

# Collective Impact: A Sceptical Approach

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Enough people acting in a certain way can produce significant, collective harm. But if my individual act makes no perceptible difference to this harm, do I have a moral obligation to change my behaviour? Previous literature argues yes, individuals do have a moral obligation to change their behaviour in these cases; collective harm requires individual responsibility. But in this article I argue against this tradition by presenting a sceptical solution to problems of collective impact. This article will comprise four parts. First, we consider a definition of problems of collective impact. Second, we examine a consequentialist solution from Shelly Kagan, before, thirdly, presenting Julia Nefsky's *non-superfluous contribution* argument. Finally, I argue for a sceptical solution to these problems, claiming that, although individuals can make a non-superfluous contribution towards change, individuals do *not* have moral obligations in cases of collective impact problems. Instead, moral obligations fall to both the collective, either governments or regulatory-bodies, and those who profit from collective harms. In essence, this article argues that collective harms require collective responsibility.

Issues of collective harm, such as climate change, are more salient amongst younger generations ([The Economist 2023](#)), and individuals are also willing to make sacrifices in order to alleviate these harms. US consumers spent nearly \$1.9 billion on plant-based milks in 2018, while the number of vegans in the US grew from 1% of the population in 2014 to 6% in 2017 ([Kateman 2021](#)). A recent study also found that consumers are willing to pay a 9% premium for environmentally friendly food ([The Economist 2023](#)). But what moral reason do we have to make these kinds of sacrifices—to switch from beef and dairy to Quorn and soy? Individually, it seems as if our actions make no perceptible difference to rising global temperatures or the cruelty of factory-farmed animals. The collective harm of climate change will remain whether I drive or take the bus, and the scale in which factory farms operate means that my refraining from buying bacon is unlikely to save the life of a factory-farmed pig. Therefore, it appears that I have no reason to change my behaviour.

This disconnect between individual actions and collective harm is often referred to as the *problem of collective impact*. These problems are found not only in climate change and animal cruelty, but also in everyday consumer choices, and even elections.

Traditional literature on this subject has predominantly sought a theory for why individuals ought to change their behaviour. However, in this article I will seek a sceptical solution ([Nefsky 2018](#)) to problems of collective impact. This approach is sceptical since it argues that individuals do not act wrongly in these cases, deviating greatly from recent, notable work in this area by Shelly Kagan and Julia Nefsky. Instead of finding moral reasons for individuals to change their behaviour, I will argue that the responsibility for reducing collective harm falls *upon the collective*. Although I accept that individuals, in the words of Julia Nefsky (2019, p. 11), can make a non-superfluous contribution towards change, I do not believe this is sufficient to generate a moral obligation for individuals to change their behaviour.

This article will comprise of four parts. In the first section, I will outline the problem of collective impact and why it matters. In the second section, I will present a consequentialist solution to this problem, as argued by Shelly Kagan (2011), who argues that individuals

*might* make a difference by being part of a triggering cohort. Following this, the third section will present Julia Nefsky's non-superfluous contribution argument ([Nefsky 2019](#)), which argues that individuals may not make a perceptible difference, but can still make a non-superfluous contribution towards change. Finally, in the last section, I will present my own sceptical approach to this problem, arguing that the moral obligation for solving these harms falls only upon collections of individuals, either in the form of governments, regulatory bodies or those who profit from collective harm, not individuals in their own right. In essence, I will argue that collective harms require collective responsibility.

## I. PROBLEMS OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT

We begin by defining the problem of collective impact in more specific terms. This is where individual actions, taken collectively, produce harmful consequences, even though (a) no *single* act appears to make a difference and (b) had any individual acted differently, the collective harm produced would have remained the same. Since our individual actions produce no perceptible harm, nor make any difference to the collective harm, it appears that they cannot be wrong. Therefore, it is difficult to say that any individual *ought* to have acted differently ([Nefsky 2011](#), p. 364).

This conflict between individual actions and collective harm creates a moral dilemma—it appears unclear how we can solve these problems of collective harm if individuals have no moral obligation to act differently. The crux of the problem lies in the aggregation of individual actions, leading to uncertainty as to who is responsible for these collective harms. The aggregative nature of this problem will be fundamental to the sceptical solution presented in Section IV of this article.

Multiple examples of this problem exist; having provided a definition for problems of collective impact, I will now present three examples to demonstrate the importance of these issues for both the study of politics, and society more widely. The first example is found in *consumer behaviour*. Collectively, consumer decisions can have significant implications for global poverty, worker exploitation, animal rights, and the environment ([Nefsky 2019](#), p. 2). Many individuals buying clothes from a fast-fashion brand can result in the exploitation of many thousands of workers; yet my individual

decision to refrain from such a purchase is unlikely to have any perceptible impact. The scale at which such brands operate means that my purchase is insignificant.

A second example of a collective impact problem can be found in *elections and referendums*. The crux of the problem lies again in aggregation. Enough individuals voting in a large election for a 'bad' candidate or policy, could result in tremendous harm, and yet no individual vote is able to make a difference to this outcome (Nefsky 2019, p. 1). Even in cases where no harm is produced, what incentive would one have to vote in an election where popular support means the outcome is almost guaranteed prior to polling?

In cases where polls are close, collective impact problems are less relevant—take the United Kingdom's Brexit referendum, for example. National divisions meant the stakes were high. Every vote counted, and there appeared no issue of collective impact. But in states with non-partisan issues, and clearly defined executive parties, such as Singapore or Japan, or where outcomes appear guaranteed prior to polling, as in the case of recent Hungarian elections, the issue of collective impact is very real.

The third problem of collective impact that I will present is *climate change*. When enough people drive, fly, heat their homes, or even boil their kettles, the harmful consequences of climate change will occur. But individual choices to take the bus instead of driving, or to only turn one's heating on for an hour a day, instead of six, does not lead things to go differently. Climate change will occur regardless of whether or not I choose to make sacrifices, or act in a more environmentally friendly manner. If I flick the switch on my kettle, I will (arguably) be contributing to the climate crisis. Yet will my act make a significant difference? With such a small action, it appears unlikely.

Having presented three contexts in which problems of collective impact matter, the prevalence of these issues for both the study of politics and society more generally should now be apparent. Collective impact problems pose a real obstacle for electoral participation in non-partisan issues or systems that predict near-inevitable outcomes. Individuals appear somewhat powerless in these situations, but what of collectives—especially in the case of governments? Individuals on their own might not be able to act, but the collections in which we organise ourselves (nation-states, regions, political parties, activist campaigns, and so on) could have some influence. Asking questions about the roles and obligations of these groups is important and will be considered in Section IV of this article. As for society more generally, these problems are purely man-made, and oftentimes are issues that we wish to solve. If society is to attempt to solve global inequality, climate change, worker exploitation, political apathy, and other issues that fit the collective impact structure, we must ask serious questions about our individual responsibility in solving these harms, and the role that collectives can play.

Now that we have defined the problem of collective impact, provided three examples of the problem in action, and explained the significance of these problems for both the study of politics and society more generally, we will proceed to evaluate some solutions to these problems.

The following two sections, Section II and Section III, consider two traditional solutions, both of which aim to find moral reasons for individuals to change their behaviour. Section IV goes on to present a sceptical solution to these problems which deviates from the traditional literature. This sceptical solution will follow my thesis that collective harm requires collective responsibility.

## II. I MIGHT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The first traditional solution we shall consider is from Shelly Kagan. In his paper 'Do I make a difference?' (Kagan 2011), Kagan seeks to prove that consequentialism is sufficient in solving problems of collective impact. Initially, the nature of these problems appears troublesome for consequentialist theories since individual actions appear to make no perceptible difference—it is difficult to argue that individuals should change their behaviour because of the consequences of their actions when these consequences are irrelevant. Kagan attempts to overcome these problems and to solve these issues within the consequentialist framework.

Kagan argues that problems of collective impact can be limited to *triggering cases*. These are cases in which most individual acts make no difference at all, but for some act—the triggering case—a substantial difference can be made. This is the triggering act which brings about the collective harm (Kagan 2011, p. 119). Without this, the rest of the acts are unable to bring about a collective outcome, even when aggregated. It is only the triggering act that can bring into effect this harm. For example, one or two individuals leaving banana peels on the ground is unlikely to be considered a tripping hazard, but if enough individuals do this the ground could pose a real danger. Since the first two or so individuals dropping their banana peels are not sufficient to cause this tripping hazard, there is a triggering individual—let us say the third or fourth individual—who brings about this hazard. This individual is the triggering case. Two things must be extracted from this example. First, triggering cases may not be a specific number in every circumstance, it is not always the hundredth person who drives instead of taking the bus that is the triggering case, but a rough range which is open to interpretation. Second, triggering cases are only 'triggering' because they are part of a wider triggering cohort. Without the other cases that come before it, triggering cases are not able to be the trigger of anything. Therefore, all cases in a triggering cohort carry some causal weight in the collective outcomes which they produce.

This idea of a triggering cohort is Kagan's main premise for explaining why individuals can make a difference in cases of collective harm. Kagan argues that individuals can still act wrongly in instances of the collective impact problem since, in our consumer society of mass production, there is still a triggering number of acts, let us call it  $T$ , such that I have a  $1$  in  $T$  chance of being part of a triggering cohort. Limiting his arguments to cases of factory farming, it is clear that Kagan's cohort can have an impact: I can have a  $1$  in  $T$  chance of triggering a change in demand sufficient to reduce supply by level  $T$  (Kagan 2011, p. 127). This is assuming negative net utility—that the suffering produced in production is greater than the pleasure received from consumption (Kagan 2011, p. 124).

We can illustrate this further by considering an example of factory-farmed chickens. Let us imagine the triggering amount,  $T$ , is 100, so that if the sale of chickens falls by 100, the farm will produce 100 fewer chickens the following month. I only have a 1 in 100 chance of being part of a cohort which triggers a sufficient change in demand to reduce supply, but when I am part of this cohort I can make a big difference—my refusal to buy a chicken corresponds *exactly* to saving one chicken's life, so long as I am in the triggering cohort (this is inside knowledge that we are unlikely to have), because the fall in demand equals the fall in production. Therefore, as long as I am part of a triggering cohort, it seems that my actions *might* make a difference after all.

On the face of it, this seems a satisfying solution to problems of collective impact. Kagan has used a consequentialist framework to show that I *might* make a difference after all. This solution is not without its flaws and there are two major objections relevant to this example.

The first challenge facing Kagan's argument is that he assumes a fall in demand will directly correspond to a fall in supply (Nefsky 2018, p. 274). In essence, the fall in demand of 100 chickens achieved by the triggering cohort will result in exactly 100 chickens *not* being killed. In reality, this assumption seems foolish; there are many strategies that businesses can utilise in order to realign supply and demand. Of course, cutting supply, thus reducing the number of chickens killed, is one strategy. But slaughterhouses could also seek new markets in which to sell their chickens, devise a new marketing strategy to attract new customers, or simply lower their prices to realign demand without changing supply. So even when demand drops by a triggering amount there is no guarantee that supply will fall by an *equal* amount, if at all.

The second issue for this consequentialist solution is that the scale considered by Kagan is unrealistic—factory farms operate in the millions, not hundreds. As Julia Nefsky observes (2019, p. 8), this renders the chance of being in a triggering cohort *negligible*. So not only is my abstention from purchasing one chicken unlikely to save a corresponding chicken, the chance that I will be in a cohort producing any impact at all is statistically irrelevant.

Kagan is not likely to take these challenges lightly. He would likely accept the first objection, and admit that little can be done to predict the practices of large-scale corporations—after all, that is why the exact number of the triggering cohort is information unbeknownst to the consumer. But in light of the second objection, the size of  $T$ , the scale of the triggering amount, does not matter to Kagan. What matters for Kagan is the ideal that individual actions *might* make a difference. Yet, this does little to solve our problem because this 'might' is so small that it is negligible—our actions remain imperceptible, and so the core issue of the collective impact problem remains to be solved.

### III. I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

In the previous section, Shelly Kagan's expected utility argument was unable to prove that my actions *might* make a difference. Kagan's proposed solution to problems of collective impact appears unrealistic in

its assumption that a fall in demand will correspond directly to a fall in supply, and the scale in which triggering amounts occur proves so large that they are insufficient in contradicting the imperceptible nature of individual actions. In this section, we shall examine an alternative solution from Julia Nefsky—the idea that I *can* make a difference. Like Kagan, Nefsky also seeks to prove that individuals *ought* to act differently in instances of the collective impact problem.

Nefsky argues that even if our actions do not make a perceptible difference, this does not mean they are superfluous. Change is still *possible*. Individual actions *can* play a non-superfluous part in changing the outcome of a collective impact problem, even if they are unable to materialise change in their own right (Nefsky 2019, p. 10).

By this logic, we might have moral reasons to make individual sacrifices after all: not driving my gas-guzzling car might not make a perceptible difference to greenhouse gas emissions, but it will make a non-superfluous contribution towards reducing emissions; voting in an election with a predictable, harmful outcome might not make a perceptible difference to this outcome, but it will make a non-superfluous contribution towards reducing the chance of the predicted victory; and not buying clothes from a fast fashion brand might not make a perceptible difference to the exploitation of vulnerable workers, but it will make a non-superfluous contribution towards reducing this exploitation. Therefore, it seems my actions *can* change something, or at least contribute towards bringing about change, contrary to what the collective impact problem might lead us to believe.

My action being imperceptible is no longer a problem—what matters is that my action *can* contribute towards change which can occur if the circumstances are right. The question of what these circumstances are poses a challenge for Nefsky's argument. Having considered the merits of Nefsky's arguments, we shall now go on to consider one objection facing her non-superfluous contribution solution, in addition to a fundamental limitation of the traditional approach employed by both Nefsky and Kagan.

We begin by considering an objection to Nefsky's argument. For my actions to make a non-superfluous contribution towards change, we must have good reason to believe that others are also willing to contribute towards change, otherwise our actions will be redundant. This is because if no other individual is willing to change their behaviour, it means that our individual sacrifices cannot contribute towards anything, since there is nothing to contribute towards. If this is true, my voting and not-voting in the case of a harmful candidate is irrelevant, since even if my vote is non-superfluous, it can only contribute towards change if there is a potential change to contribute towards. If I am certain that no other individual will act, perhaps for fear of violence, torture or disenfranchisement, then my act remains irrelevant. This time it is irrelevant because there is no change for it to contribute towards, and thus it cannot make a difference despite remaining non-superfluous.

Nefsky may claim that this objection misunderstands her argument. According to Nefsky, my action is not dependent upon others also acting, and its non-superfluous nature does not result from a *belief* in actual

change, but that I can make a step towards creating change—much like my donation towards Shelter, a British housing charity, is unlikely to *solve* homelessness, but *can* take a step towards creating change. The creation or potential for change is not dependent on others, but something which I can create, if not contribute towards, in a non-superfluous way (Nefsky 2019, p. 11).

Putting this aside, however, the argument that individuals refusing to make the sacrifices outlined in the perception argument would be morally wrong is unconvincing. In my view, Nefsky falls victim to the fallacy that individuals—in isolation—can have any impact. This fallacy exposes a fundamental limitation in the traditional literature on problems of collective impact: both Kagan and Nefsky overlook why collective action problems are problematic in the first instance. To solve them, we must ask what is at the core of these problems. The answer to this question lies in the aggregation of individual actions, the collective consequence of which can have harmful effects.

Since the aggregation of individual actions is why collective impact problems are problematic in the first instance, no moral reason can be sufficient in motivating individual behaviour change that can aggregate a collective which is sufficiently large to make a difference. As a result, it must be shown that collective harm requires a collective solution—to claim otherwise is naïve. Even if Nefsky's argument convinces some individuals to change their behaviour, it will not convince a sufficient number of individuals for any significant change to materialise. In order to overcome this limitation, we must seek a solution to problems of collective impact which is not limited to the confines of individual action, but which considers the wider scope of collectives and those who profit from collective harm. This is what I intend to do in the final section of this article.

#### IV. WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

In the previous two sections, this article has considered two traditional solutions to problems of collective impact. These solutions are traditional in the sense that their authors wish to find reasons why individuals ought to change their behaviour. The first considered was Shelly Kagan's expected utility argument which uses a consequentialist framework to prove that individuals *might* make a difference. We then considered Julia Nefsky's recent work on non-superfluous contributions, the idea that I can make a difference, even if it is non-perceptible. I will now defend a sceptical response to problems of collective impact, presenting an argument which aims to prove that we, collectively, can make a difference.

Before presenting this sceptical argument, I will address why such an approach is appropriate, and how it might help us provide solutions to problems of collective impact. First, the way in which we organise ourselves, in communities, societies, nations and nation-states, must be acknowledged. It is this organisation of individuals which I believe is key to solving problems of collective impact. We are, as proven by these groups, social beings. Therefore, it is possible to imagine a collection of individuals who might be able to assume the responsibility of solving collective harms.

Second, I believe a sceptical solution of this sort—reducing responsibility to the collective, not the individual—is a more realistic approach to problems

of collective impact. Collective harm is bad because of the many millions of individuals acting in a particular way which, on their own, produce no perceptible harm. If we reverse engineer this issue, the collective good that is possible through collective action seems the only realistic option to solve collective harms, given the scale at which they occur.

Finally, this second point raises the need for an important clarification: I would like to distinguish reducing *responsibility* to collections of individuals and reducing *action* to collections of individuals. In presenting this sceptical approach I am not denying that individuals will have to change their behaviour, nor am I claiming that individual actions are superfluous—in fact, I strongly agree with Nefsky that individual actions can make a non-superfluous contribution towards change, even though this is insufficient in producing solutions on the scale required to combat collective harm. What I am attempting to do is to limit the *responsibility* of this harm to the collective, so that no individual *ought* to change their behaviour for moral reasons. Instead, with responsibility in the collective domain, it is up to collections of individuals—most likely governments, international agencies, regulators, local communities, and corporations—to incentivise change on an individual level, as well as changing the behaviours of those corporations who profit from collective harm.

Now that I have addressed the relevance of sceptical solutions in solving problems of collective impact, how such solutions might help reduce collective harms, and distinguished collective responsibility from collective action, I shall proceed to outline my sceptical argument.

This argument is two-pronged. First, it seems that given the scale of our economies, individuals are powerless unless they act as a collective—individual actions considered in isolation cannot make a difference. This was evident in the examples listed in Section I, such as buying clothes from a retailer which treats its workers well instead of one which exploits them; voting in an election with a certain harmful outcome instead of abstaining; and taking the bus instead of driving my car. The negligible act of the individual was also exemplified in the second objection to Kagan's arguments in Section II. Consequently, individuals acting alone *cannot* be morally wrong. Instead, collections of individuals have a responsibility (moral obligation) to prevent and solve collective harm in these instances, since it is only these collectives that have sufficient power to make a difference. Therefore, the collectives in which we organise ourselves—governments, both local and national, international organisations, corporations, charities, and many others—carry the burden of responsibility for solving collective harms when no individual act is sufficient in making a difference.

Secondly, in our consumer-centric society, every product has *some* value—there will always be a market for any good produced. As such, if corporations (firms or businesses) profit monetarily from goods or services which create or contribute towards collective harm—either in the production, use or disposal of these goods or services—then they also have a moral obligation to reduce these collective harms.

Therefore, individuals do not act wrongly in problems of collective impact, since the moral responsibility for

preventing harm falls on collections of individuals—like governments—and those firms who profit from collective harm. As previously stated, this is not to say that individuals should not be expected to change their actions, but only that the reasons for changing their actions should not result from individual moral obligations. Instead, a change in actions should be decided and incentivised by that of the collective in which they are organised.

This argument builds upon the work of Walter Sinnott-Armstrong (2010), who argued that our individual moral obligation in problems of collective impact is to get governments to do their job. Instead of selling my heavily-polluting sports car—or making other significant sacrifices, like switching to oat milk instead of dairy—I should continue to drive my heavily-polluting sports car whilst campaigning the government to change policy so that driving such sports cars would be illegal (Sinnott-Armstrong 2010, p. 304). After all, it is the collective that has the power to create such significant harm, and so it is the collective—in the form of, or represented by, the government—which has the power to do something about it. One could argue that expressing views through our actions is of equal importance, and so I should not continue to drive my sports car. However, the impact of driving my sports car is so insignificant and imperceptible that my individual action does not matter. What matters is my ability to change the agenda and successfully campaign for a change in government policy, that is, to successfully campaign for collective action.

This collective approach, argued by Sinnott-Armstrong and developed by my own argument, finds strength in humanity's natural ability to aggregate, a feature which both Nefsky and Kagan overlook; one that is at the core of collective impact problems. The responsibility of corporations who also profit from these collective harms is an important nuance which I believe crucial to my sceptical approach.

To illustrate this sceptical approach, let us consider what it means for the examples given in Section I. In the first example, *ethical consumerism*, it means, firstly, that governments and collective institutions (such as regulators) have a responsibility to promote clothing production which does not take advantage of its workers. This could be done through labour protection policy, a minimum standards policy for goods, trade restrictions on countries whose labour laws allow such exploitation, or policy which promotes transparent supply chains, an example of which can be found in the *Modern Slavery Act 2015* (Home Office 2018). Secondly, those corporations who profit from exploitation of workers—the collective harm in this instance—must also share the responsibility of reducing exploitation. This could be done through improving their environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) practices: changing suppliers, improving pay and conditions of workers, or ensuring transparent supply chains.

The second example, *elections and referendums*, could be seen as more problematic for this sceptical approach. However, the sentiment remains the same. It is up to institutional arrangements, drawn up by the collective of individuals, the government, to prevent candidates from enacting potentially dangerous policies—perhaps through checks and balances—or to

increase competition in electoral systems to raise the stakes and incentivise voter participation. In the first instance, preventing harmful candidates from obtaining office or harmful policies from coming into effect would not be the responsibility of individuals, but the institutional safeguards enacted by the collective. In the second instance, individuals should be incentivised to participate by improvements in electoral competition.

Finally, in the example of *climate change*, it is again the responsibility of collectives—in this instance multiple governments across the world and the international institutions in which they organise, as well as those corporations who profit from the harmful effects causing climate change—to act. In many ways we have already seen these collectives taking responsibility through climate conferences, like the Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP); investments into state infrastructure and public transport; as well as corporations switching to renewable energy sources and investing in climate-friendly methods of production. Individuals can be incentivised by governments to walk or use public transport instead of driving, but this can only be done if the right infrastructure has been delivered by the government, the collective. A similar point can be made about heating. Individuals can be incentivised by governments to insulate their homes or use more environmentally-friendly heating techniques, but this can only be done if the government has reduced the costs of these technologies and made them easily accessible.

These three examples highlight the ability of collectives to solve problems of collective harm in instances where individual actions can make no difference. Many of these examples are evident in real life, as with the *Modern Slavery Act 2015* and COP, two government initiatives that have already been mentioned. Therefore, we can see that the collective approach to solving these problems is already embodied in our everyday lives. This must add to the validity of this approach.

Reducing responsibility to the collective in these instances is not the same as claiming individuals are not responsible for their actions. The responsibility for solving and preventing collective harms falls only upon the collective in instances where individual actions make no difference. Furthermore, individuals may still be required to change their behaviour, as explained earlier in this article, but the reasons for doing this come not from a moral argument of obligation at an individual level, but from the incentives of the collectives in which we organise ourselves.

## V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this article we have considered various solutions to problems of collective impact. We first defined these problems of collective impact, before presenting three examples of these problems: ethical consumerism, voting and climate change. I then argued that problems of collective impact are important in the study of politics, and society more widely, if we wish to solve some of the world's most pressing issues, such as: global inequalities, food poverty, and climate change. We then considered three solutions to these problems. The first two, from Shelly Kagan and Julia Nefsky, were from the traditional literature on this subject, and tried to find moral reasons for why individuals ought to change their behaviour. The third solution was sceptical; it sought

to prove that the responsibility for solving problems of collective impact falls not upon individuals, but the collectives in which we organise ourselves—primarily governments—and those corporations who profit from collective harm.

This article argued that collective harm requires collective responsibility. This does not contradict the idea that individuals are responsible for their actions, or that individuals can be required to change their behaviours in order to reduce these harms. Instead, the collective is responsible only in instances where no single act can make a difference, and individuals will be required to change their behaviour, not for

moral reasons, but through incentives provided by the collective.

So, should I, as an individual, seek to act in a more ethical way—to vote in an election to prevent a harmful political actor from gaining power, or, more simply, to use oat milk instead of soy? This article says yes, if you wish to. Your individual actions can, in the words of Julia Nefsky, make a non-superfluous contribution towards change (Nefsky 2019, p. 10). But you should feel no obligation towards performing these actions. Instead, the responsibility for preventing problems of collective impact falls upon the collective, not the individual.

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