

WHAT DATA TO COLLECT?

ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPROACHES FOR FOUNDATIONS

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Philanthropy Southwest Community & Health Foundations Convening

February 26, 2026



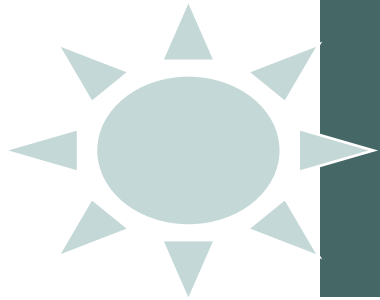
CITY OF SANTA FE AND ASPEN SOLUTIONS
AN ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION
APPROACH WITH CITY GRANTEEES

Ana Coghlan, Senior Evaluation Specialist
Philanthropy Southwest Community & Health Foundations Convening
February 26, 2025

Agenda



City of Santa Fe Grantmaking Process and
Results-based Accountability Approach



Human Service Committee:
Priority Areas and Population-based Indicators



Grantee's Performance Measures and Reporting

ASPEN SOLUTIONS



Program Evaluation

A small evaluation consulting firm, based in Santa Fe, NM



Participatory Approach

Contracted by City of Santa Fe to assist committees in monitoring grantees

Our role is not about compliance, but about support and data capacity building.



Strengths-Based

We do not make any funding decisions.

We act as a liaison between grantees and the City and Committees.

CITY OF SANTA FE GRANTMAKING PROCESS

- ❖ Series of city committees, consist of highly-qualified community members/volunteers
- ❖ Each committee develops a strategic framework, oversees an RFP and grantee selection process, and monitors the performance of grantees
- ❖ For monitoring and evaluation, the City and committees adapt a Results-based Accountability approach



RESULTS-BASED
ACCOUNTABILITY
FRAMEWORK:
CORE CONCEPTS

- ❖ Start with the “Ends”: Focus on desired conditions for children, families, or communities
- ❖ Work backwards to the “Means”: Determine the strategies, programs, and resources needed to achieve those ends.
- ❖ Two Levels of “Accountability”
 - Population accountability – For the whole community’s well-being → Population-based indicators
 - Performance accountability – For specific programs, focusing on how participants are better off → Performance-level indicators
- ❖ Key Questions re. Performance
 1. How much did we do? (Quantity)
 2. How well did we do it? (Quality)
 3. Is anyone better off? (Impact)

RESULTS BASED ACCOUNTABILITY: HOW IT WORKS



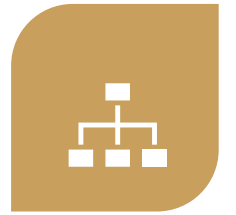
DEFINE
COMMUNITY
WELL-BEING:
ESTABLISH
SHARED
VISION AND
RESULTS FOR
THE
COMMUNITY



IDENTIFY
CONTRIBUTIONS:
DETERMINE
HOW
DIFFERENT
PARTNERS
AND
PROGRAMS
CONTRIBUTE
TO THOSE
RESULTS.



MEASURE
PERFORMANCE: USE
THE THREE
KEY
QUESTIONS
(I.E., HOW
MUCH? HOW
WELL?
BETTER OFF?)
FOR EACH
PROGRAM.



USE DATA
FOR ACTION:
APPLY DATA
TO MAKE
FUNDING
DECISIONS,
IMPROVE
PERFORMANCE,
ENSURE
TRANSPARENCY &
ACCOUNTABILITY

HUMAN SERVICES
COMMITTEE (HSC)

GOAL AREAS



Adult
Health

Behavioral
Health

Community
Safety

Equitable
Society

City of Santa Fe, Human Service Committee (HSC)
Goals, Expected Outcomes, and Priority Indicators
 2025-2029

Goals by Priority Area	Expected Results	Priority Indicators
Improve Adult Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce risk factors for heart disease, cancer, and diabetes • Improve diabetes prevention and control • Improve maternal health (new) • Reduce risk factors for falls among adults age 65+ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of diabetes deaths • % of diabetes diagnosis • % of obesity – adults • % of persons without health insurance (under age 65) • % of women receiving prenatal care in first trimester • Rate of fall-related deaths & hospitalizations (among adults age 65+)
Improve Behavioral Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce risk factors for deaths of despair (suicide, overdoses, substance-related injury) • Improve opportunities to promote mental well-being • Increase access to behavioral health services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of adults with frequent mental distress • % of suicide deaths • % of alcohol-related deaths • % of drug-overdose deaths
Improve Community Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve safety in the home • Reduce gun-related violence (new) • Increase pedestrian safety (new) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of domestic violence • Rate of firearm injury and death • Rate of pedestrian death
Strengthen Equitable Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to emergency housing • Increase access to affordable housing • Increase access to parenting support, food, transportation, literacy, workforce development, and legal support to vulnerable populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of homelessness for NM • % Unemployment • % Food insecure • % Adults age 25+ with high school diploma • % Adults age 25+ with a bachelor's degree or higher

Goal Areas	Priority Indicators	FY26-FY29 HSC Grantees
ADULT HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diabetes deaths and diagnosis ● Obesity prevalence ● Persons without health insurance ● Prenatal care in first trimester ● Fall related hospitalizations and death 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coming Home Connection – Navigation and caregiving* 2. La Familia Medical Center – Diabetes prevention 3. Scott’s House – Hospice care and respite* 4. The Memory Care Alliance – Navigation and support groups 5. The Birthing Tree – Prenatal/postnatal doula care
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Frequent mental distress ● Suicide deaths ● Alcohol-related death ● Drug overdose death 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Gerard’s House – Safety net grief support groups 7. Santa Fe Recovery Center – Navigation and SUD treatment 8. Solace – Navigation and forensic interviewing* 9. The Life Link – Navigation for homeless individuals
COMMUNITY SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Domestic violence ● Firearm injury and death ● Pedestrian injury and death 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Esperanza – Shelter and navigation* 11. Fathers New Mexico – Navigation for parenting support*
EQUITABLE SOCIETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Homelessness ● Unemployment ● Food insecure households ● % of adults age 25+ with post-secondary education 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Interfaith – Navigation, shelter, basic needs 13. Kitchen Angels – Navigation and meal delivery 14. Las Cumbres – Navigation and support 15. Literacy Volunteers – Basic literacy and workforce dev 16. New Mexico Immigrant Law Center – Navigation and advocacy/legal support 17. Santa Fe Dreamers / Contigo – Legal support 18. St Elizabeth Shelter – Navigation, shelter, and basic needs 19. The Food Depot – Navigation and food provision

Population

- Obesity rates
- Alcohol-related motor vehicle crash deaths
- Suicide death rates

State or County Level data

Performance

- Fruit and vegetable intake among diabetes program participants
- % of patients who abstained from alcohol 6 months after leaving program
- % of clients with reduced depression

Agency or Program level data



RBA PERFORMANCE-LEVEL QUESTIONS

1. How much are we doing?

- # people served, # classes held, # case management hours

2. How well are we doing it?

- Client satisfaction, wait times for service, preferred language used, meeting education standards, successful referrals

3. Is anyone better off?

- Changes in knowledge (improved understanding of how to live independently), skills (gained/maintained employment), behaviors (reduced substance use), or circumstances (housing stability or safety)

EXAMPLE PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	HSC Performance Measures
Level 1	How much service did we deliver / provide? # unduplicated participants served with safety net # participants served by navigator # total patients served (could be patients carried over from previous quarters)
Level 2	How well did we do it? Average # case management hours per family # referrals accepted
Level 3 Is anyone better off?	What quantity/quality of change for the better did we produce? Did we improve skills, attitudes, behavior, or circumstances? # and % of clients who had safe housing # and % of patients who reduced A1c (diabetes risk) # and % of clients who obtained/maintained employment

SECTION 1 – To be completed for both the mid-year and the end-of-year reports.

City of Santa Fe – Human Services Committee
Grantee Report Form

Submit report to the following people: Christa Hernandez chernandez@santafenm.gov, Natalie Skogerboe natalie@aspensolutions.consulting and Ana Coghlan acoghlan@aspensolutions.consulting

Due Dates: January 15 & June 15

Name of agency			Due date: January 15, 2026
Prepared by:		Preparer's email	
		Preparer's phone	
HSC goal area		Population Indicator	

SECTION 1: Complete this section for the mid-year report and the end-of-year report.

Performance Measures				
Level 1	Quantity of effort: How much service was provided?			
	Baseline	Quarter 1-2 (July-December)	Quarter 3-4 (January-June)	Total (add Q1 & Q2 with Q3 & Q4)
# Safety net clients served (unduplicated)	TBD			
# Navigation clients served (unduplicated)	TBD	EXAMPLE		
# Safety net clients billed to city	Contracted for			
# Navigation clients billed to city	Contracted for			

Level 2	Quality of effort: How well was the service provided?			
	Baseline	Quarter 1-2 (July-December)	Quarter 3-4 (January-June)	Total (add Q1 & Q2 with Q3 & Q4)
% who reported being satisfied or very satisfied with services	TBD	EXAMPLE		

City Report Due Dates
 Q1-Q2 July-December (DUE January 15)
 Q3-Q4 January-June (DUE June 15)

Level 3	Effects of effort: What outcomes were achieved? Is anyone better off? Improvements in skills, attitudes, behaviors or circumstances			
	Baseline	Quarter 1-2 (July-December)	Quarter 3-4 (January-June)	Total (add Q1 & Q2 with Q3 & Q4)
a. # of clients who visited an ER before services	TBD			
b. # of clients who visited an ER after services				
c. % reduction in ER visits after services (Level 3 b. minus Level 3 a., divided by 3 a. multiplied by 100)		EXAMPLE		
d. % <u>other</u> outcome indicator				

1. What changes, challenges, or concerns have occurred during this reporting period that may impact the program's progress? (This could include changes in staff, programmatic challenges, or other organizations changes). **Could either the City staff or Aspen Solutions assist you with any of the challenges the program may have faced?**

July-December:

SECTION 2 – To be completed only for the end-of-year report.

City of Santa Fe – HSC Grantee Report

SECTION 2: Only complete the remaining sections for the end-of-year report

2. **What progress or other accomplishments did the program make this fiscal year? What specific strategies, if any, were used to help achieve these accomplishments?**

3. **How has the program used agency partnerships to accomplish your programming and/or achieve outcomes for this grant?** This might include examples of how a collaboration helped your program or your client(s), a multi-disciplinary task force you established or participate in, or a new partnership that was valuable to your program.

4. **Does your program have any exemplary success stories from clients or about your program that you can share?** This might include an example or quote from a client with an exceptional story about changes in their life, or major accomplishments from your organization.

5. **Do you or others in your organization have any specific technical assistance requests or questions?** This might include support from Aspen Solutions about revising or tracking performance measures, data collection or evaluation, or questions for the city about billing, contract questions, or site visits.

City Report Due Dates

Q1-Q2 July-December (DUE January 15)

Q3-Q4 January-June (DUE June 15)

Demographics

Only complete this section for the end-of-year report.

Please provide a brief description about the demographics data if the total number differs from the total unduplicated number provided in Level 1 of this report.

Race / Ethnicity	# (July 1 st to date)	% (July 1 st to date)
American Indian or Alaskan Native		
Asian		
Black or African American		
Hispanic or Latino		
Multiple Racial/Ethnic Identities		
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander		
White		
Other		
Total	0	100%
Gender Identity	# (July 1 st to date)	% (July 1 st to date)
Male		
Female		
Another gender		
Total	0	100%
Age*	# (July 1 st to date)	% (July 1 st to date)
18-21		
22-40		
41-59		
60+		
Total	0	100%
<small>*Do not change or add age categories. Remember, the HSC funds services for individuals aged 18 years and older.</small>		
Residency	# (July 1 st to date)	% (July 1 st to date)
Live within City of Santa Fe limits		
Live outside City of Santa Fe limits		
Unknown		
Total	0	100%
Income Level	# (July 1 st to date)	% (July 1 st to date)
At or above guidelines (above 80% of median)		
Low/moderate income (50%-80% of median)		
Very low income (below 50% of median)		

USE OF THE RBA DATA

By the City and HSC:

- ❖ To inform funding decisions
- ❖ To provide assistance to grantees
- ❖ To display transparency and accountability (ex. to the City Council, community members/taxpayers, etc.)

By Grantees:

- ❖ To improve program design & implementation
- ❖ To obtain additional funding
- ❖ To display transparency and accountability (ex. to program participants, volunteers, community members/taxpayers)

THANK YOU!

Ana Coghlan

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Questions?

Ideas?



ASPEN SOLUTIONS



The Meadows
Foundation

Serving the People of Texas

BUT WHAT IF WE DON'T HAVE A SET OF HIGH-LEVEL INDICATORS?

Zimo Banta, Director of Learning and Evaluation, The Meadows Foundation

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BUT WHAT IF WE DON'T HAVE A SET OF HIGH-LEVEL INDICATORS?

Don't
panic

Recognize
current efforts

We can all
collect data
with intention



GROUNDING PRINCIPLES FOR COLLECTING DATA WITH INTENTION

USERS

Who **needs** information?

USE

What will they be able to **do** once they have that information?

QUESTIONS

What **questions** will get them the information they need?



WHO ARE USERS?

- Any group of people that that are working to accomplish or improve something
 - PO → portfolio
 - VP of Grants → initiative
 - President/CEO → foundation strategy
 - Board → ROI
 - Grantees → program
 - Peer Funders → joint funder initiative
 - Community → shared community concern



WHAT ARE POSSIBLE USES?

- Accountability
- Judgement
- Development
- Learning
- Others?



WHAT ARE POSSIBLE QUESTIONS?

- Accountability
 - Are **goals and targets** being met?
 - Are resources being used **efficiently**?
- Judgement
 - To what extent does the program have **value**?
 - Is this an especially **effective** practice that should be continued?
- Development
 - Are we **progressing** in the right direction?
 - How do we adapt to the dynamic environment we're experiencing?
- Learning
 - What general patterns and principles of **effectiveness** do we see across programs and sites?
 - How do we use our learnings to get smarter about the way we make **decisions**?
 - What patterns or circumstances can we identify in this "**failed**" situation that we can consider as red flags to look for the next time we try, to lead us more toward success?

PO → portfolio
VP of Grants → initiative
President/CEO → strategy
Board → ROI
Grantees → program
Peer Funders → joint initiative
Community → shared concern



HOW DO WE DEFINE VALUE, EFFECTIVENESS, THE “RIGHT DIRECTION”?

Helpful to articulate:

- What success looks like
- What strategies or actions will help drive progress
- What barriers make the issue “sticky”, and what assets can be tapped
- What assumptions are we making around the work



The logical links between strategies/actions and desired results



THEORY OF CHANGE – BAD RAP



- Time-consuming to create
- Intimidating
- Cumbersome
- Not useful



THEORY OF CHANGE – IT'S SO MUCH BETTER THAN YOU MIGHT THINK



- Clarifies thinking for yourself and others
- Makes the implicit explicit
- Brings stakeholders together to a shared understanding
- Active tool for thinking and learning



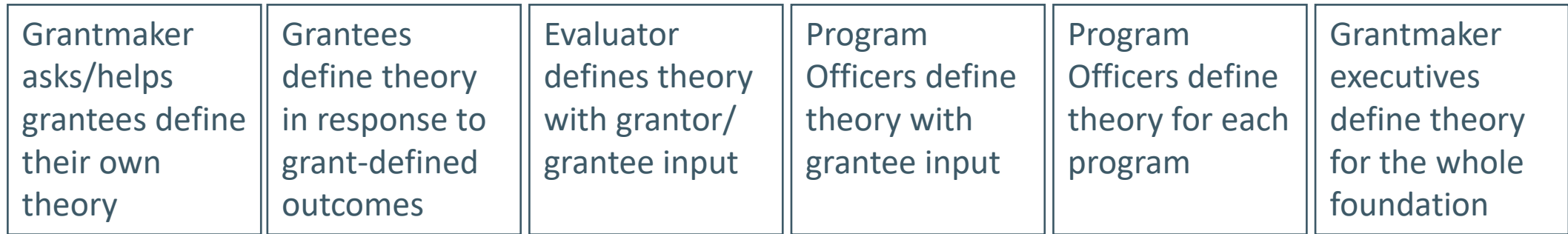
DO WE REALLY NEED A THEORY OF CHANGE?

“ If foundations fail to commit to an outcome and a theory – by not articulating it or letting thinking go **stale** – the quality of **reflective learning** suffers. ”

- Marilyn J. Darling



WHO DEFINES THEORY?



Emphasis on
Grantee

Emphasis on
Grantmaker



THEORY OF CHANGE TEMPLATE

What is it: A theory of change is a high-level description of how an initiative is meant to work. It helps make thinking & strategy *visible*, sketching the anticipated path from current state to end goals and flagging key assumptions. The most useful TOCs also help to put an initiative's core strategies & activities into context, highlighting their importance in addressing barriers and enabling progress.

About this Template: Much of the template's value comes from a small set of questions it asks about how an initiative can be expected to support change. The questions aim to help teams download, discuss, and document their shared insights—in effect, making their thinking more visible to others. When groups can better articulate expected pathways to change, it benefits internal decision making and also makes it easier for funders, partners, and other stakeholders to engage constructively. These core questions and the suggested order in which they should be considered (steps 1, 2, and 3), are outlined below. When filling out the template, I suggest using bullet points and trying to limit the amount of information so that it fits on *one side* of a single 11x17 page.

Purpose of Your Initiative:

Key question to answer: *What does your initiative aim to do (what's the big picture)?*

Current State

(Step 1)

Key question to answer:

What core problem(s) will this initiative address (e.g., what's wrong, not working, or missing)?

Tips:

- Briefly describe the problem (or specific part of the problem) that the initiative is meant to address.
- Identify who is most affected by the problem and why addressing it matters.

Barriers & Assets

(Step 2)

Key question to answer:

What are the key obstacles to progress and what assets can be tapped (champions, resources, windows of opportunity, etc.)?

Tips:

- Ask why the problem hasn't yet been solved (e.g., what obstacles led past efforts to fall short).
- Flag potential assets that make the approach and/or timing especially ripe for this initiative.

Strategies

(Step 3)

Key question to answer:

What core strategies will help drive the initiative's progress toward desired ends?

Tips:

- What are your insights—why do you believe these strategies can make a difference where past efforts have come up short?
- Ensure that proposed strategies account for the barriers and tap the assets you identified in Step 2. If not, are you missing something critical?

Activities

(Step 3)

Key question to answer:

What activities, tactics, or actions needed to support and carry out the proposed strategies?

Tips:

- Consider why the proposed activities make sense for this initiative and are essential to support the strategies you've identified.

Progress

(Step 2)

Key question to answer

What early-stage changes would indicate or enable meaningful progress toward end goals?

Tips:

- Ask what "momentum" looks like. What changes from the current state would suggest that things are moving in the right direction?
- Look beyond quantitative measures to consider shifts in attitudes, behaviors, interactions, etc.
- What might suggest the initiative is off track or not working well?

Desired Ends

(Step 1)

Key question to answer:

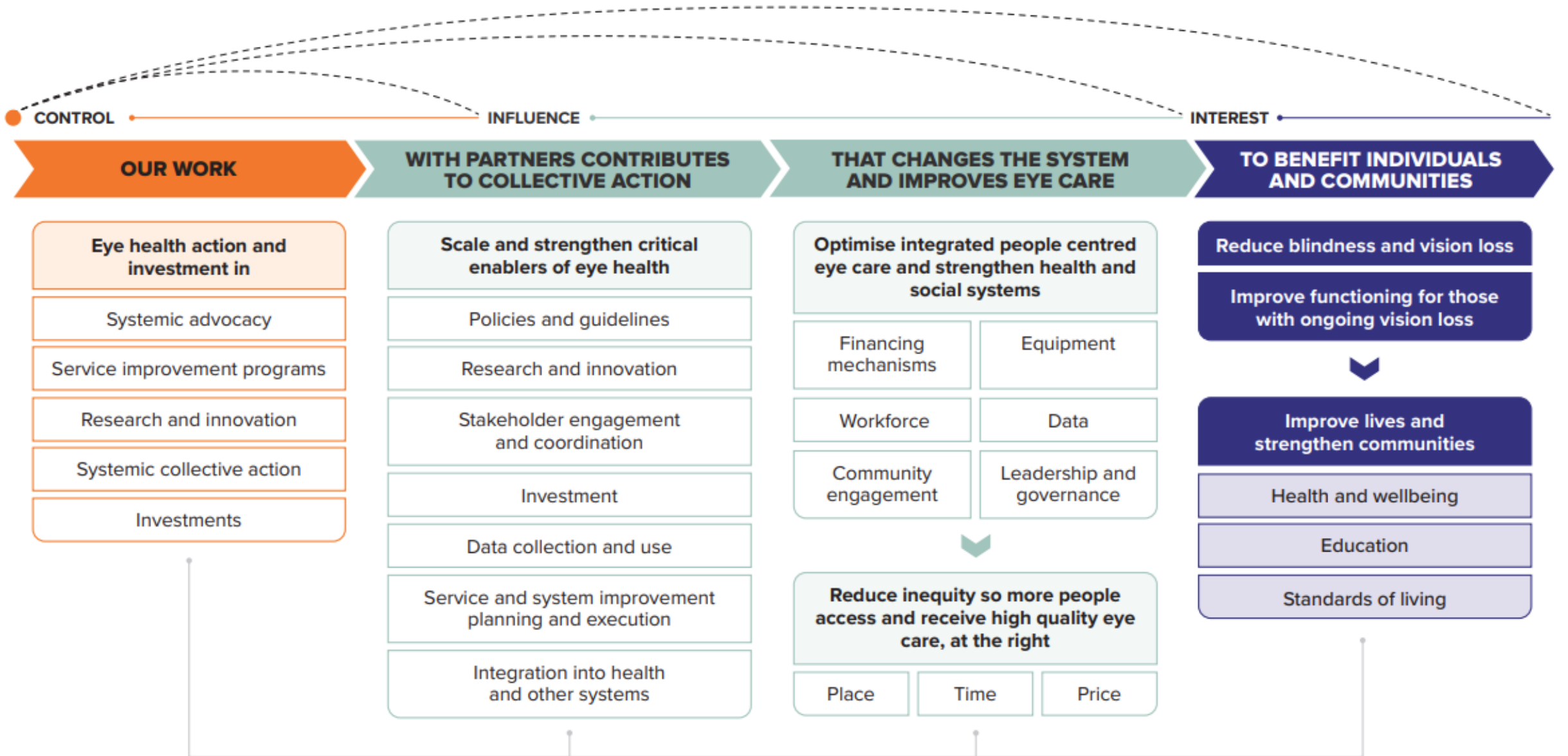
What are the end results/outcomes that your initiative aims to achieve? Over what time period?

Tips:

- Ask what "success" looks like. What improvements over current state will the initiative make possible if it succeeds (e.g., what specific parts of the problem will it address or solve)?



Our Programmatic Theory of Change depicts the story of how our work leads to the change that we seek



Our work is informed by learning and feedback loops

FOCUS ON CONCEPT FIRST, NOT MEASUREMENT



Sanity check your theory with the intended users

Better yet, create & use your theory with them



KEEP THE ROSE ALIVE BY CONNECTING REFLECTION TO ACTION

“Adults – especially overcommitted professionals – learn best when they need to.”

- What questions do we need answered for future decision-making?
- What’s the “toughest nut to crack” in the work we do/fund?
- What uncertainties or challenges are keeping us up at night? What’s presenting the greatest apparent risk to strategy effectiveness?
- What are our biggest opportunities or highest leverage points?

Building reflection into existing workflows strengthens relevance

- Board meeting prep, grant application process, decision-making process, grantee reporting process



EVALUATION/LEARNING PLAN TEMPLATE

Intended User	Question & (Theory Focus Area)	Indicator	Collection Method & Freq	Responsible & When	Actions/Decisions affected



EVALUATION/LEARNING PLAN EXAMPLE

Intended User	Question & (Theory Focus Area)	Indicator	Collection Method & Freq	Responsible & When	Actions/Decisions affected
Board	To what extent has blindness reduced in the community? (Community Benefit)	%-point decrease in incidence of blindness in the community	Community clinic surveillance of blindness incidence using eye sight screening, every 6 months	Country officers, 15 th of each month for previous month's data	Marked increased incidence would trigger conversations about possible reallocation of funding resources
Grants Staff & Grantee Learning Community	Which service improvements have the greatest positive effect on increased access to eye care? (Partner Contribution)	% of positive screen cases that receive corrective treatment within 3 months of screening	Community clinic screen and follow up log, monthly	Primary grant contact for grantees with "access" outcome, bi-monthly learning call	Identification of more effective service improvements could be further adopted across the grantee network.



EVALUATION/LEARNING PLAN EXAMPLE

Intended User	Question & (Theory Focus Area)	Indicator	Collection Method & Freq	Responsible & When	Actions/Decisions affected
Grants Staff	To what extent is our investment in research and innovation feeding back into partner knowledge and effectiveness? (Our Work)	% of grantee partners reporting application of our research results into practice	Grantee Learning Community Meeting Survey, annually	Learning Officer, November 15 of every year	If research isn't being used by partners, re-examine investment priorities in research vs other strategies

*Which questions you can answer for whom depends on the work's stage of development



GROUNDING PRINCIPLES FOR COLLECTING DATA WITH INTENTION

USERS

Who **needs** what information?

USE

What will they be able to **do** once they have that information?

QUESTIONS

What **questions** will get them the information they need?



REFERENCES

- Darling, Marilyn J. *A Compass in the Woods: Learning Through Grantmaking to Improve Impact*. Fourth Quadrant Partners, LLC. 2012.
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THOUGHTS? QUESTIONS?

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