HARVARD

GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF EDUCATION

Collaborative Accountability

Paul Reville | August 4, 2022

Paradoxes of Collaborative Governance:

Investigating the Real-Life Dynamics of Multi-Agency Collaborations Using a Quasi-Experimental Action-Research Approach

Category	Challenges
Substantive problem solving	• Identifying, diagnosing, and defining the problem • Developing a sound theory of change • Measuring performance against the theory of change
Collaborative process	• Reaching a shared understanding on goals and approach • Building trust among collaborators • Generating commitment to the process
Multi-relational accountability	• Managing tension with parent organization accountability • Accounting to collaboration partners • Accounting to (new) external channels of accountability

Maurits Waardenburg, Martijn Groenleer, Jorrit de Jong, & Bas Keijser (2019)

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"Collaborators must also solve the problem of developing performance measures to gauge their performance against their theory of change – evaluating whether partners are deploying resources as planned, whether resources are being combined to generate desired interventions and outputs, and whether the outputs are actually yielding the envisioned societal (or public value) outcomes the collaboration sought (Bryson, Crosby, and Stone 2006). Because individual contributions to collectively pursued activities are hard to isolate, results will seldom be attributable to single-organization efforts. There is also the difficulty of conceptualizing and enumerating complex and multi-faceted societal outcomes and measuring them without benefit of counterfactuals (Stoker 2006; Moynihan et al. 2011). Finally, dynamic policy discourses and different stakeholder agendas often leave room for multiple interpretations of what outcomes should be pursued and how to measure them (Guarneros-Meza, Downe, and Martin 2017)."

Maurits Waardenburg, Martijn Groenleer, Jorrit de Jong, & Bas Keijser (2019)

A Leader's Coaching Approach to Accelerating, Scaling and Sustaining Results

Sensemaking

1. **Population Accountability**
2. **Place**
3. **Results**
4. **Indicators and Baselines**
5. **Strategy Development**
    a) **Understanding the Nature and Logic of the Indicators**
    b) **What Works**
        ✔ Evidence
        ✔ Professional Knowledge and Judgement

Aligned Contributions/ Collective Action & Impact

6. **Emergent Strategy / Right Mix of Solutions**
    a) Families
    b) Programs
    c) Systems
    d) Policies
7. **Partner Action Commitments and Targets**
8. **Maintaining High Action and High Alignment Among Partners**

Source: Dr. Michael McAfee. Adopted from Results-Based Accountability by Mark Friedman

The Results-Based Accountability Guide

The *Results-Based Accountability Guide* includes a brief overview of the framework's most important ideas. You can use the *RBA Guide* to lead or facilitate a group in using the framework to improve decision-making. The *RBA Guide* is ultimately a road map to help you navigate the complete RBA decision-making process, step-by-step.

Download this free e-book to learn how the RBA framework can help you start with ends and work backward towards means.

Core Considerations

- Theory of problem
- Theory of action

Cabinet Considerations

- Who is our population?
- What's the problem we're trying to solve?
- What are the root causes of the problem?
- What are the most promising strategies for solving the problem?
- What's the evidence to suggest they will work?
- Who are the best partners to execute on those strategies?
- What does success look like? What are the key outcomes?
- What are the key indicators and how do we measure them?
- What's the targeted timeline?
- What are the terms of accountability?