

# Systems Change:

## Philanthropy's Role in Creating Systems to End Homelessness



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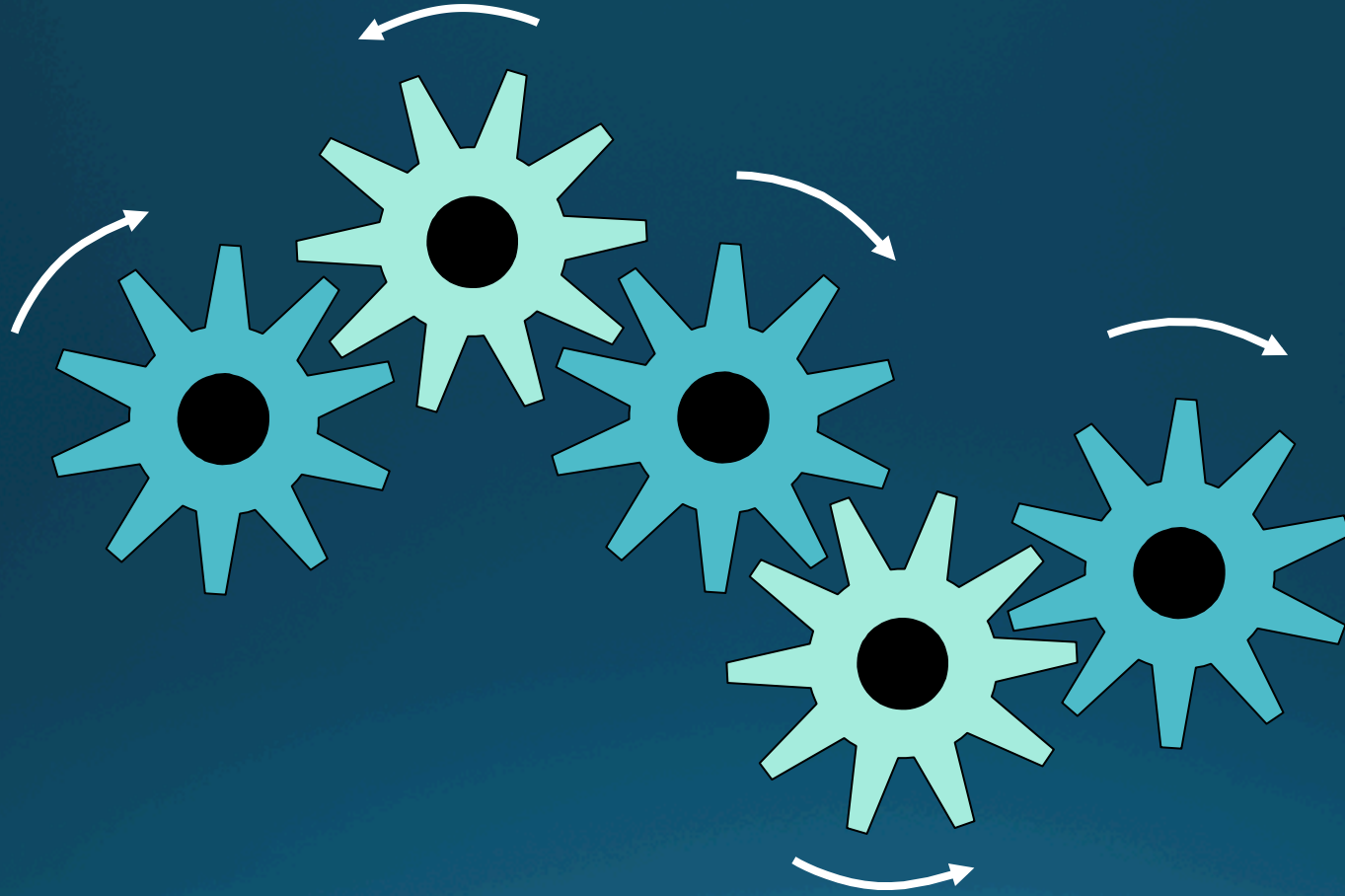
# Ending Homelessness A Systems Approach

“Despite a housing crisis, a great recession, rising income inequality, and elevated poverty, America’s homeless population – an estimated 633,000 – has declined in the past decade.”

*-The Atlantic*



# What is a System?





# A System Is:

- ✓ Many parts
- ✓ Doing different things
- ✓ Working together
- ✓ Focused on a common goal





# A Systems Approach

- Encouraging trend in the last few years towards addressing systems as opposed to just programs. Communities are convening in unprecedented ways
- There are also efforts across the federal govt agencies to break down the silo mentality. Systems change is discussed increasingly.



# Less than effective systems

We have designed systems that make sense to bureaucrats, funders and agency administrators

We have not created systems that make sense from the perspective of people with multiple problems who need or are seeking our help

Many communities don't have 'systems' to end homelessness, but a broad group of individual programs and agencies, working separately or with little true coordination

# A System Isn't:

Individual programs or organizations who are not working together towards a common goal





Systems approach =

Bringing players  
together to form an  
orchestra to play a  
symphony



# Creating Solutions: Philanthropy's Role in a Systems Approach

# Philanthropy's Role in a Systems Approach

**Building relationships**  
**Convening**



# Philanthropy's Role in a Systems Approach

## Grantmaking

# Philanthropy's Role in a Systems Approach

## Advocacy

# Catalytic philanthropy :

**Convener: *Getting the right people into the right places and dialogues:*** Using the reputation and pull of our sector to promote the conversations that can make systems change happen.

**Knowledge Generator: *Investing in research to help shape policy & practice:*** Using evaluation data to inform key decisions, define investments and “make the case” for change

**Catalytic Investor: *Funding innovations that drive systems change:*** Strategic grant making to promote impacts disproportional to the size of the investment.

**Advocate: *Providing credible voice to advance systems change:*** Making the case for change with a broad portfolio of non-lobbying advocacy investments and activities.



# Getting Funders to the Systems Table

- ✓ Don't – approach them only to pay for what you're doing. Funders should not be simply ATM's.
- ✓ Do – get them involved in the process and discussions early on
- ✓ Do use them to bring people to the table and to help you build relationships
- ✓ Don't expect them to pool money with other funders
- ✓ Do help them to see the importance of aligning their work with that of other funders
- ✓ Don't hoard a good funder
- ✓ Do involve them in the community conversation

# Getting Funders to the Systems Table

- ✓ Don't assume they understand the issue well enough or that they don't need to have an in-depth understanding (although don't discount how much they do know)
- ✓ Do – start on a process of shared education and learning
- ✓ Do help them understand the importance of advocacy and help them become advocates/ambassadors for you
- ✓ Do talk to them about the importance of data and community outcome measures

# Systems Thinking

Philanthropy can be a catalyst and your partner in systems change in your community.



# Funders Together to End Homelessness

- For more information on Systems Change, Contact Us:

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