

Enabling Conditions of Community Progress

What factors drive improvement in the communities, cities, regions or highly-centralized countries that are closest to achieving their vision for children? What interventions or approaches are having the highest impact or driving the fastest progress?

| Enabling Condition | What It Means |
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| Pursuing a shared vision of impact for children | Impact means transforming outcomes for children in line with a shared vision |
| Having a deep understanding of context | Gaining deep knowledge of the local culture and context |
| Engaging all community members as leaders | Recognizing that everyone can contribute and sharing leadership among all leaders in the ecosystem |
| Structuring and supporting collaboration | Enabling different groups to collaborate effectively |
| Taking iterative action in the face of complexity | Acting on, and amidst, complexity and change, and understanding that progress isn't linear |

PURSUING A SHARED VISION OF IMPACT FOR CHILDREN

It's easy with such complex work to become focused on the inputs, and forget to pay attention to the outcomes. In the places making the fastest progress, we're seeing a real desire to understand whether collective leadership is resulting in outcomes improving for all children in a community. In Haiti, Anseye Pou Ayiti is developing a new digital tool that allows the organization to measure and track the depth of impact for students in the communities where teacher leaders work. In Nepal, Teach For Nepal have commissioned an Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) – the first ever assessment of student outcomes data across the region of Tulsipur – in order to generate the baseline data that will allow fellows, alumni and community members to know if their collective efforts are improving academic outcomes for children.

HAVING A DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTEXT

All meaningful community impact efforts are rooted in a deep understanding of the context in which they are taking place. Decades of global evidence gathered by the world's senior development economists show what the experiences of network partners have taught us: practices that work in one context doesn't automatically work in another, with the politics, culture and capability of communities all playing a deciding role. All successful efforts are rooted in a deep understanding of the local context. In the US, The New Teacher Project (TNTP) has developed a sensitive approach to building a deep understanding of the contexts in which it works in partnership with community members. The Reach Hub in the UK was launched after seven years of work to build relationships with local students and parents.

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RESEARCHER MATT LLOYD-ROSE ON HOW TO PURSUE COMMUNITY IMPACT

COMMUNITY PROGRESS RESOURCES



Community Impact Convening **video** summarising purpose



Place-based change **video**

ENGAGING ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS AS LEADERS

Authentic community engagement increases the likelihood of meaningful long-term change. However, initiatives that begin with high ambitions for community engagement often fall short because authentic community engagement requires more investment than people often imagine, takes significant time, and means listening meaningfully and relinquishing control. In the short-term, there's a lot that organizations can do without taking these steps, but as Teach First found with the Northamptonshire Social Mobility Project, which faltered after two years, lack of deep investment in authentic engagement makes collective efforts particularly fragile. Taking these lessons on board, Anseye Pou Ayiti spent two years listening to community members before launching their first program, using an asset-based community development (ABCD) approach. In Monterrey, Enseña por México alumni have spent the past year speaking to and building relationships with parents throughout the communities in which the organization places teachers. Recently, Lead For Ghana piloted a module in which its first year fellows spent a week building relationships in their placement communities.



STRUCTURING AND SUPPORTING COLLABORATION

The crux of any community impact initiative is the question of how, and how effectively, different groups work together. Large-scale collaborations are difficult even when they are going well, and in order to generate shared vision and momentum, and work through conflict, competition and politics, clear structures and spaces are needed. In Ancash, Perú, the Enseña Perú team have created two initiatives to navigate these factors: an annual gathering of the whole community of students, teachers, parents and policymakers called Ayni; and a small technical group of school, NGO and ministry officials that manage the

shared programming of the 'Efecto Ancash' collective action project. In the UK, Teach First Northamptonshire created a clear structure and process for a group of local government leaders, school leaders, teachers, police and health service officials to meet to set shared goals, design implementation activities and reflect on progress.

TAKING ITERATIVE ACTION IN THE FACE OF COMPLEXITY

You can't expect to just make a plan and stick to it in community impact work; success depends not on the quality of your plan, but on how well you respond to complexity and change. Communities have to navigate shifting circumstances, and respond to events as they arise, rather than doggedly following a pre-determined strategy. This year in Delhi, the Teach For India team completed its community aggregator pilot, and is deciding to change course. They learned that while aggregation is valuable, they aren't best placed to do it. In Estonia, the Noored Kooli team pivoted away from the development of a single partnership model with schools to one that allows each school to develop its own community plan in partnership with the NK team. The world's leading development experts have put together a 'problem-driven iterative adaptation' (PDIA) toolkit to help groups take action in this way.

Enabling Conditions: Leadership Across the Ecosystem

What is the role of leadership across the ecosystem of children in driving community progress? How do we grow and develop this leadership capacity throughout the ecosystem?

| Enabling Condition | What It Means |
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| Leadership at all levels of the ecosystem | Leadership at all levels, from bottom to top, grass roots to grass tops. |
| Strategic positioning of leaders | Strategic placement of leaders predisposed to lead in partnership with other across the ecosystem |
| Recognition of current community strengths | Finding your appropriate or highest-leverage place in the ecosystem in relation to the work of others |
| Leadership is fully shared | Everybody whose work impacts children needs to be involved in decisions and strategy |
| Money is in place where it is needed | Dedicated resources are crucial, meaning money must be committed |
| Risks of individual leadership are understood | Understanding the tensions between entrepreneurial and collective leadership, and the risks and benefits of acting alone |
| Scale of leadership matters | A critical mass of leaders is more likely to bring about change |

LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS OF THE ECOSYSTEM

Where communities are making progress, there is leadership working at all levels of the community for change. Students, parents, teachers, school leaders, NGOs, businesses, local government and others are all empowered to improve outcomes for all students and have the capability to do so. In Delhi, Teach For India's community impact efforts are built on 10 years of developing alumni leadership capability throughout their partner communities, with dozens of alumni in ministry roles, consulting with government, running social enterprises, leading schools, or advocating for change in other ways – as well as building partnerships that reinforce the leadership of others in those communities. In Washington, D.C., which became the fastest improving school district in the US under the leadership of Teach For America alumna Kaya Henderson, leadership had been reinforced over two decades by TFA alumni school leaders and teachers.

STRATEGIC POSITIONING OF LEADERS

The strategic positioning of strong leadership within communities also contributes to progress. A powerful grassroots movement of students and parents will struggle to achieve real improvements for all children without partnering with school leaders and teachers, for example. Partner organizations are taking a strategic approach to positioning leaders within community impact efforts. In Tulsipur, Nepal, Teach For Nepal is placing a small team of alumni to work alongside the mayor to shape regional education strategy, whilst also clustering new fellows as teachers in schools. In Estonia, Noored Kooli works closely with schools where there are two fellows or more as well as alumni in positions of leadership.

RECOGNITION OF CURRENT COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

The most effective approaches to community impact recognize the strengths of others within the community, and find an appropriate place to intervene. Teach For India - Delhi's community aggregators started out as an initiative of TFIx, a new branch of TFI that was set up to support cohorts of leaders who would serve as multipliers within communities. These aggregators would learn about who was already doing great work, find existing spaces where community progress was being made, and seek to add value by making new connections, brokering access to funds, or supporting with capacity. Similarly, in Ancash, Enseña Perú has found that they are not best placed to lead the collective efforts, but work better as an NGO partner within a structure managed by the local government, where there is strong leadership in place and alignment on the regional aims.

LEADERSHIP IS FULLY SHARED

Everyone whose work impacts children needs to be involved in community impact. At DC Public Schools, Kaya Henderson initially involved all of the education system stakeholders in a shared plan for school improvement, which worked successfully in improving outcomes for children, but began to alienate parents and community members, who felt like difficult changes – like the closure of some schools – were being done to them. Kaya quickly revised the approach to include community members in the leadership decisions, reaching out to the whole community through suggestion boxes in shops, churches and hair salons, and inviting them to participate in the making of difficult decisions.



RISKS OF INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP ARE UNDERSTOOD

While strong leadership is needed throughout communities, it is also increasingly clear that there are risks associated with entrusting too much to individual or entrepreneurial leaders. Teach First's, Northamptonshire Social Mobility Project was founded by two staff members from the East Midlands regional office, with Teach First acting as the catalysts and conveners. When Teach First's organizational priorities changed and one staff member transitioned to a new role, momentum was lost. In Armenia, Teach For Armenia's community development initiative was created in partnership with community members, but because a single person oversaw the work, it was not initially embedded within the strategy of the whole organization – something that the team identified and is addressing in the year ahead.

SCALE OF LEADERSHIP MATTERS

A few committed citizens can change the world, but many committed citizen can change it faster. In the most successful cases of community impact we've observed in the network, whether in Washington, D.C., London or Delhi, two things are true: the relationships that the organization holds with others in the ecosystem have grown to a significant scale, and the number of fellows and alumni leaders working within the system is also significant.

LEADERSHIP ACROSS THE ECOSYSTEM RESOURCES

- ▶ **Collective leadership & learning**
- ▶ Alumni leader: **Tarun Cherukuri**
- ▶ Alumni Leader video: **Ed Vainker**
- ▶ James Darley: **Transform Society**

MONEY IS IN PLACE WHERE IT IS NEEDED

Funding is a catalyst for community impact. In London, the work of Black Thrive to mobilize a community to improve mental health outcomes for the black population in the borough of Lambeth launched thanks to a start-up grant, and was continued as a result of an ongoing funding commitment from the health service. The 'Efecto Ancash' exists in the Peruvian Andes as a result of a long-term funding commitment by Antamina, the mining company that is the major employer in the region. The work of the Reach Hub in Feltham, UK is enabled by a partnership with Save the Children. Though funding is an enabler, it can also come with unhelpful strings attached.

Enabling Conditions: Leadership Diversity

Who is involved in successful efforts to drive community-level progress? How can we increase the diversity and inclusiveness of leadership?

| Enabling Condition | What It Means |
|--|--|
| Draw on the diverse wisdom of many in the collective | Those who have experienced injustice bring as much expertise and skill as those with formal authority' |
| Enlist those with formal power | Key decision-makers must be included in the collective effort |
| Students and parents can catalyze impact | Parents and students are agents of change |
| Solutions are co-created by the community | Strategies have to be co-created with people closest to the problem |
| Finding a balance between ownership and participation | Organizations like Teach For All network partners aren't always best placed to lead community impact, but context sometimes demands it |

DRAW ON THE DIVERSE WISDOM OF MANY IN THE COLLECTIVE

History shows us that movements for change are most successful when those who have experienced the injustices they are fighting to overcome are equal partners with those in positions of more formal authority, such as in the fight for gender equity, or civil rights. In New Zealand, Southside Rise has been working with Maori and Pacifica students to help build their leadership and advocate for new education paradigms that reflect and celebrate their history and identity. In Haiti, Anseye Pou Ayiti is working with current teachers, parents, and school leaders, as well as new fellows, in order to build the leadership needed for change.

ENLIST THOSE WITH FORMAL POWER

Community impact is enacted by those with the power to make change. As well as existing in the hands of community members, power is also found in the hands of those who have formal authority, so successful efforts usually include partnerships with those individuals or groups. In Tulsipur, Teach For Nepal CEO Shisir Khanal built a strong relationship with the regional mayor that resulted in an invitation for TFN to lead and staff the region's education strategy. In Ancash, Enseña Perú's relationship with the national ministry allowed its program to survive in the region when it was threatened, while its relationship with the officers of the UGEL (Unidad de Gestión Educativa Local) mean they influence the day-to-day practice of school leaders and teachers. In Colorado, the students of Future 10X met with the governor of the state to demand changes to how the system is governed.

“We have to figure out exactly what is the root cause of this inequity and the reasons why certain people are benefiting from that inequity. Otherwise, I think we are actually replicating what we think we are disrupting.”

**NEDGINE PAUL DEROLY
| CEO, ANSEYE POU
AYITI (TEACH FOR
HAITI)**

LEADERSHIP DIVERSITY RESOURCES

▶ The importance of engaging parents **video**

▶ Students as agents of change **video**

▶ **Video** of Nedgine Paul Deroly on 'Leading From Within'

▶ **Video** of Shisir Khanal on 'Contextualised Vision'

STUDENTS AND PARENTS CAN CATALYZE IMPACT

Today students are leading change across the world. In dozens of countries they're striking to pressure governments to act on climate change. In Denver, Teach For America - Colorado supported the launch of the Future 10X student movement, convening 20 current high school students to mobilize others to apply pressure on the state administration to give students greater agency in the decisions that affect schools by having a student representative on the school board. They met twice with the Governor of Colorado. In Argentina, Enseña por Argentina is trialling a program to develop the capacity of parents of high school students at risk of dropping out to help them stay in school.



SOLUTIONS ARE CO-CREATED BY THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Community impact happens when leaders working at all levels come together to co-create solutions to the problems that the whole community has chosen to tackle and wants to solve. In London, Citizens UK has been using a community organizing approach to mobilize change in education. They brought together hundreds of thousands of community leaders in house meetings and town hall meetings around the question of how to improve education for kids in low-income communities. After much discussion and deliberation, they decided that they would campaign for all adults to be paid a living wage – this would save parents from having to work multiple

jobs, and give them more time to be with their children, as their first educators. When communities co-create solutions, they think of things that those in power often miss.

FINDING A BALANCE BETWEEN OWNERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

Our network is full of entrepreneurial leaders who see problems and then strive to solve them. In the complex work of community impact, that often means that network partners seek to become the backbone organization for a collective impact effort. But now, network partners are beginning to question whether they are best placed to lead those efforts, and are instead trying to position themselves as participants in a collective. In Delhi, Teach For India found that their community aggregators made real progress in mobilizing a variety of agencies and individuals to work in partnership over two years, but ultimately decided that although aggregation is vital, it is not TFI's role to lead it. Similarly, in Ancash, Enseña Perú initially convened a group to create their own shared plan for collective impact, but are now aligning their efforts under the leadership of the local ministry or UGEL (Unidad de Gestión Educativa Local), which is convening stakeholders to create a shared plan for improving education in the region.

Enabling Conditions: Collective Approach

What is the role of a collective approach in catalyzing change in the community? How can we catalyze and develop a collective approach?

| Enabling Condition | What It Means |
|---|--|
| Start with people not policy | Community impact depends on people and culture not policy and implementation |
| Collective efforts are built on one-to-one relationships | Deep authentic relationships enable people to do hard work together |
| Spaces for shared vision and reflection | Opportunities to reflect together on where we are and where we're heading |
| Shared systems for monitoring progress | Knowing whether we're making progress, both in data and tools |
| Using existing tools and techniques | Tools and practices to enable people to do the work together |

START WITH THE PEOPLE, NOT THE POLICY

Community impact doesn't come about as the result of great policy or implementation, but rather depends on people and culture. Successful efforts don't start out with a brilliant plan that someone created and then revealed to the group, but rather with the people in the group, their hopes, identities and capabilities. In recognition of this, Anseye Pou Ayiti began its work to develop leadership programs for parents and school leaders with a listening tour carried out by 100 volunteers to hear the thoughts of all members of the community. In Estonia, Noored Kooli launched professional learning communities for dozens of teachers in their two partner schools, but they didn't impose a focus or process. Instead, they brought people together to get to know one another, and let them decide what to do. These approaches are also characteristic of community organizing, which is practiced all over the world.

COLLECTIVE EFFORTS ARE BUILT ON ONE-TO-ONE RELATIONSHIPS

In work that involves people, nothing is more important than relationships. All community impact efforts are really the sum of thousands of relationships that exist between individuals, all of which must be nurtured. If the quality of a school system can't exceed the quality of its teachers, the success of community impact efforts can't exceed the quality of relationships between community members. Community organizers put one-to-one relationship-building at the heart of all that they do, and providing specialist training on how to do it in a way that balances listening and storytelling, giving and receiving.

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SPACES FOR SHARED VISION AND REFLECTION

In order to make progress, communities create spaces in which they can come together to talk honestly and openly about what they want for their children, to develop shared visions and plans for mobilizing the community, and to reflect on the progress that is being made collectively towards achieving these visions. These spaces and structures can be highly structured, or more informal and relational. In Ancash, the Enseña Perú team created two initiatives: an annual gathering of the whole community of students, teachers, parents and policymakers called Ayni, and a small technical group of school, NGO and ministry officials that manage the shared programming of the 'Efecto Ancash' collective action project. At Black Thrive in London, UK, frequent community meetings are held to which all community members are welcome to shape the plans and hold collective efforts accountable, but a smaller central team also meets regularly to plan the activities of the organizational partners in the efforts.



SHARED SYSTEMS FOR MONITORING PROGRESS

Communities develop systems to evaluate their progress towards shared goals. Ideally, these are co-created by the community members, who come together to ask what success would look like for kids, how the community wants to get there, and then what indicators they'll pay attention to in order to know whether they are making progress. These can be qualitative, taking the form of stories of change, or quantitative, measuring change in the data. In Estonia, Noored Kooli are tracking the impact of the partner school model through student academic data in the national data system, student agency via surveys,

school culture via teacher surveys. Teach For Armenia has developed a community development framework that allows progress to be tracked at the level of students, parents, schools and community. Teach For Nepal have commissioned the first ever Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) study in Tulsipur to set a baseline in student outcomes.

USING EXISTING TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Communities making progress are often basing their structures for collaboration on existing tools and techniques. The work of Anseye Pou Ayiti is inspired in a large part by the asset-based community development (ABCD) approach. Reach Hub's place-based change initiative is modelled on the Strive Together collective impact methodology. Ako Mātātupu - Teach First NZ's leadership development approach draws on the cultural practices of Maori and Pacifica communities.

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