UNITED WAY OF GREATER MILWAUKEE

A LOOK AT THE CRISIS FACING BLACK BOYS AND MEN IN MILWAUKEE

Submitted By

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DISCLAIMER:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Milwaukee has received national attention, being identified as the worst place to raise children of color. Funders are in a different place to work collaboratively and collectively. The climate is right. The right pieces are in place. This is promising. – Milwaukee Community Leader

A snapshot of the drastically disproportionate challenges facing African American boys and men in Milwaukee is bleak. This population of people suffers disproportionate health disparities, low graduation rates, high unemployment and early associations with the criminal justice system, all of which contribute to significant economic, social and political exclusion. According to 2010 U.S. Census Bureau data, Milwaukee ranks among the poorest cities in the U.S. with a general poverty rate of nearly 30%. Forty percent of the population is African American, and 38.2% of Milwaukee's African Americans live below the poverty level. Only 44.7% of the metro area's working-age African American males between the ages of 16-64 were employed compared to 77.4% of white men. Nearly two in three African American children (64%) live apart from their biological fathers, compared to one in four white children, and homicide is the leading cause of death among African American males, ages 15 to 24 years old.

This report details the critical need in Milwaukee for a large-scale coordinated effort to address issues facing African American boys and men and provide real opportunities for them to succeed. Interviews with 16 community stakeholders were conducted and an environmental scan of current programs and services completed to inform this report. Interviews demonstrated that key community leaders and stakeholders in Milwaukee recognize the enormity of the challenges facing boys and men of color and understand that a complex and interconnected set of factors underlie these dramatic disparities. Many are working diligently with limited financial and human resources to address and mitigate the issues affecting boys and young men of color and the resulting impact on our neighborhoods.* However, all individuals interviewed for this report are acutely aware that their individual efforts are inadequate to sufficiently address the myriad of factors necessary to overcome the prodigious task at hand.

Most interviewed agree that the primary challenges facing Black boys and men in Milwaukee include: fatherless homes, lack of jobs and/or limited access to jobs and training, and staggering incarceration rates. Although many programs currently exist to address these challenges, the primary issues identified as preventing organizations from achieving large-scale impact in our community include a lack of funding to sustain programming and issues of trust and credibility in and among organizations. Generally, participants agreed that as we look to collectively address these issues, there are a number of opportunities and challenges that lie before us.

The acute sense of urgency with which community leaders view this issue provides an important opportunity to catalyze action. To the credit of many grassroots organizations, leaders within these organizations are passionate and determined to create better opportunities for African American boys and men. Most are poised to roll up their sleeves and get in the trenches, if resources become available. Leaders recognize that solutions to these challenges must be comprehensive and long-term and will not occur overnight, so they are committed for the long haul. In addition, the launch of President Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper Initiative provides our community with an opportune time to put infrastructure in place so that as federal dollars become available, the city is poised to receive funding to address these challenges.

However, despite these good intentions, there are also underlying issues of historical mistrust among grassroots organizations that create obstacles to progress. Shrinking funding has inadvertently pitted some community-based organizations (CBOs) against one another as they have been forced to vie for the same dollars, creating a climate that is less than conducive to developing and supporting a coordinated initiative. In addition, the intensity of the issues at hand can contribute to frustration and burnout, particularly when individual leaders lack strong organizational support or are unable to take the time and space needed to build a support network that can help them reflect and recharge.
Although community leaders easily laud the efforts of specific individuals and organizations that are making a difference working with African American boys and men, there was no one organization or initiative identified as having the diverse traits necessary to facilitate the breadth of change that needs to occur. Given this, we believe it is time to take a collaborative approach to building a comprehensive initiative. Among interviewees, there was strong consensus that for a collective effort to succeed, visionary leadership through an organization with strong community credibility across sectors was critical. Also vital to the success of a collective effort is the development of a leadership model that is informed both by those that work most closely with African American boys and men and those who bring a high-level strategic perspective for getting this work done collectively at a large-scale. Given the climate and culture of CBOs in Milwaukee, a balanced partnership between organizational leaders at both the grassroots and systems-level is essential to building and sustaining trust and strategically mobilizing resources for truly transformative work.

It is our belief that the right collaborative model will have the power to elevate the work currently underway, align resources with effective strategies, and remain nimble enough to revise the course of direction in response to changing opportunities and needs. Many of those interviewed emphasized the urgency and immediacy with which these issues must be addressed, but also cautioned that any initiative would require a long-term commitment and investment to achieve real transformation. We emphasize that the complexities of these issues will require a lengthy implementation timeframe. Therefore, sustainability must be considered from the outset and a commitment must be made to remain invested until outcomes are achieved. Given the extent of this crisis, however, we cannot wait any longer to mobilize a collective response.

* This report does not address issues and challenges facing Latinos, Asians or other persons of color. Additional research will be needed to address issues specific to those communities, using the same or similar overall model.
METHODOLOGY

The United Way of Greater Milwaukee contracted with P3 Development Group to develop and facilitate a comprehensive report to identify and assess organizations and stakeholders within the Milwaukee community to gauge the breadth of services and programs specifically geared to address some of the well-known negative outcomes for African American boys and men.

From June 9, 2014 through August 13, 2014, P3 Development Group simultaneously conducted individual interviews of key stakeholders, researched best practices for governance models and conducted an environmental scan of Milwaukee to identify services and programs which align with the six (6) focus areas of the City’s Black Male Achievement (BMA) Initiative: (1) Family and Social Development, (2) Education K-16, (3) Employment and Workforce Development (4) Health and Wellness (5) Incarceration, Public Safety and Criminal Justice and (6) Faith-Based and Community Engagement.

Specific components of the project included:

- Developing an environmental scan to identify current work underway aimed at alleviating disparities in outcomes between Black male children and adults and their peers;
- Identifying key stakeholders to engage in a process to discuss the possibility of initiating a collaborative strategy;
- Engaging in discussions to assure stakeholders have the same vision and expectations regarding the need for a specific backbone entity to support the work being conducted by all; and
- Identifying governance structure(s) to support a collaborative strategy, including collective impact.
KEY INFORMANT/STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS
FINDINGS—KEY INFORMATION
ANALYSIS

P3 Development Group contacted and interviewed key informants or community stakeholders who work in at least one of the six (6) focus areas proposed by the City of Milwaukee’s Black Male Achievement (BMA) initiative. Those areas include: 1) family and social development; 2) education; 3) employment and workforce development; 4) health and wellness; 5) incarceration, public safety and criminal justice; and 6) faith-based and community engagement. Throughout the interview process, these individuals were asked a series of questions as outlined in the questionnaire found in the Appendices. Emerging themes and comments from some of those interviewed follows:

I. ISSUES AND CONCERNS FACING AFRICAN AMERICAN BOYS AND MEN

Key informants were asked about their background, roles within their organizations, and their perception on issues and challenges African American boys and men are facing that have become most problematic in recent years.

DEFINING THE PROBLEM
While there appears to be a consensus that “something needs to be done” to address the health, education and crime disparities facing African American boys and men, and there is a sense of what has precipitated the crisis, the problem is so great that no one appears to have a long-term comprehensive plan to address and resolve these issues. This is partially due to the fact that the impact on the population is large and multi-faceted. Despite this, most interviewees were able to identify a priority issue or group of issues based on their position and related perspective, and all interviewees agreed that the problems affecting African American boys and men were so complex and interrelated that it is necessary to address issues simultaneously in order to affect any substantial change.

Some specific comments from interviewees related to this were:

- I haven’t seen interventions become as successful as they could because there isn’t a collective strategy.
- One of the challenges is [the need for] immediate return or thoughtful and intentional planning – a lot of layers will make it hard to see outcomes so it’s way off. The results are so far off (e.g., an 8 or 9 year old going to college).
- Everyone has their idea of what the priority areas of focus should be based on where they sit but none of it works — really works — unless it works together.
- [There are] cycles of hopelessness and despair so people give up and don’t do anything.
- So many of the negative behaviors [of Black boys and men] have become intertwined in what they are defining as their culture it is hard to address the negative behavior without challenging their adopted identity.
- At the end of the day, you are talking about people. People have a variety of needs and challenges. If you fix my unemployment problem and don’t fix my cocaine problem, I am going to end up in the same place.
- If your program can only take a person so far, then you need to have a partner organization that can pick up where you leave off. If you don’t connect them to the next step, people will stumble and fall.
ABSENT FATHERS AND LACK OF POSITIVE MALE ROLE MODELS

According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, nearly two in three African American children (64%) live apart from their biological fathers, compared to one in four white children. Many interviewees agreed that young African American men are in crisis, to a large extent, because adult men are absent or disconnected—physically and/or emotionally from their lives. One individual referenced documented positive outcomes by programs that proactively engaged fathers. Several interviewees identified absent fathers and a lack of positive male role models as the primary factor contributing to early delinquency of African American boys and men. Interviewees identified the abundance of negative male images and a lack of overall family structure as equally important contributing factors.

Some comments from key informants were:

- [We are] living in an environment where women are doing everything. [African American boys and men] do not feel as though the 'culture of success' reflects who they are. Young men feel as though pursuing that route is 'giving up' something. It is a cultural barrier to success.

- Manufacturing and public sector jobs were always seen as ways to enter the middle class and maintain your masculinity but those jobs are gone. Boys don’t see men working and building stable lives.

- If the family were intact, young men would have a place to go back and process their feelings around not feeling like fitting in some of these perceived circles of success.

- [We need to] empower fathers. We also need trauma informed care and to expand services to fathers and not just mothers. We need more overall initiatives that address the family structure.

- [The challenges are] negativity, lack of family structure, poverty and hopelessness.

- I’ve seen lots of progress with initiatives that advocate for fathers to be active in building connections with their children and helping them with mediation skills to [allow them to] be advocates for their children.

- Fatherless homes, lack of adult guidance and supervision and lack of adult advocates and role models are the root cause of the problem.

- The disintegration of the Black family structure has hurt young boys in a way that it has not hurt young [Black] girls.
EDUCATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Many interviewees agreed that developing solutions to address the educational and employment disparities within the African American community is instrumental to the overall success of African American boys and men. According to the 2010 US Census Bureau, only 44.7% of the metro area’s working-age African American males between the ages of 16-64 were employed compared to 77.4% of white men. In regards to education, disparities exist starting at the preschool level. National studies show that by the time children enter kindergarten, there is a disparity that, depending on the measure, averages between 5% and 15% in readiness for learning scores. In order to effectively address the crisis affecting African American boys and men, we must specifically address the issues and disparities around education and employment with a sense of urgency.

Some specific comments related to education are:

- Education needs to be perceived as a priority in our communities. If we do not demand better educational opportunities, they will not be provided.
- Educational and enrichment opportunities are not being presented for our boys. There are options available but they are not being provided to us.
- Education is a big issue, but I believe the school system is sometimes unfairly blamed.
- There are a few good programs out there [for education], but they are not connected. Once a boy graduates from one program, they don’t push him into the next program.
- The culture has changed, but the educational system has not changed. This results in boys falling through the cracks.

Some specific comments related to employment are:

- There are a number of issues we need to address but the unemployment issue should be a priority.
- High [Black] male unemployment is one of the main reasons for the Black family breaking apart.
- There is still a lot of work to do but I’ve seen that when men are given jobs and employment, it makes a difference.
- Work and job training programs that allow boys to see the value of and power of earning money and becoming self-sufficient are crucial.

INCARCERATION

In the 2010 Census, Wisconsin had the highest percentage of incarcerated Black men in the nation. One out of every eight Black man of working age is behind bars. In Milwaukee County, more than half of African American men in their thirties have served time in prison. This has a tremendously negative impact on the well-being of African American men, their families, and their communities. The consequences of incarceration are a driving factor behind the absence of fathers, high unemployment rates, and unstable neighborhoods.

Some comments from key informants include:

- Mass incarceration of Black males is the most pressing issue [in our community]. Once a man is imprisoned, it leads to a number of inevitable challenges for him and his family.
- The driver’s license issue is central to preventing young boys from entering the criminal justice system at an early age.
- There is a school to prison pipeline — starting at very young ages, kids are being suspended and put on track to jail.
- Our boys are negatively impacted by early interactions with law enforcement.
II. OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR ESTABLISHING A COLLECTIVE INITIATIVE

Interviewees identified a number of opportunities and challenges for establishing a collective initiative focused on African American boys and men. There was general agreement among the interviewees that a coordinated effort to address these issues was necessary in order to achieve meaningful impact. However, most interviewees agreed that implementing a collective strategy will be difficult and will require a long-term commitment to the process, the ability to adapt to changing circumstances, and a willingness to make and learn from our collective mistakes.

OPPORTUNITIES

SENSE OF URGENCY

Most interviewees agreed that there is a sense of urgency regarding the current status of African American boys and men at the local and national level. “The sense of urgency around this work,” one interviewee articulated, “may be just the push we need to stop talking and start doing.” This sentiment was echoed by several interviewees who, though dismayed by the current situation, expressed hope that the crisis would push us to action. This urgency may signal a readiness for the launch of a large-scale collective initiative.

FOCUS INSIGHT

• We have to do something. We just do not have time to wait any longer.
• Things are so bad with our [Black] boys that it has risen to the level of a state of emergency.
• It is almost too late. People are talking as though this is an emergency but no one is doing anything.
• I am disgusted that we are trying to figure out who is going to lead this. We are wasting time discussing who will step up to the table.

NATIONAL INITIATIVE

Several interviewees agreed that the launch of the President Obama’s “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative will provide our community with an opportune time to harness organizations working with this target population and put infrastructure in place so that as federal dollars become available, the city is poised to receive funding to address these challenges. Many who we spoke to were hopeful that the initiative would spark collective action and allow the Milwaukee community to leverage federal dollars to expedite a collective agenda. Conversely, several interviewees expressed disappointment that it takes the launch of a national initiative to begin the dialogue about a collective solution for what has become a crisis around Black boys and men in Milwaukee.

FOCUS INSIGHT

• The federal dollars will provide us the opportunity to build capacity across all sectors and ensure strategies are responsive to this particular population.
• There is national attention on this issue right now. We need to take advantage of the timing.
• It is great that this has become a national issue, but we should not need their blessing to move forward.
• People appear to be waiting to see what is going to happen on the national level before they decide what needs to be done [in Milwaukee].
• Milwaukee has received national attention, being identified as the worst place to raise children of color. Funders are in a different place to work collaboratively and collectively. The climate is right. The right pieces are in place. This is promising.
CHALLENGES

COMPETITION FOR RESOURCES AND A HISTORY OF DISTRUST

Attacking the complex issues facing Black boys and men demands that there are -- not more organizations developing more programs -- but more organizations coming together to build a large-scale effort that can address the real problem. While there are a number of organizations doing great work in the Milwaukee area, the current funding environment encourages competition among organizations working towards common or similar goals. Although several community leaders expressed a desire to work collaboratively to address these issues, financial constraints too often result in organizations remaining in silos rather than collaborating. Organizations and individuals are also perceived as being territorial around this space. Some of this mindset is historical and germane to Milwaukee leaders, but some speaks to the complexities of navigating an environment with limited resources. To that end, any collaborative initiative will need to intentionally address longstanding distrust among organizations and navigate through a sense of “territorial” and towards a belief in collective abundance.

FOCUS INSIGHT

• Current resources are not aligned — so you see marginal outcomes.
• Funders are afraid to try new things and new organizations. This results in an overall lack of innovation and Milwaukee maintaining the status quo.
• There is competition between organizations because of the reduction of the funding dollars over the past decade. Everyone is trying to get their piece of a shrinking pie.
• We fund programs and we need to force collaboration by funding strategies.
• It is hard to convince people that they should work together if that means funding may be reduced and programs may be cut.
• There are still many old “fiefdoms” in Milwaukee. People who have been here for ages but aren’t doing anything. Why can’t we get rid of some them? Get onboard or get out of the way!

FRUSTRATION AND CYNICISM

The good news is that most stakeholders that were interviewed are ready and prepared to address the charge. Though they face funding challenges, staff shortages and burnout, their passion and determination to make a difference, supersede most real or perceived obstacles. Key informants understand that burnout and/or cynicism exists for individuals who have long been ‘in the trenches’ attempting to address these issues. They have watched some leaders give up and leave the area and are afraid others may follow suit. On the flipside, they recognize some of the up and coming leaders have the passion and determination to make a difference and are committed to staying the course for the long haul.

FOCUS INSIGHT

• The right people don’t want to enter those roles [of leadership] because they are burned out.
• People are frustrated by the lack of progress on these issues. We have success on individual levels but the overall problem is getting worse.
• It is frustrating because there is no leadership strategy that aligns people and gets them mobilized and energized.
III. CONSIDERATIONS FOR SELECTING THE LEAD COORDINATING ORGANIZATION

Key informants were asked to identify the traits they felt were most important for an organization to possess to lead a collective initiative that addresses the issues and challenges facing Black boys and men in the Greater Milwaukee area. Several interviewees were adamant that the initiative should be led by a Black man, someone who reflected the community the initiative would be seeking to serve. Authenticity and integrity were also mentioned by several interviewees as being critical to the ability to lead this type of initiative. In addition, creativity and nimbleness also topped the list of traits necessary for an organization to possess. As one interviewee observed, “We need a visionary who is willing to take risks but also has the sense and ability to change course quickly when we realize something is not working.” Finally, most interviewees agreed that any lead organization must possess the tenacity and discipline to keep individuals and organizations motivated for the long haul by ensuring the collective vision always remained front and center.

VISION
Key informants agreed that a lead coordinating organization or convener must be able to support and articulate a set of big picture goals. Almost all the interviewees agreed that the ability of the lead coordinating organization to develop and gather support for a vision would be critical to the success or failure of any initiative.

Some of the comments related to vision include:

- The [lead coordinating organization] needs to get people behind a collective vision. We need to be striving for the same thing.
- If you don’t have vision, you cannot inspire people to act.
- You can’t lead without a vision.

CREDIBILITY
Nearly all stakeholders agreed that credibility would be a critical trait to lead or oversee an initiative that addresses the challenges facing African American boys and men in Milwaukee. Interviewees were adamant that credibility across sectors and at all levels was necessary to effectively lead this type of initiative. Several interviewees expressed their lack of confidence in the City of Milwaukee's credibility to lead an initiative of this size, type and scope.

Some of the comments from stakeholders surrounding the issue of credibility were:

- The City does not have credibility, trust or respect [to lead this initiative].
- The City does not have the culture or capacity to facilitate collective engagement. They lack transparency and follow-through. The politics that they have to play internally stymie efforts.
- The initiative needs to be led or co-led by someone who has credibility in the community and credibility with the funders and business community.
- An initiative like this needs to be led by someone who has been working with Black boys and men for some time and has a good understanding of the complex issues facing our community.
- This should be led by an African American man. If it is not led by an African American man, it will automatically lack credibility with many organizations.
- We need someone with ‘street cred.’
LEADERSHIP

Some of the comments from stakeholders lauded individuals who have stepped up to the plate and are trying to make a difference in the lives of African American boys and men. Among those, the following names repeatedly mentioned were: Jeffrey Roman, Vincent Lyles, Victor Barnett, Reggie Moore and Muhibb Dyer and Kwabena Nixon. Leadership was defined by different interviewees in different ways but there was a general consensus that leadership — the ability to lead — was a rare trait and difficult task but absolutely necessary to the success of the initiative.

FOCUS INSIGHT

- There is a sense that the landscape is shifting. Leadership matters and we need leaders that we have not checked out or burned out to make the difference. More institutions are beginning to pay attention to what is going on. The City of Milwaukee and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation have identified some focus areas. There is a collective energy starting to bubble up from the ground, but nothing comprehensive to date.
- Leadership is smart, consistent, passionate and compassionate.
- Identifying a consistent coordinating partner is important and a strong opportunity and it is long overdue.
- Some leaders are not doing anything. [They] are not creative or thoughtful about solutions so we are not going to see great results. We need to recognize the importance of leadership on the ground. We lose trust by not keeping with it.
- There is no comprehensive leadership strategy that aligns people and gets them mobilized and energized. Additionally, people don’t convene well in this city and this topic is not typically appealing for the business community.
- New leaders are emerging on the scene. This community will need a lot of heavy lifting — authentic leaders.

IV. WHO IS LEADING THE CHARGE?

INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

Interviewees were asked about which individuals, groups and organizations are providing leadership in addressing the issues facing African American boys and men in Milwaukee. Among those organizations mentioned more than once as leading the charge to address the challenges of African American boys and men were: Center for Youth Engagement and Reggie Moore, Community Advocates, Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee and Vincent Lyles.

Organizations such as Running Rebels, Operation Dream and individuals such as Muhibb Dyer, Kwabena Nixon and Chris Conley were all identified by several interviewees as providing leadership within their own organizations or in a limited capacity but lacking the overall capacity and resources to lead a collective initiative.

There also appears to be significant recognition of and respect for some of the long-time, new, and emerging leaders among key informants. Some names that were repeatedly mentioned were: Earl Buford, Jeffrey Roman and Rob Cherry.

Based on the information provided via key informant interviews, there does not appear to be any coordinated or comprehensive approach to dismantling the health, education and economic disparities facing African American boys and men. Individuals and organizations are doing what they can, where they can, absent a long-term, comprehensive vision to alleviate the challenges. As such there are demonstrations of leadership in silos but no one has stepped to the forefront to claim leadership of a comprehensive movement.
LEAD ORGANIZATION ASSESSMENTS
LEAD ORGANIZATION ASSESSMENTS

At the conclusion of the key informant interviews, individuals were asked to identify organizations in the community who could serve as lead coordinating organizations or agencies and to rate them on specific traits identified by the Collective Impact Forum as important “backbone” traits. (See Lead Coordinating Agency Assessment in Appendices for details.)

The charts below reflect those ratings. Given their knowledge of the organizations they named, key informants were asked to rate them on a variety of traits, on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high). The numbers in the headers after an organization's name reflect the number of times the organizations were mentioned. The scores for organizations that received multiple mentions are averaged. TABLE 1 describes how many times an individual organization was named during the interview process. TABLE 2 provides the average score for each individual organization based on traits identified in the assessment.

Several key findings emerged from this assessment:

• Community Advocates was identified most often, by four (4) individuals, as having the ability to lead a collective initiative and received an average score of 58.4 out of 70 total points.
• United Way of Greater Milwaukee, Center for Youth Engagement and Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee received the three highest scores — 66.2, 64.5 and 64.0, respectively — and were each identified by three (3) individuals as having the ability to lead a collective initiative for Black boys and men in Milwaukee.
• Several individuals mentioned that the collective should be led in partnership as there was not one organization they felt possessed all the qualities and traits necessary to lead an initiative to address the issues facing Black boys and men.
• Several interviewees were unable to identify any organizations who they felt could effectively lead this type of initiative.

Finally, it is important to note that the following organizations did not have a staff member interviewed during key stakeholder interviews but were identified by others as having the traits necessary to lead this type of initiative:

Bercham Stapleton Little League
Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee
Holton Youth Center
Milwaukee Community Service Corps
Northcott Neighborhood House
Northwest Side Community Development Corporation (CDC)
United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee (UNCOM)
World of Hope Ministries
United Way of Greater Milwaukee
Neu-Life Community Development
TABLE 1: ORGANIZATIONS IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL LEAD AGENCIES FOR A COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE

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<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
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## TABLE 2: ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

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<th>BOYS &amp; GIRLS CLUB OF GREATER MILWAUKEE (3)</th>
<th>BURKE FOUNDATION (1)</th>
<th>CENTER FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT (3)</th>
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GOVERNANCE
STRUCTURE
ANALYSIS
DEFINING GOVERNANCE AND COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE

Governance plays an important role in determining how a collective initiative will function. For the purpose of this particular project, P3 Development Group defines governance as “the processes, structures and organizational traditions that determine how power is exercised, how stakeholders have their say, how decisions are taken and how decision-makers are held to account.”

Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a complex social problem (as defined by the Foundation Strategy Group at www.fsg.org.) The underlying premise is that no single organization can create large-scale, lasting social change alone. The five conditions that are identified by FSG as leading to meaningful results for initiatives operating through collective impact are:

1. Common Agenda: All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions
2. Shared Measurement: Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable
3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities: Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action
4. Continuous Communication: Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation
5. Backbone Organization: Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies

There are several important factors, specific to the information gathered during the key informant interview process, which should be thoughtfully considered when deciding on the best governance structure to support an initiative to address the challenges facing African American boys and men in Milwaukee. As detailed below, these include roles and responsibilities, obtaining a balance of power and authority, developing the collaborative process, and factors that facilitate or discourage cooperation.

Roles and Responsibilities
During the interview process, several interviewees expressed concern about the manner in which an initiative would be established and carried forth. A number of interviewees specifically voiced their concern about an initiative being set up with too many or too few participants able to participate in the decision-making process. Additionally, there was concern expressed about confusion around the roles and responsibilities of individuals involved in the collective initiative.

Careful consideration will need to be given to the process of building the collaborative and its governing structure. It is necessary to select or build a governance structure that carefully considers the landscape in Milwaukee. In nearly every successful governance model, the governing body will be responsible for:

- Creating a vision, securing resources
- Defining clear roles and responsibilities
- Establishing benchmarks for performance and-monitoring them, and being accountable to key stakeholders

These are only a few of the responsibilities that need to be considered. Additional thought and consideration should be given to the specific roles and responsibilities for each level of the collective structure. Specific roles and responsibilities should be clearly articulated and established in a way that allows the collaborative to efficiently communicate information and concerns bi-directionally and work in a cohesive and effective manner to implement strategy at the neighborhood level.
Balance of Power and Authority

A complex adaptive system continually selects from a variety of strategies to achieve desired outcomes because of trial-and-error learning through the interaction of individuals and organizations. Likewise, in collaborative governance, individuals and organizations use trial-and-error learning to set agendas and make decisions. Rather than attempting to achieve goals that come from a top-down authority, participants achieve desired outcomes in a more bottom-up manner, as the result of deliberation and their own selection of strategies. (Hewlett Collaborative Governance)

As presented in the themes, the interviewees also felt it was important to establish leadership at the neighborhood level and ensure that a balance of power was achieved so as to prevent power struggles and stagnation. The initial establishment of a governance structure which lends itself to balance, power-sharing and cooperation will support the development and implementation of effective strategies. There should also be mechanisms built in to allow the collective to respond swiftly to opportunities and move nimbly to allow for course adjustments that ensure that the collective remains responsive to the changing needs of the community.

THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

It is important to mention, as several interviewees pointed out, that implementing collaborative efforts is not a simple task. There will inevitably be set-backs and frustrations. The following tasks and steps have been identified as being part of the collective process and it will take time to work through the challenges associated with each (Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice, Chris Ansell and Alison Gash):

**Organizing and Agenda-Setting:**
This stage involves bringing people together to effect change, picking issues effectively and getting them “on the screen“ for the attention of others, turning “concern” into organized action and identifying those with a stake in the issues (stakeholders), building will and capacity for change;

**Planning Together:**
This step involves, given a set of identified problems or concerns, working with others to understand conditions and causes, generate possible solutions or options, and making decisions among the options;

**Implementing Together:**
Given a mandate and some promising options, this stage involves producing the needed results, more and more often through joint arrangements among stakeholders—sometimes called “partnerships” or “alliances.”

In addition, other tasks that cut across those, may include:

**Learning Together:** Getting players that are working together to learn more about the problems (especially when they don’t see things the same way), about each other’s interests, about the types of solutions or responses to problems are promising and why, about what the barriers to action (including the players’ own resistance) may be; and

**Negotiating:** Involves advancing your issues (or those of your constituents) in a world in which more and more issues that matter are jointly decided with other players, rather than imposed “top-down” from above. Promoting needed cooperation and trust. Managing conflict to get key decisions made—and made legitimately and wisely. Dealing with unequal power, gaining more leverage.
**Additional Considerations**

Conditions at the outset of the collaboration can either facilitate or discourage cooperation among stakeholders and, therefore, additional factors should be considered at the outset of the collective strategy. Consideration should be given to the factors below prior to engaging in a collective strategy to ensure mechanisms are built into the governance model to address issues that may arise specific to one of the factors listed below. *Many of the factors addressed below, especially power and resource imbalances and prehistory of antagonism and cooperation, have been identified as being particularly problematic for organizations operating in this space in Milwaukee.*

<table>
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<th>1. Incentives to Participate</th>
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<td>2. Prehistory of Antagonism and Cooperation</td>
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<td>4. Institutional Design</td>
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<td>5. Power and Resource Imbalances</td>
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**MOVING FORWARD**

Developing an effective collaborative governing model is not a simple task, but nonetheless, holds the best potential to authentically engage all necessary stakeholders and advance the work underway in Milwaukee. The current assessment work completed for this report provides a good start for gathering the input of many stakeholders and beginning the careful consideration required to start a large-scale collective initiative.

A specific governance model that we believe will be most effective in building a powerful collaborative is detailed in the Recommendations section that follows.

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It is important to note that this is not a linear process. The steps outlined above will vary depending on a variety of factors specific to the environment and individuals and organizations involved in implementing a collective strategy.
AGENCY MAP BY ZIP CODE

- Family & Social Development
- Employment & Workforce Development
- Education
- Health & Wellness
- Incarceration & Criminal Justice
ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN AND MAPPING

After interviewing key informants and stakeholders and conducting an extensive environmental scan, P3 Development Group engaged in a lengthy process of identifying organizations in Milwaukee that currently have programs and initiatives working to address and/or align with some or all of those same six focus areas adopted by the BMA initiative.

Data from the environmental scan was collected to lay over the information gathered from interviews and research and to identify and support recommendations for an effective government analysis recommendation. It is important to note that while many people noted the importance of available resources, these resources—absent access—are futile. To that end, transportation that enables people to access those resources is key to the success of any initiative. Resources must be within close proximity to those in need—supporting the merits of building a place-based neighborhood approach.

The attached map does not identify organizations that provide services which align with the six (6) focus areas identified by the BMA initiative but do not have programs or services specifically targeting Black boys and men in Milwaukee. However, it should be noted that though not listed, these organizations will assist in addressing some of the gaps in programming for each area. For example, Goodwill Industries, who has Workforce Connection Centers located in three (3) of the zip codes identified on the map, is not represented on the map because their programs do not specifically target Black boys and/or men.

The approximately one hundred and thirty (130) organizations and agencies serving Black boys and men in Milwaukee were divided into the following categories: (1) Direct Service (2) Funders (3) Government and (4) Universities and Colleges.

The following findings emerged from the environmental scan:

- Out of the approximately 130 organizations and agencies identified, 64% are direct service agencies.
- Of the remaining 46% of organizations and agencies serving Black boys and men, universities and colleges constitute the smallest percentage.

Direct service providers serving Black boys and men in Milwaukee were divided into the six (6) focus areas identified by the Black Male Achievement (BMA) initiative: (1) Family and Social Development (2) Education K-16 (3) Employment and Workforce Development (4) Health and Wellness (5) Incarceration, Public Safety and Criminal Justice and, (6) Faith-Based and Community Engagement.

Direct Service organizations with programs that specifically target Black boys and/or men are the only organizations represented on the map. There are a number of other direct service programs that may provide resources and programs that benefit Black boys and men but did not identify programs that specifically target this population.

Also, there are additional faith-based organizations with programs that specifically target this population than are represented on the map. Unfortunately, it was difficult, based on our research methods, to identify the programs targeting Black boys and men within each faith-based organization.
Finally, the list of organizations identified for this report is not exhaustive. We recognize that there are additional programs and efforts underway in the City of Milwaukee that specifically target Black boys and men. The organizations identified, however, are a good start and provide a fairly accurate view of the services and programs that target this population in the city.

The following emerged regarding the direct services organizations identified:

- Direct service providers are dispersed throughout the central city with the largest concentration of providers being located in the 53212 zip code.
- The majority of direct service organizations can be categorized under the following focus areas: (1) Family and Social Development and (2) Education.
- A significant number of the organizations identified as faith-based/community engagement provide a variety of services that align with other focus areas identified by the BMA initiative.
- A large number of organizations classified as family and social development provide multiple services and programs, some of which align with other focus areas identified by the BMA initiative.
- Of important consideration, there were fewer direct service agencies providing employment and incarceration and criminal justice services than any other focus areas.
RECOMMENDATIONS
P3 DEVELOPMENT GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

There is an overwhelming need in Milwaukee to invest resources, talents, and collective energies into advancing opportunities for African American boys and men that will empower them to succeed. Our interviews with community leaders and our environmental assessment demonstrate that a lot of good work is underway across the city of Milwaukee. However, there are currently limited resources and leadership to elevate this work through a unified approach that comprehensively addresses these complex needs. To date, no individual or organization has stepped out in front to advance this work collectively across organizations and communities. We believe it is time to take a collaborative approach and build a comprehensive initiative for collective impact.

Critical to the success of a collective effort is the development of a leadership model that is informed both by those that work most closely with African American boys and men in each of the six (6) focus areas and those who bring a high-level strategic perspective for getting this work done collectively at a large-scale. Given the climate and culture of CBOs in Milwaukee, a balanced partnership between organizational leaders at both the grassroots and systems-level is essential to building and sustaining trust, inspiring passion and engagement, and strategically mobilizing resources for truly transformative work.

Based on the data collected, P3 Development Group recommends a “neighborhood collective impact model” that uses a place-based approach and empowers grassroots service providers across sectors to advance their work through a shared agenda and common vision. We believe there is leadership within the neighborhoods most affected that can be guided and strengthened to form local collective impact models within their zip code or limited geographic area. Such a model would include a governance structure involving three key roles: 1) Grassroots Service Providers, 2) Neighborhood Coordinators, 3) Convening Partners. This model provides critical support to grassroots service providers within selected neighborhoods that provide direct services in each of the six (6) focus areas while also building synergies across neighborhoods and giving rise to a collaborative capable of addressing these complex issues at a large scale.

Solutions must be created at the local level to address the specific needs and opportunities within communities, while also coordinated at a high level to accomplish a shared vision and bring significant resources to bear. Organizations within neighborhoods will drive and implement programming within their communities, while remaining accountable to a larger entity that provides support and resources.

The neighborhood collective impact model would involve three key roles:

Grassroots Service Providers  Neighborhood Coordinators  Convening Partners

A successful initiative must address the specific needs of each community and neighborhood within Milwaukee. To that end, the grassroots service providers that work on the ground in these communities must be empowered and resourced to advance the work. The goal of the neighborhood collective impact model is to enable all organizations providing services for African American boys and men to work from a shared agenda, have a clear sense of resources available, attract additional funding, evaluate their outcomes and modify their approach based on evaluation results and successful models. Most importantly, this structure will empower grassroots “implementers” who do transformative work to keep their focus on the work at hand, while providing a trusted neighborhood coordinator to manage the collective effort across their neighborhood.
For each participating neighborhood, a neighborhood coordinator should be employed to oversee the collective efforts. Too often we find that when work is as intensive as this is, grassroots providers do not have the time or resources to look above and beyond their day-to-day operations, and therefore, miss opportunities to build effective collaborations. The Neighborhood Coordinator will help the Grassroots Service Providers develop and implement a shared agenda that advances work across the six (6) impact areas, identify opportunities for collaborations and gaps in services, mobilize resources to advance collaborations, and communicate opportunities and needs to the Convening Partners and other funders. The Neighborhood Coordinator may be a staff person at a neighborhood association or be based out of one of the Grassroots Service Providers, if that provider is committed to advancing the collective work across the neighborhood beyond the scope of their own mission.

To provide overarching support and guidance, P3 Development Group recommends that a convening partnership be established between a community organization that has the credibility to work with grassroots organizations across the city and an embedded funder committed to implementing a comprehensive and collective approach. From the onset, the Convening Partners must be intimately familiar with the issues facing African American boys and men, be able to access funding, and have the ability to connect to resources and information about national strategies and best practices. The Convening Partners will be responsible for convening the Neighborhood Coordinators across communities, helping establish a shared agenda and objectives within each neighborhood, helping establish common metrics and supporting on-the-ground evaluation, collecting and sharing lessons learned across neighborhood initiatives, and researching and distributing information about national best practices. These partners will serve as the hub or “backbone” for the neighborhood collective impact initiative overseeing the administrative functions.

Collectively, we believe that these three critical roles have the power to elevate the work currently underway, align resources with effective strategies, and remain nimble enough to revise the course of direction in response to changing opportunities and needs.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In developing this recommended governance model, P3 Development Group recognizes that there are many elements that require further research and consideration. Some key aspects requiring further thought include:

- **Support for Grassroots Service Organizations** – Although this model is intended to allow grassroots service providers to elevate their work and alleviate the need for significant time spent on administrative functions, it remains to be seen how best to provide this support. Discussions with key providers are needed to understand what types of support would be of most value and would have the greatest impact in advancing their work. The role of the Convening Partners should be responsive to the needs articulated by the individual neighborhood collectives.

- **Advocacy for policy and system change** – While this report focuses more heavily on advancing services and improving access to resources for individuals and neighborhoods, P3 Development recognizes the critical importance of developing a shared advocacy agenda that catalyzes policy and system changes, including changes to the correctional, educational, welfare and workforce development systems. Further consideration should be given to including an organization within the Convening Partners that is charged with advancing a policy agenda. The neighborhood collectives should inform the development of the policy agenda and be mobilized as active advocates for policy and system changes.

- **Long-term commitment and sustainability** – Many interviewed emphasized the urgency and immediacy with which these issues must addressed, but also cautioned that any initiative would require a long-term commitment and investment to achieve real transformation. While Milwaukee cannot wait any longer to mobilize a collective response, we emphasize that the complexities of these issues will require a lengthy implementation timeframe. Therefore, strategies to sustain the initiative must be considered from the outset and a commitment must be made to see implementation through to fruition.
BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

1. Please tell me about your role with ______ organization.
2. Please tell me about the work you’ve been involved in around boys and men of color in the Greater Milwaukee area?
3. How have you primarily been involved in this work (i.e., as a funder, program manager etc.)?
4. What do you identify as some of the opportunities and challenges around advancing a collective initiative around the work being done around boys and men of color in the Greater Milwaukee area?

BOYS AND MEN OF COLOR LANDSCAPE QUESTIONS

After providing a definition of what you mean by landscape, the following questions might be asked:

1. Describe the conditions of Boys and Men of Color that have become problematic issues in recent years
   - in general? Nationally
   - in Milwaukee specifically?

After providing a definition of what you mean by leadership, the following questions might be asked:

1. What local people, groups, and organizations have provided leadership in addressing which of these problematic issues?
2. Describe the interventions and solutions that local people, groups and organizations use to address these problematic issues?
3. Which of the interventions and solutions that these local people, groups and organizations use have been effective and efficient?
4. To what extent have these interventions and solutions made progress toward addressing these issues?
5. Why have these specific interventions and solutions been successful?
6. What additional strategies, people, groups, organizations, funding, other resources will be needed to continue to make progress in addressing these problematic issues?

LEAD COORDINATING SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

1. Please list 3 organizations currently working in this area who you feel possess the traits necessary to act as a lead coordinating organization or agency?
2. What specific traits do you feel would be most important for the lead coordinating agency of this type of initiative?
3. Complete assessment of three organizations listed in Question 1.
## ATTACHMENT B

### LEAD COORDINATING SUPPORT ORGANIZATION ASSESSMENT

Name of Organization: 
Describe your relationship to the organization and how well you know them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAIT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>SCORE: SCALE OF 1 (LOW) - 5 (HIGH)</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Ability to support a set of big picture goals (across ages, populations, outcomes and approaches)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic Scope</td>
<td>How well does the organization mirror the geographic footprint of the collective initiative?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic Levels</td>
<td>Ability to connect across levels – neighborhoods, city/county, local/state</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Levels</td>
<td>Ability to connect with, understand and be respected by grassstop and grassroots leaders and coalitions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alignment</td>
<td>Ability to connect and align efforts under a common agenda, resolving competing priorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convening</td>
<td>Ability to convene stakeholders across sectors, systems, levels, related coalitions, provider networks and partnerships.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy and Action</td>
<td>Ability to facilitate strategic planning and coordinate implementation of action plans</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Will and Policy</td>
<td>Ability to build, effectively communicate agenda and (when necessary) help advance public policy</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Measurement and Analysis</td>
<td>Ability to use data for decision making in a public transparent way and help establish shared systems for measurement and analysis for the partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Ability to focus on accountability for own staff and the partnership.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>Ability to act with confidence based on the organization's credibility.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fund Development</td>
<td>Ability to devote time to fund development priorities of the partnership, not just the organization.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Staffing</td>
<td>Dedicated staff skilled in the above functions with sufficient time to prioritize coordination and alignment efforts.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Buy In</td>
<td>Sustained by a solid fiscal home that has an engaged and supportive board and CEO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start-up Flexibility</td>
<td>Could this organization serve in an interim or term-limited capacity, subject to review by the partnership?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ATTACHMENT C
LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Vanessa Johnson
Executive Director, New Concept Development Center

Angela Turner
Executive Director, Center for Self-Sufficiency

Sharon Robinson
Director of the Department of Administration, City of Milwaukee

Clifton Crump
Office of the Mayor Staff Assistant, City of Milwaukee

Walter Lanier
Director of Counseling and Advising and Pastor, Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) and Progressive Baptist Church

Chris Boston
Director of Sustainable Communities and Pastor, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and Lamb of God Missionary Baptist Church

Victor Barnett
Executive Director and Founder, Running Rebels

Bishop Walter Harvey
Parklawn Assembly of God

Deanna Singh
Executive Director, Burke Foundation

Robert Cherry
Director, Community Advocates Public Policy Institute

Jeffrey Roman
Benchmark Coordinator, Minority Male Achievement, Community Advocates Public Policy Institute

Jerry Roberts
Program Officer, Helen Bader Foundation

Reginald Moore
Founder and Executive Director, Center for Youth Engagement

Matthew Johnson
Founder and Publisher, Fellas Magazine

Rodney Bourrage
Executive Director, Operation Dream

Terron Edwards
Men’s Wellness Coordinator, Walnut Way Conservation Corp.