

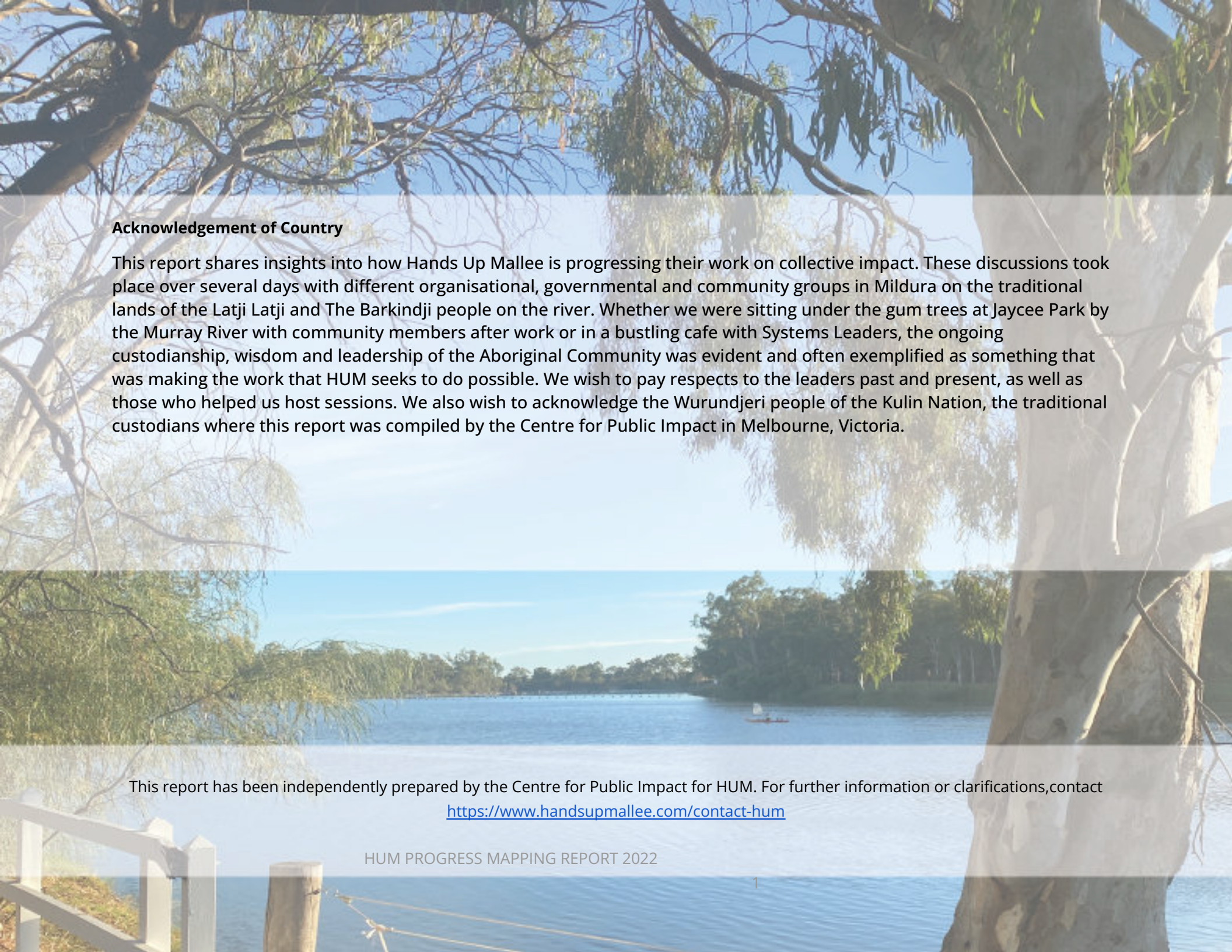
Stronger Places, Stronger People

Progress Mapping Report

Prepared by the Centre for Public Impact (CPI) for Hands Up Mallee (HUM)

May 2022



The background of the page is a scenic photograph of a river, likely the Murray River, with large gum trees framing the top and sides. A white wooden fence is visible in the bottom left corner. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white background.

Acknowledgement of Country

This report shares insights into how Hands Up Mallee is progressing their work on collective impact. These discussions took place over several days with different organisational, governmental and community groups in Mildura on the traditional lands of the Latji Latji and The Barkindji people on the river. Whether we were sitting under the gum trees at Jaycee Park by the Murray River with community members after work or in a bustling cafe with Systems Leaders, the ongoing custodianship, wisdom and leadership of the Aboriginal Community was evident and often exemplified as something that was making the work that HUM seeks to do possible. We wish to pay respects to the leaders past and present, as well as those who helped us host sessions. We also wish to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, the traditional custodians where this report was compiled by the Centre for Public Impact in Melbourne, Victoria.

This report has been independently prepared by the Centre for Public Impact for HUM. For further information or clarifications, contact <https://www.handsupmallee.com/contact-hum>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part 1. Introduction

At a Glance

Project scope

Methodology

Part 2. Progress Mapping

Enabler 1. Systems leadership

Enabler 2. Inclusive Community Engagement

Enabler 3. Understanding Measurement, Evaluation and Learning

Enabler 4. Use of Collective power for purpose

Enabler 5. Investment for policy and purpose

Enabler 6. Leading and supporting effort for purpose

Part 3. Priority areas

APPENDIX

Added detail from the discussion of each enabler

Part 1. Introduction

At a Glance

This report details the outcomes from the Stronger Places Stronger People annual progress mapping, conducted by the Centre for Public Impact in April 2022. The Hands Up Mallee (HUM) backbone team, community members, delivery partners and people in government discussed the ways in which HUM has been making progress towards six enablers of collective impact, each of which is mapped out in the following report.

In these sessions we heard how HUM has earned the trust and respect of large sections of the community, local partners and government at all levels. Government partners in particular appreciate the backbone's strength and maturity and look to them for ideas and ways that the government should change to support collective impact initiatives elsewhere. Community sees the HUM team as a trusted ally that values their expertise and insight and supports them in their efforts. Despite persistent challenges with a growing but still patchy recognition of the shared agenda, potential over-reliance on certain community spokespersons, and challenges due to funding arrangements, strong progress is still being made. This is attributed to trusting interpersonal relationships with government and the community, and working with progressive individuals within government and organisations, who are seen as "the brave and the willing".

Priorities for the next year and beyond build on the significant achievements of the past. Most notably there are opportunities stemming from the [deep collaboration with community during the COVID vaccination outreach](#); [strong and trusting relationships with government](#); [governance reform](#); [understanding of the funding environment](#), the [experience of working with those individuals within partner organisations](#) who understand the potential of a collaborative shared agenda for change, and an understanding of what it takes to develop [healthy partnerships](#) to support collective action.

Government, partner organisations, and community members reiterate that HUM has "the right people for the job", and is creating meaningful impact in the community, demonstrating a collaborative leadership approach to council and government, and progressing their collective impact efforts.

Project scope

Hands Up Mallee (HUM) engaged the Centre for Public Impact (CPI) to map the progress of HUM's collective impact approach for the year of 2021, in accordance with the Department for Social Services (DSS) Stronger Places, Stronger People (SPSP) funding guidelines. This involved using the predefined mapping tool created by the DSS to collect data exploring the HUM experience and changes in the last year across six different enablers of collective impact:

- systems leadership
- inclusive community engagement
- understanding measurement, evaluation and learning
- use of collective power for [collective] purpose
- investment for policy and [collective] purpose
- leading and supporting change.

The data collected during this mapping exercise will be used to guide discussion during a Learning Circle in May 2022. Discussions from this Learning Circle will inform the Annual Action and Support Plan for strengthening collective impact through HUM for the next year. More information about HUM is [available here](#).

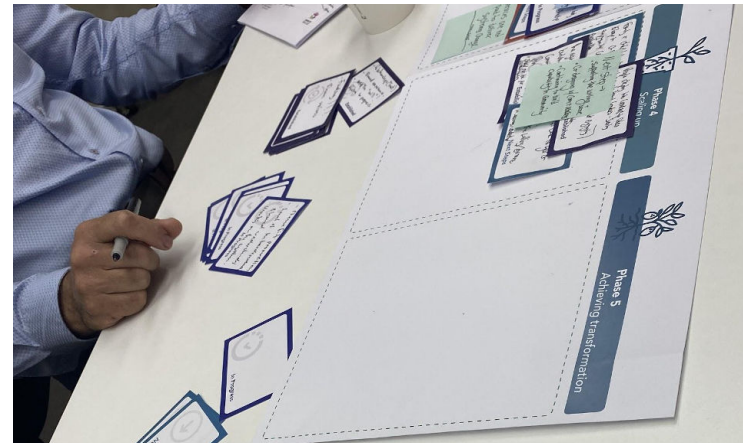
Methodology

Conversations were guided by the progress mapping tool shared by the SPSP team at DSS. It is detailed, extensive and necessarily complex, due to the complexity of the collective impact model and the challenges that exist in determining progress in this context. The CPI team, in consultation with the HUM backbone team, adapted this tool to make it more flexible to deliver to the different stakeholder groups being engaged. In some sessions such as with the backbone team with people in systems leadership and government, they elected to write directly into the tool, while other sessions relied more heavily on semi structured interviews and group conversations while a co-facilitator took notes.

The CPI team met with five stakeholder groups over the course of three days in Mildura in March 2022 to discuss the six collective impact enablers. Listening sessions were scheduled for two hours, though it is worth noting that several sessions ran over by 20-45 minutes to accommodate the wealth of information and rich discussions taking place. These groups were unexpectedly smaller than planned due to pandemic related reasons of illness and the need to isolate, in addition to the usual busyness of people in these roles. As a result, each group discussion prioritised specific enablers that fit the groups' expertise.

The sessions were audio recorded, with the recording kept for two weeks to verify notes and ensure a complete report of the conversations. Verbal consent to record was given by all those recorded. Notes were taken as described above, verified through the recording and synthesised for this report. The notes were then compiled into the draft report which was verified with participants for accuracy before becoming the final report.

Details of each group are provided below.



Participants using the Progress Mapping tool

People	Type of Stakeholder	Enabler Focus
3 in person	Government and Service Sector A group of professionals, working in local government and service delivery, who were involved in the co-creation of the HUM Monitoring and evaluation framework	3. Understanding Measurement Evaluation and Learning 5. Investment and policy for purpose
5 in person	Mallee Community Voices Community members connected with their communities and interested in working with HUM and others to improve outcomes for community members	2. Inclusive community engagement 4. Use of collective power for purpose
2 in person 1 phone call	Aboriginal Reference Group Aboriginal community leaders who work with HUM and across the community to advocate for improvements for the way people work with Aboriginal communities	2. Inclusive community engagement 4. Use of collective power for purpose
2 in person	Governance, investment and policy People involved in governance of HUM, and investment and policy across the North Mallee region.	1. Systems Leadership 5. Investment and policy for purpose
2 in person, 3 online	System leaders Those within government who work to commission services to improve outcomes across the community	1. Systems leadership 5. Investment and policy for purpose 6. Leading and Supporting effort for purpose
8 in person	HUM backbone team. This group are employed in the HUM backbone to work on the initiative and a variety of roles, including community engagement, communications, social impact and systems improvement	6. Leading and Supporting effort for purpose 3. Understanding, measurement, evaluation and learning (UMEL) 1. Systems leadership

Figure 1 *Composition of the progress mapping circles and topics*

Part 2. Progress Mapping

This second part of the report details what we heard and what we learnt when discussing each enabler within the groups during progress mapping each of the six SPSP enablers:

Enabler 1: Systems Leadership

Enabler 2: Inclusive Community Engagement

Enabler 3: Understanding, measurement, evaluation, and learning

Enabler 4: Use of collective power for purpose

Enabler 5: Investment and policy for purpose

Enabler 6: Leading and supporting effort for purpose

Each table below continues the colour coding system established in the DSS progress mapping tool to determine whether the progress reflects: what has been done and is embedded; what is being currently worked on; and what the planned or aspirational next steps are for the next 12 months.

Orange - in place and established.

We have done the work, it is sustainable. The initiative can step away and know that others will keep the change going.

Green - in progress

We are currently working on this. If the initiative stepped away, things could return to the previous way things were done.

Blue - next steps

We have not started this yet but see it as the next piece for us to pick up over the next 12 months.

Enabler 1. Systems leadership

This enabler covers the leadership conditions necessary to bring about change from individual organisational impact to collective impact. More detail is available in the [Appendix](#).

Group discussions centred around the need to take a systems approach to tackling entrenched problems and the extent to which participants saw those they worked with and alongside taking a systems view.

Established- COVID Vaccination Outreach

The community mobilisation during the COVID vaccination outreach work was a short term example of excellent systems leadership, when those involved from different parts of the system worked together to create change, and repurpose effort and resources for that change. It demonstrates that this level of collaboration is possible, and how it might be done routinely in the future.

In progress - Acceptance of a shared agenda

The discussions suggested that although there is a lot of HUM activity that concentrates on creating a shared agenda and building foundations, some system leaders feel that alignment to this agenda is not universal. This is in line with what HUM expected to see, as with system change we often see this patchy progression and change, with pockets of resistance and slower moving engagement.

Next Steps - Investment mapping and governance

Investment mapping will provide strong leverage to engage system leaders and encourage them to commit to the shared agenda and pool their resources for greater impact. The emerging changes to the HUM governance structure will also be a powerful enabler for engaging leaders to work in different ways for collective impact.

“The willing and the brave”

People working to promote collaboration across the system described how, as hierarchy increased, people appeared less convinced of the value of collaboration or were unable to change the way they worked. They described how individuals with little “role power” sometimes worked in ways that were not officially sanctioned and were termed “*the willing and the brave*.” Supporting the efforts of this group of people, and increasing community accountability amongst service providers, were seen as important actions HUM could do to progress Systems Leadership efforts.

Enabler 1. Systems leadership				
Phase 1 Building readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Transformation
HUM have strong relationships of trust across government and non-government partners	System mapping is done but not widely shared across partners	Change efforts need to be focused at board level to enable service deliverers to shift resources and incentivise staff to deliver against targets <i>and</i> build an ecosystem of support	Community mobilisation during the COVID vaccination outreach work catalysed upon the crisis and achieved better outcomes in the context of a shared agenda	
People working at a community level see a clear need for collaboration and sharing across organisations	HUM is working to create time and space to nurture curiosity - to open up thinking in places where the dynamic could change towards collaboration	It is recognised that the HUM governance structure needs to play a role in advocating to boards to get involved in the common agenda, and to step up in the role of systems leadership	Discussions are taking place around making the community lead approach business as usual and continuing to support this way of working in other initiatives	
There is growing acknowledgement that communities have an important role to play within systems of change	Fund mapping is planned, and will provide leverage for collaborative action and increased accountability across the system	There is momentum to support the “willing and the brave” to take on systems leadership roles despite the lack of traditional role power		
<p>Orange - in place and established</p> <p>Green - in progress</p> <p>Blue - next steps</p>	Government partners need to be at the table to establish commitment for collective impact and to advocate for collaboration			

Enabler 2. Inclusive Community Engagement

This enabler covers how community voices are listened to and valued. It includes two components: community members as leaders and experts on what needs to change; and community organising/movement building. Each of these is discussed more fully in the [Appendix](#).

Established - Strong relationships

A good example of inclusive community engagement was through the COVID vaccination outreach, where HUM listened well to community voices and demonstrated how they valued what they heard. HUM was very responsive to suggestions from the community for how the outreach might be most effective, and advocated on behalf of the community to change plans for vaccination outreach. Successful vaccine outreach and establishing a presence through the “Fun in the Park” program leveraged existing relationships and further established trust in HUM, as well as demonstrated the community’s ability to shape decision making.

In Progress - Responsiveness to community needs

HUM is seen as listening to voices in the community and the backbone team recognises that they need the ability to adapt as community needs change. There are discussions about building community capability to lead, and evidence of community capacity building, for example through advocating for, and community members to attend the North Mallee Leaders program.

Next Steps - Learning from COVID Vaccination outreach

The vaccination outreach program demonstrated a link between community leadership and achieving outcomes of a shared agenda, which is a criteria of achieving transformation. The next step is incorporating the learning from this initiative and a new appreciation of the capabilities of community leaders into foundations for other projects and future engagements.

Agenda and values

Instead of a shared agenda, community members who participated in this exercise preferred the language of shared values, recognising that they did not feel they were totally aligned with the agenda of any particular agency, but strongly shared the values of HUM: promoting self-determination and improvement of conditions and outcomes for people in the community. This suggests that although the shared agenda of HUM was co-designed through an extensive process, much has happened in the intervening two year. Either new people need more information to understand it and see whether they share it, or it needs to be revisited to assess whether it is still shared across the community and partners.

Gatekeeping

There was a risk noted that some people are designated as “spokespeople” by virtue of being present, while there are more diverse voices who are not being represented. By relying on these people HUM risks creating another layer of distance to the wider community agenda being heard - “[gatekeepers] are a system in themselves.”

2.1 Community members as leaders and experts on what needs to change				
Phase 1 Building readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Transformation
Pre-covid, networking within the community was strong and there were many people engaged. We need to rebuild these community connections, now that face to face contact is allowed again	HUM has the reputation of being good at holding space and time for people to connect to each other. Jane and the wider HUM team are seen as a strong ally for the community agenda	During the COVID vaccination outreach work, the government and community were working together through HUM to increase uptake of vaccination	During the COVID vaccination outreach, community leadership was central to decision-making, and directed activities for improved outcomes	
Orange - in place and established Green - in progress Blue - next steps	There were lots of people having interesting conversations within the community, and HUM recognise the need to connect them up more		There is an opportunity to see the COVID outreach as a proof of concept for how to do business - listening and trusting the community feedback, and most importantly making it easy for them to access services and expertise they need	
	There is a sense that at times the Community Voices group was presented as evidence that the community is respected as experts on what needs to change, but that this felt a bit hollow, without real substance behind it			

2.2 Community Organising/Movement building				
Phase 1 Building readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Transformation
<p>Community members described the quality of listening they received from the HUM team, which made them feel valued and respected when they interacted with the HUM team</p> <p>Orange - in place and established</p> <p>Green - in progress</p> <p>Blue - next steps</p>	There is an awareness that there are lots of people having interesting conversations within the community, and HUM needs to connect them			
	During discussions with Mallee Community Voices, a sense of collective working brought solidarity and increased strength through coordination. One member described this as: "I'm fighting for the people and I'm not on my own."			
	There is a perception that, through HUM, there has been increased engagement with Aboriginal Community. Although people come and go, this turnover brings in fresh ideas.			
	It was identified that there needs to be more proactive community engagement and movement building - walking and talking, knocking on doors, distributing flyers, employing people to build trust with the community			
	Community expressed a need to create space for listening to young people speak for themselves, rather than relying on more vocal or those with even informal role power to speak for them			

Enabler 3. Understanding Measurement, Evaluation and Learning

This enabler concerns data and the extent to which government data is brought with transparency to the decision making table, and held in parity with local data and local storytelling and narratives to inform plans and the focus of the work. This is discussed more fully in the [Appendix](#).

The main issues described here were about sharing data across organisations, which is a key component of collective impact. It was felt that this is extremely challenging right now due to the competitive nature of the tendering process and the commercial risk presented by sharing data around successes and revealing failures.

Established - Desire for diverse data

There is genuine interest in learning from diverse sources and types of data, and a desire to share data with and collectively implement changes based upon that data with the community.

In Progress - Activating frameworks

Resources are being allocated according to publicly accessible data as well as evidence from diverse places such as listening to the community. Some ways of working that take into account community knowledge have been established and are being scaled up, like sharing HUM's Measurement Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework created with Clear Horizon.

Next Steps - Implementation and accountability

There are some uncertainties around the implementation of the MEL Framework. Services have clear learning from the data about their deliverables and impact on communities, but it was less clear to the groups who discussed this, who would measure the effects of system change, and what these effects might be. This raised questions of whether this MEL data could be used to hold HUM and service delivery partners accountable for creating system change within the communities they served.

There was excitement from multiple groups to shift from an evaluation approach which focuses on outputs that are easier to measure, to one which focuses on outcomes for families that are more systemic, linking MEL to Investment for Purpose and discussions of funding structures.

Enabler 3. Understanding Measurement, Evaluation and Learning				
Phase 1 Building readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Transformation
There is a clear identified need from the data to do something differently	There are groups of engaged partners who wish to collaborate on MEL	The HUM MEL Framework created by Clear Horizons is a great milestone. Teams are now working to understand what it means in practice and how they might implement it		
There is an understanding that a systems approach is necessary to achieve meaningful change	Data sharing between partner agencies is beginning but is extremely difficult due to the commercial risk presented when one organisation shares data about their successes and failures, AND lack of clarity around data protection and ethical management of data	There is increased data sharing from the state and federal government, who are now asking what data HUM needs		
Local evidence corroborates the published evidence on what families need to do to tackle the challenging work of bringing up families	Publically available data is used to establish an awareness of need in the community	Partners are beginning to ask questions about measuring the incidental consequences of engagement with HUM (system change aspects), including increased social connectedness of young people, practitioners extending their practice, and resources have been reallocated, in addition to the more direct improvements in outcomes for young people		
Orange - in place and established Green - in progress Blue - next steps	Senior leadership is beginning to understand the importance of the new MEL framework for HUM, although it is still awaiting some senior sign off			
	In order to build partnerships and trust across services, it is important to learn and understand what people have to gain/lose by collaborating	The nested MEL frameworks to guide activities over the next few years are under development and should highlight the contribution of those involved in collective impact efforts		

Enabler 4. Use of Collective power for purpose

This enabler explores the extent to which there is a shared recognition that the way power and authority has been used across the system has not delivered for more socially vulnerable communities. There are three components within it - system change, decision-making and inequitable power structures. Each of these are discussed more in depth in the [Appendix](#).

Established - Trust and support

HUM have the trust and confidence of the community through their work actively listening and responding to their views. Both directly through meetings and indirectly through advocacy, they connect people in the community to those with more decision making power. One community member speaking about involvement in community programs and local initiatives said, *"We know we have the support of HUM, otherwise we wouldn't do it."*

In Progress - Equitable and inclusive decision making

More equitable decision making is seen by community members as creating a shared agenda which indicates a solid foundation for systems change. Decision making is happening with certain community members, although there are concerns that some community leaders are overreaching and speaking for others.

Next Steps -Connections and communication

Community members expressed a desire for HUM to step into a connecting role, describing *"Collective power looks like getting the web between the little organisations and communities."* Currently, there is a strong reliance upon relationships between people and not enough communication about the work HUM is doing. *"It's really apparent as an outsider (well I work in services)...I can't see that any of them have a clue what [HUM] is trying to do."*

Enabler 4. Use of Collective power for purpose				
Phase 1 Building readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Transformation
4.1 System Change				
People within the system know which organisations share data and act transparently and which do not and are asking questions	Community members are now beginning to ask about fund mapping and how resources are distributed across the area			
There is a conflict in how the services see their work (largely satisfied) and how the community and HUM see it (room for improvement)	Government partners are very open to fund/fiscal mapping and are keen to make this happen, recognising the state of readiness for this that exists in the community			
4.2 Decision-Making				
There is an express wish for HUM to help hold those with the money and power accountable for their decisions - “Connect to the power players.”				
4.3 Inequitable power structures				
Those in the community want those in power to understand the challenges faced and hear about it when things don't work- “You gotta know what I'm going through.”	The community (but not leaders) are speaking about racism and its consequences	Orange - in place and established Green - in progress Blue - next steps		
	Organisations are aware of how they need to work together, but this is not universal			

Enabler 5. Investment for policy and purpose

This enabler assesses whether there is a recognition that investment, policies and accountabilities should better align with the community-led collective impact agenda, and the extent to which this inspires action across the system. There are three components: governments, investment for system change and service systems. Each of these are discussed more in depth in the [Appendix](#).

Established- Awareness of mismatched investment

Funding commitments from local government significantly support HUM's operations, and there have been successes by starting small as a way to secure more funding.

In Progress- Flexible use of funding and shared resources

HUM is repurposing unused funds, and people with strong relationships with HUM are sharing their own resources to support programs. This suggests local commitment to the shared agenda, albeit at a small scale currently.

Next Steps- Fund mapping

There was a sense that fund mapping could be successful this time since the community is ready requesting this process which will make it easier to insist on data sharing. This could be a means to further involve partner organisations.

There were two significant issues that were identified in relation to funding. The first was that often the duration of the funding was counterproductive to collaboration, and actively undermined a longer term collective impact approach. Securing grant funding for a discrete project lasting three years that is designed to contribute to an overarching ten year plan is disruptive, especially when the processes to secure the funding are disproportionate to the amounts. Secondly, there was uniform agreement that competitive tendering undermines collaboration and encourages a competitive spirit amongst service providers, which is counter to the shared collaborative agenda and does not support long term change.

Home Base Hoops and the Covid outreach work for vaccination uptake were seen as good examples to advocate for a different way of funding a shared and emergent agenda, and working across the system. However, in these cases some organisations did not fully collaborate whilst still benefiting from the collaboration or pooling of resources. This highlights the minority of unhealthy partnerships that persist and undermine collaborative efforts and scaling up. Establishing ways of working and rewording partnership agreements were proposed as solutions to this (for more see [here](#)).

Enabler 5. Investment for policy and purpose				
Phase 1 Building readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Transformation
5.1 Governments				
Across agencies there is a drive to work together and create communities of practice that are collaborative and share ideas and resources. This drive is not as evident in government	Fund-mapping of government money in Mildura was attempted 10 years ago, but was not successfully completed as organisations were hesitant to share data. The process could be reattempted in the near future with community and government support			
There is a recognition across services that funding needs to change to match the longer term theories of change being developed				
5.2 Investment for system change				
Partners are clear that the way funding is allocated undermines collaborative work - “funding atomises, creates competition and distrust.”	Sharing of hard resources is happening in ad-hoc ways that depend upon relationships rather than systems (e.g. transport options for Home Based Hoops.)			
	There is growing momentum among government and systems leadership to encourage other partners to commit resources to build collaborative work			
5.3 Service Systems				
There is an awareness that current funding modes reward outputs that aren't always aligned with community needs or agendas.	HUM has repurposed unused funding from other projects to support Home Based Hoops, responding to demand from the young people in community.	There is a need to clarify ways of working, re-wording partnership agreements to prioritise a shared agenda.	Orange - in place and established Green - in progress Blue - next steps	

Enabler 6. Leading and supporting effort for purpose

This enabler looks at how governance structures and processes, and the design and resourcing of the support for the work (such as a backbone team), are aligned to the phase of development of HUM as a collective impact initiative. It has three components: governance, backbone and partnerships. Each of these are discussed more in depth in the [Appendix](#).

Established- The backbone team

The community has trust in HUM's leadership and sees the backbone team as listening and holding the shared agenda. Within HUM the backbone team is united around, and committed to, their shared agenda and theory of change that informs their work.

In Progress- Leadership diversity and Sharing back

Over the last year HUM have been recognised for deepening the diversity of their backbone team and their leadership across the SPSP initiatives. By beginning the work of designing 'mini MELS', HUM are improving how they evidence their work and are better able to share back what is working. Some of this sharing has resulted in mindset shifts from other organisations about the importance and process of reporting and what the real work is. Government partners also expressed gratitude to HUM for their generosity and openness to share their learning with other collective impact initiatives, furthering the agenda nationally and changing the way people report to government.

Next Steps- Stepping into expertise

Defining ways of working with partnerships between services and communities is the next step to scaling up, as some partners are still not fully on board with the shared agenda. Government partners invited the backbone team to lobby them more, using the power of HUM's platform based on their successes, evidence gathered and as an experienced collective impact initiative to improve practice across the government workstreams.

Enabler 6. Leading and supporting effort for purpose				
Phase 1 Building readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Transformation
6.1 Governance				
	Community members expressed confidence in the HUM backbone team and leadership	HUM have an established backbone team and internal agreement about ways of working	There is a completed Journey of change to guide implementation and a MEL framework in place, to learn and track progress, necessary for effective scaling up	
			HUM is exploring ideas to pilot a fit for purpose model of governance	
6.2 Backbone				
	HUM are known for listening well to the community.	The backbone team have co-created a journey of change for HUM with a wider stakeholder group.	The backbone team appears to be fully resourced, recently taking on two new Aboriginal staff members.	The backbone team has already begun to consider how sustainable funding for the next 10+ years might be achieved.
		HUM work to bring people together to learn from them and to increase social connections within the community.	The backbone team is building “mini MELs” for the activities that will feed into the wider framework.	Orange - in place and established Green - in progress Blue - next steps

Enabler 6. Leading and supporting effort for purpose				
Phase 1 Building readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Transformation
6.3 Partnerships				
There is evident collaboration between HUM and the community and some service delivery partners but it is not systemic nor BAU for most	There is a diverse governance group working to co-design a governance model that will be fit for purpose	There is a strong sense that partnership agreements that detail the expectations of each partner and their commitment to collaborative working and system change approaches would be helpful	Partners recognise the importance of connecting with the youth at Home Base Hoops and allocate resources to staffing the evening	
	HUM are building deeper collaborative relationships with government to make a strong case for more flexible funding and sharing data for collective impact	By sharing the HUM journey of change with partners and potential partners, they will increasingly understand the HUM agenda and ways of working and may be willing and able to collaborate more		
	Through community programs there are efforts to build relationships with diverse community groups and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal community			

Orange - in place and established
 Green - in progress
 Blue - next steps

Part 3. Priority areas

Several themes arose during the process and suggest themselves as natural priority areas for the coming year.

1. Learning and building on COVID vaccination outreach work

How should the experience of the COVID outreach work impact HUMs' ways of working?

The experience of coordinating the outreach work to extend the offer of vaccinations to communities who were fearful or otherwise hesitant to take up the offer of a vaccine appears to be a pivotal experience in the past 12 months. Due to the emergency nature of the pandemic, ways of working with communities were accepted by the wider system or organisations and agencies that might, in different circumstances, have been deemed to be less acceptable. HUM were able to use their networks and trusting relationships to listen to the community and organise a response that would address their concerns. Community members were respected for their views, and time was taken to give appropriate advice from those with the right expertise, to ensure people understood what it meant to be vaccinated. Time was taken for people to consider the information, and come to their own conclusions about what was right for them, including waiting until others in their community were vaccinated without incident. People did not feel coerced nor disrespected.

Community members praised the way HUM came into the community to listen and then design a response around the community needs, rather than sitting in offices and not meeting people face to face. HUM's ability to coordinate services around what they had learnt was enormously appreciated. Community members felt this approach should be mainstreamed, alongside more proactive community engagement that goes into communities and listens widely and deeply, beyond people who volunteer more time or are easier to speak with.

The key components which were seen to have had the biggest impact on outcomes were:

- physically going into communities
- knocking on doors and giving out flyers
- listening and respecting what people said and their rationales and reasoning
- designing a response that responded to the challenges faced in community
- bringing the professionals to where the people were, rather than asking them to attend where the professionals were.

2. Leveraging the evidence base and experience of HUM to advocate for reform in government

When is the right time for HUM to use their platform gained through experience and expertise, to advocate for change in Government that improves practice in collective impact?

Due to their role as a connector across communities, service providers and government, it was suggested by system leaders and government that there was an untapped opportunity for HUM to better recognise the power of their platform. This platform, gained through the relatively long duration of the program, (compared to others in Australia), the evidence gathered, networks created and successes and the leadership of the backbone team, mean that HUM stands in a position where it is being invited to share learning and influence policy (for example Jane sharing the simplifying and streamlining changes made to reporting documents to DSS and SPSP with other collective impact groups).

At this point in time, there appears to be an opportunity for HUM to reflect on how time and resources are used to further their aims. Is the amount of time spent influencing government processes more widely right for this stage in the programme? If yes, what would be the signs or triggers that this balance would need to be reconfigured, and more time could be spent on the strategic agenda, bearing in mind this would involve some delegation or demotion of activity.

3. Accountability to community

What is the role of community in governance structures?

It was suggested by several groups during the progress mapping that due to strong networks and the trust that has been built with the community, HUM has an opportunity to strengthen governance through developing accountability lines to the community.

Communities directly and indirectly witness the successes and failings of services and therefore are able to communicate honestly about the reality of service delivery and hold these organisations to account for how they spend public money. Increased accountability to the community might therefore create better organisational collaboration, (through highlighting interdependence between organisations and government departments), more efficient and effective use of resources through better collaboration and therefore better outcomes. Given that HUM is in the process of revising governance structures and arrangements, there is an opportunity to explore whether increasing accountability to community members might be an innovative and potent change to bring about a shift in the traditional ways of working within the service provision ecosystem in Mildura.

4. Making funding work for collaboration

Can HUM leverage trusting relationships in Government to adapt funding for collaboration?

Currently, those in leadership positions often feel unable to encourage nor incentivise service delivery staff to spend time building collaboration with other services for collective impact. During the progress mapping this differentiation was termed “working on the system rather than in the system”. By delivering according to their contracts, managers meet output targets, increasing the likelihood of future funding and therefore ensure organisational stability, fulfilling obligations to trustees or board members. Essentially, services are not paid to collaborate and collaboration is required to deliver system change that supports improved outcomes through collective impact.

Addressing this could be another focus for HUM in the coming year. One potential avenue could be through accessing unspent funds, through an agreement with funders. The Understanding Monitoring Evaluation and learning group in particular, spoke about unspent funds that had to be returned to the funder at the end of the financial year. They were unspent because of poor staff retention, or because services were not taken up in the state in which they were commissioned. HUM has been able to repurpose unspent funds, albeit somewhat unofficially, through informal agreements and strong leadership. If these repurposing decisions were official and formalised through adapted financial governance guidelines, there is an opportunity for others to contribute to collective impact in a similar way.

5. Supporting changemakers - the willing and the brave

Is there a role for HUM in encouraging “the willing and the brave”? What would this look like?

Although there are people who see the value in collaboration for community improvement, most appear not to have traditional role power. These are informal leaders who are stepping into the role of collaborator, and were termed “the willing and the brave” during the progress mapping. These individuals, who are connected to HUM, express gratitude for the example of their leadership and a safe space to explore collective impact. Those with traditional role power, the formal leaders, with a few notable exceptions appear less committed to collaboration, perhaps due to the pressure they feel to ensure organisational stability and extended funding within their roles.

Another potential avenue of work could be for HUM to openly support the willing and the brave through a variety of approaches that encourage collaborative working. This could include lobbying for a collaboration clause in Government contracts for work or a Community of Practice, or something else that would work better for those involved.

6. Healthy partnerships

What are the hallmarks of healthy relationships within collective impact, and what does this look like across community, services, and government?

Clearly, healthy partnerships are key to good collaborative working across a system, but in practice, they are extremely difficult to manage. HUM have experienced challenging behaviours from those they are working with. One short term priority could be to examine the relationships that HUM holds and manages, and define some expectations or parameters to clarify what is needed for collaborative work to thrive. This could be as formal as a code of conduct, or one or two clauses inserted into partnership agreements. If this was a co-creation with stakeholders at different levels it might have a stronger chance of success, recognising the constraints that each stakeholder experiences within the collaborative partnership.

Final thoughts

This report summarises progress made in the past year by HUM, from the perspectives of the main stakeholders of HUM and the backbone team. There are numerous opportunities to develop this work, building on the successes so far to promote the shared agenda and further collaborative working within North Mallee.

Significantly, HUM is seen as a listening organisation that responds proactively, creatively and courageously to the challenges reported by community members. It is a trusted government partner and recognised among collective impact initiatives for its progressive approach to data and reporting and strong leadership example. This past year, the COVID vaccination outreach was a significant achievement for HUM, where existing trusting relationships were leveraged to make a significant contribution to vaccine coverage in clinically vulnerable populations, and HUM was able to demonstrate the potential for deep community mobilisation to the wider system.

A variety of priorities have emerged from this process, ranging from those which might require deep and longer term reform, and those which might be more immediately achievable. The strong base and reputation of the HUM backbone team, and the trusting collaborative relationships they have built will be invaluable to this work.

The CPI team wishes to thank all of the participants who gave up their time to contribute to the progress mapping process, and for their thoughtful and careful reflections that they so generously shared.

APPENDIX : Added detail from the discussion of each enabler

This Appendix contains an overview of the current state of each enabler by colour coding of Progress Mapping Tool. It also provides supplemental detail from the progress mapping that was felt to be interesting but perhaps not as relevant as other comments. It is included here for a complete report and should be read in conjunction with the relevant section.

Appendix- Enabler 1 Systems Leadership (continued)

One senior system leader described what he saw as the interdependence of service provision, and wished to convey how understanding this interdependence between organisations could be crucial in making the case for collaboration. It was suggested that one way to convey the interdependence of service providers would be to increase accountability to the community, who would make it clear that they needed service providers to collaborate for their benefit.

Phase 1 Building Readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Achieving transformation
In place and ongoing				
	Currently being worked on			
		Next steps		
			Beyond the next year	

Overview of current state by colour coding of Progress Mapping Tool for Enabler 1

Appendix- Enabler 2. Inclusive Community Engagement (continued)

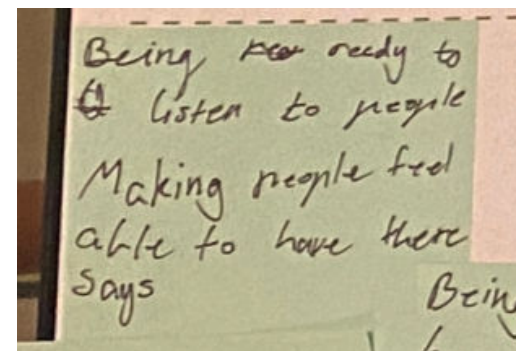
Phase 1 Building Readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Achieving transformation
Community members as leaders and experts on what needs to change				
Currently being worked on	In place and ongoing			Beyond the next year
			Next steps	
Community organising / movement building				
In place and ongoing		Beyond the next year		
	Next steps			

Overview of current state by colour coding of Progress Mapping Tool for Enabler 2

Community members as leaders and experts on what needs to change

The COVID pandemic brought opportunity and challenge to the community. On the positive side there was the example of working with the community to establish the outreach work to increase uptake of COVID vaccinations. This was an opportunity for HUM to demonstrate their commitment to the community, and listen and respond to suggestions from the community for how the outreach might be most effective. It was a highly effective approach - community members had access to expertise who were able to listen to and allay their fears and share information that enabled informed consent to vaccinate. The trust that was built between HUM and the community, through deep listening and relationship, meant that many were open to vaccination who would not have been otherwise, which made the case for others to vaccinate also. This was a significant experience for the community and HUM, and could be a powerful advocacy tool for changing the way work is done in the future.

The negative impact of the pandemic on community networking and relationships was recognised by all present. The work to re-establish these relationships and connections was seen as the immediate priority in the future.



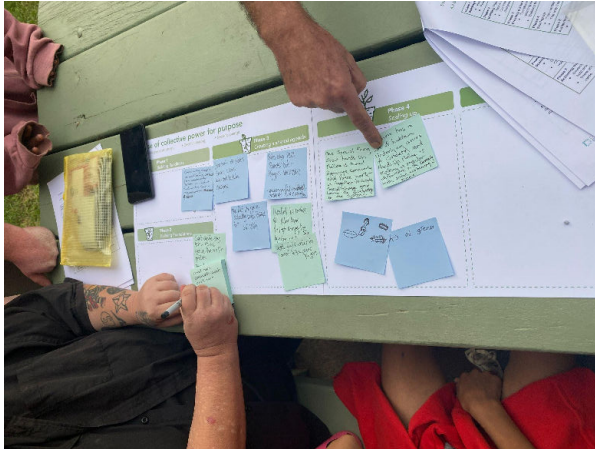
Instead of a shared agenda, community members who participated in this exercise preferred the language of shared values, recognising that they did not feel they were totally aligned with the agenda of any agency, but strongly shared the values of HUM: promoting community self-determination and improvement of conditions and outcomes for people in the community.

In terms of access another important aspect of HUM work with the community was to provide access to those with decision-making ability and real power to change. Community members described how they had been able to speak with those in positions of power and challenge them when their teams were not working in ways that benefited community members. Those community members with informal positions of leadership were able to feed complaints they heard in community to those with the power to change things, which felt enormously important, and impossible without the facilitation of HUM. This was not happening in a structured or sustainable way but ad hoc when people were invited to meet those in leadership roles.

Community organising/movement building

The comments around Community organising and movement building reflected a process focusing on building foundations. HUM were acknowledged for their work identifying, affirming and supporting the personal growth of local people, recognising their expertise and potential as community leaders. Several people recalled the importance of a course called North Mallee Leaders Program and many of the community engaged in HUM had participated or planned to participate in this course because they were encouraged to attend by HUM.

The course was recognised as pivotal for many individuals recognising their potential as community leaders, who noted that HUM also encouraged them to apply for scholarships to facilitate access. HUM also creates networking opportunities through Mallee Community Voices for unofficial community workers to meet each other and create a sense of solidarity in their work.



HUM appears to play a role in listening to people in the community. This was really important. However, there was doubt in the minds of some of those present about whether *all* voices were listened to. Despite deep respect for the Elders in the Aboriginal community in particular, some wondered whether young people were being adequately listened to, or others in the community who had a perspective that differed from that of the Elders or other spokespeople that HUM were successfully engaging with. There was concern that a limited number of spokespeople could create barriers for those who disagreed with them.

Appendix- Enabler 3. Understanding, measurement, evaluation, and learning (continued)

Phase 1 Building Readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Achieving transformation
In place and ongoing			Beyond the next year	
	Currently being worked on			
		Next steps		

Overview of current state by colour coding of Progress Mapping Tool for Enabler 3

Given that data in HUM is designed to focus on learning and improvement, discussions touched on how the MEL might also work to enable HUM to be accountable to the community. There was concern that at times communities were consulted about their experiences but not adequately integrated into MEL processes. Federal government is more advanced in their journey of exploring data sharing and in their thinking than the state government who have been more hesitant, hypothesised because the federal government is less exposed by the data they share (lessons for other data sharing needs). Both the federal and state government remain extremely committed to sharing data. Senior leadership across local organisations have expressed buy in, though some executives still need to sign off the document.

“If you’re looking at best outcomes for people not organisations, you need to look at what data and how data is gathered”
Acknowledgement there are barriers to community accessing data - past experiences of systems have been disempowering

Appendix- Enabler 4. Use of collective power for purpose (continued)

Phase 1 Building Readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Achieving transformation
4.1 System Change				
In place and ongoing	Currently being worked on	Beyond the next year		
4.2 Decision-Making				
Next steps				
4.3 Inequitable power structures				
Currently being worked on				

Overview of current state by colour coding of Progress Mapping Tool for Enabler 4

System change

Community members described HUM as genuine, non judgemental and active listeners who are invested in creating stronger communities. HUM has the trust and confidence of the community through their work actively listening and responding to their views. Both directly through meetings and indirectly through advocacy, they connect people in the community to those in power. HUM also works with agencies such as the Police, service providers and communities encouraging collaboration across the system. This work has created a strong foundation from which community now feel confident in their capacity to ask questions about those who hold power, exploring the flow of resources and decision-making processes.

Decision-making

Community members spoke about how they wished HUM would facilitate them to hold those in power accountable through more transparent processes. This suggests that in terms of system change and decision-making, HUM and the community it works with are still in the early stages of building readiness.

Inequitable power structures

We heard about the effects of racism from community members (but not explicitly from other groups). We also heard about how some organisations and governments understand the need to work more together, suggesting that HUM are building readiness in places, and in others building foundations to challenge inequitable power structures.

Appendix- Enabler 5. Investment for policy and purpose (Continued)

Phase 1 Building Readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Achieving transformation
5.1 Governments				
Currently being worked on	Next Steps	Beyond the next year		
5.2 Investment for system change				
In place and ongoing				
	Next Steps			
5.3 Service Systems				
In place and ongoing	Currently being worked on	Next Steps		

Overview of current state by colour coding of Progress Mapping Tool for Enabler 5

Government

Government partners recognised the challenges they faced in changing the way funding worked to enable collaboration across organisations and communities. We saw differing levels of agency to effect change in different levels of government, with less at a local government level and increasing levels correlated with increased distance from the work. At all levels of government it was recognised that some people understood and were on board with the agenda and there were some people who didn't see the potential and found it difficult to share the agenda.

Participants recognised how unusual it was to have Federal and state governments working together on a programme of work, both committed to funding in the longer term. HUM also noted the funding commitments from local government, which funds one post within the backbone team, and many of the financial processes that enable HUM to operate smoothly.

Investment for system change

HUM are advocating for changes to funding that would enable them to work on the collaborative system that is needed to create a collectively shared agenda across all partners working in the communities around Mildura. One suggestion was that 1% of the government budget should be for collaboration across the system, rather than funding to work within the system and deliver business as usual. There was recognition of the mismatch between longer term theories of change that were being developed, especially as part of HUM, and the short term pots of funding that were available- 3 years as an example. This suggests that there is a recognition across services that funding needs to change. There was uniform agreement that grant funding and competitive tenders, especially disproportionate processes for small buckets of money, was counterproductive to collaboration, and actively undermined a collective impact approach.

Service Systems

The way that funders operate was a significant barrier to establishing collective impact and collaborative ways of working: "It doesn't matter what we do, it all comes down to - I don't want you to steal my funding". There was an example cited of two organisations who wanted to pitch for some funding as a coalition of service providers, but those awarding the funding did not allow this approach, presumably to maintain the competitive market and encourage quality through competition. Both the community and some systems leaders commented about whether service providers (not referring to HUM) were delivering what they had been contracted to deliver or what the community needs. This relates back to the discussion around what is being measured and evaluated (outputs) not reflecting a longer term theory of change, or the meaningful outcomes defined by the community.



Some participants spoke about the aspiration to encourage other partners to commit some of their resources to build collaborative work to improve outcomes in community. We did not hear of organisations other than HUM doing this. Some offered use of hard resources that they were not currently using (transport options) to support Home Based Hoops, but not unrestricted funding for collaborative impact or systems change.

Appendix- Enabler 6. Leading and supporting effort for purpose (continued)

Phase 1 Building Readiness	Phase 2 Building Foundations	Phase 3 Creating a shared agenda	Phase 4 Scaling up	Phase 5 Achieving transformation
6.1 Governance				
In place and ongoing				Beyond the next year
			Next Steps	
6.2 Backbone				
In place and ongoing			Currently being worked on	Next Steps
6.3 Partnerships				
In place and ongoing	Currently being worked on			

Overview of current state by colour coding of Progress Mapping Tool for Enabler 6

Governance

The Governance of HUM is under review by a group of diverse stakeholders, including the community. This is an exciting opportunity to try something different, sharing power with the community more transparently and openly.

Backbone

The backbone team are well established and well respected across the communities of Mildura residents and those we spoke to in a professional capacity. Jane was mentioned as an example of good leadership in the region, due to her commitment to work collaboratively and respectfully with communities.

Government partners invited the backbone team to lobby them more, using the power of their platform as an experienced collective impact initiative. This platform is the evidence gathered through what they had learnt in Mildura, and the evidence of a proven track record of building trust in the community, to make changes across the wider SPSP system. They asked what the line of sight was into government.

Partnerships

There are several key partners involved in HUM across Mildura and the North Mallee region. There were examples of services not collaborating respectfully with HUM, for example using HUM supported services but not contributing to the collective effort beyond this. HUM also provides opportunities for the Government to create healthy partnerships with the community. A key question for HUM right now appears to be: What does healthy partnership mean and what are the hallmarks of a healthy partnership within collective impact? Defining this seems fundamental to good collaborative work between services; and between community and services and government, bearing in mind the need to collaborate in partnership with those who might not yet be on board with the shared agenda.

