

# Building Trust in Community Collaborations



Trust is about relationships. The process of building strong, open, and trusting relationships should be an outcome of a connected community initiative, as an important foundation to achieving other deliverables and outputs.

## Why is trust important?

- Enables community networks to thrive
- Opens up access to broader networks and potential new partners
- Engages diverse perspectives, wisdom and expertise
- Nurtures long-term collaboration
- Leads to future initiatives and program renewal
- Supports building initiatives that reflect community voice

## Facilitating trust across a community

A community backbone organization (CBO) can facilitate collaborative trust by convening, catalyzing co-creating, aligning, facilitating, building capacity, listening, learning, and sharing in order to build community. The functions of a CBO can be carried out by an organization but also by an individual that is participating in an initiative that would benefit from this approach.

## 6 TIPS on Facilitating Collaborative Trust

### 1. Prioritize the relationship.

When things don't go according to plan, prioritize maintaining strong relationships rather than accomplishing a task that may no longer suit the initiative.

### 2. Timing matters!

Start building trust early, ideally before the funding proposal process.

### 3. Use values as tools.

Establish the principles and values together and use them as a steering tool to frame strategies, activities, make decisions and deal with difficult conversations.

### 4. There is strength in diversity.

Embrace differences in mandates, pressures and organizational culture among partner organizations.

### 5. Regular and open communication is critical.

Don't wait for an issue to arise to consider how complex communication among many different partners is going to flow.

### 6. Create a plan for potential staff and participant turnover.

Communities are complex, and players/partners will change. If the people involved change, this is not necessarily an indicator of something negative.

