



TACHI Learning Session – Backbone and Governance (aka Stewardship)

October 19, 2022

Today's Agenda

- **Backbone – Purpose and Function, Proven Practices**
 - Break-Out Rooms on Backbones
 - Group Discussion

Short Break

- **Governance aka Stewardship - Purpose, Structures, Importance**
 - Break-Out Rooms on Stewardship and Governance
 - Group Discussion

Tools

Advancing Health Equity in Accountable Communities for Health: A Toolkit for Action

Page 6 (backbone) and Page 7 (governance)

Being an ACH backbone: A conversation with Kitty Bailey (part 1)

Advancing Health Equity in Accountable Communities for Health:
A Toolkit for Action

Confidential & In Review

JUNE 2022

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Developed for
Texas Accountable Communities for Health Initiative (TACHI)

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Discussion Questions

- How do you view your role as the backbone?
- Why do you think the backbone is such an essential component of TACHI?
- What are you hoping to take away from this learning session?

Questions for you to ponder.... For break out rooms after presentation

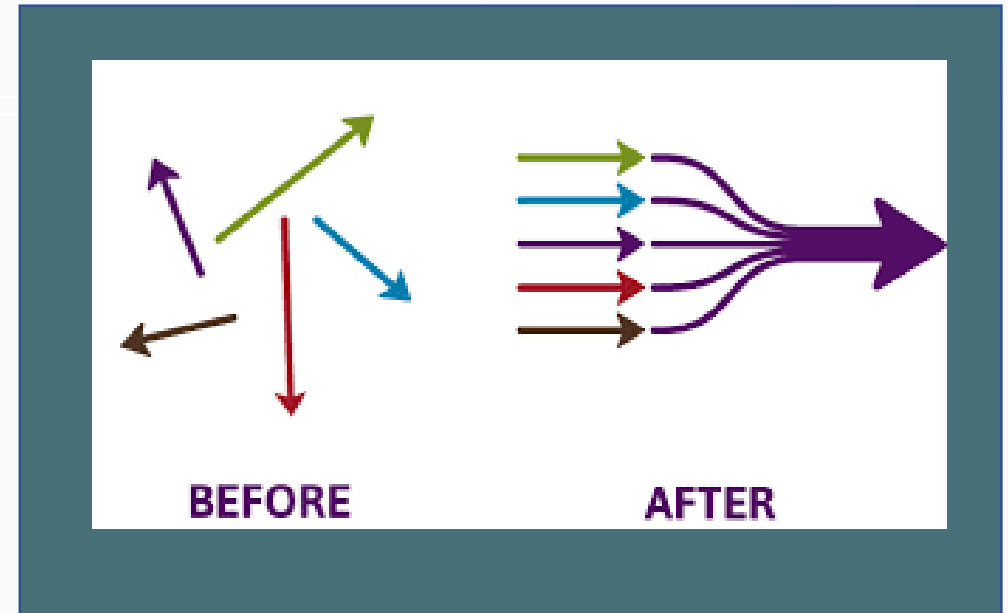
- In what areas have you had success, provide an example?
- What areas have been challenging for you, provide an example?
- How do you as the backbone center health equity in the work?
- What is one thing you want to commit to trying after this learning session and do you need any TA support?

Backbone definition

Backbone organizations serve as coordinating bodies that bring together a diversity of stakeholders and lead a synchronized effort to achieve a common goal.

Over the lifecycle of an initiative, they

- (1) guide the vision and strategy,
- (2) support aligned initiatives
- (3) establish shared measurement practice
- (4) cultivating community engagement and ownership
- (5) advance policy
- (6) mobilize funding



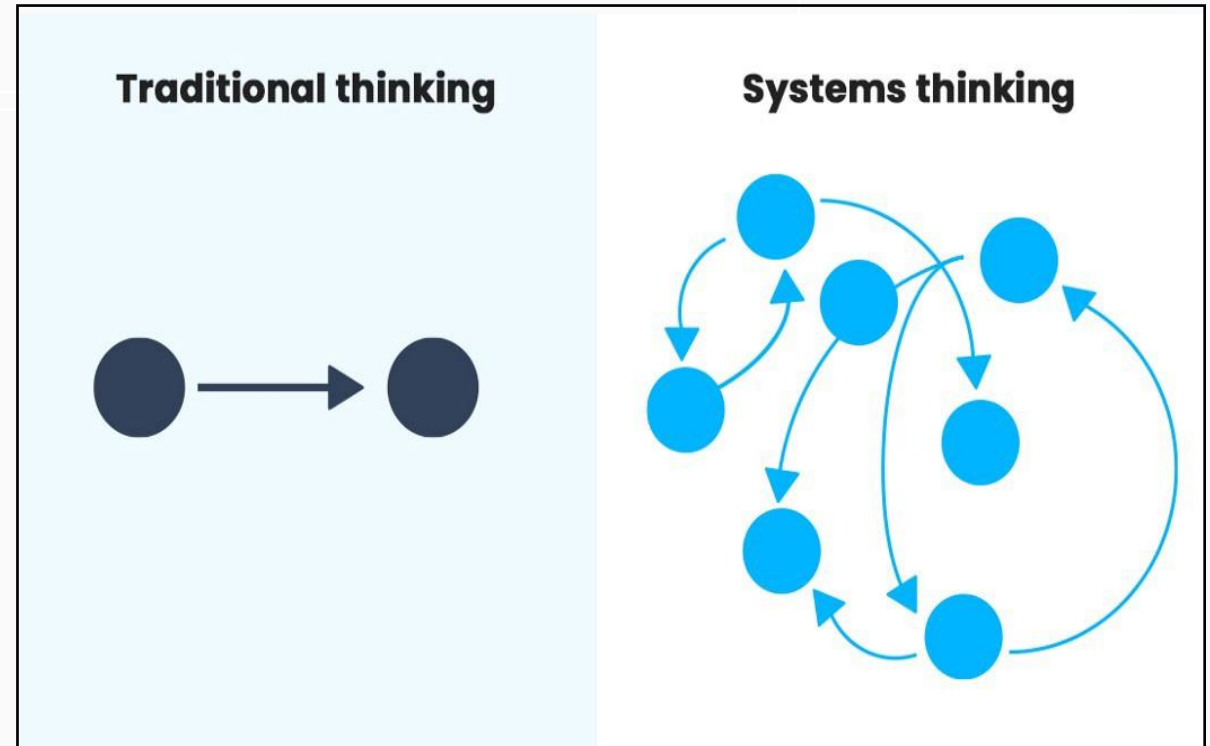
Can be housed at many kinds of organizations. For example, philanthropic organizations, public health agencies, healthcare organizations, community-based organizations, others?

Backbone staffing

Backbone need dedicated staff, usually 2-3 part or full-time staff who have following skills sets

- Collaborative Leader
- Communicator
- Community Translator
- Lifelong Learner
- Politically Astute
- Strategic
- Practical
- Systems thinker

Source: Tamarack Institute



The WHAT: “Backbone Purpose and Functions”

1. Guiding vision and strategy
2. Supporting aligned activities
3. Establishing shared measurement practices
4. Cultivating community engagement and ownership
5. Advancing policy
6. Mobilizing resources

https://ssir.org/articles/entry/understanding_the_value_of_backbone_organizations_in_collective_impact_2#

The HOW: “Six Proven Practices for Backbone”

1. Clarity of purpose
2. Driving long term momentum and growth
3. Strong partnership identity
4. Connected and aligned people and activities
5. Involving the population of focus
6. Clear measures of success connected to learning

https://ssir.org/articles/entry/six_proven_practices_for_backbone_organizations

Combining the WHAT and the HOW for VISION

Guiding vision and strategy

- **Prioritize equity**
- Facilitate a process that leads to a Vision for the ACH
- Prioritize opportunities for action towards the Vision
- Adapt to changing context and external environment

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Clarity of purpose

- Hold and champion the vision – **including equity**
- Continue to articulate the vision
- Ongoing communication with the partners
- Make a connection with the partners

Combining the WHAT and the HOW for IMPACT

Supporting aligned activities

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Driving long term momentum & growth

- Facilitates dialogue between the partners
- Directly supports the Steering Cmte and Workgroups
- Coordinates ongoing activities

- Create an ROI for people's time
- Create ongoing opportunities for growth and learning
- Craft a narrative around the value for individual partners and the community

Combining the WHAT and the HOW for MEASUREMENT

Establishing shared measurement

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Clear measures of success

- Manages data collection among the partners
- Supports the use of data for learning and evaluation

- Support the partners with developing a set of meaningful metrics
- Turn metrics into meaningful stories
- Opportunities for appreciative inquiry and leverage strengths of the partners

Combining the WHAT and the HOW for COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Cultivating community engagement & ownership

- Build an inclusive effort that authentically engages and fosters ownership within the community

+ Involving the population of focus

- Listen and actively involve the people you want to help, actively involve in design, implementation, iteration and assessment
- Use and train the partners in the use of specific tools like focus groups, co-design methods, human design thinking, surveys and other tools

Combining the WHAT and the HOW for POLICY / PARTNERS

Advancing policy

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Strong partnership identity

- Support a policy agenda with a broad definition of policy
- Impacting larger systems and institutions

- Utilizing the dual energy of the dual loyalties of the partners
- Having direct conversations
- Actively work on the partnership itself

Combining the WHAT and the HOW for RESOURCES including PEOPLE

Mobilizing resources

- Developing resources for the initiative
- Fundraising for the backbone itself
- Recruiting volunteers and in-kind contributions
- Supporting the partners fundraising efforts

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Connected & aligned people and activities

- Need to coordinate among partners for impact and reduced duplication
- Decision making processes and norms (doesn't need to be unanimity) utilizing shared leadership processes

Break Out Rooms

- In what areas have you had success, provide an example?
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Backbone Community of Practice

Question for you to consider:

In 2023 would you be interested in having a Backbone Community of Practice?



5 minute break

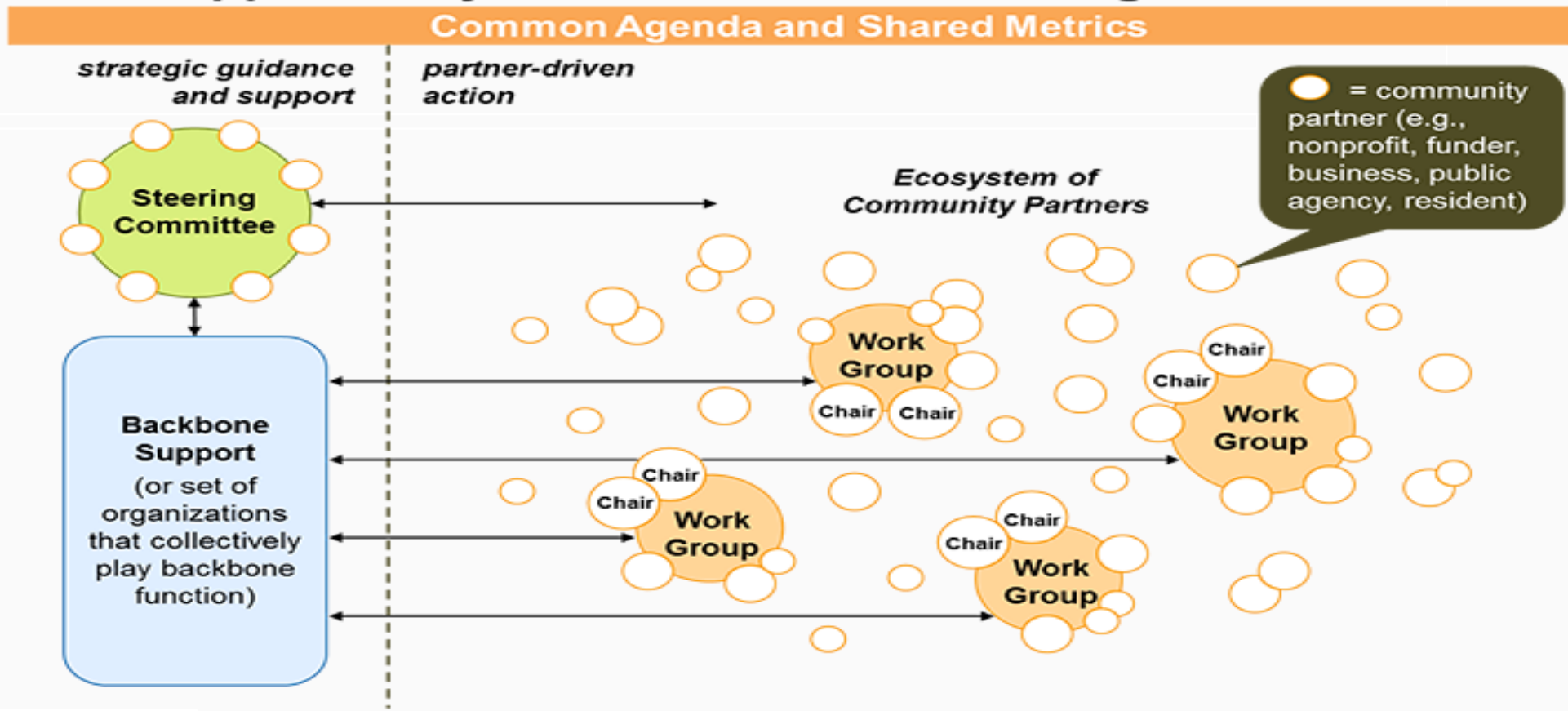
Governance (aka Stewardship)

- The purpose of good governance “is not to tell members what to do, but to enable them to do what they want to do,”

Connecting to Change the World: Harnessing the Power of Networks for Social Impact, Peter Plastrik, Madeleine Taylor, and John Cleveland, Island Press, 2014

A Visual...

A Broad Set of Partners Work to Achieve the Common Vision, Supported by a Backbone and Steering Committee



* Adapted from *Listening to the Stars: The Constellation Model of Collaborative Social Change*, by Tonya Surman and Mark Surman, 2008.

Definition of Governance (aka Stewardship)

Governance – often referred to as Stewardship has two features:

- 1) **Steering Committee & Workgroups** (noun) and
- 2) **Principles and processes for shared leadership** (verb)

Core Elements of a Steering Committee & Workgroups

- Diverse representation from a cross-section of community partners and localities.
- Executes proper fiduciary, fiscal, and social responsibilities
- Oversees the funding of the ACH and staff helping to drive the collaborative.

Core Principles/Processes of Shared Leadership

- Creates an environment for the backbone to “lead from behind”
- Process elements to help minimize the effects of power imbalances
- See Equity Toolkit, page 7

Steering Committee Responsibilities

- Define the key responsibilities of the Steering Committee in a Charter or similar document.

Ideas for what to include in the Charter...

- Provide long term strategic direction to the initiative
- Oversee the work of the backbone
- Uncover/address any obstacles
- Champion the effort broadly in the community
- Monitor progress against common agenda goals and indicators to ensure advancement of collective effort

Steering Committee & Workgroup Membership

Decision Makers and Influential Champions:

- Organization or System-level members who have influence or are capable of driving systems change relevant to effort.
- Regardless of professional or community role, these individuals command respect of broader set of stakeholders (and are perceived so).
- Can bring stakeholders to the table and keep them there.
- Can champion the strategy with the broader community

Steering Committee & Workgroup Members continued

- Diverse Representation:

- Members should reflect the geographic, racial, ethnic, and broader demographic diversity of the communities they serve.
- Members should also reflect a mix of community sectors (e.g., health, education, business, faith-based, etc.)

- Content Expertise/Practitioners:

- Individuals familiar with the subject matter and are willing and able to contribute substantively to issues that may arise.

Steering Committee & Workgroup Members' Qualities to Consider

- **Passion and Urgency:** Passionate about the issue(s) and feels real urgency for the need to bring change
- **Focuses on the Greater Interest:** Represents needs of his/her/they own organizations but able to think and act in the greater interest of the community
- **Commitment:** Willing and able to commit time and energy to attend meetings and get work done
- **Lived Experience:** Community members or residents with lived experience on the issue(s) being addressed by the initiative

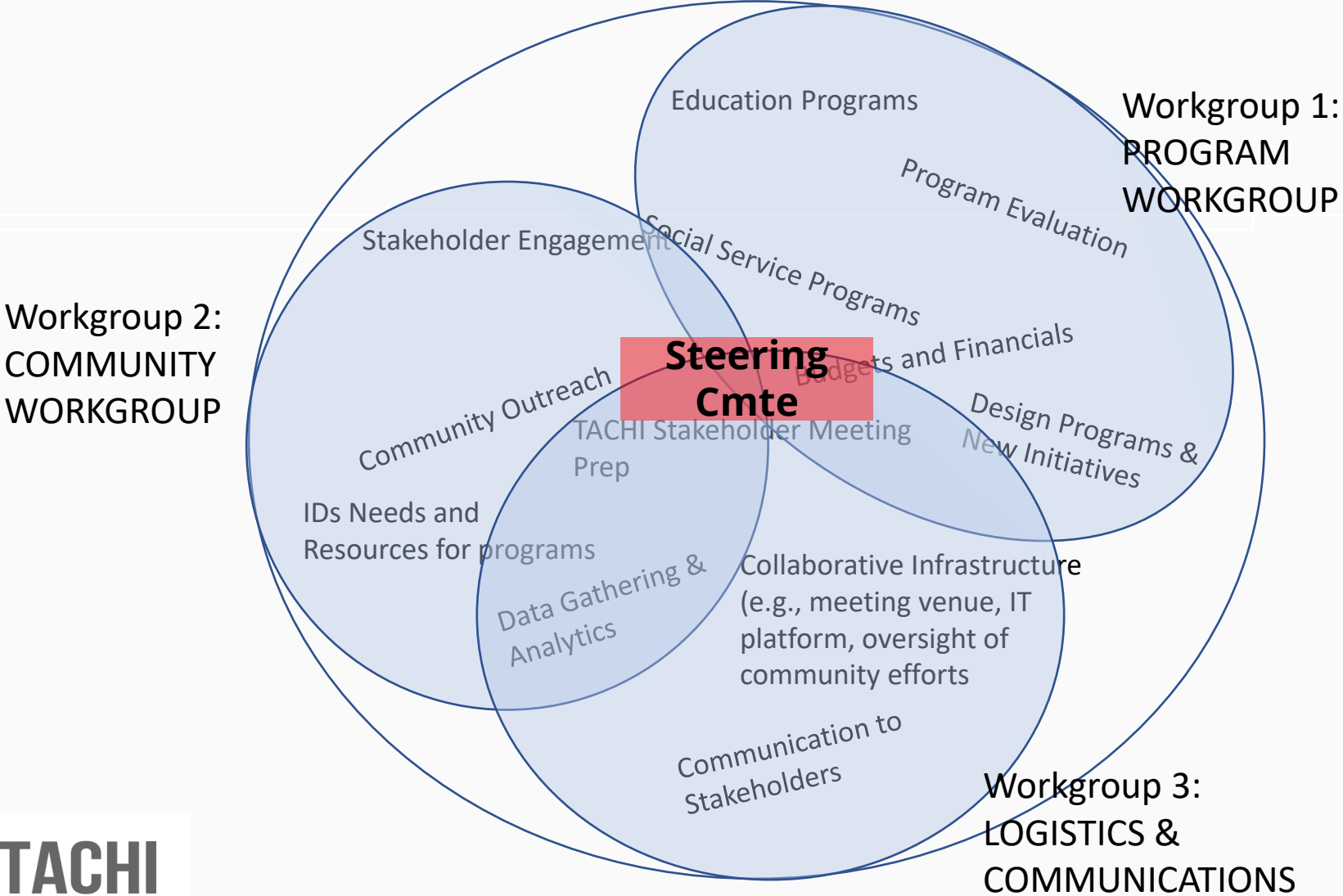
Backbone steps: starting up your Steering Cmte & Workgroups

- Works with key leaders to develop a governance structure, e.g. Steering Cmte and Workgroups based on the current work
- Meet with stakeholders and community members to assess interest in participation and find the “fit”
- Works with key leaders to select representatives from the various sectors and the community to sit on the Steering Cmte and Workgroups
- Create the Steering Cmte and Workgroups, create Charters, and schedule regular meetings

Well functioning Steering Committee & Workgroups should have:

- A **structure** – can be flexible but at least a chairperson (or co-chairs). Must work within structure of entity(ies) coordinating funds flow.
- **Regular** meetings (at least quarterly)
- A **diverse cross-sector** membership that **interacts regularly** with the backbone and the leaders of the collaborative working groups
- **Continuous** communication to foster a culture of collaborative trust and transparency among all stakeholders.

Interlinking Steering Committee with Workgroups



- Stewardship is what 'binds' the separate programs into a cohesive, community effort.
- A collaboration does not compete with its members' efforts.
- Each partners' work or program should *complement* the others and align with the vision and objectives of the collaborative.



Strong Governance/Stewardship in an ACH Matters:

Ensures the long-term growth and success of your collaboration

Enables funders to direct dollars to a known entity that has fiduciary oversight, shared decision-making, transparency, and accountability

Enhances individuals' and organizations' attributes in a respectful, open and supportive environment

Provides the scaffolding for partners and programs to connect and build on their collaborative efforts

Break Out Rooms...

- What successes and challenges are you having with developing your Steering Cmte and Workgroups?
- How have you found challenges or success with integrating equity into the governance structure?
- What actions might you take from today's learning session?
- What support can the TA Team offer?

Thank you!