5. Navigate Between Collaboration & Disruption

Having crafted your intervention, the next step is to execute. Implementation might start on a small scale, but a true breakthrough requires the growth of an innovation from the margins to the mainstream. To achieve this growth requires attracting resources and partners from across the system, but it also requires disruption of that same system.

Disruption

It takes forceful action to break through the inertia of systems that have attracted powerful constituent groups but fall short in serving citizens' needs. The constraints and barriers facing the local innovator include:

- Lack of market discipline to clear out the old and to incent innovation;
- Government funding is overly prescriptive and silo-ed;
- Rules & red tape bias established over new providers;
- Opposition from incumbents and their sponsors;
- Political expediency & momentum drive funding decisions;
- Aversion to risk & fear of failure; and
- Concern over adapting innovation to local context.

Disruption often includes:
- Repurposing dollars to a new technology or program model
- Outside strategic partner that catalyzes dramatic systemic and cultural shifts
- New pipelines for volunteer or donor goodwill

Collaboration

At the same time, successfully growing an idea from the margins to the mainstream requires coordination across sectors; government should not try to solve all problems alone while the nonprofit sector relies on government's resources for scale. The private sector—both in the non-profit and for-profit realm—can often provide the skill, flexibility, creativity and market discipline that is missing from government. By opening itself up to meaningful partnership with other sectors, government improves its own capacity and the people benefit. Effective innovation also requires collaboration with "clients" to capture their voice and to increase expectations for individual potential and responsibility. Collaboration could refer to:

- Public-private (non-profit and for-profit) cooperation
- Integration of philanthropic dollars with public dollars with a coordinated focus on meaningful metrics and results
- Working across organizational boundaries

- Realignment of existing actors inside a social system

You will need to navigate between the importance of improving cross-sector and cross-agency collaboration on one end, and the need for a break from business as usual on the opposite end.