



Leveraging Data for Systems Change

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Today's Discussion

- About MEDA and Evaluation Team
- Why data are a key lever for systems change
- Examples of how data have driven our strategy
- How we built our team and data systems
- Tools we have used for data integration
- Partner capacity building

Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA)

- Established in 1973
- Based in San Francisco's Mission District
- Primarily serve low-income Latino families, including monolingual Spanish speakers and immigrants
- Backbone agency for Mission Promise Neighborhood (MPN) collective impact/cradle to career initiative
- 90 staff

Comprehensive Community Development Services

- Housing connection and development
- Workforce development
- Education supports
- Asset building
- Policy advocacy
- Small business development

Evaluation Team (4 FTE)

Success for our department:

MEDA staff and stakeholders seamlessly access and utilize data to:

***Demonstrate
need and
impact***

***Challenge
ourselves to
continually
improve
programs***

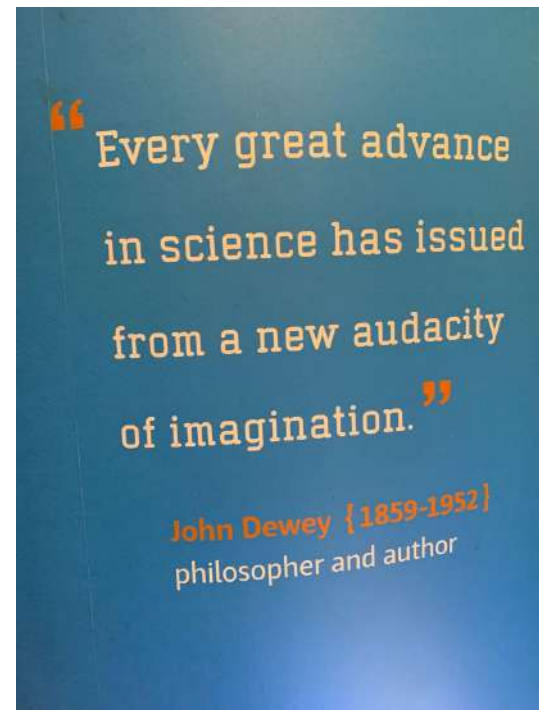
***Pursue
innovation***

***Adapt to
changing
circumstances***

***Mobilize
stakeholders***

How Can We Leverage Data?

- Continuous cycle of evaluation
 - Needs assessment
 - Make the case, raise awareness, demonstrate need
 - Process evaluation
 - Informs program improvements
 - Outcome and impact monitoring
 - “If you don’t measure it, it didn’t happen”
- Promotes accountability
- Supports data-driven decision making and advocacy
- Moving beyond compliance and reporting requirements
 - Using data to support learning and action



Example of Data-Driven Programming

- Held community forums as part of MPN needs assessment and initial planning process
 - Learned that lack of affordable housing and financial instability were key barriers to kids succeeding in school
 - Used these data to advocate for more affordable housing programs and align city policy
 - Launched MEDA's Community Real Estate program



Community Driven Accountability

- Gathering data that are valuable to the community, not just funder-driven requirements
- Power shifting: engaging community as key partners
- Centering community voice and leadership
 - Nothing for the community, without the community
- Feedback loop: collect data and report back
- Example: Community report card project
 - Collecting data to inform policy and practice changes

*What
“outcomes”
would
clients tell
their family
and friends
about?*

Building Data Systems: The How

- Requires organizational culture change and buy-in
 - Gradual/ongoing implementation process
- Intersects with data-driven planning and accountability structures
- Staffing to decolonize evaluation
 - Building pipeline from underrepresented groups
 - Need dedicated staff before technology investment
- Database technology considerations
 - Develop human solutions/workflow first, technology to follow

Data Integration Tools

- Results Based Accountability (RBA): used at MEDA and across MPN collaborative
 - Comprehensive set of results, strategics, indicators, performance measures (how much? how well? better off?) that enable “Turn the Curve” analysis
 - Multi-tiered planning structure: Strategic plan, RBA plans, Action plans, Individual work plans
 - Cross-department focus to support program integration
- Salesforce case management system
 - Universal client intake form
 - Centralized client and staff communications systems
- Human centered design
 - Starting with community members and direct service providers
- Strive Together Theory of Action informs systems level planning

Partner Data Integration

- Data sharing agreements
- Range of data capacity = range of data systems
- Tailored approach: 1 size doesn't fit all
- Training and capacity building support to maximize participation
- Relationship and trust building
- Starting small and building from there



Building the Data Infrastructure that is Needed to Support and Sustain Systems Change

- Imperative to have and use data: No longer optional or just a “nice to have”
- Developing performance measures AND associated data tracking/monitoring systems are essential for success
 - Quantitative and qualitative data
- Requires dedicated staffing
 - Takes time and ongoing investment to develop and maintain
- Funders need to invest in data systems

Questions?



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