

**MEASURING SOCIAL CHANGE INVESTMENTS**  
A Research Project of the Women's Funding Network  
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past 30 years, philanthropic institutions in the United States have increasingly invested their resources in ways they anticipate will lead to powerful and positive change in the lives of women and girls. The Women's Funding Movement has grown in response to a variety of social, political, and institutional injustices that leave women at a disadvantage in terms of achieving their full potential within society. Funders within this movement have supported all kinds of activities directed at ameliorating these injustices, including direct services, education, and advocacy. Worthwhile investment strategies and practices have been developed over time by individual institutions and shared among other foundations and funds with the same interests in and commitments to building a more just and equitable society. For the last several years, members of the Women's Funding Movement have been engaged in ongoing discussion about the need to systematically consolidate their knowledge and expertise in such a way that the significance of these social change investments can be demonstrated and used in planning future investment and fundraising strategies.

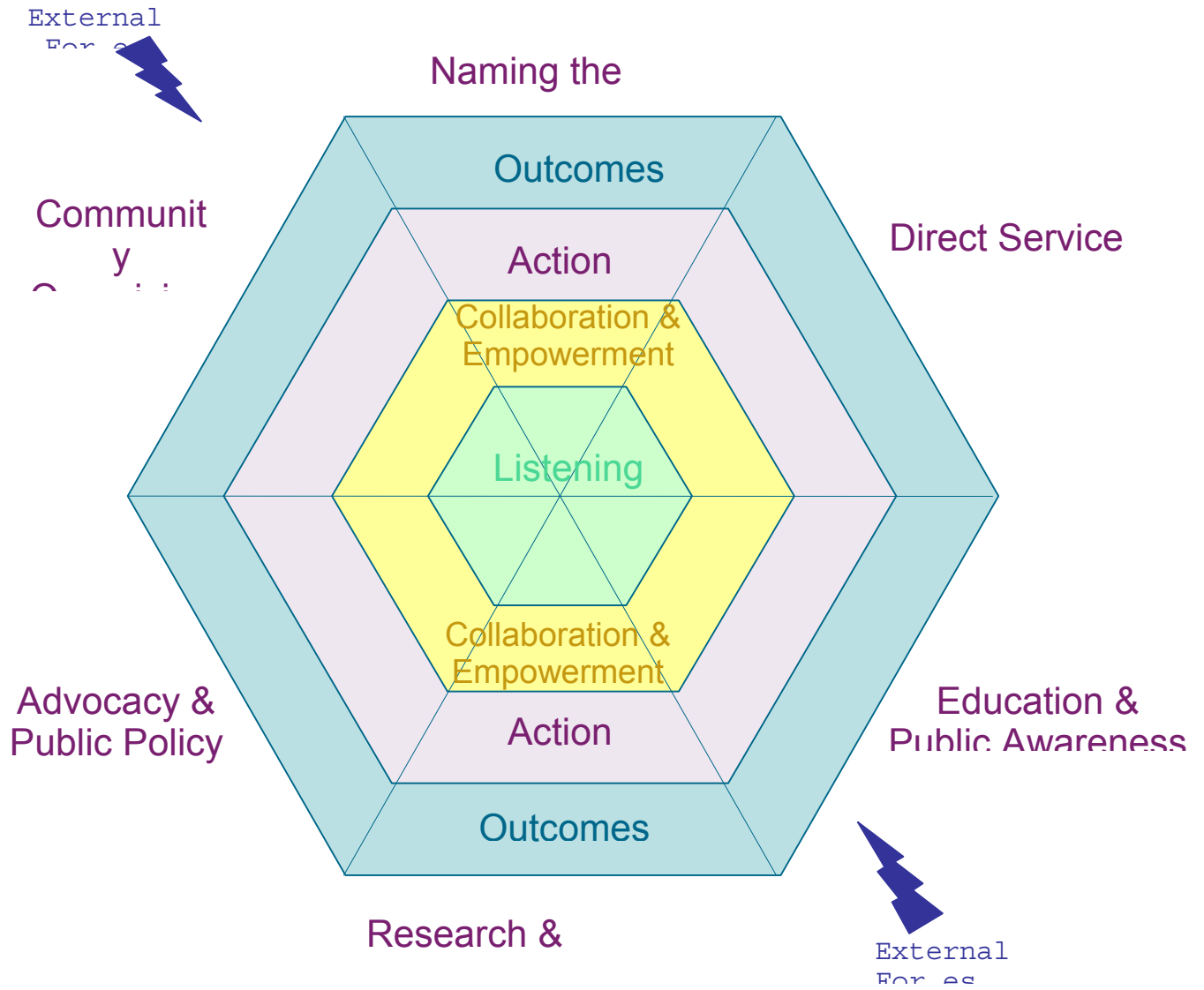
As part of its commitment to making certain that women's funds are recognized as the investment of choice of people with shared values, the Women's Funding Network is supporting ongoing research on *Measuring Social Change Investments*. The research has explored how change is understood and measured in the broader universe, developed a model for understanding and measuring the impact of philanthropic investments that benefit women and girls, and will soon begin to test the model among non-profits supported by its members. Ultimately, WFN will develop tools and processes to enable its members and their grantee partners—individually and collectively—to track and understand their achievements in ways that will enable them to develop more effective future strategies and attract new donors to the movement.

*Measuring Social Change Investments* builds on ongoing discussions among members of the Women's Funding Movement interested in better understanding various aspects of the social change around which their work revolves. Questions such as, *How do we evaluate the impact of our work*, and, *How do we know when we've succeeded* reflect their desire to become more effective at tracking and claiming the impact of social change investments. This research presents evidence from the literature review for an interpretation of social change that is multi-dimensional, and presents a model that accommodates both its complexity and lack of predictability. The model enables philanthropic institutions and their grantee partners to capture the rich array of their achievements—from micro to macro in scale—that represent the result of deliberate

investment in transforming the social and institutional landscapes of our world. The Achievement Vector – illustrated on the following page – is built on the categories:

- ❑ Naming the Issue
- ❑ Direct Service
- ❑ Education and Public Awareness
- ❑ Knowledge and Research
- ❑ Advocacy and Public Policy
- ❑ Community Organizing

# Women's Funding Network Measuring Social Change Investments Achievement Vector



**Standards for Achievement:**

Listening

Action

Collaboration & Empowerment

Outcomes