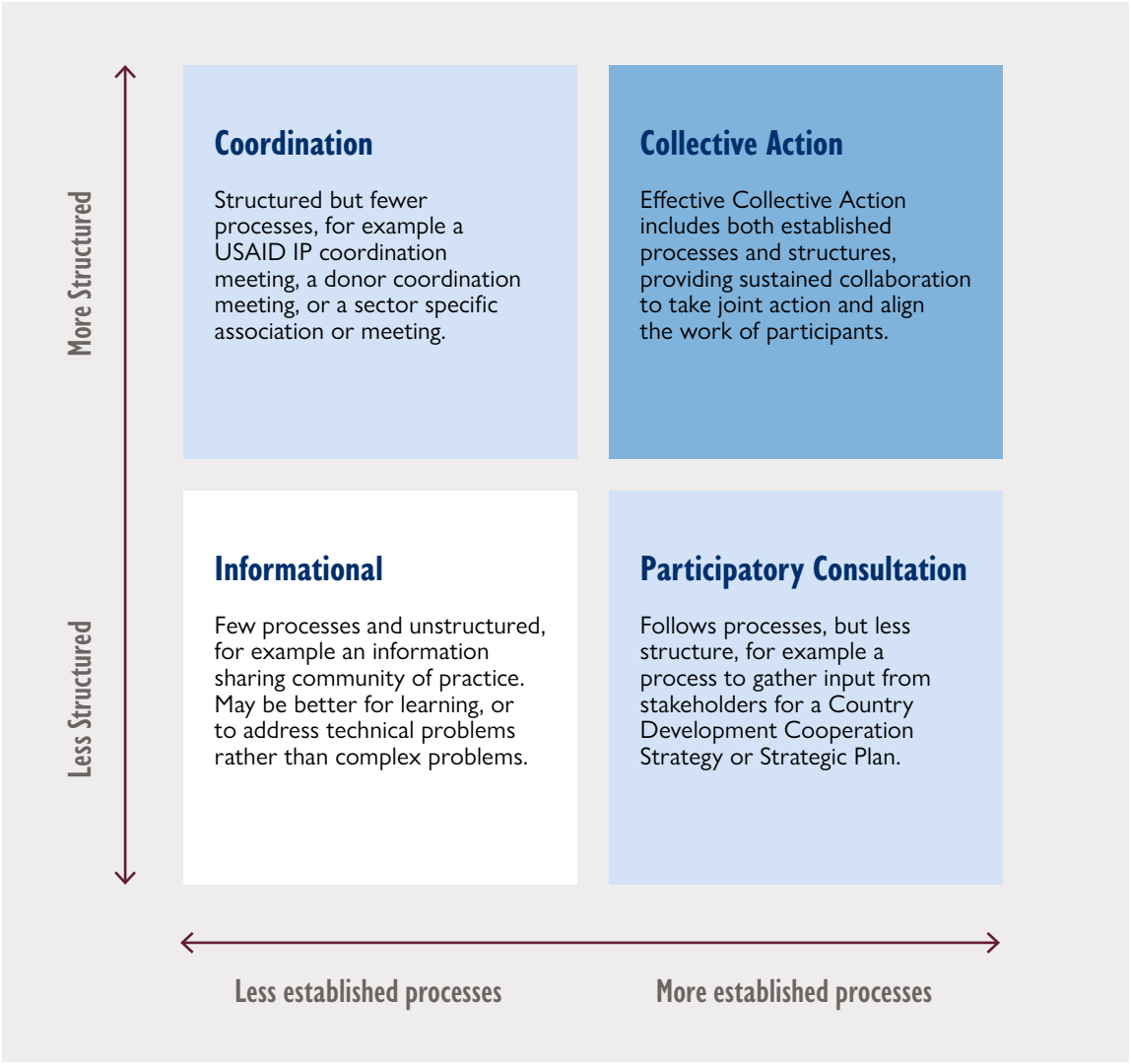
Collective Action can be a highly effective means to address complex development problems,[1] such as poverty, access to education, climate change, child mortality, access to potable water, corruption, and more. These types of challenges often exceed the mandates of individual organizations and institutions involved and/or competing efforts by these stakeholders lessen their collective results due to unintended consequences and reliance on "perverse" incentives.

Collaborative approaches to address shared problems require both structures and processes, though the relative amounts may vary. For instance, a member association for organizations in a specific sector, or a sector-specific coordination meeting typically has fewer set processes, but a more established structure, including who is a member or expected to attend, and internal and external communications protocols. Alternatively, participatory stakeholder consultations such as those facilitated during the development of an organization's strategic plan or for designing new programs generally follow an established process, but their respective structures may vary depending on the stakeholders or issue involved.

Collective Action describes a specific type of collaborative approach seeking to align and even integrate the work and objectives of the participants. Effective CA has higher degrees of both structures and processes. While CA is a more structured and intentional form of collaboration, it can utilize a variety

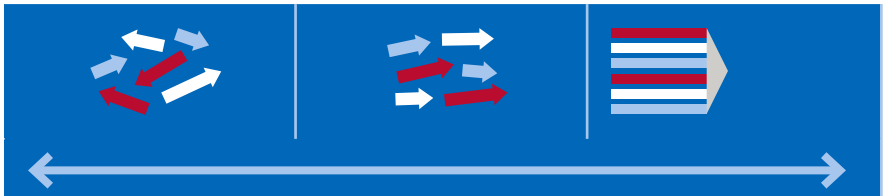
1 Complex problems are sometimes referred to as wicked problems, adaptive problems, systems problems or other terms. Collective Action can address any of these types of problems that are dynamic, differ depending on context, have multiple potential solutions, and do not have clear cause-effect relationships or clear root causes.

of methods depending on the context and needs around the issue and convened stakeholders. Defining the details and implementing a CA approach is the subject of the remainder of this Guide.



While the term "collaboration" at USAID covers a range of topics and activities, there are some features that differentiate CA. In the table below, we compare three steps along a "collaboration spectrum" from Individual Action (low collaboration), through Coordinated Action (moderate), to Collective Action (high collaboration) that USAID programs might apply to address a development problem. The first approach illustrates potential requirements and features of more traditional, direct implementation by a prime awardee leading activity implementation. The second approach illustrates moderate collaboration, with information sharing and coordination requiring intermediate levels of structure and process. The third approach illustrates Collective Action highlighting the alignment of participants and their joint actions.

Table: A Comparison of Program Approaches Along a Spectrum of Collaboration[2]



	Individual Action: Direct Implementation (low collaboration)	**Coordinated Action:** Information, Coordination, Consultation (moderate collaboration)	**Collective Action:** Alignment (high collaboration)
Approach Participants and Relationships	Individual organizations and end-users. Some formal/informal coordination with other organizations.	Participants include other stakeholders to the problem. May or may not be consistent in participation.	Members who participate consistently, preferably representing diverse stakeholders of the problem.
Level of Engagement in Collaboration	Low engagement between one organization and others.	Low-moderate engagement: May be one-time or infrequently repeated.	Moderate-high engagement: Sustained over time including regular communication, joint decisions and actions.
Shared Purpose	Organization has its own funding, objectives and mission. Other organizations may be working on the same problem with different goals or expected results.	Participants are all working toward the same general goals with respect to the problem.	Members align their understanding of explicitly agreed upon goals with respect to the problem.
Coordination of Action	Individual organization's actions informed by limited knowledge of others' actions.	Participant actions aligned toward the same goal, attempting to avoid duplication or contradiction.	Collective problem analysis and aligned purpose leads to joint decisions on actions.
Commitment from Stakeholders	Stakeholders / individual organizations retain full autonomy.	Participants have some accountability to one another or to the same end-users/goals.	Members have influence over one another's actions and are held accountable.

2 Adapted from USAID Sustainable WASH Systems Learning Partnership "Defining Collective Action Approaches in WASH" April 2020, and USAID/Vietnam Learns "Collective Action for Environmental Health Study" September 2020

EFFECTIVE COLLECTIVE ACTION

While CA can be designed and implemented in many ways depending on the context, shared problem, and local needs, there are some crucial decisions and strategies that can contribute to positive results. This Practical Guide provides information, advice, examples, and decision points to help make your CA effort effective. LINC's field research in preparing this Guide shows that CA in USAID programming manages several important factors that contribute to success regardless of the context. Those factors include:

- Appropriate roles for USAID, implementing partners, facilitators, and CA participants;
- An understanding of potential breadth of actors to engage and the geographic scope;
- Capable hub organization with convening authority to lead and focus the group's efforts;
- Ability and openness of convened stakeholders to adapt;
- Funding and material and human resources to support activities and interventions;
- Perceived value for all participants, accompanied by a commitment to action; and
- Government and institutional buy-in commensurate with their roles and responsibilities on the issue.

While each of these factors are consistently helpful to drive CA and make it more effective, it is not necessary to maximize all of them right from the start. It is possible to begin with a few, building on and improving them over time, and then deciding which are most feasible as the context evolves. More guidance on this and related issues can be found in **Module 3**, **Module 4**, **Module 5**, **Module 6**, and **Module 7**.

As well, some efforts may require a longer time, greater effort, or increased adaptation to be effective; this is natural, and can be illustrated by a number of real-life examples in USAID programs (see box below). It is important to remember that for CA, success is a matter of degree and can change over time. Whether a CA effort is achieving significant progress, moderate progress, or little progress, learning and adaptation can always improve effectiveness. Similarly, for CA, failure is not the opposite of success, but can be an important step in the process. Learning from the challenges or flaws in the design and implementation of CA is a powerful way to improve and create lasting impact.

Adaptation Leads to a Shared Vision

In one case study, the Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement activity in Nigeria, initial outreach to engage Ministry officials in a youth-focused CA effort proved unsuccessful until the CA facilitator identified a group of young legislators who shared a common vision with the coalition. The legislators used their influence with their more tenured colleagues to champion the work of the coalition and co-sponsor legislation that addressed their shared objectives. In this case, expanding the range of stakeholders and identifying those with a commitment to action helped to advance the CA effort.

CO-CREATION AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

Co-Creation, widely applied in commercial and creative industries and somewhat newly applied to development, is related to and aligned with CA. USAID defines Co-Creation as *"a design approach that brings people together to collectively produce a mutually valued outcome, using a participatory process that assumes some degree of shared power and decision-making. It is a time-limited process that focuses on generating a specific outcome. Co-creation is a technique that can be used at various points throughout the Program Cycle."*[3]

At USAID, Co-Creation is often used as a procurement process, to select and improve on concept papers initially developed individually. This, however, is only one usage of co-creation as a collaboration tool. Co-Creation is a method for consensus-building and design. It is often used by CA members throughout their work together - from inception through implementation. In the USAID context, the field research also revealed that several USAID teams used Co-Creation during the procurement process of designing and awarding CA activities.

INTEGRATION WITH OTHER USAID FRAMEWORKS

Many of the terms and concepts used in this Guide mirror those in other USAID frameworks and guidance. In fact, Collective Action builds on many of these other frameworks and can readily be integrated. For instance:

- Collective Action is one particular method of Strategic Collaboration, a part of USAID's Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) Framework.
- The ability of Collective Action to engage and empower local stakeholders encourages movement along the Locally Led Development Spectrum and integrates well with the Locally Led Development Checklist.
- The shared values between Co-Creation and Collective Action provide ample opportunity for integration as shown in the Co-Creation Discussion Note.
- The diverse perspective of the participants in Collective Action adds to the holistic understanding of situations as called for in the Local Systems Framework.
- The Local Capacity Development Policy also acknowledges the value of collective capacity for collaboration with and between local actors.

3 USAID's specific definition of co-creation is included in this Co-Creation Additional Help Discussion Note

MODULE 1: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Collective Action is an intentional and agreed-upon process that engages interested parties to take joint actions in support of shared objectives or a shared issue. CA is well suited for complex development problems that require multiple stakeholders working together.
- Collective Action is structured and has processes to support collaboration. It takes more time than individual action (such as direct implementation or individual organizations and projects) or coordinated action (raising stakeholders' awareness of one another's actions so they can avoid duplication). However, as CA aligns stakeholders' work and supports joint action, it can be more effective and more sustainable than individual or coordinated action.
- Collective Action can be designed and implemented in many different ways to suit the context and needs, but there are some important factors that contribute to effective CA in any context (guidance for those is provided in **Module 4**, **Module 5**, **Module 6**, and **Module 7**).

MODULE 2

Preparing for Collective Action

IN THIS MODULE:

Tools to Prepare for Collective Action
Stakeholder Communications and Outreach
Illustrative Workplan for Collective Action Launch
Collective Action in Challenging Contexts
Supporting an Existing Coalition vs. Establishing a New One

Preparing to effectively facilitate Collective Action (CA) requires a deep understanding of the issues being addressed, relevant stakeholders, and the landscape and systems in which local stakeholders may already be working to address the issue. With this knowledge, initial outreach can build into efforts to win support for CA from stakeholders.

This module will review and examine some of the tools that can be used to gather and analyze the necessary data and information to plan and launch CA effectively. The module also provides guidance on initial outreach to potential coalition members and other stakeholders, an illustrative example of a workplan for launching a CA effort, and a discussion of the trade-offs of supporting an existing coalition or establishing a new one. The tools and other preparation efforts are equally applicable for both CA efforts that plan to establish a new coalition and for those CA efforts that intend to leverage an existing network.

TOOLS TO PREPARE FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

There are several practical tools and frameworks that can be used to conduct the necessary research and analysis to effectively prepare to facilitate CA. Below, you will find a more detailed explanation of two examples of helpful tools - Stakeholder Analysis and Social Network Analysis - and **Module 10** provides references to many other potential tools for this phase for facilitation of CA. In certain cases, some of this research may have already been conducted by USAID Missions or other stakeholders, while in other cases it may benefit the facilitator to conduct this or additional research to fill gaps and complete the analysis of stakeholders, their roles and responsibilities, their networks, and the landscape. Regardless of the research or planning tools used, the following are a few basic tips to keep in mind:

- Before deciding what research to conduct and which tools to apply, clarify what role you are being asked to play for the design and implementation of CA. The terms in the Glossary in the **Introduction** and the discussion of roles in **Module 3** provide more detail on the different roles in implementing CA. The facilitator, convener, hub, or another role (or combination of roles) may have different needs for understanding the landscape.
- In planning the research phase and its integration with the overall CA effort, minimize the time between the initial interviews and mobilizing the coalition so as to maintain the momentum and keep the effort fresh in the minds of the stakeholders.
- Regardless of the research tool(s) applied, the researcher should be clear and transparent, introduce themselves, who they work for, and why they are conducting the research. It is best to explain that participation is voluntary and to obtain respondents' permission to use (and potentially share) the information in accordance with the plan.

- To begin a productive discussion and gain insight into perspectives around the issue, the researcher might initially pursue lines of questioning around challenges and opportunities in the sector, probing respondents to elaborate key points, provide recommendations to address the issue, and prioritize objectives that can be achieved through CA. In addition, participants in the research are often best placed to identify other key stakeholders to engage both in the preparation for CA and in the CA effort itself.
- Information gathered during the research phase should be shared with the respondents so that they can see the results and have an opportunity to provide feedback, to show that their input was valued, and to jumpstart dialogue and CA within the network. This is most effectively done after the data is preliminarily analyzed and before a final report is prepared to allow the stakeholders to provide input that can be incorporated into the report.

TOOL BOX
STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

A range of techniques or tools to identify and understand the needs and expectations of major interests inside and outside the project environment, thus helping to engage the right stakeholders in the right way.

Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

As a local actor working within the system around a particular issue, the CA hub and the facilitator will often have a relatively thorough understanding of the stakeholders and systems involved. Nevertheless, a systematic approach to identify and analyze stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities can be beneficial to gain a more complete understanding of the landscape, fill knowledge gaps, potentially identify additional stakeholders, and gather new perspectives on challenges and opportunities. **Module 3** has more information on roles in a CA effort.

Conducting a methodical stakeholder analysis can provide several benefits to the CA facilitator in addition to gathering useful data and information.

- **Mobilize and Inform:** Stakeholder research necessarily involves outreach and communication with the system stakeholders involved around the issue. Reaching out to them to gather information about their roles, responsibilities, and services provided in the space will help to mobilize them around the issue, inform them regarding potential future efforts, identify resources, and stimulate collective thinking. Informing and gaining support from the most influential stakeholders can help to mobilize the necessary human, financial, and time resources, making your efforts more likely to succeed. Meanwhile, not engaging certain influential stakeholders has sometimes resulted in them using their influence to impede formation of the CA coalition.
- **Gain Understanding and Consensus:** Early communication with stakeholders will help ensure that they fully grasp the intent and objectives of the proposed CA, give them opportunities to provide their own perspectives and better understand others', and build consensus around the issue that incorporates the different perspectives.
- **Anticipate and Plan:** Gaining a thorough understanding of stakeholders allows you to anticipate and predict their reactions to CA efforts as they develop, allowing you to plan and facilitate actions that are likely to gain consensus and support. Attracting the support of the most influential stakeholders can help to inform future interventions, improve the quality of the activity and attract resource commitments moving forward. Additionally, identifying existing networks, or even collaborative efforts that are underway is an important input to planning (the section at the end of this module discusses the trade-offs of working with existing coalitions).

While the specific research objectives may vary, there are generally three steps to follow in conducting stakeholder analysis:

- **Step 1: Identify Stakeholders:** Begin with a brainstorming process to identify who the stakeholders are and their perceived levels of prominence and influence. This can often be done through an internal exercise consisting of team brainstorming, team members' knowledge and experience, and historical or public data around the specific or comparable issues, potentially complemented with outreach to key informants that may possess a more intimate knowledge of the local systems and landscape. Consider the different types of stakeholders working or collaborating in the space, potentially including national and local government, public institutions, civil society, business, academic, and potentially other sectors of support and service providers. As stakeholders can be either organizations or individuals, keep in mind that you must ultimately communicate with people, so identify the correct individuals within the organization with whom to communicate. At this stage you may also identify existing networks of stakeholders that may be helpful to work with, or may be concerned about a duplication of effort.
- **Step 2: Survey Stakeholders and Conduct Research:** Once you have preliminarily identified the stakeholders, you should look to better understand their roles and responsibilities and their relative power, influence, and interest so that you can begin to plan who to include, how, and what to expect. For this step, you should reach out to the identified stakeholders to solicit their perspectives and input, gain a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities around the issue and identify any additional relevant stakeholders. During this step, keep in mind that certain stakeholders may possess the power to either obstruct or advance CA efforts, so their perspectives, inputs and recommendations will be vital for your future effectiveness. A useful exercise is to develop a Power/Interest Grid (see graphic) listing the stakeholders and classifying them according to their levels of power and influence. Moving forward, this will help to guide levels of engagement and commitment expected of the different stakeholders.
- **Step 3: Analyze Results and Win Support:** Lastly, based on the stakeholder interviews, the data should be analyzed to further articulate and refine their roles and responsibilities within the coalition, anticipate how you might expect them to respond to CA, and seek ways to strengthen their ownership and interest in actively participating.

POWER/INTEREST GRID FOR STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIZATION

Social Network Analysis

A second tool that can help to better understand the relationships and influence of stakeholders around the issue is Social Network Analysis (SNA). We all understand that relationships matter, and in development, relationships within and between organizations can mean significant differences between cooperation and obstacles during implementation. SNA can help to understand stakeholder relationships and answer questions such as: Which stakeholders are the most critical to share and disseminate information? Who are the most relevant stakeholders to take action and dedicate resources? Which stakeholders are the most influential or connected to other stakeholders? Which stakeholders act as "bridges" between different parts of the network? Are there existing or nascent coalitions of stakeholders actively cooperating with one another?

Typically, SNA surveys are organized in three parts: i) Respondent and Organization Information; ii) Organization Attributes, such as type of organization, services provided, constituency served, and other attributes that are relevant to the network dynamics; and iii) Relationships and Attributes, including with which other actors the organization maintains relationships, the type and nature of the relationship.

While SNA may require somewhat greater levels of resources and time, the analysis is effective in helping to understand how the stakeholders view one another, share information, cooperate, and take joint action. SNA is a means to *quantify* different attributes of relationships and is thus useful to identify those that should be strengthened, build on those that are functioning at a high level, and monitor progress and impact going forward. USAID and their partners have developed numerous tools and resources applying SNA to different systems, as can be found on USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse; some useful pointers are offered here to get started:[1]

- Consider your learning questions and use-case of SNA. Is it being used to identify stakeholders; design the CA effort; develop or build coalition capacity; or contribute to monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) for your CA effort?
- Be clear about what information is most critical to your efforts and how you plan on using the findings to inform your CA effort.
- Consider how local context should influence the SNA approach and depth of analysis. SNA is a powerful tool, but one that can involve significantly more data and analysis than may be necessary. Select an appropriate process that balances the need to better understand the network versus the resource commitments. Low-resource techniques such as "collaboration mapping" might be done during a single session at a stakeholder forum of coalition meeting; versus high-resource techniques, which might incorporate many stakeholders and their associated attributes that can be input and analyzed on one of several SNA platforms.
- Consider engaging a specialist organization to assist with setting up the SNA and training your team how to use and further apply the tool going forward, for instance in advancing MEL throughout implementation.
- Make sure that security, privacy, and ethical considerations are addressed. Keep in mind that data about relationships in general can be sensitive, and SNA data can be hard to anonymize, allowing readers to glean the responses provided by other stakeholders. For example, if a key government stakeholder is shown to be less prominent in the network, they may become defensive and less willing to engage going forward. Make sure to incorporate informed consent and an opt-out option

1 These pointers are adapted from the blog post "Top 5 Do's and Don'ts of Using SNA for International Development" and the research product "Using Social Network Analysis in WASH Programs"

when collecting potentially sensitive data, and be transparent about how you will collect, analyze and report on the data.

- While it is often tempting to incorporate a large amount of data collection and attributes, it can quickly become unmanageable to analyze. Stick to what is important to the types of relationships you are looking to understand for the launch of CA or to strengthen through CA. Some common types of relationships include information-sharing; cooperation; financial, service or resource transactions; problem solving. It may also be beneficial to examine attributes such as frequency, resource levels or perceived strength of the relationships.
- Lastly, as with all analytical tools, SNA findings are only as good as the data that goes into them. As possible, integrate SNA analysis with other data, such as Political Economy Analysis (PEA), to ensure that your understanding and interpretation is accurate. Presenting the analysis back to the stakeholders, perhaps at an organized forum, is a critical step to ensuring buy-in and getting practical clarification on why things are the way they are.

Decision Point: How much analysis is necessary to proceed, and what type of analysis is needed to fill in missing gaps? What is the best way to reach out to stakeholders and begin to stimulate their interest in CA? What is the right amount of data needed to advance the CA effort?

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Regardless of which tools are ultimately employed, communication with stakeholders is necessary to mobilize and inform, to build consensus, and to anticipate and plan. For these reasons, it is important to consider how these communications will be managed. Depending on the number of stakeholders and the information to be collected, there are several options.

- **In-Person or Phone Interview:** The first option is to conduct individual interviews with each stakeholder, either in-person or by phone. This is generally the most labor-intensive option, but also likely offers the most insight and flexibility in gathering important information. This method is most practical for relatively small networks of stakeholders, perhaps up to 30, and generally located within a manageable geographic area (in the case of in-person interviews). The method is also most applicable if tools beyond a basic survey are employed, where the interviewer can dive more deeply into issues and responses.
- **Focus Groups:** Similarly, smaller focus groups of 3-5 stakeholders can be convened in a single session, providing an opportunity to both collect individual survey responses and also to discuss and debate some of the challenges and opportunities related to the issue. This method can also be used to share perspectives, build consensus, and strengthen relationships.
- **Workshop or Event:** An organized workshop or event can be a practical and efficient way to gather information from the stakeholders. As well, this can be an interactive activity designed to both facilitate data collection while stimulating discussion and consensus building within the entire network. This may work best as one or two sessions as part of a larger organized event involving the stakeholders.
- **Online or Email Survey:** Lastly, an online or email survey can be used, especially in cases where many stakeholders, such as 50 or more, should be surveyed. While this method is considerably less labor- and time-intensive, it is possible or even likely that not everyone will respond. If high response rates are necessary, follow-up phone reminders are a useful way to increase participation.

ILLUSTRATIVE WORKPLAN FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION LAUNCH

Below we have provided an illustrative workplan to complete the research phase and launch CA. Obviously, the overall time requirement will depend on what research tools are employed, number of stakeholders, survey methodology, depth of research, reporting requirements and other factors, but the example below can be used as planning guidance for an illustrative four-month planning and research phase:

Illustrative Workplan
Preparing for Collective Action

Activity	Month 1				Month 2				Month 3				Month 4			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Step 1: Identify Stakeholders																
• Brainstorm with team	■															
• Gather additional background data	■	■														
• Identify key individuals within organizations		■														
Step 2: Survey Stakeholders and Conduct Research		■														
• Determine research objectives		■	■													
• Decide on research methodology and tools			■	■	■											
• Develop tools and stakeholder roster						■										
• Inform stakeholders of plan; schedule interviews or forum						■										
• Conduct research							■	■								
Step 3: Analyze Results and Win Support																
• Conduct preliminary analysis of data and initial findings									■	■						
• Present initial findings to stakeholders to get feedback											■					
• Finalize analysis with stakeholder input												■	■	■		
• Present final analysis to stakeholders and receive feedback															■	
• Assess power, influence and interest																■
• Assess roles and responsibilities within coalition																■
• Anticipate response and identify ways to leverage interest																■

Decision Point: How will stakeholder outreach and research be conducted? How much time is available for research, and are there trade-offs that need to be considered to both capture necessary information while expediting the start of CA?

COLLECTIVE ACTION IN CHALLENGING CONTEXTS

Even in contexts and with problems where CA is a powerful and effective approach, your preparatory research may identify a situation that might make bringing stakeholders together difficult. In a worst case scenario, it may be best to wait to launch a CA effort until the context changes. Some context challenges and potential mitigation strategies are outlined in the table below.

Challenging Context for Collective Action	Strategies to Mitigate Challenge
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Coalition members must be willing and able to accept and listen to all groups or stakeholders to the shared issue. In situations where diverse or marginalized groups are unable to participate equitably, CA will be more difficult.	• Initially establish multiple coalitions to introduce opportunities for marginalized groups to participate, then merge coalitions equitably. • Keep in mind that CA might also contribute favorably to diversification and inclusion by giving a seat at the table to those traditionally excluded.
Lack of Interest: Insufficient interest from stakeholders to participate in CA or to try new ways to address the challenge is a significant constraint to CA.	• Engage champions passionate about the issue and ready to act. • Build awareness of the issue and its persistence despite hard work and good intentions applied to date.
Animosity or Distrust: Stakeholders that historically compete for resources sometimes have trouble working together. Similarly, stakeholders that have long been on opposite sides of a conflict may find cooperation a challenge.	• Start by supporting smaller collaborative efforts to build trust. • Start with multiple coalitions with a plan to merge, adapting and proceeding as feasible.

Decision Point: Did your research reveal any challenging stakeholder dynamics? If so, what strategies might you take to mitigate them?

SUPPORTING AN EXISTING COALITION VS. ESTABLISHING A NEW ONE

In many contexts there are likely to be existing alliances, associations, consortiums, or other groups related to the shared problem you are seeking to address. Supporting existing coalitions or efforts requires some different approaches from establishing a new CA coalition. Based on LINC's research, there are important trade-offs to consider when evaluating whether to support an existing or establish a new coalition.

An existing coalition is more likely to be organically developed, and its creation is often driven by the members' recognition of the need to collaborate. This type of starting point is generally more sustainable

and effective, and may well require less effort and resources to facilitate. Establishing a new coalition when one already exists can also generate confusion and misunderstanding, and dilute resources and membership. These dynamics have created a challenge for CA efforts in the past, in particular in those cases where Government institutions manage, support, or participate in the existing coalition.

On the other hand, existing coalitions are also likely to come with their own pre-existing biases. For example, the existing coalition may have limited diversity, exclude some important voices, have unequal power dynamics, display a lack of transparency, or use unfair processes for decision-making. Despite this, it may still be more effective to support the existing CA coalition, especially if they are willing to adapt. In other cases, establishing a new CA coalition is the best way to address the shared problem fairly and at scale.

Decision Point: Is there an existing coalition or network that you can support to address the shared problem collectively, equitably, and inclusively? What are its positive and negative internal dynamics, and how might these come into play during implementation?

MODULE 2: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Preparing to launch a Collective Action effort can be a sensitive process, in particular due to difficult to observe interpersonal and interorganizational relationships among stakeholders. Therefore, it is valuable to take time to better understand the landscape and build interest in collaboration.
- Two tools, among many others, that can help prepare for CA launch are Stakeholder Analysis and SNA.
- Initial outreach to research the current landscape can also provide an opportunity to build support for the CA effort.
- Identifying an existing network or coalition to support in CA may be the most efficient, sustainable, and locally driven. However, in some cases it may be better to establish a new coalition, especially if the existing coalitions are not diverse, inclusive, or equitable.
- Your research may uncover situations where CA is particularly challenging, such as difficulty engaging marginalized groups in a coalition, a lack of interest in the issue, or deep distrust among stakeholders. In those cases, there are some potential mitigation strategies.

MODULE 3

Roles in Collective Action

IN THIS MODULE:

Key Roles in Implementing Collective Action
Overlapping Roles and Responsibilities
Role of USAID and Power Dynamics

There are many different ways to engage in Collective Action (CA). Many of the design choices and facilitation approaches discussed in later modules of this Guide derive from role choices discussed in this module, including how roles are defined and distributed among USAID, implementing partners, hubs, facilitators, and other stakeholders.

Across the examples of CA in USAID programming that were studied to compile this Guide, there are a few key roles worth understanding as you manage and facilitate a CA effort. This module presents those roles, the potential for overlap in responsibilities across roles, and the role of USAID in a CA effort.

KEY ROLES IN IMPLEMENTING COLLECTIVE ACTION

Hub: Sometimes referred to as the "backbone," the hub supports the logistics, administration, coordination, and management of the coalition and its activities. A good hub is neutral, has credibility with stakeholders, maintains and builds strong relationships across members, has convening authority, and collects feedback from members to improve their work. The hub may stay behind the scenes to allow the coalition greater collective ownership and equity. They generally do not set the agenda or drive the solutions, but rather ensure that these things happen. They may or may not also assume the role of facilitator.

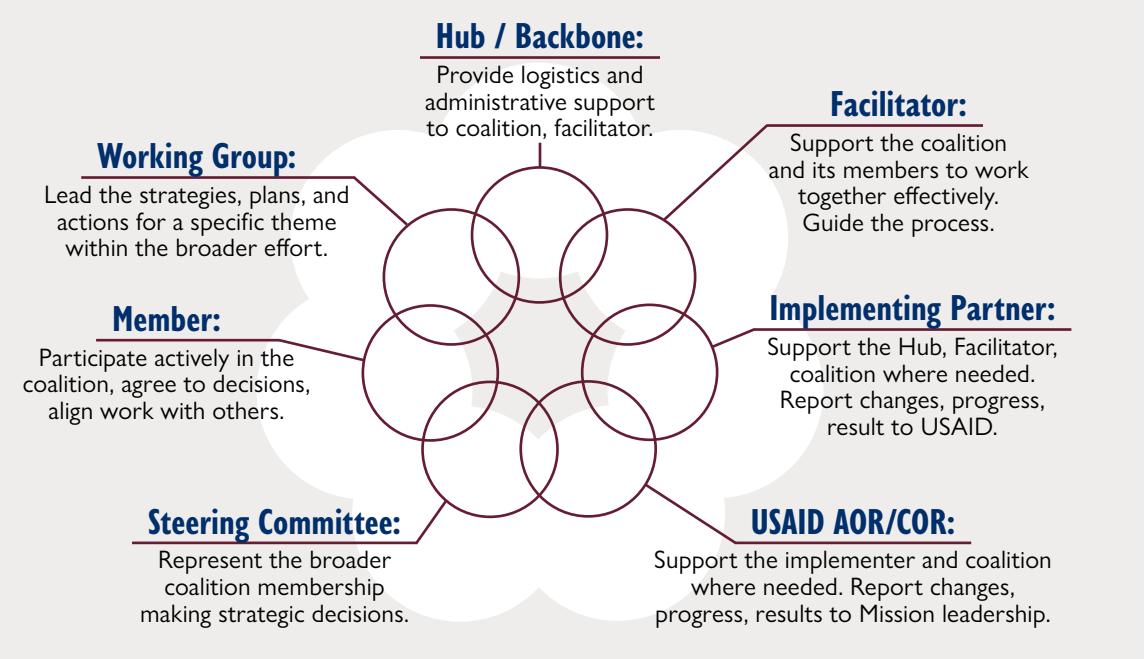
Facilitator: The facilitator is an individual or an organization whose primary role is to help the coalition work together to set a shared agenda, reach consensus, identify priorities and other efforts. Facilitators should remain neutral in discussions and decisions. Many CA coalitions underestimate the value of a good facilitator and the need to dedicate resources to improve group cohesion.

Member: A member is a stakeholder actively participating in the CA coalition, and may include NGOs or CBOs; Government offices, institutions or officials; private businesses; community leaders; donors; academic institutions; and others. All members play an important role in the CA effort by participating in discussions and decision-making, conducting advocacy and outreach, engaging in working groups, and aligning their actions and goals with the coalition's priorities.

Stakeholder: A stakeholder is an organization, institution, or individual with an interest in the outcome and resolution of the development issue. Stakeholders include members of the coalition, as well as any other non-members relevant to the issue. In some cases, a coalition seeks to include as many stakeholders as possible, while in other cases a smaller coalition is more effective, although outreach and dialogue with all stakeholders remains a priority.

Steering Committee and/or Working Groups: Sometimes a coalition is organized into smaller groups to divide work and decision-making. These groups remain accountable to the broader coalition, and are expected to work toward the shared agenda, goals and priorities. A steering committee is important when a coalition becomes large enough that not every member can be included in every discussion and decision. The steering committee members therefore represent the broader coalition, help set the shared goals, champion the overall effort, and provide guidance and feedback. The steering committee meets regularly and can be fluid in its composition based on evolving needs over time. Working groups are typically smaller groups focusing on more specific aspects of the coalition's objectives and activities. They are usually formed based on the priorities of the coalition, and more may be formed or dissolved over time. Working groups set the strategies for their work, use data to inform decisions, and coordinate with one another and with the coalition overall.

OVERLAPPING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Though this Module provides definitions and guidance on some of the most important roles for designing and implementing CA, LINC's research showed that there is no single way to separate or combine the responsibilities of each actor in the process. Cases of effective CA each separated or combined the key roles in ways that worked for their context. For example, the implementing partner of the Clean Air Green Cities activity in Vietnam was also the hub/backbone and facilitator. The Family Care First activity in Cambodia also had the implementing partner take on the hub/backbone and facilitator role, as well as being an active coalition member, and it formed working groups to focus on specific themes. The Bangladesh Livestock Coordination Group did not have working groups or a steering committee, but USAID took on the role of hub/backbone and facilitator. The Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth in Kenya transitioned over time from USAID as hub to an implementing partner as hub, and included numerous other implementing partners as members. The implementing partner for the Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement activity in Nigeria identified "anchor organizations"

to be the hub and facilitator for each CA coalition formed, and those organizations were also active coalition members. The Transparency Rapid Response Project in Mexico engaged a subcontractor as facilitator and sub-national government as hub.

ROLE OF USAID AND POWER DYNAMICS

Financial resources, such as those provided by USAID or other donors, often come with explicit and implicit requirements and power dynamics. This can create an uncomfortable but necessary tension. Donors often have great insight into the challenges faced by CA coalitions, knowledge of global best practices, strong networks, and other valuable contributions for a CA effort, but their participation can inadvertently affect the equity of the dialogue and the process.

To stimulate coalition ownership of the process and results, USAID should take on as small a role as possible that still allows for effective CA. This means that they only take on responsibilities that are necessary for the CA effort and where no other actor can. Nevertheless, even when USAID takes a hands off approach, it is still the responsibility of the implementer, hub, and facilitator to keep USAID informed on progress and challenges. Of course, when USAID takes on a role that is impeding progress of the coalition, the implementer, hub, or facilitator should feel comfortable discussing the issue and negotiating a different dynamic.

In USAID's experience with CA, the most effective roles for USAID, still with a light touch, have included:

- **CA Design Organizer:** In many cases the CA design will be organized or even led by USAID. USAID and their implementing partners' roles may be limited to this, as deeper involvement may affect power balances, incentives and the actions. In any case, even during design, local stakeholders can take a lead role in defining important aspects of the CA effort.
- **Funder:** USAID has frequently provided financial resources to the coalition or to the "hub" that is supporting the administrative needs of the coalition. Providing financial resources also affects the power dynamics within the group, incentives for stakeholders, and other important aspects of group cohesion. Alternatively to providing direct resources, USAID may support and expect the CA coalition to mobilize other resources, either through facilitative support from USAID or matching funds commitments. In the Clean Air Green Cities activity in Vietnam, USAID provided funding not only to support the hub to organize the CA effort, but also to support joint actions prioritized by the coalition.
- **Convener:** Ideally, the coalition members and the hub have the reputation and network to attract the relevant stakeholders to participate. In cases where that is not possible or where there is a set of valued stakeholders that are not engaging, USAID has been able to use its name recognition or social capital, or even diplomatic connections to attract those stakeholders. Facilitators of the Family Care First activity in Cambodia asked USAID to lend its convening power to the coalition, in particular to engage government stakeholders in the coalition.

In rare cases, USAID has taken on other roles in CA implementation, though these may be more difficult to balance effectively with the power USAID brings.

- **Member:** There are some examples where USAID or other donors have directly participated in the CA coalition. This may be a challenge as it has the potential to significantly affect the

power dynamics, equity, inclusion, and incentives of other members. However, if a CA effort is established, trust is built within the coalition, and transparent processes are in place, USAID may be a valuable member. Frequently, this participation has included providing subject matter expertise, engaging in dialogue, supporting diversity, and making or supporting decisions that align with the coalition's. Additionally, USAID's participation can improve their understanding of the needs for the sector and the transparency of funding decisions - and in some cases donors have pooled funds in a way that can provide more flexible funding while minimizing the outsized power of the donor. Of course, there are also many examples of USAID-funded or other donor-funded projects participating as coalition members.

- **Technical Support:** In some cases, USAID has taken on a role providing technical support to a CA coalition. Again, this also has implications for power dynamics of the coalition, equity, and participant incentives. However, there may be valuable specialized knowledge or experience from other countries or contexts that USAID has access to and can be utilized for a specific need of the coalition. For example, in the Bangladesh Livestock Coordination Group, USAID was able to provide technical experts from outside the country who conducted training on specific topics that the CA coalition members' programs were lacking.

Regardless of the role that USAID pays, relationship dynamics are sensitive, often requiring significant attention from the hub and facilitator. USAID's involvement can affect those dynamics in unpredictable ways. Again, it is the responsibility of the implementer and/or hub to keep USAID up to date on the progress and needs of the coalition, but best to engage USAID to take an active role only when necessary. If USAID is involved and you can see that involvement affecting the equity and inclusion of your coalition, be clear about that concern with your donor.

Decision Point: What is an appropriate role for USAID to play in the CA coalition? Do any roles need to be renegotiated with USAID? Are there any foreseeable moments or needs to further engage USAID?

MODULE 3: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Key roles in implementing Collective Action include the hub, facilitator, members, other stakeholders, and structures such as a steering committee or working groups.
- Some roles and responsibilities may overlap or be distributed in different ways depending on the context and CA effort.
- USAID's role should be as small as possible, and only as large as necessary. It is the responsibility of the implementer and/or hub to keep USAID informed of progress, adaptations, and results, and to engage USAID when their knowledge, network, resources, or other support are needed to help the coalition work effectively.

MODULE 4

Facilitating Collective Action

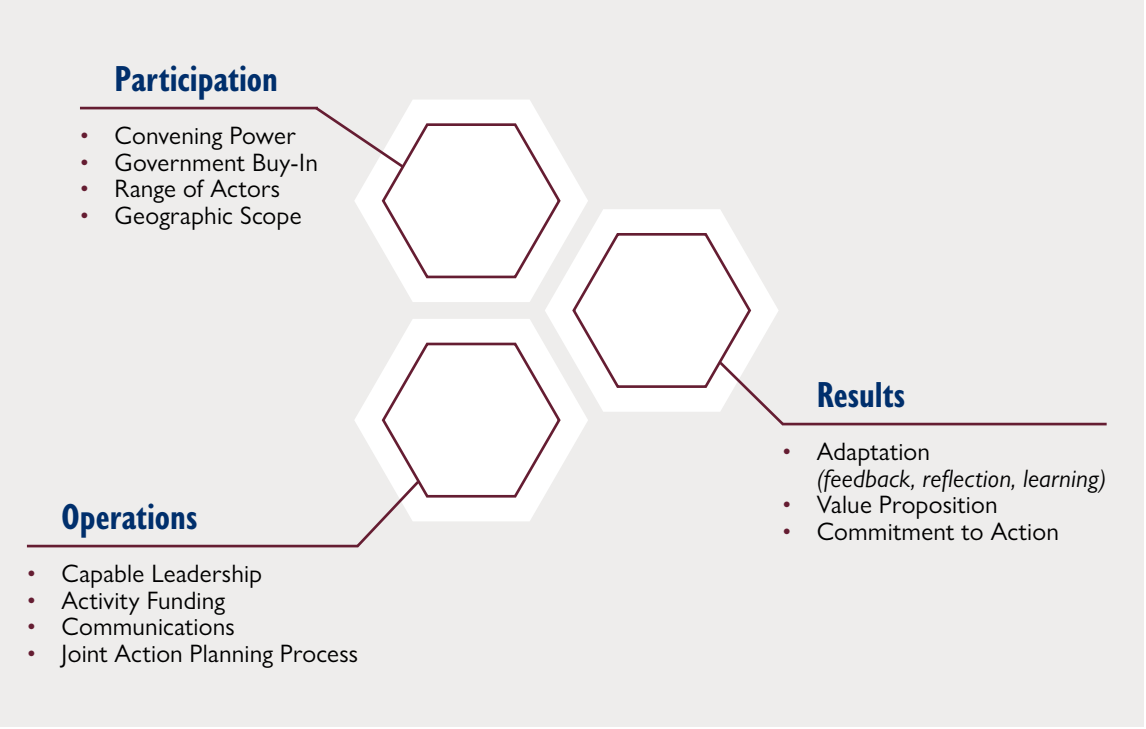
IN THIS MODULE:

Three Types of Momentum for Collective Action
What if One (or More) Factor is not Viable in My Context?
Foundational Factors
Time Period for Collective Action

Organizing and facilitating Collective Action (CA) as a CA implementer, hub, or facilitator is an ongoing effort. Based on LINC's research and analysis, that effort requires maintaining three types of momentum for the coalition and its work at all times. During certain moments, you may need to focus more on one topic than another, but in general, keeping an eye on the three types of momentum will support the continued value of the CA effort.

THREE TYPES OF MOMENTUM FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

The three types of momentum are: Participation, Operations, and Results. **Module 5** provides tips and guidance for maintaining participation, **Module 6** focuses on operations and functioning of the coalition, and **Module 7** on ongoing results of the effort. Note that the three types of momentum are not perfectly mutually exclusive - they are interdependent and some of the important factors or considerations discussed under one area are also relevant under another area.



Participation: Mobilizing and maintaining participation of coalition members is an important challenge. As shown in the graphic above, this includes identifying and convening the key stakeholders, getting buy-in from influential actors, determining the scope of the effort in terms of diversity of perspectives and geographic area of focus, and adjusting membership and scope over time. While these are important at the launch of your CA effort, they are also an ongoing need. (More on this in **Module 5**.) Participation is closely connected with ***operations*** because the coalition needs capable leadership to engage members, processes and structures for adjusting membership, and internal and external communications to keep members and other stakeholders informed. Participation is also closely connected to ***results*** because learning from feedback, adapting, maintaining value for the members, and follow-through on member commitments help the coalition maintain participation.

Operations: Defining and maintaining the functioning of the coalition is a second important area of focus. As shown in the graphic above, this includes establishing and supporting leadership and other structures, providing funding for joint activities of the coalition, internal and external communications, and processes to support collective planning, decision-making, activities, and learning. (More on this in **Module 6**.) Operations are dependent on active and effective ***participation***, and they rely on learning from feedback and member actions to see continued ***results*** of processes and structures.

Results: Reflecting and learning on results is an often overlooked element of effective CA. It allows improvement over time to ensure continued progress of the coalition and provides space to take a longer term view of the overall effort. As shown in the graphic above, this area includes adaptability of goals, actions, and processes, value for the participants, and accountability of participants to meet their commitments. (More on this in **Module 7**.) A focus on results supports both ***participation*** and ***operations*** by providing tools for learning and motivation for continued participation.

What if one (or more) factor is not viable in my context?

Effective CA is the result of a combination of the multi-dimensional and context-specific factors defined in each of the three areas of momentum. Based on LINC's research, **case studies** of effective CA all exhibited some level of emphasis on each of the factors outlined in Module 5, Module 6, and Module 7. However, these seven factors are not necessarily exhaustive, nor is it a strict requirement to maximize all of the factors. The relative degree of influence and importance of each of these factors will vary significantly across contexts, stakeholders, and issues, and some of these factors possess temporal components as well. For example, government buy-in and perceived value for participants may need to be built over time, once members better understand the outputs and benefits of the coalition's work. Not every coalition will need to significantly adapt their approach if it is working well, or provide funding for activities if there are other means for achieving joint goals. Simply put, the key to CA lies in understanding the specific needs of the context and stakeholders, and planning an effective approach to respond.

FOUNDATIONAL FACTORS

As a CA organizer or facilitator, there are several foundational factors to keep in mind that support the participation, operations, and results of the effort.

- **Balance process and product:** Coalition ownership of the CA effort centers on control over the process, and the products or results of that process. This requires a careful balance – too much focus on process can decrease member motivation for participation, while too much focus on

products can result in weaker sustainability of the effort. A good facilitator will manage the balance carefully and ensure the coalition is encouraged to own both the process and products.

- **Focus on group cohesion to achieve results:** The research highlighted that in order to achieve progress toward their shared goal, the coalition needs to focus on cohesion among the members. The traditional emphasis on results-oriented programming has led many CA efforts to underinvest in group cohesion. A balance between cohesion and results is still necessary, and can shift over time, however, it is clear that sustained progress requires healthy group dynamics and group cohesion. **Module 8** contains further discussion and recommendations on measuring group cohesion.
- **Identify a network catalyst if available:** The personality of an individual or organization leading the CA collaboration can heavily influence its success. A catalyst (this term may be more accurate rather than champion) of the CA effort has energy, interpersonal skills, connections or reputation, and cares deeply about achieving results on the shared problem. If a catalyst exists in your context, they are often able to help launch the CA effort efficiently with convening power, building buy-in, establishing processes, supporting internal and external communication, encouraging members to follow through on their commitments, and other important factors. People interested in CA can be trained on these skills or found within the coalition, but it is worth the investment to find and engage those people. That said, if a catalyst is not available in your context, it is not a requirement for effective CA.
- **Facilitate, don't lead:** Inherent to CA is a philosophy of neutral facilitation. The hub, organizer, and facilitator must step back to let the coalition lead or manage the process. This provides the safe space required to allow members to fully participate, and build shared results over time. As facilitator, seek to support the coalition to come to agreement on goals, make the right decisions for their situation, and take joint actions without imposing an external agenda. The key skills required of facilitators are:

    - » Actively involving participants in the process;
    - » Understanding the shared issue;
    - » Bringing tools to support discussion and decision-making;
    - » Listening, paraphrasing, observing, clarifying, elaborating;
    - » Interpreting verbal and nonverbal behavior;
    - » Mitigating differences or conflict - not avoiding it;
    - » Managing time;
    - » Demonstrating empathy;
    - » Building a trusting environment;
    - » Believing in the value of the CA coalition.

- **Encourage a collective mindset:** CA provides an opportunity to support and strengthen an organized effort among both practitioners and end-users affecting - and affected by - the shared problem. Putting collective needs and interests ahead of individual ones, this group is better able to understand and articulate the dynamics, turbulence, and uncertainty of the situation, and is better positioned to adapt and ultimately succeed. However, it requires all participants - donors, implementers, collaborators, included - to release the control they previously had, even over their own activities as they align with others.
- **Expect conflict as part of the process:** Change - and in particular *systemic change* - rarely takes place without a sense of urgency, and often faces obstacles from agents desiring the status

quo. By engaging a more diverse group of stakeholders with different perspectives and priorities, CA approaches are thus often likely to unveil and endure periods of conflict, particularly at the outset. While this conflict can challenge efforts to build consensus, facilitate trust and acceptance between stakeholders, collectively plan, and achieve joint action, the results that are achieved are more likely to be equitable, inclusive, and ultimately sustainable.

In addition to the discussions on Participation (**Module 5**), Operations (**Module 6**), and Results (**Module 7**) in this Guide, **Module 10** contains brief introductions and links for some suggested tools and resources that are very helpful for participatory analyses and processes you may want to apply with your CA coalition.

Time Period for Collective Action

Making progress on complex issues with diverse groups of stakeholders takes time, to say the least. However, not all CA efforts need to be long-term endeavors. The CA research showed successful case studies ranging from under a year to ongoing (even after more than 5 years). Some CA efforts have a specific achievable purpose and may end when that purpose is achieved. Others will require iterative progress or seek a sustainable coalition model. The decision on time period is best discussed with coalition members, and best revisited from time to time as the value and need for CA may shift over the course of your work. More information and guidance on sustainability of CA is provided in Module 9.

MODULE 4: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Based on LINC's research and analysis, Collective Action facilitators should work to maintain three interdependent types of momentum throughout the effort: Participation, Operations, and Results.
- Mobilizing and maintaining participation (**Module 5**) includes convening stakeholders, getting buy-in from influential actors, determining the diversity of participants and geographic scope of the effort, and adjusting membership over time.
- Defining and maintaining the operations (**Module 6**) of the coalition includes establishing leadership structures, mobilizing resources for joint activities, managing communications, and facilitating planning and decision-making processes.
- Maintaining progress towards results (**Module 7**) and learning from them includes facilitating processes for adaptation and learning, creating value for participants, and encouraging commitment to action.
- Several foundational factors are important for facilitators to keep in mind: balance process and product, focus on group cohesion to achieve results, identify a network catalyst if available, facilitate rather than lead, encourage a collective mindset, and expect conflict as part of the process.

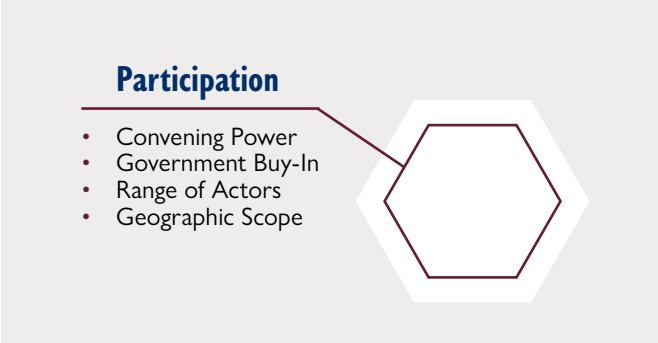
MODULE 5

Planning for success: Participation

IN THIS MODULE:

- Convening Power
- Government Buy-In
- Range of Actors to Engage
- Geographic Scope

Collective Action (CA) is based on the participation of multiple stakeholders in a shared exercise to conduct analysis, make decisions, and take joint action toward a desired goal. There are four important factors that contribute to mobilizing and maintaining participation of CA coalition members: Convening Power, Government Buy-in, Range of Actors, and Geographic Scope. In this module we will address each in turn and provide guidance as you develop strategies to achieve them in your context. As you work through this module, keep in mind that these factors are interdependent with one another and with the important factors for operating a CA coalition (**Module 6**) and for improving results over time (**Module 7**). **Module 10** contains brief introductions and links for some suggested tools and resources that might help with CA participation.



CONVENING POWER

Convening power represents the ability of a hub, implementer, government office, or other stakeholder to bring together prospective members of a coalition by using their relationships, social capital, and/or reputation. A coalition's convening power lends it an essential sense of legitimacy in the eyes of potential participants and helps to motivate initial and continued participation. Conveners can foster engagement by using their position to demonstrate the value of the coalition and by emphasizing how CA can effectively catalyze change around the shared issues and opportunities.

Convening power can be exhibited by an influential institution, organization, or individual, usually a recognized champion of the issue with technical expertise and a large network. However, it is important that an influential convener doesn't exercise their convening power such that participation is perceived as compulsory as this may discourage genuine collaboration among actors. Effective CA relies on trust, transparency, and dependable working relationships.

Convening Power	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• The ability of a hub, implementer, government or other actor to call together members of a coalition. • Based on relationships, social capital, and/or reputation. • Can come from an individual or an institution.	• A coalition's convening power lends it an essential sense of legitimacy in the eyes of its members. • Helps to motivate initial and continued participation. • Encourages diversity, inclusion, and equity.

Notes for facilitators

- The convener of the coalition may be the hub if the hub has the reputation and network to attract participation. If an existing network or a relevant coalition is already functioning, it is more likely to have convening power than a newly established coalition. However, an existing coalition with weak convening power may be an indication that a new coalition is needed.
- If seeking a stakeholder to take the role of convener, beyond the exercise of "asking around," network analysis can be a very effective tool for identifying stakeholders with wide networks and good reputations.
- Convening stakeholders is a political process. You may have to start by engaging some individuals or smaller groups separately in order to keep them interested in the process. There may be some particularly influential individuals or institutions who require more tact and outreach, not only to keep their interest, but to ensure they do not use their influence to impede collaboration.
- Different stakeholders will see the shared problem from unique perspectives. This means that what "attracts" one stakeholder to join the coalition may not be the same as what brings another to participate.
- Good communication (also see **Module 6**) is necessary to convene stakeholders.

TOOL BOX
NETWORK ANALYSIS

A process of identifying key actors and stakeholders around a shared issue and their interrelationships. Network analysis can help to spot key influencers in the network and guide you in structuring your hub or backbone organization.

Example Strategies for Convening Power

- **Engage well-connected institutions to convene stakeholders.** A common strategy is to work directly with an organization or institution that has convening power. If the hub has convening power, that is also a good strategy, but be sure to honestly evaluate their network. For example, the Family Care First activity in Cambodia was convened by some of the largest NGOs in the sector with support from their donors. Several examples from the research directly engaged government or USAID to convene stakeholders such as the Transparency Rapid Response Project in Mexico and the Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth in Kenya.
- **Engage a well-connected individual champion or catalyst.** Similar to engaging an institution, if there is a particular individual who has a strong network and understands the context well, they can be an effective convener. For example, the Uganda Sanitation for Health Activity had on staff a well-regarded individual who was also a key sector stakeholder. That individual was able to identify other stakeholders necessary for the CA effort and bring them together to participate.

- **Leverage an existing platform or gathering of sector stakeholders.** Where a relevant network exists, they can be an effective starting point for convening stakeholders. For example, the Clear Air Green Clties activity in Vietnam started based on an existing network of important stakeholders to air pollution that was already convened by the hub organization.
- **Identify "anchor" actors with convening power on the topic.** Another viable strategy is to work with one key actor interested in the topic and in CA to act as a starting point for convening other participants. For example, the Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement activity in Nigeria conducted an advocacy strategy analysis to identify anchor organizations for each CA topic they supported. Those anchor organizations were able to leverage their reputations and networks to convene other actors in each topic.

Guiding Questions for Convening Power

- Does your organization or institution have the network and reputation to convene stakeholders on its own, or is there a benefit to leveraging the convening power of other champions?
- Imagine the perspective of stakeholders that are important participants in the CA effort. Will the convener trigger competitive forces that may undermine the effort or limit participation? If so, perhaps look for a more neutral convener.
- Is there a particular organization, institution, or individual that has the network and reputation to most easily convene stakeholders around the shared problem? If so, is there a way to leverage their convening power without affecting power dynamics and trust within the coalition?
- Is there an existing network or coalition that can be a starting point for convening the CA coalition? If so, are there other trade-offs to consider in engaging them?

Decision Point: How will you identify and convene the right stakeholders to participate in your CA coalition?

GOVERNMENT BUY-IN

Government buy-in is achieved when the relevant government decision-makers believe in the coalition, support their efforts and take action on their recommendations. In most contexts, government buy-in is essential for CA to not only achieve progress, but to sustain the effort over the longer term. Government buy-in might support space for the coalition to meet and operate, as well as providing the necessary convening authority. Government buy-in is instrumental not only at the outset, but should be maintained throughout the process.

In most cases, the appropriate level of government should be involved in the coalition from the outset, providing an essential bridge between civil society, public institutions, and others. However, government buy-in does not necessarily require its participation in the coalition in every case. In LINC's research, even in cases where the coalition's efforts focus on advocacy or government accountability, it was shown to be possible and valuable to have a level of government buy-in.

Government Buy-In	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• Relevant government decision-makers demonstrate explicit or implicit support for the coalition. • Could be through participation in the coalition, a public endorsement, meeting occasionally with coalition leaders, or in some environments even simply allowing the coalition space to operate. • Buy-in could result in government action on coalition recommendations.	• In many contexts, lends credibility to the coalition. • Lack of buy-in can result in government creating obstacles for coalition effectiveness. • Can support progress of the coalition and sustainability in the long term. • Government actors are often well placed to use their convening power to bring other important stakeholders to the table. • Relevant throughout all phases of the program cycle.

Notes for facilitators

- Tools like political economy analysis or advocacy strategy matrices can help in identifying key government stakeholders and powerbrokers to engage and potentially to seek backing from.
- A common concern of government has been that the coalition is duplicating a government effort or supplanting its role. Coalitions have allayed that concern by incorporating those efforts into their CA work and showing that together they can achieve more than separately.
- If it seems that sufficient government buy-in may be difficult to obtain, CA facilitators can re-assess their approach.
- Even in cases where a coalition's efforts would seem to be in contrast with current government actions or actors, past USAID experience shows that it is still possible for a coalition to find common ground with government on a shared issue of interest.
- In particularly challenging circumstances, USAID (or other international agencies) may also be able to leverage their diplomatic relationships to engage government at a higher level than the coalition has access to.
- Ultimately, to get government actors on-board, a coalition will need to demonstrate the value of their approach for government and the constituents they serve.

TOOL BOX

Political Economy Analysis

A process for understanding the political dimensions around a development challenge and using this information to inform how you approach government actors. Politics represents both the formal and informal ways that influential actors collaborate on complex topics.

What if I can't get government buy-in?

Based on LINC's research, it is generally valuable to have government buy-in for the coalition and the CA effort overall. However, there are some situations that may make government buy-in very difficult. If the coalition is actively working to hold government accountable or is directly addressing a controversial topic, government buy-in may be difficult or even impossible. Additionally, there may be situations in which the coalition would suffer reputational damage by having an endorsement from government. Of course, there are strategies for dealing with these situations (see "Example Strategies for Government Buy-in" for some ideas) but it is ultimately up to the coalition to determine what trade-offs are worthwhile.

Example Strategies for Government Buy-in

- **Engage government in planning for CA.** One example of an effective strategy has been to bring the concept for CA to key government stakeholders prior to convening a coalition. As government input and feedback is incorporated into the planning, those stakeholders are more likely to endorse and/or participate in the CA effort. For example, the Transparency Rapid Response Project in Mexico conducted an assessment for each location before the CA effort commenced to ensure there was sufficient buy-in from the target state government institutions and potential gate-keeping individuals (e.g., state governor). In locations where full government buy-in did not seem likely, the CA effort did not proceed at that time, but steps were taken to improve buy-in for a later CA effort if possible.
- **Identify the right champions from government.** For some shared problems, there will be a government office with a mandate to address it, or in some cases a government champion already exists. Often that champion will advocate for the coalition and encourage other government stakeholders to participate, or at least accept, the CA efforts. For example, the Clean Air Green Cities activity in Vietnam worked with the local Environmental Protection Agency which had already been receiving complaints about air pollution from citizens. That agency was interested in the same results as the CA effort and saw value in leveraging the knowledge and resources of the coalition members. The Mindanao Youth for Development activity in the Philippines worked with local authorities who were responsible for youth engagement in governance. Through that partnership, government not only supported the effort, but convened and facilitated the coalitions (named Youth Development Alliances).
- **Demonstrate alignment with government priorities.** Alignment between the CA effort and government priorities will show that the CA coalition can help government achieve its goals. For example, the Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth in Kenya first partnered with the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) as it was seeking to address the humanitarian crisis that led to the formation of the CA coalition. The coalition aligned its initial efforts with the Ending Drought Emergencies Strategy enacted by NDMA.
- **Provide specific valued services to government through the coalition.** The coalition can demonstrate value by inviting government to share the expertise and resources of coalition members. For example, the government was part of the formation of the Partnership for HIV-Free Survival in Tanzania, and stayed deeply involved because the coalition members openly shared their research, data, and analyses which government found valuable for planning. Local government also valued the expertise and thought leadership of the coalition members of the Clean Air Green Cities activity in Vietnam.
- **Ask for support from an ally with strong ties to government**. If government relations on the topic are particularly challenging, USAID or another influential member of the coalition may be able to advocate for the CA effort. This may include elevating the coalition's connections to higher levels of government. For example, in Cambodia, the Family Care First activity initially faced friction from government for forming the coalition. In Cambodia, government buy-in is crucial for convening a group of stakeholders. . The hub worked closely with USAID which formed and improved relationships with relevant government ministries in order to gain buy-in for the coalition and its members.

Guiding Questions for Government Buy-in

- Is the work of the coalition aligned with government priorities or trying to shift them?
- What value proposition does the coalition offer to government? (For example, providing resources, expertise, knowledge, and/or capacity that government seeks.)
- Does the work of the coalition have a political or contentious dimension to it? Is it possible to 'bridge the gap' with government stakeholders?
- Will there be any spoilers from the government? Who are they, and what do they want?

Decision Point: Is government buy-in feasible? If so, how will you work to gain buy-in from government?

RANGE OF ACTORS TO ENGAGE

Ultimately, CA is about helping stakeholders to align themselves on a shared issue toward a greater good. To do this, it is necessary to determine which actors to engage and how to get them on board with the concept of CA. Even in the case of working with an existing coalition or CA effort, it is necessary to ensure the right actors are engaged.

Research shows that an effective coalition requires at a minimum, the right stakeholders to represent the diverse Stakes, Power, and Knowledge needed to make decisions, carry out actions, and ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion. Stakes refers to the diversity of perspectives and interests, including conflicting opinions, on the shared problem. Power refers to the influence and authority to act on the joint decisions taken by the coalition, including shifting member priorities to those of the coalition, implementing joint activities, and/or enacting policy. Knowledge refers to the subject matter and the local context knowledge to address the shared problem.[1]

The process of determining the range of actors may appear slightly different depending on the context and nature of the development challenge. For example, if the goal of the CA initiative is to develop and promote best practices within a particular sector (e.g., healthcare delivery) your coalition is likely to include those stakeholders most relevant to the health sector. Conversely, if your objective is broad and cross-cutting in nature (e.g., community resilience) you might target a more diverse group of actors with varying perspectives on the issue. In some cases, the members of your coalition may already have a shared and aligned understanding of the issue, in which case a more targeted group may be more appropriate; in other cases, the goal of the coalition itself may be to better understand and collectively define the issue, in which case a more diverse group might be appropriate.

The range of actors involved will also depend on the geographical scope of the effort (see below). Defining a clear geographic scope will help to identify actors within the boundary, as well as those outside the boundary but with influence. In some cases, certain actors may be invited to participate because they lend legitimacy to the process or help strengthen the political economy of the coalition. Certain actors may need to be engaged early in the process to gain their buy-in, even if they do not end

1 The Stake/Power/Knowledge framework was presented in "Stakeholder-Assisted Modeling and Policy Design Process for Engineering Systems", Mostashari, A. (2005)

up with a large role in the CA effort. Tools like Stakeholder Mapping, Social Network Analysis (SNA) and Political Economy Analysis (PEA) can help support this process by illuminating the relationships between actors and networks.

A final dimension to consider is balancing the functional size of the group with the diversity of perspectives represented. Regardless of which stakeholders are involved, remember that CA ultimately benefits from building trust among members, being aware of power dynamics and ensuring equity among members (**Module 3**).

Range of Actors to Engage	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• Determining which actors (organizations, institutions, and/or individuals) to engage. • Could range from a targeted and narrow set of actors up to a wide and diverse set.	• Influences other important design decisions (geographic focus, size of coalition, etc.). • Affects the operation of the coalition by balancing the functional size of the group with the diversity of perspectives represented. • Having the right members determines the results of the coalition (ensure members represent the stake, power, and knowledge required).

Notes for facilitators

- As with many important factors for effective CA, there is tension along the range from a targeted CA coalition to a diverse one. In particular, pay attention to the need for diversity and inclusion, any power imbalances among members, the manageable size of the coalition, and the potential for conflict among members.
- Larger and more diverse groups, or particularly contentious shared problems, will inevitably create some conflict among members. Such conflict is still a valuable part of the process, and the role of the facilitator is to make the conflict productive rather than personal and destructive.
- In cases where a diverse set of stakeholders are crucial to the shared issue, and those stakeholders do not work fairly together, it might be better to convene two coalitions on the same issue as a starting point. Once each has achieved some progress and set objectives, it may be easier to bring them back together around shared objectives.
- In some scenarios, it may be best to invite certain actors to participate because they lend legitimacy to the process or coalition, even if they are not crucial stakeholders for the process.
- Some actors may need to be engaged at the start of the CA effort to support the launch, even if they do not end up playing a role in the CA effort at a later stage.
- As described in **Module 2**, initial consultations with key informants and understanding the landscape that surrounds the shared problem will be very helpful for determining the range of actors to engage. Tools like stakeholder mapping, network analysis, and political economy analysis can help support this process by illuminating the relationships between actors and networks.
- In determining the range of actors to engage, look for uncommon partners, stakeholders whose voice is not typically heard.

Examples for Range of Actors

- **Targeted coalition.** A targeted coalition might be more appropriate for technical working groups, pilots and scale-up activities, a shared problem with a narrow scope, or a shared problem with more stakeholder agreement on root causes and potential solutions. For example, the Transparency Rapid Response Project in Mexico formed targeted coalitions of stakeholders from government, private sector, and civil society, to focus on policy and enforcement challenges for anti-corruption measures. The Bangladesh Livestock Coordination Group was a small coalition of livestock project implementers and donors which worked together on building capacity and disseminating best practices for a narrow scope shared issue.
- **Diverse coalition.** A diverse coalition might be more appropriate for collectively identifying constraints and solutions, advocacy, a shared problem with a broad scope, a sector with a large and diverse set of actors, or a shared problem that has a wide range of proposed solutions. For example, the Family Care First activity in Cambodia includes a coalition of approximately 80 members which represents the entire sector including service providers, donors, and government offices. The Clean Air Green Cities activity in Vietnam built on an existing network to form a broad and diverse coalition of NGOs, research institutions and universities, private sector, and government.
- **Flexible membership.** While flexibility is an important trait for all CA efforts, some coalitions have a particularly flexible membership to adapt to the dynamic needs of the CA objectives. For example, the Core Group Polio Project in the Horn of Africa has a set of central coalition members but allows for rapid expansion of contraction of membership depending on needs for disbursing polio and other vaccines in the region.
- **Participatory coalition composition.** Of course there has to be a starting point for engaging coalition members, and the hub or facilitator will need to make some decisions about the range of actors to involve. However, some coalitions take a participatory approach to defining the range. For example, the Mindanao Youth for Development activity in the Philippines chose to allow the coalition members, in particular youth, take the lead in determining the range of actors to engage.

Guiding Questions for Range of Actors

- Do stakeholders to the shared problem already agree on aspects of the situation or do they bring highly contrasting perspectives?
- Which actors do you need to solicit input from versus need to be involved in the CA coalition? How many actors are needed to represent the stake/power/knowledge required to discuss the problem?
- What is the boundary of the issue? Who is clearly inside the boundary? Who else influences the issue? Who else is affected by it?
- How will you address power dynamics within a diverse group? Should some meetings be with sub-groups of the coalition to be more accessible to partners with limited political/social capital?
- Should the coalition be targeted at specific groups who are best placed to address the issue or better to be open to all stakeholders?
- What is an appropriate size for the group?
- Are there existing networks, coalitions, or working groups currently addressing this issue?
- How will you ensure that the coalition encourages equity, inclusion and diversity?
- How will you manage power dynamics, gatekeepers, and spoilers?

Decision Point: Who will you engage in your CA coalition? or How will you identify the actors for your CA effort?

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

CA can take place at different geographic and administrative levels or across different geographic scopes, for example, national, sub-national, or local. Identifying the most appropriate geographic scope will depend on the shared issue, the range of actors involved, and resources available to achieve objectives. The selection of a geographic scope will help to determine what types of stakeholders will be targeted by the program, what timelines will be required for uptake and impact, as well as how other key collaboration factors will be addressed.

Defining your geographic scope will be dependent on the shared problem you are looking to address and the context you are working in. If the problem manifests itself at a local level or appears differently in different locations, a more local scope may be appropriate, whereas if the problem is fairly consistent nation-wide or affects a wide area, a national or regional geographic scope may be better. Understanding where the constraints to addressing the problem lie can also help determine scope. For example, constraints that are related to local knowledge or behavior can lend themselves to a local CA effort while constraints related to policy or legal frameworks might require a more national approach. It is also possible to engage a range of actors from national, sub-national, and local geographic levels, but there is an added complexity to managing that type of scope.

Geographic Scope	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• Level at which you will orient the work of the coalition. • Can be national, sub-national, or local level, or tied to another geography such as a watershed or a cross-border region.	• Helps delineate the factors, actors, and processes that are internal to the boundary or external. • Helps to identify where you will focus your efforts and who will be a part of the coalition.

Notes for facilitators:

- Geographic scope may already be determined or proposed by your donor or government stakeholders. It is still valuable to think through the guiding questions below and consider whether to propose expanding or narrowing that geographic scope.
- Geographic scope is highly interdependent with the range of actors in your coalition. It may be necessary to iteratively define the two hand in hand.
- Problem Tree Analysis (or another analysis that helps get at root causes such as Causal Loop Diagram or PEA) and Stakeholder Analysis are two tools that can help identify where the constraints and most influential stakeholders to the shared problem sit, providing important input to defining geographic scope. **Module 10** suggests other potentially valuable tools with links to reference materials.
- It is generally easier to involve relevant or necessary national level actors in a local CA effort, but more difficult to fairly choose which local actors would be beneficial to a national level CA effort.
- The coalition members themselves can support the definition of the geographic scope, and it is valuable to reflect on needs and revisit this decision over time. The scope can shift over time based on needs.

TOOL BOX

Problem Tree Analysis

A method of determining underlying causes of a problem by mapping out the cause and effect chains around an issue.

Examples for Geographic Scope

Geographic Level	Example Contexts	Example Collective Action Objectives
Local	Neighborhood, village, municipality	Improving local ownership, creating action networks, community-based development
	Case Example: The Mindanao Youth for Development activity in the Philippines worked with youth and youth support providers at the municipal or community level. At this level, youth could organize specifically under a legal framework with government support, and use the CA effort to address a variety of local opportunities and challenges for youth.	
Sub-National	Province, state, region, district, county, watershed	Aligning efforts, leveraging resources, strengthening capacity, improving a situation unique to the regional landscape
	Case Examples: The Transparency Rapid Response Project in Mexico operated at the State level working with state level government offices and other coalition members within an existing legal framework for anti-corruption efforts. The Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement activity in Nigeria supported anchor organizations in specific thematic areas to form coalitions at a variety of sub-national levels. The shared problem thematic areas and the stakeholders engaged typically cut across a sub-national region.	
National	Country-wide and/or involving national-level actors	Policy development, national budgeting, priority setting, strengthening capacity
	Case Example: The Partnership for HIV-Free Survival in Tanzania and the Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth in Kenya both operated at a national level, but also established ties or "sub-coalitions" at the sub-national level in counties or regions. Both addressed learning and actions at a sub-national scale, but included issues and policy needs that required national engagement.	
Cross-Border	Watershed, border-regions	International cooperation, improving a situation unique to the cross-border landscape
	Case Example: The Core Group Polio Project in the Horn of Africa specifically formed its CA coalition around a health issue that easily crosses borders - polio. Recognizing that vaccination only on one side of a border in the Horn of Africa region is weakened by a lack of access to vaccines on the other side, the coalition was able to engage cross-border collaboration.	

Guiding Questions for Geographic Scope

- How does the scale of the issue compare to the coalition's reasonable ability to affect it?
- Where does decision making power exist on the shared issue? Is it within your geographic focus?
- Does the issue require a large scale change (e.g., national policy), or is it more suited to demonstrate the potential of an approach to scale (e.g., improving partnerships within a small town)?

- Where are the potential end-users of your activity located? Where and how do they receive the services and goods you seek to improve? What constraints exist to improving access or quality of these services? Where do these constraints lie? (Note: they may exist at different geographical levels.)
- Are there organizations, institutions, agencies, or existing programs that have a mandate for your objective? If so, at what level does their role most prominently exert itself (e.g., national, sub-national, local)?
- Are there potential obstacles or opportunities for implementing CA at a certain level?

Decision Point: What is the most appropriate geographic scope for your CA approach - local, sub-national, national, or cross-border?

MODULE 5: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- LINC's research found that there are important factors that contribute to maintaining participation for effective Collective Action, regardless of context or theme. The strategies for achieving those factors should be chosen based on the specific situation. The factors are interdependent with one another and with the important factors for operating a CA coalition (**Module 6**) and for improving results over time (**Module 7**).
- **Convening Power** is the ability to bring together members and prospective members of a coalition, using their relationships, social capital, and reputation. While using authority to convene stakeholders may be an effective way to force attendance, it is less sustainable than motivating participation through interest and relationships.
- **Government Buy-In** is achieved when relevant government offices or champions demonstrate implicit or explicit support for the coalition. It could include government participation in the coalition and government action, or in a more restricted environment, it may be more subtle buy-in by allowing the coalition the space to operate.
- Participation in CA means having the right **Range of Actors** engaged. Examples of effective CA have demonstrated a full spectrum of options from a targeted, narrow set of actors to a wide, diverse set. Having the right members in the coalition affects the smooth operation and the results of the coalition.
- CA can take place across different **Geographic Scopes** such as national, sub-national, local, or cross-border. Identifying the appropriate scope for the CA effort helps to manage the processes, and to understand the factors that affect the shared problem or objectives.

MODULE 6

Planning for success: Operations

IN THIS MODULE:

- Capable Leadership Structures
- Funding for Activities
- Internal and External Communications
- Joint Planning, Decision-Making & Action

Collective Action (CA) is a collaborative and intentional approach that is most effective when a coalition has clear operation and management processes in place, understood by all coalition members. There are four important factors that contribute to operating and administering a CA effort: Capable Leadership, Activity Funding, Communications, and a Joint Action Planning Process. In this module we will look into each in turn and provide guidance for you to help build the capacity for operating and managing a CA effort and applying these concepts in your context. As you work through this module, keep in mind that these factors are interdependent with one another and with the important factors for motivating participation in a CA coalition (**Module 5**) and for improving the CA effort's results over time (**Module 7**). **Module 10** contains brief introductions and links for some suggested tools and resources that can be applied with the CA coalition as a core part of its operations.

CAPABLE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

While CA coalitions can take many different forms (e.g., secretariat, backbone organizations, steering committee, working groups, etc.), they will each need some structures and capable personnel to act in key positions. This is of critical importance as these personnel and structures have a direct influence on the day-to-day functioning of the coalition and thus on its success as well. It is important to distinguish *leadership* from *power* (in particular equity among participants), as the individuals who serve in a leadership position may not have the most influence over actors in the coalition, but they will need to work dynamically and adeptly to build trust among coalition members and drive the group towards consensus building and accountability. In some cases, these leaders may be government officials or the implementers themselves. In other cases, external facilitators may be brought in to help manage the coalition.

In order to build capable leadership structures, implementers should engage individuals with experience, energy, reputation, and the ability to adapt to the situation. Experience has shown that appointing leaders from champions within the group to take on leadership roles and getting government on-board early on can help to support these structures. In many instances, the ideal leaders may be those who are central to key stakeholders' networks and are recognized for their technical expertise in the topic field. Overall, what is most important is that leaders have the coalition members' trust and that

the processes and structures that govern the coalition are perceived as being transparent, effective and equitable.

As the size of the coalition increases, facilitators may find it useful to add organizational structure to the management of the group. Doing so increases the opportunity for inclusion of voices not traditionally heard, input from a diversity of perspectives, and equity among members. Those structures might include a steering committee or secretariat to represent the diversity of the membership in strategic decisions, and working groups with more distributed responsibility for specific thematic areas - both accountable back to the wider coalition.

Capable Leadership Structure	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• A capable "hub" entity responsible for the logistical and administrative duties to keep the coalition functioning. • Structures, processes, facilitation and governance mechanisms of the coalition overseen by the hub. • Could include steering committees, working groups, or other structures.	• Determines how the coalition will operate. • Personnel and structures have a direct influence on the day-to-day functioning of the coalition. • Capable leadership will have a big influence on participation, engagement, effectiveness, and sustainability of the coalition.

Notes for facilitators

- Leadership structures should be fit-for-purpose. While there are multiple options for how to structure the management, operations, and decision making of the coalition, ultimately, the structure will need to be responsive to the needs of the group.
- Structures should be designed to foster strong relationships. In the long term, the working relationships and coordination behaviors that develop among coalition members will be as influential to success as the capacity of the individual members.
- Roles and responsibilities for members and organizational structures are also discussed in **Module 3**.
- Building effective leadership structures will require time and resources. Don't underestimate how long various aspects of setting up a coalitions' leadership structures may take.
- The term leadership often implies power, but facilitators should be aware of power dynamics and seek to maintain equity among members.
- Capable hubs tend to leverage past experience and training in facilitating groups, organizing group efforts, and project administration.
- Building the capacity of members within the coalition to take on leadership roles will enhance the overall operation of the coalition as well as promote its sustainability over time by building resilience against turnover in leadership positions.
- Clear roles and responsibilities can be established up front and formalized in a protocol, charter or memorandum of understanding between coalition members. Making these structures clearly understood by all members will help to ensure transparency and build buy-in to the coalition.

- Different hubs require differing amounts of resources to support the coalition's structure. Some hubs may require dedicated staff, office spaces, and other resources, while other hubs may only need volunteer efforts from members.

Example Strategies for Capable Leadership Structure

- **Engage the right individuals to take on leadership roles.** Individuals with experience, energy, reputation, and the ability to adapt to a dynamic context are needed to lead the coalition toward progress. For example, the Partnership for HIV-Free Survival in Tanzania benefited from strong leadership from government. Additionally, the technical leaders from the hub entity were very experienced in facilitating CA and the subject matter, which further incentivized members to engage in the process.
- **Create appropriate organizational structures within the coalition.** Those structures can increase inclusiveness and diversity, especially in larger or more complex coalitions. For example, the Family Care First activity in Cambodia established multiple working groups within the coalitions, including a Knowledge Sharing Group, Advisory Board, Secretariat, and thematic subgroups.
- **Appoint leaders from champions among the coalition members.** Leadership that comes from within the coalition can be a challenge to maintaining equity, but can also have the effect of energizing participation of members. For example, the 100-day challenge coalitions in the Transparency Rapid Response Project in Mexico appointed a "president" from among the coalition to convene members, encourage participation, and increase accountability.
- **Leverage existing structures and hierarchies.** In contexts where there are existing leadership structures and those structures operate equitably, they can be beneficial for coalition uptake. For example, the Mindanao Youth for Development activity in the Philippines established Youth Development Alliances with leadership from municipal government, most often the mayor's office. The Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement activity in Nigeria intentionally selected anchor organizations to lead thematic CA coalitions based on their capacity, reputation, and position in the network. The Transparency Rapid Response Project in Mexico mirrored the hierarchy of the government structures as designated in the 2017 Anti-Corruption Law.
- **Operate with transparency as a clear priority.** Transparency from the hub and the work of the coalition helps build trust and supports the power sharing necessary for effective CA. For example, members of the Family Care First activity in Cambodia reported being more engaged and willing to share knowledge and resources due to the high level of transparency in the functioning of the hub, in particular the process for designing joint activities and disbursing funding to support those activities.
- **Continuously reflect and adapt.** Maintaining flexibility in governance mechanisms for a coalition will keep it responsive to the needs of members and the dynamics of the local contexts in which it operates. For example, the hub for the Clean Air Green Cities activity in Vietnam built significant flexibility into their facilitation of the coalition, which increased support for the hub from members and served to build trust.

Guiding Questions for Capable Leadership Structures

- Does your organization or institution have the experience and capacity to effectively lead the coalition? If not, is there an organization or institution better positioned for that role?
- What structures and processes can the coalition agree on to make their work more effective?
- Does the size or scope of the coalition membership lend itself to establishing additional organizational structures such as a steering committee or working groups?
- What roles can coalition members play in leadership of the CA effort?

Decision Point: What strategies for establishing a capable leadership structure can be effective for your context and objectives?

FUNDING FOR ACTIVITIES

CA provides an ideal platform through which stakeholders can pool and leverage resources towards greater collective results. While there are examples of effective CA with minimal or even no funds set aside for joint activities, CA is typically more effective when the coalition has the resources and ability to follow through on their decisions and priorities. That said, this is not the only role that funding plays in supporting CA.

Funding often represents a major value and motivator for stakeholders to join a coalition. In return, coalitions can act as effective vehicles to allocate funds for greater impact by motivating stakeholders to work together. Coalitions can serve as a platform for members to access potentially underutilized government or donor resources, and can also offer members a network of like-minded organizations to build relationships as partners for future opportunities.

Funding for activities of shared interest can also build trust in the coalition; however, it is important to maintain transparency in determining which members receive support so as not to erode that trust. It is essential that coalitions intentionally determine *how* they will fund efforts, and not just *what* they will fund. In some cases, it is beneficial for members to vote on funding proposals or to distribute pooled funds to smaller groups of organizations.

VIRTUOUS CYCLE FOR FUNDING ACTIVITIES FOR COLLECTIVE

Funding for activities can also have perverse or unintended effects. In some contexts, norms around per diems and stipends can promote a false sense of engagement that runs counter to collaboration. Also, the presence of international funding may have negative connotations and thereby diminish participation. Funding can be a powerful tool to

motivate collaboration and catalyze action, but since it can also have the opposite effect, it is important to assess the role of funding within the particular context before integrating it into the CA effort.

Funding for Activities	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• Funds that coalitions use to support implementation of joint activities. • May include funds from USAID or a project supporting CA or the members, and/or external funds leveraged from outside the project or coalition.	• In some form, resources are essential for implementing shared strategies and creating impact. • Can be an incentivizing factor for members. • Effective funding allocation prompts collaboration over competition.

Notes for facilitators

- Funding for activities is part of a virtuous cycle that enhances the work of the coalition by building confidence in the CA effort which further promotes continued commitment among members.
- Funding for activities not only supports the coalition to implement its shared activities, it also builds confidence in the effort by demonstrating that coordinated activities can achieve impact.
- While access to funding can be a major motivation for members to participate in the coalition, you will likely not be able to support all members of a coalition individually with financial resources. For this reason, it's important that a hub's procedures for allocating funding are transparent and feel equitable and fair to all members.
- Funding for a coalition's activities can come from multiple sources and can motivate alignment of member resources, effectively increasing both the mobilization of resources and the scale of impact. The funding needs for CA efforts may vary greatly by context and scope. Costs for implementing activities identified by the coalition members will depend on the nature of activity and the number of members involved.
- Funding can create perverse incentives for members, such as false motivation to participate, a lack of trust in funding decisions of the coalition, or an increased sense of competition among coalition members.
- Alternatively, there are ways to use funding for activities to encourage cooperation over competition, such as matching funding, prioritizing resources for activities demonstrating cooperation, or joint activity planning processes that create more opportunities for cooperation.

Example Strategies for Funding Activities

- **Prioritize funding activities that build members' buy-in, confidence, and perceived value of the coalition.** To support initial engagement in the CA effort, consider investing in areas that will encourage members to engage actively with the coalition. This could include skills

training, workshops or knowledge sharing activities where members learn a new skill or best practices from one another. Under the Bangladesh Livestock Coordination Group activity, the coalition hub funded training, exchange visits, and other shared-learning opportunities to respond to requests for more skills training in livestock best practices.

- **Use members' feedback to determine which priorities to fund.** To identify funding priorities that align with members' and government's priorities, consider conducting consultative workshops and focus groups where all members are asked to contribute their ideas and proposals. Under the Family Care First program in Cambodia, the hub's facilitators created a system where members could help choose both which priority areas were funded as well as which organizations were selected to receive funding (see box). This approach can help motivate members to 'see the larger system' and put their own organizational priorities into the lens of a larger overall objective and work for the greater good.

Case Study

Funding For Activities

The Family Care First (FCF) platform was established in Cambodia to improve practices around services for orphans and vulnerable children with an emphasis on safely integrating children back into family care. As part of their approach, FCF developed a system for collectively identifying members' priorities that aligned with the national strategies for vulnerable children. FCF then created a system to foster the non-competitive development of proposals to address these priorities and a coalition polling system whereby members could vote for which organization(s) they believed were best positioned to be funded to implement the work of the proposal.

- **Create incentives for members to pool their resources.** This approach can help leverage underutilized resources, highlight the impact of collaborative efforts and demonstrate a value proposition for prospective donors to fund CA. Highlight the benefits of sharing knowledge, skills and network building that members and donors get from working collaboratively over the short-term value of funding itself. As part of the Clean Air Green Cities program in Vietnam, the hub and members identified over 40 different sources of funding from private sector, development agencies, and other civic partners to support their work, which allowed them to pool USD 400,000 to use toward coalition objectives.
- **Institutionalize transparent practices for funding activities.** To improve transparency and clarity of the funding process, consider developing systems where members can vote on the proposals that get funded and which organizations are chosen to implement activities. This will help build members' confidence that the work that funded members conduct supports the work of the entire coalition and CA effort overall. Also consider creating non-competitive practices among members by emphasizing funding of collaborative activities. The Family Care First program demonstrated a functional system for improving transparency in funding practices that covered all stages of the funding process, from proposal development through monitoring and evaluation (see box).
- **Identify funding sources external to the coalition:** Consider conducting an asset inventory of available funding sources that can be used to support the hub itself and its members' shared activities. Identify funds that have fewer restrictions to help support collaboration among members. Different sources of funding will have different limitations on how they can be used. Under the Mindanao Youth for Development activity in the Philippines, coalition members conducted asset inventory audits of existing government and private sector programs to identify underutilized resources that could help support the coalition's goals of improving out-of-school youths' access to employment opportunities. Together the Youth Development Alliances were able to leverage over 1 million USD of resources to support joint activities.

Guiding Questions for Funding for Activities

- What types of expected activities might be identified and prioritized by the coalition to advance the objectives of the CA effort? What is the approximate budget required for those types of activities?
- What are the potential benefits and disadvantages of providing funding for activities prioritized by the coalition?
- What existing resources can be leveraged to reduce the hub's funding burden? How can you incentivize members or donors to pool their resources together to support the hub's work?
- Is funding the most important resource needed to generate the coalition's desired outcomes? What other 'leverage points' may exist that don't require funding?
- How can you attract external funding to support the work of the coalition or encourage stakeholders outside of your coalition to leverage their own resources?

Decision Point: Is funding for activities overall beneficial for the coalition? If so, how will you mobilize and distribute those resources to maximize cooperation and build trust?

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

CA requires effective communication both internally for the coalition and externally with other stakeholders to the problem. Internal communications include mechanisms for sharing information, data, and skills among the whole coalition, within or across subgroups such as working groups, and between individual members. External communications include strategies, plans, and tools for disseminating knowledge and results outside of the coalition.

Typically a CA coalition will hold regular meetings and the hub can organize and facilitate the meeting agenda based on the needs and interests of the coalition. However, significant time and effort is required to follow up with coalition members between meetings, and building cohesion among the members through ongoing productive communications. Additionally, as members or working groups conduct research, analysis, activities, and other efforts that generate knowledge and learning, information sharing and information management is crucial to the collective process.

An external outreach strategy can support the CA effort through awareness raising about the effort which can increase participation or mobilize resources, disseminating knowledge generated by the CA coalition to others who can use it, and advancing the collective goals by fostering behavior or mindset shifts. Effective external communications can also highlight the roles of individual organizations, raising their relevance, standing and prestige in a sector and providing further value propositions for them to join and stay engaged with a coalition.

Internal and External Communications	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• Process by which coalitions share information and knowledge both internally (to their members) and externally (to their wider issue-focused audience). • Platforms, strategies, plans, and tools to share or disseminate knowledge and build group cohesion.	• Supports facilitation of the coalition and cooperation among members. • Raises awareness of the CA effort, results, and needs. • Builds strong networks among coalition members. • Can advance the CA goals for awareness and behavior change.

Notes for facilitators

- Establishing good communication among coalition members is part of the facilitator's role, but the tools and mechanisms need to meet the needs of the coalition and be easy to use.
- Good internal communications can require time and resources, potentially including for technology platforms that may be beneficial for sharing information, tracking discussion threads, and managing the knowledge of the coalition.
- For external communications, there may be value in engaging a specialist to support the coalition in determining an outreach strategy, developing a communications plan, and/or drafting specific communications or messages.

Examples for Internal and External Communications

- **Conduct regular meetings with agendas established and shared before the meeting.** Most of the CA cases researched held regular meetings and the facilitator shared an agenda of topics to be covered in each meeting. The agenda items can include a mix of topics proposed by members, exercises the facilitator identifies to advance the plans or work of the coalition, and information and knowledge sharing from members or external experts.
- **Follow up with coalition members between meetings.** A significant portion of the time required from the hub and facilitator is to follow up with members between meetings. Follow up with members may include sharing joint decisions and action items from the previous meeting, providing updates on progress, checking on updates for progress from members, and/or making requests for agenda items, presentations, or knowledge sharing at the following meeting.
- **Establish an agreed-upon platform for internal communications and/or knowledge management.** This could be as simple as using a group communications platform like WhatsApp or email distribution lists, or a more customized platform. Many of the CA cases researched used a shared communications platform. Additionally, a shared library or other locations for managing collective knowledge is valuable for CA coalitions.
- **Develop an external communications strategy and plan.** This might include newsletters, a coalition website, presentations at conferences, and/or publication of materials from the CA

activities. Many of the cases researched conducted outreach to external stakeholders. For example, Family Care First in Cambodia has a website for external communications, and the Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement activity in Nigeria published learning and findings from their work and presented at conferences. The Clean Air Green Cities activity in Vietnam conducted a significant awareness raising and behavior change communication campaign to reduce the use of polluting cookstoves.

Guiding Questions for Internal and External Communications

- Is there an existing communications platform that many members of the coalition already use?
- What types of communications will be most common or most useful for the whole coalition? for subgroups of coalition members? for one-on-one communication between members?
- What types of knowledge product or information are likely to be generated by the CA effort or by coalition members?
- Is there an existing knowledge management platform that can be leveraged by the coalition?
- Who are the primary and secondary external audiences for external communications (to disseminate information, to learn from, for outreach that can achieve the goals of the coalition)?

Decision Point: How will you facilitate internal communications among coalition members? How will the coalition effectively communicate with external stakeholders?

JOINT PLANNING, DECISION MAKING & ACTION

A core component of CA is that the coalition members take action to address a shared problem. To achieve this, a key factor for the operations of the coalition is a process for identifying, prioritizing, and implementing actions that make progress against the shared problem. This includes defining and coming to consensus on their shared problem, creating joint actions plans, executing those plans, and measuring results.

Joint planning and decision-making encourages participation as well, bringing together diverse perspectives to listen to one another, discuss areas of common and diverging understanding, and seek opportunities to improve on the problem. The process requires curiosity and exploration, but also commitment and a willingness to put the community's needs ahead of the individual's. Along the way the process reinforces and is reinforced by increased trust and cohesion among the participants. There are many tools that facilitators can use to guide a coalition through that process (**Module 10** provides a number of examples), but the end products are decisions, plans, and actions.

Joint Planning, Decision Making & Action	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• Collaborative and participatory processes for groups to define and achieve their goals. • Pays close attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion. • Includes defining the development challenge, developing strategies, analyzing the problem, planning for action, taking action, measuring results.	• Aligns coalition members' understanding of the problem and different perspectives. • Aligns coalition members' efforts so that they are complementary or even integrated. • Helps collaborative ideas of the coalition translate into action. • Helps to build members confidence in the value of the coalition and one another.

Notes for facilitators

- The facilitator helps the coalition to define and lead the processes that will help them work most effectively, but coalitions themselves can provide significant input into those processes.
- Joint planning, decision-making, action, analysis, and measurement are most valuable for the coalition to make progress toward its goals, but it is very important to use the process to also build trust and group cohesion.
- These same processes can support decisions or actions toward achieving many of the other important factors covered in this Practical Guide, such as government buy-in, funding for activities, capable leadership structures, geographic scope, communications, etc.
- Diverse coalition members will have diverging views of the shared problem and its potential solutions - even sometimes contradictory views. It is important to remember that two contradictory viewpoints can both still be correct.
- These processes often require iteration and repetition to analyze, plan, test, learn, and adapt. That is also valuable because the process itself can be improved over time, and the coalition members can learn to be better participants in the process over time.
- Some conflict is an inevitable part of collective processes. As a facilitator, it is important to focus on the issues rather than on the individuals, and to mitigate conflict rather than avoiding it.

Examples for Joint Planning, Decision Making & Action

- **Analysis:** A wide variety of studies, assessments, and analyses can be valuable to CA coalitions. **Module 10** provides several examples for problem analysis (root cause, problem tree, systems mapping), context analysis (stakeholder, network, political economy), and others. Many of the cases studied in the research applied one or more of these approaches. For example, the Mindanao Youth for Development activity in the Philippines supported Youth Development Alliances to conduct landscape analyses. The Quality Improvement approach used by the Partnership for HIV-Free Survival in Tanzania included collective analysis of data provided by coalition members to find opportunities to improve health care delivery.

- **Joint Planning:** Most facilitators have had experience helping a group through a participatory planning process. Almost all of the cases studied in the research went through a joint planning process to set priorities and determine actions that the coalition members could undertake together or alongside one another. For example, the Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement activity in Nigeria facilitated joint action planning for every thematic CA coalition they supported. The Uganda Sanitation for Health activity CA coalition worked together to create a national strategy for market-based sanitation.
- **Collective Decision-Making:** Again, one of the most common requests for facilitators is to help a group make decisions or come to consensus. Most of the cases studied in the research regularly made collective decisions. For example, the Family Care First activity in Cambodia led a structured process for collective review and selection of proposals for activities to support and coalition members to lead their implementation. The Bangladesh Livestock Coordination Group made collective decisions on training needs for members and stakeholders.

Guiding Questions for Joint Planning, Decision Making & Action

- What are essential elements of a process to support your coalition to address its shared problem?
- What hypotheses are disputed or debated among coalition members with differing opinions?
- What types of questions do coalition members have about the context, the problem, or the potential solutions?
- Are there key constraints to improving the situation related to relationships among stakeholders? related to underlying assumptions and perverse incentives? related to policy and power dynamics?
- What important topics require consensus among coalition members?
- Are there opportunities to use the collective processes to build trust and cohesion among coalition members?

Decision Point: How will you incorporate joint planning, decision making and action into the facilitation process?

MODULE 6: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- LINC's research found that there are important factors that contribute to the functioning and operations of effective Collective Action, regardless of context or theme. The strategies for achieving those factors should be chosen based on the specific situation. The factors are interdependent with one another and with the important factors for maintaining participation of CA (**Module 5**) and for improving results over time (**Module 7**).

- **Capable Leadership Structure** has two key components: a capable hub organization to support the coalition, and appropriate structures for the coalition to operate efficiently. Leadership refers to the role of motivating the coalition towards its goals rather than power or influence, which need to be more equitably shared across coalition members. The right personnel and structures directly impact the day-to-day functioning of the coalition.

- **Funding for Activities** are the resources that the coalition can access or leverage to follow through on the decisions and actions prioritized. These resources can be an incentive for members and can be allocated to motivate collaboration over competition. To avoid potential trust challenges, funding decisions should be transparent and fair.

- Multi-stakeholder processes require **Internal and External Communication** for the coalition to share information and knowledge among the members, and to their wider issue-focused audience. Internal communication supports group cohesion, cooperation, and improved results. External communication can raise awareness and help the coalition achieve advocacy or behavior change goals.

- A core component of any CA activity is **Joint Planning, Decision Making, and Action**. These processes align coalition members' understanding and efforts which leads to improved confidence in the activity and translation of collective ideas into results. **Module 10** also contains brief introductions and links for suggested tools and resources for facilitating these joint processes.

MODULE 7

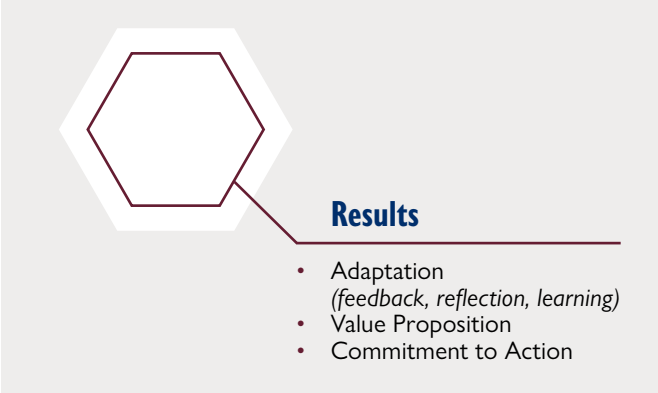
Planning for success: **Results**

IN THIS MODULE:

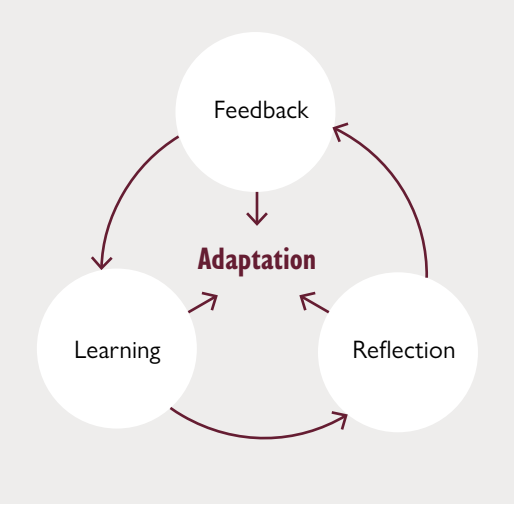
- Adaptation
- Value Proposition
- Commitment to Action

Collective Action (CA) is a dynamic and iterative approach to collaboration that greatly benefits from continuous learning, reflection and adaptation to improve the overall effectiveness and results. There are three important factors that contribute to fostering an environment for progress and improvement: Adaptation (including feedback, reflection, and learning), Value Proposition, and Commitment to Action. This module provides guidance to apply each of these factors to a CA effort within any context.

As you work through this module, keep in mind that these factors are interdependent with one another and with the important factors for motivating participation in a CA coalition (**Module 5**) and for operating and managing a CA effort (**Module 6**). **Module 10** also contains brief introductions and links for some suggested tools and resources for facilitating learning and results with the CA coalition.



ADAPTATION



Effective CA requires regular reflection and adaptation. Here, adaptation means the ability of the coalition to realign its goals, processes, plans, and actions. By bringing together stakeholders with different perspectives, a coalition may find that the initial means by which they seek to effect change may not actually be the most impactful. Adaptation keeps members engaged, heeds their voices and perspectives, gives them ownership over the direction of the coalition, and is responsive to their needs and concerns. Thus, coalitions should organize regular and intentional reflection, feedback, and learning into the CA process.

Adaptation can be incorporated into a CA approach in different ways. Many collaboration frameworks such as CLA, Collective Impact, Quality Improvement, and Adaptive Management have built-in mechanisms to ensure regular reflection and adaptation. For CA, this might be as simple as regular

member surveys and feedback to help understand what is working well and what should be improved, or an annual workshop where the coalition convenes to review their efforts and make a detailed plan for moving forward. Member feedback is essential to identify gaps in the coalition's approach. It may be beneficial to engage an impartial facilitator or evaluator who can more transparently solicit input to help guide and focus adaptation. Coalitions can also build adaptation into their work by establishing working groups to assess and explore different approaches to priority issues.

Case Study

Adaptation

The Clean Air Green Cities activity seeks to address air pollution and health impacts in Hanoi, Vietnam by building a "critical mass" of joint actions across multiple organizations. In early 2020 the hub's work was upended by the COVID-19 outbreak. In response, the hub transitioned to an all-remote work flow and pivoted their focus to the pandemic by mobilizing research to to conduct studies on the air quality impacts of COVID-19. This adaptation responded not only to the issues of the local context, but the needs of a global community of practice as well.

Implementers should consider how they incorporate adaptation into the CA process while staying within the USAID requirements, such as formal work plans and performance monitoring. See **Module 9** for more information on adaptive MEL activities.

Adaptation	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• Ability of the coalition to realign its goals, internal processes/functions, plans, and actions. • Supported by intentional reflection, feedback and learning practices.	• Allows coalition members to drive goals, plans, and actions, leading to more local leadership. • Supports improvement of the CA process itself. • Keeps members engaged and committed. • Builds a culture of curiosity, learning, and improvement.

Feedback, Reflection, and Learning

Feedback serves as the primary source of information for hub leaders to better understand their members' needs and incorporate that information into the coalition's approach through adaptive management practices. Feedback can take many forms and touch on a wide range of subjects about the coalition's operations including joint planning and decision making, funding, and leadership and coalition structure. In many instances, it may be beneficial to solicit input both on a continuous basis and at regular intervals and to provide members the opportunity to share their feedback anonymously.

Feedback should be organized, reviewed/analyzed, and reported to relevant leaders of the coalition and shared with all of the members of the coalition itself. Ultimately soliciting feedback is about seeking to improve the effectiveness of the CA effort in a user-centric way. To facilitate feedback, make it easy to give and receive by providing ample opportunity through multiple mechanisms, establishing an environment of trust among members, and demonstrating responsiveness to feedback provided.

TOOL BOX

Developmental Evaluation

An approach to continuous adaptation of interventions through the use of evaluative thinking and feedback. Typically includes having one or more evaluators embedded in program teams.

In addition to feedback on coalition operations, it is important to engage in reflection and learning on the coalition's plans, actions, and results. Reflection activities are most frequently based on data from fieldwork, pilots, research, or other analyses, and serve as an opportunity to revisit and revalidate initial assumptions that underpinned the coalition's shared goals and strategies.

Reflection and learning can be conducted as a one-off activity to review a particular strategy (such as an after action review) or as part of a regular event (e.g., a semi-annual pause and reflect meeting, or monthly data review sessions). They can also be supported by a suite of complexity aware tools for reflection and learning such as Outcome Harvesting or Developmental Evaluation (see **Module 8** for more on Complexity Aware MEL).

Applying these increasingly common adaptation approaches to CA, it is important to focus on shared learning across the coalition. They provide opportunities for members to better coordinate, align their institutional strategies with the coalition, and build group cohesion.

CA also allows other types of opportunities for learning among members. Each institution, organization, and individual brings its own perspectives, experience, skills, and knowledge to the coalition. Though CA seeks to have members align their own strategies and actions to those of the coalition, members typically continue to have other activities, programs, research, and results. CA presents a unique opportunity for the members to share their knowledge and perspectives with other experts, which can provide benefits in both directions. Those sharing information can receive insightful feedback, thought-provoking questions, and new ideas from other coalition members. Those receiving information can learn and incorporate new knowledge into their own work. This also feeds back into the work of the coalition by improving trust and cooperation, and increasing collective knowledge to incorporate into joint plans and actions.

Shared learning opportunities can take many forms including knowledge products, workshops, seminars, or learning summits (see box). You can institute learning within a CA approach by setting up dedicated knowledge-sharing working groups, chaired by members of the coalition. These opportunities not only provide members a platform to highlight their work and share lessons learned, but they can also serve as an incentive for members to stay engaged in the work of the coalition.

Notes for facilitators

- There is a significant body of evidence showing that adaptation leads to improved outcomes (see this literature review on USAID's Learning Lab). Applying this to CA focuses on the collective process and group cohesion, and the work and results of the coalition.
- This factor is very closely aligned with the CLA framework which also has a large library of knowledge, tools, guidance, and examples on USAID's Learning Lab.

Case Study

Learning

The Mindanao Youth for Development Program was established to address challenges and opportunities facing vulnerable out-of-school youth in eight conflicted-affected areas in Mindanao, Philippines. The program built learning and knowledge sharing into its approach by hosting annual learning summits attended by multiple youth development alliances (YDAs). The summits provided an opportunity for YDA members to reflect on their work, share their progress with others and disseminate learning on best practices. The recurring summit helped to continuously build the capacity of YDA members throughout the lifetime of the project as well as provide valuable learning back to the program implementers.

- It is worth remembering that the goal of adaptation is not adaptation itself, but to create a culture of learning and improving over time.
- Adaptation, feedback, reflection, and learning can be applied to all of the other factors presented in the Guide, including government buy-in, geographic scope, capable leadership structures, joint planning/actions, communications, and value proposition.
- Regular feedback, reflection, learning, and adaptation will require dedicated resources throughout your CA effort. There are also an increasing number of online platforms that can assist with these, such as surveys (e.g., SurveyMonkey, LimeSurvey, Qualtrix, Google Forms, etc.) and virtual whiteboards (e.g., Miro, Mural, etc.).

Example Strategies for Adaptation

- **Establish mechanisms for regular feedback, reflection, learning, and adaptation.** Platforms, tools, and mechanisms like surveys, after action reviews, regular pause and reflect meetings, or conferences can be very effective to support ongoing adaptation throughout the life of the CA effort. For example, the Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement activity in Nigeria actively employed an adaptive management approach with regular (semi-annual or more frequent) moments for reflection and adaptation, including adjustments to workplans and budgets. The Mindanao Youth for Development activity in the Philippines hosted annual learning summits for multiple Youth Development Alliances to meet, share experiences, and learn from one another.
- **Build adaptation into coalition structures or processes.** Adaptive mindsets and approaches can be further encouraged by embedding them in the structure of the coalition, such as with specific working groups focused on MEL or knowledge sharing. For example, the Family Care First activity in Cambodia has established multiple working groups on thematic topics that are each responsible for piloting, learning, and improving on the collective work towards those topics, as well as reporting back to the whole coalition. Additionally, the coalition established a Knowledge Sharing Group to specifically learn across the efforts of the entire membership base.
- **Reflect on necessary adaptations at crucial moments.** A CA facilitator can observe when there are specific moments of opportunity or challenge and take time to adapt their own process to support reflection and shifting the work of the coalition. For example, as with many other activities around the world, the Core Group Polio Project recognized the need for programmatic and process adjustments to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Explicitly link the coalition's MEL process with adaptation.** Adopting a MEL plan that calls for collecting and analyzing data to support learning, and that is flexible to the dynamic nature of CA can support adaptation (**Module 8**). Part of that process is transparent access to data among the coalition, and regular discussions of that data - within the parameters of ethically managed data and privacy concerns. For example, the Quality Improvement process used by the Partnership for HIV-Free Survival in Tanzania was based on coalition members regularly presenting data from their MEL systems for group discussion, reflection, and adaptation.

Adaptation: Guiding Questions

- Does the level of trust and openness among coalition members allow for honest feedback?
- What can be done to encourage honest and regular feedback from coalition members?

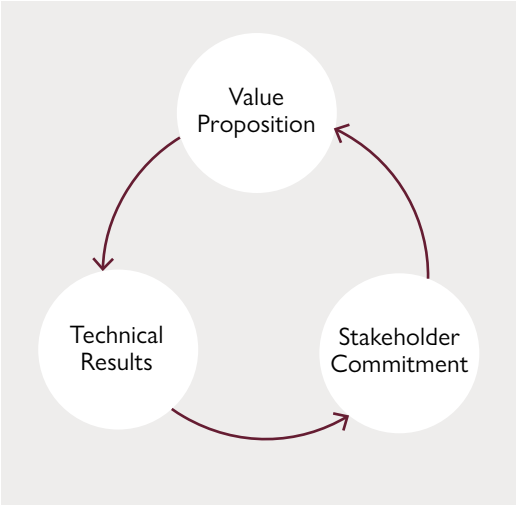
- Are there existing platforms for knowledge sharing or communication that members are accustomed to and that can also incorporate feedback, reflection, and learning?
- What is a reasonable interval for the coalition to have enough experience (with internal processes and/or with actions and results) to reflect and adapt?
- Are there any leadership or organizational structures that the coalition can establish to support and encourage adaptation?

Decision Point: How will you incorporate feedback, reflection, learning, and adaptation into the CA facilitation process?

VALUE PROPOSITION

At their core, CA coalitions provide a forum for stakeholders to connect with others to pursue action around a shared interest toward a common goal. In many cases, they also provide organizations access to funding for their activities that they may not receive elsewhere (see Funding for Activities in **Module 6**). However, potential network connections and funding alone are not the only motivators for participation. Members need to derive some value or benefit through their participation, to balance the time, effort, and resources they invest in participation. For example, coalitions might provide access to training, mentoring, and capacity building; knowledge sharing between partners; access and ability to engage with government; or the potential to influence policy. For government actors in particular, participation in the coalition may offer access to new resources, knowledge, and expertise or improved access to their constituencies.

The value proposition of the CA coalition may be different for different members, so it may be necessary to consider multiple aspects of the shared problem, collective process, coalition structure, joint actions, and expected results. The value proposition for participants is also highly interdependent with the other factors outlined in this Guide - including potential roles within the coalition and the factors supporting participation, operations, and results. Effective CA approaches also need to keep in mind that members' value proposition is both a contributing factor to – as well as a result of – effective collaboration. This feedback effect can help a coalition build and maintain momentum, promoting more impactful and sustainable outcomes.



Value Proposition	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• Perceived benefits or value to members based on their participation in the CA effort. • Answers "what do I get out of this?". • Can be different for different stakeholders. • Can take many forms. • Highly interdependent with other factors.	• Keeps participants actively engaged in an ongoing process. • Allows for continued results through a virtuous cycle of feedback. • Can be both a motivation to participate as well as a product of participation.

Notes for facilitators

- As the value proposition may vary by stakeholder, it is important to be able to speak to multiple potential benefits of the CA effort.
- There are a wide range of potential benefits to participation, including learning, networking, influencing the discussion, being part of a promising solution, access to resources, etc.
- It is important to keep tabs on what is motivating members to participate at any given time - this is a crucial component of feedback for adaptation. Maintaining the perceived benefits of participation is just as important as adapting to improve value over time.

Example Strategies to Maximize Value Proposition

- **Foster networking and partnerships.** CA coalition members reported that they received a lot of value out of opportunities to network with other participants and form new partnerships. They also benefited from raising their profile with other coalition members, in particular influential ones. For example, many members of the coalitions in the Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement activity in Nigeria assigned great value to the ability to meet and work with others advocating for the same issues. Members of the Clean Air Green Cities coalition in Vietnam also specifically pointed to the access to expand their network and work with new partners as a benefit.
- **Promote the successes of the CA coalition.** Successful results bring recognition, political capital, and future resources. It also helps to further align member activities with those of the coalition overall. For example, participants in the 100 day challenge coalitions under the Transparency Rapid

Case Study

Value Proposition

The Partnership for HIV-Free Survival is a multi-country initiative aimed at reducing new HIV infections among children. In Tanzania, partners working in the maternal and child health space wanted a new approach to speed progress and better achieve their goals. In response, the activity established a steering committee led by the Ministry of Health alongside International NGOs and technical partners that implemented a Quality Improvement (QI) program at select pilot sites. The members demonstrated effective best practices to one another that were then disseminated through the coalition and used to scale up interventions. The approach encouraged learning and knowledge sharing among members of the coalition, responding to their interest in a new and more effective approach to their work.

Response Project in Mexico felt they gained significant political and social capital by demonstrating their successful anti-corruption efforts to the public, government, and other external stakeholders. Members of the Partnership for HIV-Free Survival coalition in Tanzania noted that the close alignment of the results to their missions meant they would be able to achieve and report real progress toward their goals by working with others. Similarly, the members of the Core Group Polio Project recognized that working with other practitioners was the only way to disseminate knowledge, vaccines, and other necessary services in a porous border region.

- **Invest in shared learning, data, and expertise.** A key value of participating in CA efforts has been the ability to learn from others and improve one's work, as well as helping to improve others' work. Beyond learning from examples or cooperation, direct access to data, knowledge resources, and technical experts is seen as an important benefit of participation. For example, several of the coalitions focused significant efforts on learning and access to data, including Clean Air Green Cities in Vietnam, Family Care First in Cambodia, Partnership for HIV-Free Survival in Tanzania, Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement in Nigeria, and the Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth in Kenya.
- **Provide access to funding if appropriate.** As discussed in the section on Funding for Activities in **Module 6**, there are some potential challenges to providing access to funding within the coalition. However, it was viewed as a real benefit in many of the cases researched. For example, the Family Care First activity in Cambodia used a transparent and participatory process to disburse funds mobilized by the coalition for joint activities, and members specifically noted this funding and the process as very positive aspects of the CA effort.

Guiding Questions for Value Proposition

- What do members of your coalition value most about working collectively?
- What will motivate their initial participation and continued engagement in the coalition?
- Are there ways that the other key factors for effective CA can reinforce the value proposition for coalition members?
- How will you monitor shifts in the perceived value to coalition members over time?
- Is it possible to satisfy some of these values without significant funding? How can you leverage members' own funds to create value within the coalition?
- What values will take a longer time to create in the coalition? Are there are some 'early wins' you can foster to create value up front for members to encourage their participation?

Decision Point: What will be the most effective strategies for providing value to coalition members?

COMMITMENT TO ACTION

For the other key factors in this Guide to lead to effective collaboration, implementers, facilitators, and members need to commit to putting their plans into action. This means that everyone involved has a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, they consistently and meaningfully participate in the coalition, and they follow through on actions or decisions. Beyond ensuring effective functioning of the coalition, this commitment also helps build a sense of ownership and aligns members' work to "pull in the same direction." As commitment to action is closely linked to members' value proposition, it can be seen as both a contributing factor to, and result of, effective collaboration.

Case Study

Commitment to Action

The Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement project was implemented with the goal of strengthening Nigerian civil society's ability to influence the development and implementation of key democratic reforms at the national, state, and local levels. As part of this process, the implementer used an advocacy strategy matrix to both plan and monitor actions and outcomes of different cluster coalitions in the program. Each week, clusters reported stories to the implementer that were added to the matrix to visualize how clusters were moving from awareness to commitment. The matrix also helped highlight how each clusters' collective activities lead to interim outcomes that supported their specific advocacy objectives.

An essential task to promote effective functioning and continued progress of any coalition is the need to define clear expectations for *all* members, not just those in leadership or decision-making positions. This might include minimum attendance or contribution requirements, documented scopes of work, memorandums of understanding, or statements of commitment. Throughout the CA process, members need to be motivated to maintain their follow-through on commitments, which can be reinforced with adaptive and complexity aware MEL (**Module 8**).

Commitment to action can be one of the most difficult factors to facilitate in CA, especially when it requires members to give up some of their autonomy and to collaborate with traditional competitors. However, LINC's research highlighted a number of strategies for motivating follow-through, and found that the progress that comes from collective commitment creates a virtuous cycle reinforcing further commitment.

Commitment to Action	
What it is	**Why It's Important for Collective Action**
• Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. • Consistent and meaningful participation in the coalition. • Follow-through on actions or decisions. • Align individual actions with coalition goals. • Requires members to agree to give up some autonomy, putting the collective ahead of the individual organization.	• Actions and follow-through promote effective functioning and continued results of the coalition. • Follow-through on action is a fundamental component of the work of the coalition. • Can be difficult to achieve with members who previously competed with one another. • Members "pulling in the same direction" is how CA makes a difference from traditional approaches. • Can be both a contributor to CA results, and a product of results.

Notes for facilitators

- Accountability and commitment benefit most from clear and direct communication of expectations. Delineating roles and responsibilities overall and for specific activities or processes of the coalition is valuable.
- In CA, distributed action and decision-making that aligns with the coalition's overall goals is effective and efficient. Responsibilities and leadership should be shared equitably and inclusively, and is best when coalition members are able to self-select for responsibilities that are appropriate for them.
- When it comes to commitment and follow-through, it is important to also lead by example. If the hub and facilitator are not committing to take action and following through, it is unlikely that other coalition members will.
- As mentioned elsewhere in this Guide, a significant portion of the time of CA facilitators tends to be follow-up with coalition members between meetings or between agreements. That follow-up can be an effective way to encourage commitment.
- Coalition members are also more likely to follow through on their commitments if there is a culture of learning from mistakes than if the culture will punish mistakes.
- At the same time, it is also valuable to demonstrate that there are consequences to not following through on commitments.

Example Strategies for Commitment to Action

- **Develop clear expectations for members' roles and responsibilities.** An essential step for encouraging commitment to action from the outset of the CA effort is to make members' - and leaders' - roles and responsibilities clear to all. This will help improve transparency and trust in the CA process as well as among members. These expectations can be contained in minimum attendance or contribution requirements, detailed as written scopes of work, or memorandums of understanding. The Uganda Sanitation for Health Collective Impact activity prioritized this factor by providing draft written versions of a steering committee member's roles and responsibilities to partners before they were convened and reviewing them in detail and revising them accordingly at the group's first series of meetings.
- **Build accountability into the operation and management of the coalition.** A complementary activity to defining members roles is to create accountability mechanisms to ensure they fulfill their responsibilities and are accountable to the coalition. This can be accomplished by conducting regular tracking of member's activities and participation, holding annual reviews or 'pause and reflect' events, or by getting a developmental evaluator on-board to serve as a neutral party. The Partnership for HIV-Free Survival built in accountability measures to their CA approach from the group's inception by developing a national protocol with clear goals, purpose objectives, activities and M&E framework to measure the implementation.
- **Mirror existing accountability mechanisms from current institutional structures.** Seek to understand the work that your members are already doing within their own institutions such as government ministries or sector working groups, and leverage it to build commitment into your coalition. Look for ways to either add complementary activities to members' existing mandates or mirror them within the coalition to create familiar responsibility-feedback mechanisms. Building off of the ways that members already work will help to integrate the efforts of the coalition into members' existing roles, lowering the bar to commitment to action. As part of a series of "100-

Day Challenges" conducted under the Transparency Rapid Response Project in Mexico for state anti-corruption officials, facilitators helped members understand how they could leverage their positions in state institutions to help collectively advance the objectives of the coalition.

- **Revist roles and responsibilities at regular reflection points.** Facilitators should anticipate that members' roles and responsibilities may change over the course of the CA effort, with some members stepping up and taking on more responsibilities and others possibly needing to reduce their commitment over time due to other organizational responsibilities. Building in a review of roles and responsibilities to regular reflection activities will help facilitators stay on top of the shifting capacities and commitments of their members. For example, in the Family Care First program in Cambodia, facilitators noticed a drop off in participation after the first couple of years of the coalition's meetings, even though they were continuing to add more members. In response, the hub decided to explore creating minimum participation requirements to more fully define the expectations of members of the coalition.

Commitment to Action: Guiding Questions

- What values or incentives do you think will motivate your members' commitment to action?
- How will the coalition's activities encourage members to commit to their shared objectives?
- What are the best-fit roles and responsibilities for your members and coalition size? How will you codify these roles and responsibilities so that they are clear to all?
- How will you create accountability structures within your CA effort that will promote members' commitment to action?
- How will you keep members accountable to the coalition and monitor their progress?
- What tools will you use to keep members accountable?

Decision Point: What approaches will you take to build a commitment to action within your coalition? How will you monitor members' activities to keep them accountable to the coalition?

MODULE 7: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- LINC's research found that there are important factors that contribute to achieving and improving results of effective Collective Action, regardless of context or theme. The strategies for achieving those factors should be chosen based on the specific situation. The factors are interdependent with one another and with the important factors for maintaining participation of CA (**Module 5**) and for operating a CA coalition (**Module 6**).

- Effective CA incorporates feedback, reflection, learning, and **Adaptation** to allow the coalition to realign its goals, internal processes, plans, and actions as necessary. Often to accomplish this, facilitators need to organize intentional exercises for feedback, reflection, and learning, and implementers need to negotiate flexibility with donors.

- The coalition's **Value Proposition** answers the question "what do I get out of this?" for its members. The benefits to members may be different for different stakeholders. This factor is highly interdependent with other factors - the more value members perceive, the more they are willing to invest in CA, which will in turn create more value.

- **Commitment to Action** can be one of the most difficult factors to facilitate in CA. It includes members' clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, consistent and meaningful participation, and follow-through on decisions. It may also require members to give up some autonomy as they align their actions with the coalition's goals. However, the progress that comes from collective commitment creates a virtuous cycle, reinforcing further commitment.

MODULE 8

Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) for Collective Action

IN THIS MODULE:

Complexity-Aware Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
Focusing on Group Cohesion
Illustrative Cohesion Indicators

> *International development practitioners tend to do what they measure rather than measure what they do.*

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) must be considered throughout the design and implementation of a Collective Action (CA) effort, and there are references to MEL throughout this Practical Guide. MEL is a crucial component of effective CA, and this module is dedicated to the necessary considerations for MEL. This module will examine complexity-aware MEL, suggest ways of measuring and evaluating group cohesion necessary for effective CA, and provide illustrative indicators for cohesion.

MEL is a key driving force in effective CA. International development practitioners tend to do what they measure rather than measure what they do. In other words, implementers are often more inclined to deliver interventions that achieve the established output indicators, rather than to define innovative activities and then establish indicators to measure the results. For CA, this matters because:

- The effort of bringing together multiple stakeholders around a shared development issue introduces additional complexity; and
- Long-term success toward improving the shared issue can be more dependent on cohesion of the coalition than on a drive to make progress toward technical results.

COMPLEXITY-AWARE MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING

Complexity-Aware Monitoring is a useful tool to apply when results are difficult to predict. In CA, results are often difficult to predict because stakeholders bring diverse perspectives and multiple existing efforts to the issue; contextual factors influence the problem and programming; a dynamic context introduces new challenges and opportunities; and the pace of change is unpredictable.

In these situations, performance monitoring has some blindspots that are common for CA, such as a broader range of outcomes than initially planned, including intended, unintended, positive and negative results. The coalition of stakeholders engaged in CA are empowered to define the shared problem and prioritize joint actions, and those may result in outcomes that were not initially anticipated. Another common blindspot relates to alternative avenues of change, such as multiple actions or stakeholders contributing to outcomes. In CA, joint actions by coalition members are specifically intended to achieve synergistic results that each action could not achieve independently.

USAID has continued to expand its use of a growing set of complexity-aware MEL approaches. Traditional monitoring methodologies can be used in accordance with complexity-aware principles to derive effective tools to measure and learn from change in a complex situation. Similarly, the methods designed to monitor USAID strategies, projects, and activities operating in complex contexts are only effective if used in accordance with complexity-aware principles as well.

USAID provides guidance on complexity-aware approaches to MEL in the Systems and Complexity White Paper and the MOMENTUM Guide to Complexity-Aware Monitoring Approaches, outlining a variety of tools and methods; among them, two notable tools include:

- **Outcome Harvesting** collects evidence of what major changes have occurred and then, working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes.
- **Most Significant Change** is a narrative-based tool that generates stories from diverse frontline stakeholders on changes in their lives, organizations, and contexts, and makes each of their perspectives on that change explicit.

Additional guidance can be found through USAID's Office of Learning Evaluation and Research, USAID's Evaluation Policy, and Evidence Framework.

TOOL BOX

Outcome Harvesting

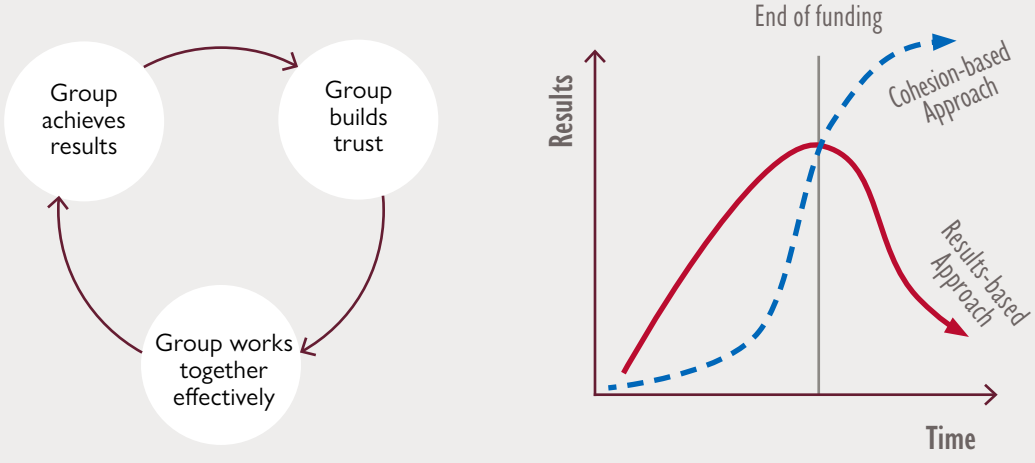
is a complexity aware MEL tool that identifies major changes and emergent outcomes, and then determines how an intervention or activity contributed to those changes.

Decision Point: What complexity-aware MEL tools will be most beneficial for tracking change and learning with your CA effort?

FOCUSING ON GROUP COHESION

Several of the cases studied in LINC's research under this activity highlighted a perhaps counterintuitive finding that in order to achieve progress toward the shared development issue, the coalition needs to focus more on *cohesion among the members* than on *progress toward the issue*. . While emphasizing results-oriented programming, USAID and its partners have frequently focused less on group cohesion. A balance between group cohesion and technical results is still necessary, and can shift over the course of the CA effort; however, to achieve sustained progress and to enable adaptation in an evolving context over the long-term, group dynamics and cohesion are critical. A deliberate focus on group cohesion represents a virtuous cycle where improving results reinforces trust and collaboration; while it may take more time than a results-based approach, its outcomes are likely to be stronger and more sustainable over time.

VIRTUOUS CYCLE OF GROUP COHESION LEADING TO SUSTAINED RESULTS OVER TIME



To maintain a focus on cohesion, it is important to establish cohesion-relevant performance indicators. For example, in the Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement activity in Nigeria, initial indicators measured several variables related to cohesion around establishing the coalition and its processes and structures. Then, as the coalition began to plan and act together toward their technical objectives, the activity added additional indicators to measure their progress toward those results. Cohesion indicators can include perceived value of the coalition by members, network density and other measures of network strength, measures of social capital, and trust index scores. Some of the tools to help define and measure cohesion include:

- **Social Network Analysis** is a powerful tool to understand relationships among members of the coalition and measure change in the network dynamics over time.
- **Perception and Feedback Surveys** are used in CA to ensure that the hub is responsive to the needs of coalition members, and to improve effectiveness and cohesion of the group.
- **Social Capital Index** or similar tools are more targeted assessments of the capacity of the coalition to work effectively together.

Decision Point: How will you ensure a focus on cohesion through indicators or other MEL tools and activities?

ILLUSTRATIVE COHESION INDICATORS

Example Cohesion Indicator	Potential Data Sources
Output Indicators	
• Number of coalition members consistently attending meetings (defined as a percentage of meetings attended)	Meeting attendance lists
• Number of coalition members agreeing and signing a set of by-laws and procedures/processes for the coalition	Meeting notes, coalition files
• Number of joint action plans developed	Coalition reports
• Number of joint actions completed	Coalition reports
• U.S. dollar value of resources mobilized by the coalition for joint actions	Coalition reports

Example Cohesion Indicator	Potential Data Sources
Outcome Indicators	
• Coalition member satisfaction with the CA effort and coalition	Regular survey of members
• Average of individual coalition members' reported likelihood that they will continue participating in the coalition	Regular survey of members
• Coalition member perception that the CA effort is making progress	Regular survey of members
• Coalition member perception that the CA effort is being managed well	Regular survey of members
• Coalition members' reported trust in other members	Regular survey of members
• Coalition network size and network density	Social Network Analysis
• Coalition power dynamic improvements measured by shifts in most connected or most central members	Social Network Analysis
• Changes in coalition social capital index as measured by partnerships, information sharing connections, regular participation in meetings, trust in one another, trust in the hub, resource contributions	Social capital index or a combination of survey questions
• ***Emergent cohesion outcomes and actions for the coalition as a whole or subsets of members of the coalition***	Outcome Harvesting, Pause & Reflect

Decision Point: Are there particular expected results for group cohesion that you would like to measure, learn from, and improve on over the course of your CA effort?

MODULE 8: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) must be considered throughout the design and implementation of Collective Action.
- As CA efforts are driven by the coalition members, complexity-aware MEL and adaptive management are well-suited for capturing change, measuring impact, and learning for improvement.
- Long-term success against the shared problem or toward the shared objective can be more dependent on the cohesion of the coalition than on a short-term focus on technical results. For this reason, it is valuable to include indicators of cohesion and collective capacity of the coalition. It may also be valuable to wait to set technical objective indicators until the coalition has established some priority actions.

MODULE 9

Sustaining Collective Action

IN THIS MODULE:

Is Sustainability Desirable?
When to Begin Planning for Sustainability
Components of a Sustainability Plan

Planning for Collective Action (CA) sustainability should begin early during implementation, and incorporate significant input, feedback, and adaptation from coalition members. Formulating a plan at the outset might be beneficial, but is likely to change over time as the coalition advances its cooperation and begins to achieve its goals. The factors for effective CA introduced in **Module 5**, **Module 6**, and **Module 7** can serve as a useful guide to plan, as these same factors that determine the effectiveness of CA at the outset will also largely govern sustainability as USAID support for the activity comes to an end.

While USAID may choose to continue its support beyond the initial programming cycle, other options for the coalition to continue are possible, and in many cases largely preferred. This module discusses how to determine if sustaining the coalition is necessary or desirable, when to begin sustainability planning, and what should be included in the sustainability plan.

IS SUSTAINABILITY DESIRABLE?

As indicated in the Time Period section of **Module 4**, not all CA efforts need to continue forever. While CA can continue to provide value in maintaining progress - especially for complex and dynamic problems - there are also cases where it makes sense to allow a coalition to dissolve. Two fairly common situations are coalitions that were formed to address a relatively narrow scope; and CA efforts for issues where after a time, other less structured forms of collaboration may be more valuable. These circumstances may not always be clear during the design and planning stages, but could emerge once CA has made some initial progress.

Guiding questions to determine if sustainability is desirable:

- Is a one-off collaborative effort enough to make considerable progress on a narrowly defined complex problem?
- Is it possible to make enough progress that the problem is considered solved?
- Has the CA coalition established laws, public policies, and/or a regulatory body (or similar) that will continue to manage the problem beyond the life of the coalition?
- Has the coalition strengthened network ties and built sufficient trust among members so that coordination and collaboration will continue even without a formal CA coalition?
- Can the efforts of the coalition, if successful, be expanded to address other new initiatives outside the original objective?

! **Decision Point:** Is sustainability desirable? Why or why not? (remember to revisit this question over the course of your CA effort)

WHEN TO BEGIN SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING

If you determine that sustaining the CA effort is desirable, you will want to have a plan that maintains the value of the time, effort, and resources already invested. The sooner sustainability planning can begin, the better the likely outcomes, keeping in mind that coalition members may need time to build and strengthen relationships and confidence in the process before jumping into longer-term sustainability planning.

Sustainability planning requires coalition members to have a good understanding of the value of their CA work and network, the effort required to maintain the coalition, and the types of activities the coalition is taking on. This experience provides members with the confidence and knowledge to prioritize sustainability and make informed planning decisions. Once the coalition has sufficient experience as a group, planning for sustainability can begin, early enough so that plans can be put into action.

Guiding questions to determine if a coalition is ready for sustainability planning:

- Does the coalition include enough diversity of membership for necessary voices to be heard?
- Are there processes and structures in place to allow the coalition to function effectively, at least at a basic level?
- Has the coalition made plans, and have members followed through with their responsibilities?
- Are coalition members expanding or strengthening their networks through collaboration?
- Is there trust among members and/or buy in on their work from key decision makers?
- Does the hub or coalition leadership have the necessary skills to keep the coalition working together?
- Do other stakeholders need to be added to the coalition (or dropped) to help ensure sustainability efforts going forward?

Decision Point: Is it an appropriate time to begin sustainability planning? Why or why not? (remember to revisit this question over the course of your CA effort)

COMPONENTS OF A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Planning for sustainability is a participatory effort that should largely be led by the coalition itself. As a first step in sustainability planning, it is best to ask the coalition members whether they want to continue collaborating beyond USAID support. It is best not to assume that they do, and in the case they are not interested at present, their opinion may change over time.

The key components of CA coalition sustainability are:

- **Organizational Sustainability.** In many contexts, the coalition may need to have a formal registration or organization to maintain its work and receive future financial support (see below). There are many options for organizational registration depending on local context and regulations. A local legal expert or other specialist - which might already be available within the coalition - can help to understand the options, and the pros and cons of each. Some examples of possible options might include:

  - » registering a new NGO or CSO specifically for the coalition;
  - » registering a new membership association for coalition members;
  - » merging into an existing NGO, CSO, or association;
  - » becoming a government or parastatal body, or merging into an existing government office;
  - » staying informal (most commonly with an administrative representative that provides financial and legal structure, often rotating among members of the coalition).

- **Activity Sustainability.** Beyond the legal entity that maintains the CA effort, the coalition will want to formalize and continue to refine the processes, structures, planning, feedback mechanisms, and accountability required for operation. The sustainability plan should include objectives and steps to achieve these and other relevant functions. Activity sustainability and operational decision-making can also help to maintain the energy for continued participation.
- **Financial Sustainability.** Sustainability also requires resources. There are many ways that a CA coalition can mobilize the resources needed for sustainability. The plan to mobilize these resources should be based on an understanding of the needs of the coalition and the contextual landscape. Financial sustainability strategies might include tapping external funding sources such as fundraising, seeking grants, or government support; internal sources such as membership fees, income generating activities, in-kind contributions or leveraged support from coalition members; or a combination of external and internal.

Decision Point: How will you facilitate the CA coalition to develop and determine their plans for Organizational, Activity, and Financial sustainability?

MODULE 9: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Not all Collective Action efforts need to continue forever. The effort and/or the coalition may continue to be valuable beyond the period of USAID funding, but if an effort is no longer needed, for example by achieving its objective or establishing a framework for continued success without CA, it is best not to invest unnecessarily in sustainability.
- If sustainability is desirable, the sooner planning begins the better. However, giving the coalition time up front to build relationships and confidence in the process will result in better sustainability planning.
- A CA effort sustainability plan needs to consider the organizational or institutional sustainability such as formal registration, activity sustainability to maintain the processes and structures of CA, and financial sustainability to ensure the effort has the resources required to continue.
- The decision to continue or end a CA effort may change over time, so it is best to revisit the discussion occasionally.

MODULE 10

Reference Materials and Resources

As the international development sector increasingly acknowledges the complexity of the problems we seek to address, interest in Collective Action (CA) has been steadily growing. But CA has a deep history with a large body of knowledge behind it. In this Module we try to provide links and references to a wide array of resources that may be helpful to anyone facilitating a CA effort. Below you will find references to a small number of well-documented models or specific approaches to Collective Action and a larger number of potential tools that can be used by facilitators to advance the process that the coalition is following. Note that the majority of the materials referenced are in English language, but some of those materials have been translated into other languages.

MODELS OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

These models are more specific approaches to bringing a group of stakeholders together to take joint action on a shared problem. Some are more focused on a given sector or social objective, but all can be a good reference point for more detailed steps to facilitating a CA effort.

- **Collective Impact:** Stemming from a 2011 article in the Stanford Social Innovation Review, Collective Impact is a structured way to bring people together to achieve social change. It proposes five conditions of group collaboration: Common Agenda, Shared Measurement, Mutually Reinforcing Activities, Continuous Communication, and Backbone Support. Collective Impact has been widely used in the United States, and increasingly in other countries, as an effective form of cross-sector collaboration to address complex social and environmental challenges. The movement has gained a significant following and has its own collective body that shares tools and case examples: the Collective Impact Forum. Their website is a good place to start: https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/
- **Quality Improvement:** Coming out of the healthcare field, Quality Improvement (QI) is a framework used to systematically improve processes and systems toward a long-term vision. QI is built on a foundation of measurement, goal-setting, and testing, and for a complex problem, a group of experts, practitioners, and stakeholders can be convened to collaborate. These coalitions are generically referred to as Quality Improvement Collaboratives. The coalition has a multi-stakeholder structured approach with five essential features: 1. There is a specified topic; 2. Subject matter, context, and quality improvement experts provide ideas and support for improvement; 3. Multi-sectoral teams from multiple sites/activities/projects participate; 4. There is a model for improvement (setting targets, collecting data, and testing changes); and 5. The collaborative process involves a series of structured activities. While there is no one site with information on QI, there are some good places to start. And though the content is very focused on healthcare, it is applicable to other technical areas.

» "Quality Improvement" (US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resource and Services Administration, 2011)
» "Basics of Quality Improvement" (American Academy of Family Physicians)
» "What is Quality Improvement Anyway?" (Saskatchewan Health Quality Council. 2021)
» "What is an Improvement Collaborative?" (Crichton, S., LifeQI, 2020)

- **Learning Alliances:** The Learning Alliance Approach seeks to engage multiple stakeholders in processes of innovation to enhance knowledge and improve outcomes. Learning Alliance coalition members typically include researchers, practitioners, donors, policymakers, and private sector representatives. The approach has been applied in many development sectors with the philosophy that more sharing of knowledge among stakeholders allows for research, analysis, pilot testing, and partnerships that improve results. There are a few case examples that provide insights into designing and facilitating a Learning Alliance approach with stakeholders:

  » "Learning alliances: An approach for building multistakeholder innovation systems" (Lundy, Gottret, and Ashby, 2005)
  » "Learning Alliances: Scaling up innovations in water, sanitation, and hygiene" (Smits, Moriarty, and Sijbesma, 2007)

- **Action Learning Sets:** Action Learning is a process that brings stakeholders together with the specific intention of solving problems. An Action Learning Sets is the coalition of participants who are engaged in action learning. Action Learning Sets have often been formed of individuals in a single organization working to improve workplace challenges and organizational results; however, they have also been applied frequently to bring together multiple stakeholders to a development context. There are a few resources that may be a good starting point for understanding Action Learning and Action Learning Sets:

  » Action Learning Sets, A Guide for Small and Diaspora NGOs (INTRAC, 2016)
  » The Centre for Action Learning
  » Materials from Action Learning Associates
  » "The Transformative Potential of Action Learning in Community Based Research for Social Action" (Zuber-Skerritt, Wood, and Kearney, 2019)
  » "Action learning and action research to alleviate poverty" (Boak, Gold, and Devins, 2020)

TOOLS TO SUPPORT COLLECTIVE ACTION FACILITATION

This Practical Guide provides information, support, and guidance for CA facilitators to design and organize the CA process and structure. A crucial component of CA is to facilitate the coalition through decision-making, planning, analysis, learning, improving, and joint actions. The tools below include a wide range of exercises, how-to manuals, and examples that you can use to facilitate analyses and participatory workflows with the coalition.

Analyses that CA coalitions can undertake

- **Root cause analysis:** A method of problem solving used to uncover and identify the underlying or root causes of problems. By identifying the underlying causes leading to a complex problem, the coalition can take more targeted action to improve the situation. Root cause analysis is more often used for smaller scope activities or to determine the underlying causes of problems affecting the functioning of the coalition.

  » Background article on root cause analysis from Tools4Dev
  » Root cause analysis for Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC)
  » Root cause analysis and systems thinking

- **Problem tree exercises:** A method of determining underlying causes of a problem by mapping out the cause and effect chains around an issue. Problem tree exercises are more often used for smaller scope problems to support project design.

  » Background article on problem trees from ODI
  » How to guide for problem trees from Tools4Dev

- **Causal Loop Diagram:** A systems mapping approach used to visualize factors and their causal relationships. Causal Loop Diagrams give coalitions insight into the interactions and feedback structures that make development problems complex and difficult to solve - getting at the underlying causes. Participating in the process is itself very helpful to coalition members to understand one another's perspectives. It is generally used for larger scope complex problems.

  » What is a Causal Loop Diagram (from USAID MarketLinks)
  » Excellent how to guide (from Omidyar Group)

- **Stakeholder Analysis:** Techniques to identify and understand the needs, interests, influence, and expectations of the parties affected by or affecting the shared problem. For any complex problem, the interests and influences of stakeholders to the problem are important inputs to strategies for addressing the problem.

  » Stakeholder Analysis: Definitions, Tools and Techniques
  » Stakeholder Analysis: Winning Support for Your Projects
  » USAID Gender Based Violence Stakeholder Analysis Toolkit
  » Listening for Program Design

- **Social Network Analysis:** A systems thinking tool used to visualize and measure the relationships among the actors related to the shared problem. Adding to the stakeholder analysis by also understanding how the stakeholders interact with one another.

  » Social Network Analysis Methods for International Development
  » Demystifying Social Network Analysis in Development: Five Key Design Considerations
  » Using Social Network Analysis in WASH Programs

- **Political Economy Analysis:** An analytical approach to help understand the underlying reasons why things work the way they do and identify the incentives and constraints impacting the behavior of actors relevant to the shared problem. With an understanding of those incentives and constraints, a coalition can make more informed decisions and take more effective action.

  » Thinking and Working Politically Through Applied Political Economy Analysis: A Guide for Practitioners (from USAID)

- **Advocacy Strategy Framework:** : A tool for articulating the process and needs to advance public policy advocacy strategies.

  » The Advocacy Strategy Framework (Center for Evaluation Innovation)

- **Systems Thinking Approaches and Methods:** There are many potential approaches and methods that support systems thinking and understanding complexity in addressing shared problems. A few resources provide an overview of different approaches to incorporating systems thinking.

  » Local Systems Framework (USAID, 2014)
  » Local Systems Framework Technical Note (USAID, 2016)
  » Local Systems Practice User's Guide

Processes that CA facilitators can apply

- **Theory of Change:** The development hypothesis for how a project, activity, or intervention will bring about the intended results.

  » What is this thing called Theory of Change (2016)
  » Developing a Project Logic Model and Theory of Change
  » Theory of Change: A Facilitator's Guide

- **Pause and Reflect, Adapting, After Action Reviews:** Processes undertaken periodically during a project or activity to identify what is working well and what needs to be adapted or improved. It allows the coalition and/or the facilitator/hub to consider how changes in the context or progress of the coalition are affecting ongoing actions and results.

  » Facilitating Pause and Reflect
  » Knowing When to Adapt: A Decision Tree
  » Guidance Notes and Template for Conducting After Action Reviews

- **Defining a Common Agenda:** Facilitators of Collective Impact or other models of CA often have a set process they use to support a coalition to form their common agenda around the shared problem.

  » How to Develop a Common Agenda for Collective Impact
  » Collaborating to Create a Common Agenda (part of a webinar series)

- **General group facilitation exercises:** There are many valuable resources available to facilitators with practical exercises for groups to work together in ways that encourage innovative thinking, changing perspectives, questioning assumptions, and building group trust. Below are a few collections.

  » Liberating Structures: Including and Unleashing Everyone
  » Facilitating Intentional Group Learning: A Practical Guide to 21 Learning Activities

Complexity aware MEL approaches that may be helpful

- **Complexity Aware MEL Overviews:** There are several resources that compile overviews of the need for complexity aware MEL and several specific tools that can be helpful.
  - » Discussion Note on Complexity Aware Monitoring (USAID)
  - » Systems and Complexity White Paper
  - » MOMENTUM Guide to Complexity Aware Monitoring Approaches
- **Developmental Evaluation:** An approach to continuous adaptation of interventions through the use of evaluative thinking and feedback. Typically includes having one or more evaluators embedded in program teams, ideally on a full-time basis.
  - » Developmental Evaluation Overview
  - » A Practical Guide for Evaluators and Administrators
- **Outcome Harvesting:** Collects evidence of what major changes have occurred and then, working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes.
  - » Outcome Harvesting Overview and Examples (USAID Learning Lab)
- **Most Significant Change:** A narrative-based tool that generates stories from diverse frontline stakeholders on changes in their lives, organizations, and contexts, and makes each of their perspectives on that change explicit.
  - » Guide to Most Significant Change (USAID Learning Lab)

Acknowledgements

We are excited to offer this Guide to Collective Action for implementers, hubs, and facilitators. The research, including ten Case Studies examined as part of this effort, provided valuable insight for this Guide and are referenced throughout. While most of the cases are perceived to have been generally successful by implementers, Mission staff, and stakeholders alike, we learned equally as much from those efforts that did not go as planned, and even more from those that adapted and refined their approaches over time.

Our efforts could not have been achieved without the innovations and creativity of champions throughout USAID, their Missions, and implementing partners, and especially local stakeholders who have been applying and piloting Collective Action in their efforts in the field, especially those who were eager to share their experiences and provide valuable feedback on the early drafts of this Guide.

Looking forward, we hope that this Guide can both help to design and support Collective Action across USAID's portfolio of work, and that users will continue to share their inputs and experiences with USAID's PPL Bureau and its iDesign team and others so that we can all collectively continue to learn and improve our efforts and impact.

In particular, we would like to recognize the efforts and contributions of some specific teams. The LINC research team put in a tremendous effort to collect and analyze data on effective Collective Action. The USAID Technical Review Committee with representation from across Bureaus and Offices provided insightful guidance and recommendations throughout the research and the preparation of this toolkit. The leadership of the Bureau for Policy Planning and Learning's Office of Strategic Program Planning (PPL/SPP), Kerry Pelzman, Tracy Quilter, and Grace Yang for their continued support of this work. The members and organizers of the USAID Local Systems Community and the CLA Community of Practice participated in helpful workshops offering feedback and input. The representatives of the ten case studies researched including USAID representatives, implementing partners, and participants in Collective Action supplied the valuable foundational data that made this Guide possible, based on their pioneering hard work with this approach. Participants in Practical Guide focus groups representing USAID Missions and USAID local implementing partners helped us outline and refine the content in this Guide. The USAID iDesign team consistently supported, encouraged, and improved both the research and this Practical Guide.

Authors

Riley **Abbott,** USAID
Craig **Hempfling,** LINC
Jennifer **Kennery,** Social Solutions International
Patrick **Sommerville,** LINC
Nick **Valcourt,** LINC / Open Water Systems

Research Team

Aji **Ceesay**
Rich **Fromer**
Patrick **Lohmeyer**
Carolyne **Njihia**
Kimberly **Pugel**
Nick **Valcourt**

Technical Review Committee

Jill **Boezwinkle** (PPL/SPP)
Jacqueline **Greene** (DDI/LFT)
Greg **Grisvold** (M/OAA)
Shannon **Griswald** (PPL/LER)
Neetu **Hariharan** (GH/HS)
David **Jacobstein** (DDI/DRG)
Sebastian **Milardo** (PPL/SPP)
Kyle **Rearick** (DDI/FAB)
Arjun **Tasker** (DDI/LFT)