ENDING POVERTY
DEEPENING COMMUNITY
BUILDING YOUTH FUTURES
CLIMATE TRANSITIONS

Vibrant Communities
T A M A R A C K   I N S T I T U T E

WORKBOOK | GETTING TO IMPACT: NUDGING SYSTEMS AND POLICY

REQUIRED TIME: 2-8 HOURS

Module 3 will provide a framework for understanding the system you are attempting to influence and will offer some sample methods for tracking and measuring your collaborative's contributions to systems changes.

OVERVIEW

"Programmatic interventions help beat the odds of poverty; changing systems that keep poverty in place – and reproduce it – can change people's odds".
- *Karen Pittman, The Forum for Youth Investment*

> *Programmatic interventions help beat the odds of poverty; changing systems that keep poverty in place – and reproduce it – can change people's odds.*

A community interested in deep and durable reductions in the overall level of poverty must have 'systems change' as a central part of its strategy. The focus of Communities Ending Poverty (CEP) on actions and strategies that result in *fewer* poor people, rather than *better off* poor people, is central to systems thinking.
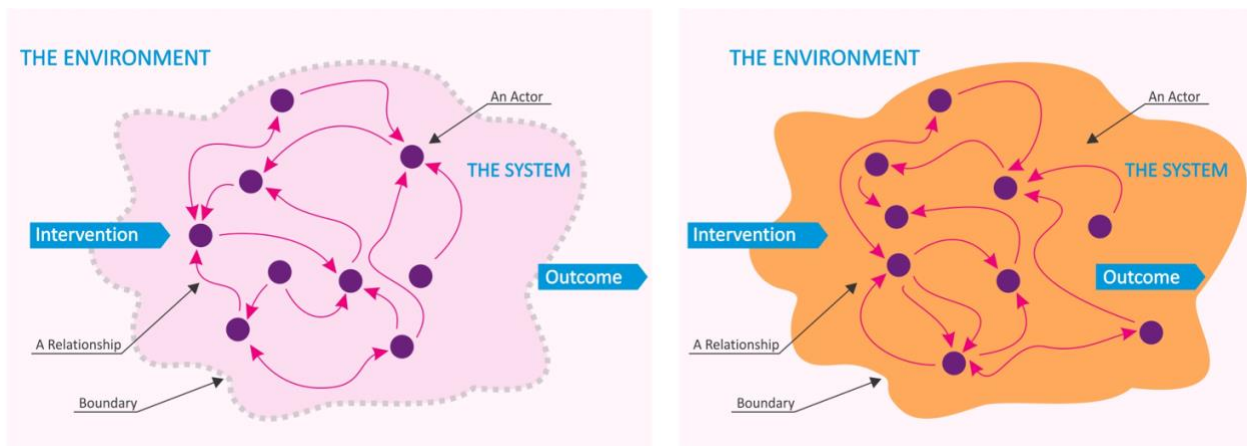
CEP members change systems by aiming to improve flexibility, integration, and responsiveness within service and support systems. In 2017, the most common areas of systems change reported by CEP members were: coordination and streamlining services and supports, enhancing multi-sectoral partnerships and collaborations, initiating action-oriented teams, creating opportunities for people with lived experience, and implementing funding reforms.

DEFINING SYSTEMS

A system is an entity comprised of parts that interact, are interrelated and interdependent. The parts and their interaction creates a whole, and understanding the system as a whole is important so we better know what helps or hinders our interventions. The components of a system, as depicted on the next page, are:

- Actors; and
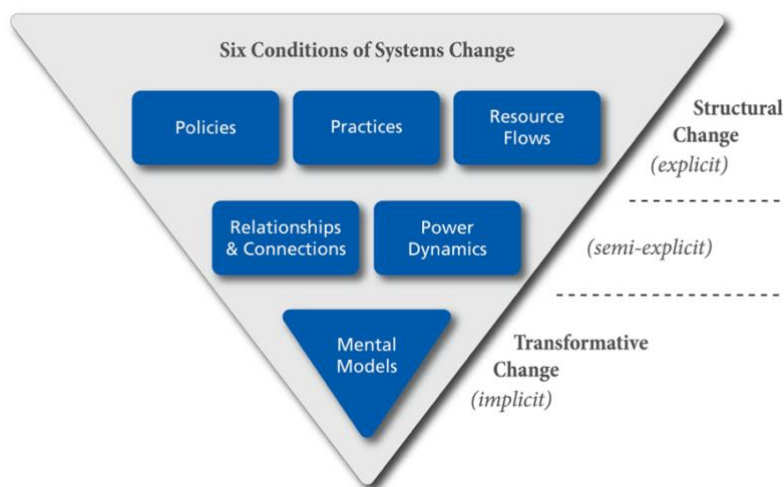- Their relationships; within
- A boundary

Watch a short video on systems thinking: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vojPksdbtI

SYSTEMS CHANGE

There are many levers or "push points" that can influence the system to change. For instance, while "policy" is often identified as a priority for action alongside systems change, policies are actually a component *of* the larger system(s).

According to Kania, Kramer and Senge, leverage points in the system include:

- Policy
- Practices
- Resource Flows
- Relationships & Connections
- Power Dynamics
- Mental Models

THREE STEPS

This module will walk you through three steps:

1. Define and scope of the system you are aiming to change

2. Determine which methods you will use to track and report your collaborative's contribution to systems changes

3. Start tracking your actions and short-term outcomes

GROUP EXERCISE #1

Purpose: *Answer the bullet points* or *map your system with a group in order to clarify the scope of the system you are seeking to influence, which actors are a part of it, and what their relationship dynamics are.*

Exercise: With your roundtable or in a small group, describe the system(s) you are attempting to change in bullet point form.

Boundaries

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-
-
-
-

Actors

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-
-
-
-

Relationships/dynamics
Tip: Read Meg Hargreaves' Evaluating Systems Change: A Planning Guide or watch the webinar Planning an Evaluation of Systems Change for ideas on what themes to explore and questions to ask.

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Want to go deeper? Do a full map of your system. There are many variations on systems mapping, each with their own set of instructions. You can select a method from the below, or create your own:

Actor mapping: https://www.fsg.org/tools-and-resources/guide-actor-mapping#download-area

Brain dump and interconnected circles mapping: https://medium.com/disruptive-design/tools-for-systems-thinkers-systems-mapping-2db5cf30ab3a

MEASURING SYSTEMS CHANGE

This module focuses on helping you measure three types of intermediate-outcome systems changes.

System change: The extent to which efforts change the underlying complex issues
   a) Changes in drivers of systems behaviours
   b) Changes in behaviours of systems actors
   c) Changes in overall system behaviour(s)

There are many different ways you may approach measuring changes in the system and the results for individuals and families. Based on the capacity of your collaborative, you may select one, two, or a combination of three or methods. The resources below will teach you various techniques for tracking and measuring your contribution.

	DESCRIPTION	INDICATORS	RESOURCES
Simple Evaluation Methodologies - LEVEL 1			
Outcomes Diary	Regularly record activities, outcomes, and contributions to monitor changes as they are occurring.	A qualitative description of policy and systems changes. Better understood with the addition of change-specific metrics.	Getting to Impact: Outcome Diary (Tamarack)
Simple Evaluation Methodologies - LEVEL 2			
Most Significant Instances of Policy & Systems Improvement (MSIPSI)	Interviews (usually telephone) with a random sample of people to gather data on their knowledge, attitudes, or behaviours.	A qualitative description of policy and systems change improvements. Better understood with the addition of change-specific metrics.	Significant Instances of Policy and Systems Improvement Technique (Clear Horizon Academy)
Outcome Harvesting	A multi-step process for identifying key systems changes, then working backwards to explore their significance and the contribution of innovators.	Quantitative ratings on key issues, level of awareness and support for action on an issue.	Outcome Harvesting (Better Evaluation) Introduction to Outcome Harvesting (Future Cities) Resource Review: Outcomes Harvesting – Principles, Steps and Evaluation Applications (Mark Cabaj)
Collaborative Outcomes Reporting	A lighter participatory activity than Outcomes Harvesting, presenting a change and asking a panel of stakeholders	Quantitative ratings and qualitative descriptions generated using the Most Significant Change process.	Collaborative Outcomes Reporting (Better Evaluation)

	about an initiative's contribution towards it.		
Comprehensive Evaluation Frameworks (Shallow and Broad) – LEVEL 3			
Disrupting Systems Dynamics Framework	Used for market-systems interventions organized around different categories of systems changes.	A variety of quantitative (e.g. new investments) and qualitative indicators (e.g. changes in rules)	Disrupting Systems Dynamics: A framework for understanding systems changes (USAID)
ABLE Change Framework	Designed to help community collaboratives unpack the domains of systems change that need to shift in order to achieve the larger mission level impact.	Describes categories for outcomes under: mindsets, power, resources, regulations, connections, components, and the interactions between them.	ABLe Change Framework (Michigan State University)
A Practical Guide to Evaluating Human Services Systems Change	A very comprehensive guide for evaluating changes in human service systems.	A collection of categories of outcomes and methods around which both qualitative and quantitative indicators can be developed.	A Practical Guide to Evaluating Systems Change in a Human Services Systems Context (Centre for Evaluation Innovation)
Targeted Methodologies (Deep and Narrow) – LEVEL 3			
Theories of Policy Change	A description of ten archetypical theories or strategies for policy change.	A set of short, medium- and long-term outcomes that allows for the use of qualitative and quantitative indicators.	Pathways for Change: 10 Theories to Inform Advocacy and Policy Efforts (Centre for Evaluation Impact)
Summary of Policy Change Evaluation Methods	Facilitated discussions of the issue with random or deliberately selected stakeholders to obtain their reactions, opinions or ideas.	Includes a summary of qualitative and quantitative techniques, including bellwether evaluation, policymaker rating scales, focus groups, etc.	A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning (Harvard Graduate School of Education)
Social Network Mapping	Counts the number and variety of times and ways the issue is covered in the print, broadcast, or web/electronic media.	Number of mentions of an issue (e.g. poverty), in different mediums (e.g. major newspapers, twitter), over time.	Four things policy-makers need to know about social media data and real-time analytics (London School of Economics and Political Science)
Causal Loop Diagrams	A method for mapping out the dynamic relationships in a system between different factors and actors.	Generates a qualitative map of relationships before and after an intervention; can be upgraded to use quantitative information.	Causal Loop Diagrams: Little Known Analytical Tool (Better Evaluation)

GROUP EXERCISE #2

Purpose*: Determine which method(s) you will use for measuring systems changes and adapt the methodology, if needed, to suit you and your partners' unique situation. Then, practice gathering data.*

Exercise: Read about the theories and methodologies most applicable to your level of capacity on Page 4-5 in this Workbook and answer the below questions with your roundtable or a small group.

Then, independently use the outcome diary template (Worksheet 1) on the next page to practice completing an outcome diary for the past week.

At a minimum, all tables should participate in outcome diary tracking. The more capacity your collaborative has, the more sophisticated methods you can supplement it with. We encourage you not to stop at Level 1 before at least considering Level 2.

1. Which method(s) resonates most and matches your capacity?

2. What adaptations do you need to make (if any)?

3. What additional information or processes are needed for you to successfully carry out this method(s)?

4. What challenges are you anticipating? What resources do you have to help overcome them or what additional resources are needed?

WORKSHEET 1: DOCUMENTATION OF WEEKLY RESULTS

Outcomes: The benefits or changes for individuals (or populations) after participating in the program or roundtable's activities.
(Examples: new knowledge, increased skills, changed attitudes, improved job status/income). Be as specific as possible noting dates, numbers and results.

How we work differently (community capacity)

Community Partner	Activity	Capacity Outcome	Impact on Poverty	Roundtable Involvement

Shifting Awareness/Will

Community Partner	Activity	Awareness/Will Outcome	Impact on Poverty	Roundtable Involvement

Systems Changes

Community Partner	Activity	Systems Change Outcome	Impact on Poverty	Roundtable Involvement

Benefits for Individuals and Families

Community Partner	Activity	Outcome for Individuals and/or Families	Impact on Poverty	Roundtable Involvement

EXERCISE #3

Keep going! Print out and continue filling in the outcome diary weekly or bi-weekly. This will save you from having to recall activities and details at the end of the year. You may also consider printing these sheets and training working groups on how to collect data-as-they-go.

REFLECT: HAVE YOU INCORPORATED THE MEASUREMENT PRINCIPLES?

Reflect on whether you have applied each of the principles to your measurement plan.

Principle	X	Nudging Systems and Policy
1. Clarify purpose	X	Ex. Identify missing actors from the food working group
2. Accept imperfection		
3. Align with plan priorities		
4. Prioritze measurement		
5. Narratives and numbers		
6. Weave data together		
7. Match methods to capacity		
8. Adapt, adopt, build		
9. Estimate contribution		
10. Assess value		
11. Make appropriate claims		
12. Learn by doing		

NOW WHAT?

Once you have finished the exercises and explored the supporting materials, connect with your Manager of Cities. They will debrief with you on what you have been able to adapt well and what you are having challenges with. They can clarify concepts and connect you with peers or resources should you require more information.

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