

Scorecard and Budget

What a village measures, what it costs, and how it gets funded

Village Series · Document 10 of 10

For Village Leaders, Chapter Coordinators, and anyone preparing a funding conversation.

Measure first, claim later.

The Movement does not yet have the evidence base to make broad claims about outcomes, and pretending otherwise would be the fastest way to lose the credibility this work depends on. What we have is a model, field experience, and a growing set of families. Building the measurement is how that becomes something a funder, a district, or a researcher can take seriously.

1. Why a village counts things

Three reasons, in order of importance.

To help the families in front of you. A village that does not track who has gone quiet will not notice for months. Most of what follows is early warning, not evaluation.

To know whether this is working. Not whether it feels like it is working. Enthusiasm is not evidence and every failed initiative had plenty of it.

To be able to show someone else. Funders, schools, and other communities will reasonably ask what happened. A village that cannot answer will not be believed, and should not be.

What we can and cannot say

We can say	How many families we serve, how consistently they train, how they are doing on the reading assessments their schools already give them, and how those numbers changed.
We cannot yet say	That the Movement caused those changes. Establishing causation requires comparison groups and study design that no village has. Anyone who tells you otherwise is selling something.
So we say	Here is what we do, here is who we served, and here is what happened. That is honest, it is unusual, and in a field full of overstatement it earns more trust than a stronger claim would.

Keep this distinction when you talk to funders. The temptation to close the gap with a confident sentence is real, and it is how organizations end up with claims they cannot defend three years later.

2. The scorecard

Five groups of numbers. A village at steady state reports these monthly to its chapter. It takes about twenty minutes if the records have been kept weekly, and about four hours if they have not — which is the real argument for keeping them weekly.

Reach — who the village touches

Measure	Frequency	Why it matters
Families enrolled	Monthly	The base number.
Students actively training	Monthly	Enrolled is not the same as active.
Families with a child under 5	Monthly	The Movement's priority group.
Households in the boundary reached in any way	Quarterly	Includes people who attend gatherings or use the platform without enrolling.

Measure	Frequency	Why it matters
Volunteers by role	Monthly	Ambassadors, mentors, council members, event helpers.
Families self-guided	Monthly	The default path. Expect this to be most of them.
Families Ambassador-supported	Monthly	The intensive path. Limited by how many Ambassadors you have.
Families who asked for an Ambassador and are waiting	Monthly	This should be near zero. A family who asked and was not answered is different from a family choosing to work alone.

Engagement — whether it is real

Measure	Frequency	Why it matters
Ambassador-supported families contacted in past 7 days	Weekly	Should be all of them. The single most important operational number.
Self-guided families active on the platform in past 30 days	Monthly	Your only visibility into families nobody is calling. Watch it closely.
Students training 4+ days a week	Monthly	Consistency is what produces the result.
Families gone quiet	Weekly	Ambassador-supported: no contact in 21+ days. Self-guided: no platform activity in 60+ days. Your early warning list. Act on it, do not just count it.
Attendance at the last gathering	Per event	Count new faces separately from regulars.
Questions asked and answered on the platform	Monthly	A quiet Q&A means the village is not yet a habit.

Progress — what is happening to children

Measure	Frequency	Why it matters
Families who completed the diagnostic walk	Monthly	The work does not start until this is done.
Students with a written plan	Monthly	A plan in the parent's hands, not in the Ambassador's head.

Measure	Frequency	Why it matters
School reading results, before	At enrollment	Collected with the family's permission. The baseline.
School reading results, after	Annually	The comparison. Reported only in aggregate.
Students moving up one or more grade levels	Annually	The headline number, honestly framed.
Referrals made to professionals	Monthly	Vision, hearing, medical, counseling. A high number here is a success, not a failure.
Students completing the training program	Annually	Completion, not enrollment.

The early years — the priority group

Measure	Frequency	Why it matters
Families reached during pregnancy	Quarterly	The earliest possible point of contact.
New mothers paired with a Mother Mentor	Quarterly	Of those eligible. Aim for all of them.
Children with an active milestone record	Quarterly	The Youth Success Record, started at birth.
Families referred to Child Find	Quarterly	Early identification is the whole point.
Attendance at Welcome Celebrations	Quarterly	New families and total.
Partner practices actively referring	Quarterly	OB/GYN and pediatric offices sending families.

Village health — whether it will still be here in three years

Measure	Frequency	Why it matters
Ambassador retention past 12 months	Annually	Turnover here is the most expensive thing that can happen to families.
Ambassadors recruited from served families	Annually	The self-sustaining indicator. This is the one to watch.
Council members active	Monthly	Both councils. Zero is a red flag, not a stage.
Decisions made by councils, not the Leader	Quarterly	Awkward to count and worth counting anyway.

Measure	Frequency	Why it matters
Roles held by one person out of necessity	Quarterly	Should trend to zero. If the Leader is still the only Ambassador after a year, the village has not launched.
Village Leader hours per week	Monthly	Honestly. Burnout is the most common way a village dies.

Two numbers to watch above the rest.

Contact with Ambassador-supported families in the past seven days tells you whether the village is functioning this week. Ambassadors recruited from served families tells you whether it will exist in five years.

Everything else is useful. Those two are diagnostic.

3. What not to do with these numbers

- Never publish an individual student's score, result, or progress. Individually you celebrate; publicly you report only in aggregate. This is what the family was promised when they signed the pledge.
- Never rank students, families, or Ambassadors against each other.
- Never compare villages competitively. A village serving a harder boundary will look worse on paper and may be doing better work.
- Do not report enrollment as though it were impact. Signing up a hundred families is not an achievement; serving ten of them well is.
- Do not quietly stop reporting a number when it turns bad. That number is the most useful one you have.

The number that will be tempting to hide

Families gone quiet. Every village has them, every village finds it uncomfortable, and it is the number that most directly tells you where to act. Report it plainly, every month, and treat a rising figure as information rather than as failure.

4. The reporting rhythm

Who	How often	What
Ambassador → Leader	Weekly	Which families were contacted, who has gone quiet, anything escalating.
Leader → Chapter	Monthly	The scorecard, plus a short note on what is working and what is not.
Chapter → National	Quarterly	Aggregated across villages.
Village → its own families	Annually	What the village did this year, in numbers and in stories. Families who see the picture stay in it.
Village → funders	Annually	Honest reporting including what did not work.

5. What a village costs

Less than people expect, with one large exception.

Almost everything a village does is free or nearly free — borrowed rooms, donated food, volunteer time, and a platform the Movement maintains centrally. The exception is the Village Leader, and the honest position is that a village run entirely on volunteer leadership is fragile until that position is funded.

What costs nothing

- Meeting space — schools, libraries, community centres, congregations, park shelters
- The platform, the training materials, and the guide — maintained nationally
- Ambassador, mentor, and council time
- Most training sessions — local professionals will often present for free

What costs something

The figures below are structure, not quotes. Fill in the right-hand column with your own local numbers and the current Tool Sheet before using this with anyone.

Line	Notes	Your figure
Program licenses per student	The reading program and the cognitive tools. Bought in bulk by the Movement and provided at cost. See the current Tool Sheet.	
Background checks	Per volunteer, every three years.	
Gatherings	Food and materials. Per event, several times a year.	
Annual celebration	The one event worth spending on.	
Printing	Welcome packets, pledges, handouts.	
Childcare at events	Sometimes donated, sometimes not. Budget for it — it decides who can attend.	
Small contingency	Something always comes up.	
Village Leader compensation	The large line. See below.	

The Village Leader position

At steady state this role takes 10 to 20 hours a week. That is not a volunteer commitment in any honest sense, and treating it as one produces a predictable outcome: the Leader burns out, the village stalls, and the families lose the person who held it together.

Three ways this gets funded, in order of how common they are:

- An embedded employee — someone already employed by a partner organization takes the role in collaboration, with their existing employer covering the time. The fastest route and often the most durable.
- A funded part-time position — raised by the chapter, covering a defined number of hours.
- Volunteer with a stipend — a bridge, not a destination.

A chapter's single most important fundraising objective is moving its Village Leaders from unpaid to paid. Say that plainly to funders, because it is the sentence that distinguishes this from an appeal for general operating support.

6. Talking to funders

Who funds this

- Local community foundations — usually the best first conversation
- Service clubs and civic organizations — small amounts, quickly, and they bring volunteers
- Congregations
- Local employers and businesses, particularly for a named annual celebration or a sponsored cohort
- Health systems and clinics, where the early years work aligns with what they already care about
- Individual donors from within the village itself — do not overlook these

What to ask for

Ask for a specific thing with a number attached. “Support our village” raises nothing. “\$X funds a part-time Village Leader for a year, which lets us serve thirty families instead of ten” raises money.

Strongest ask	The Village Leader position. Concrete, necessary, and clearly the constraint on how many families can be served.
Good ask	A cohort — the full cost of serving a defined number of students for a year.
Good ask	The annual celebration, named after the sponsor.
Weak ask	General operating support. Everyone asks for it and nobody is moved by it.

What to say about evidence

Be straight. You are early, you are measuring properly, and you will report what you find including the parts that do not work. Then show the scorecard.

Funders hear confident impact claims constantly and discount most of them. A village that says “we do not yet know, and here is exactly how we will find out” is unusual enough to be memorable, and it is the position you can still defend in three years.

What the Movement is actually funding.

Not a program that runs for three years and ends. A structure owned by the families in a neighborhood, which continues after the grant does. That durability is the strongest thing a village has to offer a funder, and most funders have been burned enough times to recognize why it matters.

7. Monthly report

One page, once a month, from the Village Leader to the Chapter Coordinator.

Village:	Month:	This month	Last month
Families enrolled			
Students actively training			
Families with a child under 5			
Families self-guided / Ambassador-supported			
Ambassador-supported families contacted in past 7 days			
Self-guided families active in past 30 days			
Families gone quiet (21+ days)			
Families who asked for an Ambassador and are waiting			
Active Family Ambassadors			
Active Mother Mentors			
Active council members (Parent / Youth)			
Students with a completed diagnostic and written plan			
Referrals made to professionals			
Gatherings held this month			
Village Leader hours per week			

What worked this month:

What did not, and what I need help with:

The last box is the important one.

A monthly report with nothing in the second box is not a report of a healthy village. It is a report from a Leader who has learned that admitting difficulty is unwelcome. Chapter Coordinators should say so out loud, and should respond to that box first.