

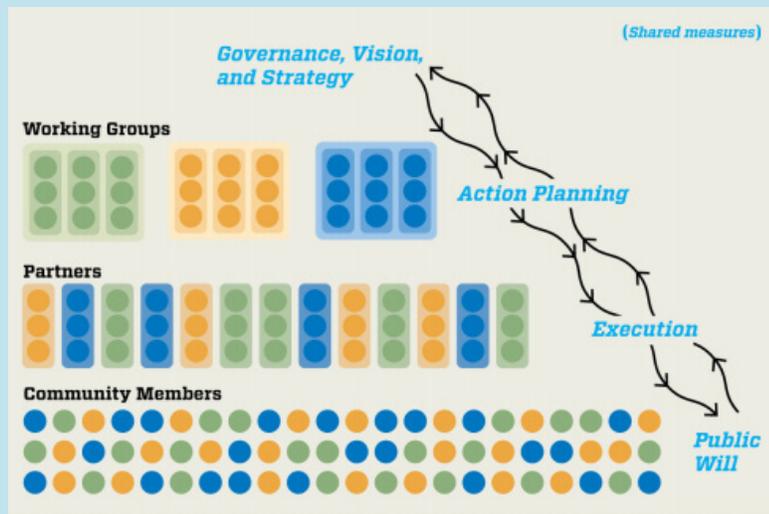


# Community-Level Planning

**ALL PLANS, LIKE ALL POLITICS, ARE BEST REALIZED AT THE LOCAL LEVEL.** While state leaders can offer a general framework for shaping an effective practice and policy response to child maltreatment, the ability of any plan to touch the lives of families depends on community leaders tailoring the plan to fit local realities. In some instances, this tailoring process will be minimal and involve introducing a state-recommended approach into the existing community service portfolio. In other instances, communities may want to convene local stakeholders to present the state plan, and local organizations may integrate the plan's core practice principles into the way they do business. In still other instances, the state's target outcomes may provide new insights for program managers on how to shape their evaluation plans and data management systems. Each of these strategies offers meaningful ways to enhance local child maltreatment prevention efforts, particularly for communities with limited ability to engage in a more comprehensive planning process.

For those communities that do have sufficient resources, leadership, and interests in the planning process, the state plan can provide a springboard for engaging in a comprehensive assessment of current local conditions, outlining an approach for improving conditions, and tracking the impacts of these reforms on the well-being of children and their families.

**Figure 1: HOW THE STATE LEVEL AND COMMUNITY LEVEL WORK INFORM ONE ANOTHER**



SOURCES: Phillips & Splansky Juster, 2014; Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012.

As noted in the collective impact literature and illustrated in **Figure 1**, the process of improving community conditions for meeting the needs of children and adequately supporting parents is iterative. Individual tasks embedded in the planning process build on each other and interface with the work that has been completed at the state level.

Hanleybrown, Kania, and Kramer (2012) note, "the real work of the collective impact initiative takes place in these targeted groups through a continuous process of 'planning and doing,' grounded in constant evidence-based feedback around what is or is not working." The success of the

entire process relies on how well the working groups can leverage their shared vision and strategic goals into a collection of actionable steps.

Local communities can follow specific steps to apply the concepts and suggested action items raised in the state plan to their specific situation. These steps are divided into three broad areas:

- **Framing the scope of the local plan** (selecting your leadership team; developing a picture of your community’s demographic, health, and economic parameters; securing input from parents; and cataloging local service options).
- **Planning specific action steps** (setting your priorities and outlining an implementation plan).
- **Monitoring your progress** (developing strategies to ensure continuous quality improvement and sustaining change over time).

These phases are organized under the steps illustrated in **Figure 2**.

**Figure 2: TASKS IN THE COMMUNITY-LEVEL PLANNING PROCESS**



SOURCES: Phillips & Splansky Juster, 2014; Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012.