IS THIS A BETTER PLACE?

THE ART & SCIENCE OF PLACE-BASED EVALUATION

OCTOBER 5-6, 2015 | SAN DIEGO, CA

#PlaceBasedEval
Defining Place-Based and Systems Change

Is This a Better Place?
The Art & Science of Place-based Evaluation
Oct. 5 & 6, 2015

Hallie Preskill, Managing Director, FSG
Place-Based Work

• **What:** An intentional, strategic, long-term, engagement in a place...which can be defined as a central city, an arts district, or a neighborhood—and seeks to provide opportunities for those living in that target area to have greater involvement in the foundation’s priority-setting and decision-making process.

• **How:** A commitment to a particular community over an extended period of time, direct and ongoing relationships with multiple community actors, community relationships as a primary vehicle of philanthropic operation, and supports and resources beyond grantmaking (e.g., TA, provision of direct services).

Source: Embedded Philanthropy and Community Change, Chapin Hall Center for Children: Issue Brief #114. April 2007; Dodge Foundation, Preliminary Considerations for Place-Based Grantmaking Memo
Defining “System”

A group of interacting, interrelated, and interdependent components that form a complex and unified whole. A system’s overall purpose or goal is achieved through the actions and interactions of its components.

A community food system is a food system in which **food production, processing, distribution and consumption are integrated** to enhance the environmental, economic, social and nutritional health of a particular place...by including the word "community" there is an emphasis on strengthening existing (or developing new) relationships between all components of the food system.

Arlington County (VA) Public Health Division brought together people and organizations who make up the local public health system in Arlington to strategically approach community health improvement.

http://health.arlingtonva.us/community-assessment/
Place-Based Work is About *Systems Change*

- **Place-based grantmaking strategies seek to improve the lives of residents** in neighborhoods experiencing entrenched, intergenerational poverty, racial discrimination and profiling, and disparities in *education, income, criminal justice, health, housing and other areas.*

- **Systems change** is an *intentional process* designed to *alter the status quo* by *shifting the function or structure* of an identified system with *purposeful interventions*. It is a journey which can require a radical change in people’s *attitudes* as well as in the *ways people work*. Systems change aims to bring about lasting change by *altering underlying structures* and *supporting mechanisms* which make the system operate in a particular way. These can include *policies, routines, relationships, resources, power structures and values.*

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Requirements for Place-Based, Systems Change

- Engagement of diverse set of actors
- Understanding of issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Understanding and management of power dynamics
- Common goals and agenda
- Use of data for decision making; commitment to continuous learning; feedback loops
- Willingness to take risks
- Strong relationships
- Adaptability, flexibility, responsiveness
- Open, frequent, and clear communications across actors/organizations
- Leadership at many levels; champions of change
- Reallocation of and/or new financial and personnel resources
- Principles of effective practice
- Trust
Characteristics of Complex Systems

- **Change** is constant, unpredictable, never static
- Everything is **connected**
- **Information** is fuel for learning
- **Context** matters
- **Best principles** rather than best practices
- **Energy and convergence** can be observed at different times
- **Relationships** are critical
- **Cause and effect** is not **linear**, predictable, or one-directional
- **Patterns** emerge from several semi-independent and diverse agents

Place-based, Systems Change Work Requires an Ongoing Interaction Between Strategy and Evaluation

Strategy establishes the boundaries for evaluation; Evaluation guides the development and refinement of strategy
Building Healthy Communities
Our Community Partners

- Del Norte County and adjacent Tribal Lands
- Richmond, East Oakland
- East Salinas
- Southwest Merced/East Merced County
- Central/West Fresno City
- South Kern County
- Boyle Heights, Central Long Beach
- South Figueroa Corridor/Vermont-Manchester
- Central Santa Ana, Coachella
- City Heights
BHC Theory of Change

Drivers of Change
- Capacity Building
- Policy & Systems Change
- Environmental Change

Outcomes
- 3 Campaigns [Transformative]
- 10 Outcomes [Years]

2020 Goals
Capacity Building

Drivers of Change

- People Power
- Youth Leadership, Development and Organizing
- Enhanced Collaboration & Policy Innovation
- Leveraging Partnerships & Resources
- Changing the Narrative

POWER
POLICY
NARRATIVE
Policy & Systems Change
PREVENTION

SCHOOLS

NEIGHBORHOODS
“Transformative Twelve” Policy Domains

Health Happens in Schools
- School Climate
- School Wellness
- Comprehensive Supports

Health Happens in Neighborhoods
- Food Environment and Food Systems
- Land Use Planning and Anti-Displacement
- Community and Economic Development
- Environmental Health and Justice
- Systems That Restore and Heal
- Healthy Youth Opportunities

Health Happens with Prevention
- Public Health
- Health Homes
- Health Care Services
What is the Sacramento Building Healthy Communities (BHC) Hub?

– Coalition of residents, grantees and partners working towards building a healthier community
Sacramento BHC Hub

**Full Hub Collaborative:**
Central table of all interested stakeholders

**Leadership Team:**
Co-chairs of action teams and BHC contractors

**Action Teams:**
Moves forward work of BHC

- Resident Advisory Board
- Health Access
- Youth Engagement
- Healthy Land Use and Engagement
- Communications
- Food Access

- Community Based Organizations
- Adult Residents
- Systems Leaders
Sac BHC Target Area

- Pop: 89,000
- 41% Latino
- 21% Asian Pacific Islander
- 19% White
- 12% African American
- 7% Other

- 44 languages spoken in Sac City Unified School District
Creating Food Environments and Food Systems in Neighborhoods

- Sacramento City Council adopts an urban agriculture ordinance that would allow the on site sale of produce on urban farms (March 24, 2015)

- City Council designates City of Sacramento as an urban agriculture incentive zone. Owners of vacant lots will be eligible for tax breaks if they use the land for agriculture for 5 years (Aug 2015)
SCUSD adopts policies to improve school climate

- Anti-bullying policy (2011)
- Policy that clarifies guidelines and protects transgender and gender variant students (Dec 2013)
- Positive school climate and school discipline policies (June 5, 2014): objective is to reduce suspensions and expulsions
Access to Health Care

• Sacramento County Board of Supervisors approves a budget that includes funding for healthcare for the undocumented (June 16, 2015)

• Sacramento County convenes a Stakeholder Group that includes BHC Hub partners to design and work through the implementation of the healthcare program for the undocumented
Reflections

- Based on what has just been presented, what might be some specific implications for how you (funders, community members, and evaluators) do your work?

- How can you manage the power dynamics that are always present in place-based work (e.g., between funder and community, between evaluator and funder, between evaluator and community), especially as it relates to systems change?

- What implications are there for the ways in which evaluations are designed and implemented?