

## Fundamental Objective Hierarchy: Baltimore Example

At the beginning of the [Baltimore Workforce Funders Collaborative](#)'s (BWFC) systems change initiative in January 2019, the BWFC wanted to:

*Address inequity and economic immobility with a three-pronged approach: developing a shared data system, expanding industry partnerships that focus on racial equity, and (engaging in) policy advocacy.*

This statement describes a high-level issue or problem (“inequity and economic immobility”), but the description is vague. You can guess BWFC’s objectives, but questions remain about how to reduce inequity or economic mobility. Furthermore, the type of approach described (e.g., developing a data system) focuses on means or activities, not objectives that tie back to an achievement.

Using the fundamental objectives hierarchy process and tool, BWFC was able to refine its fundamental objective to this instead:

*Improve rates of employment in family sustaining jobs among unemployed and underemployed residents of Baltimore who are predominately Black.*

Then, BWFC clarified the subobjectives as the *reason* for a shared data system. The *reason* for a shared data system was *to improve workforce system outcomes for Black residents of Baltimore.*

Clear objectives can illustrate *why* you are undertaking a means or activity. They also help you communicate to other stakeholders *why* certain projects (i.e., shared data system) are important and how seemingly distinct actions (i.e., decriminalizing poverty and improving job quality) are linked to achieving an objective.

In this case, rallying supporters around a clear, fundamental objective and related subobjectives may be more effective than addressing a vague issue with disparate projects.

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### BWFC systems change initiative fundamental objectives hierarchy (August 2019)

