

## Performance Management and *Influence*

Friday morning, 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

It has often been suggested that what really marks the success of NNIP partners is their *influence*. End outcomes (or results) such as, improved housing conditions, young children better prepared to begin school, reduction in the rates of teen pregnancy and crime represent commonly expected results from neighborhood improvement investments. While NNIP partners contribute to such social change, they cannot be held accountable for achieving these results directly. What data intermediaries do is provide data, analysis and other data related services with the aim of *influencing the behavior of other local actors* so they, in turn, will do a better job of achieving such goals. The measure of success for NNIP, then, is having ***positive influence*** on outcomes. The work is successful when the behavior of other local actors has been changed for the better because of the data and services NNIP intermediaries have provided.

How can partners enhance their influence? It all starts with developing a ***strategy*** explicitly directed toward that objective. Partners have taken a variety of approaches to doing that and we have had a number of topical sessions at NNIP meetings relevant to that topic (although we undoubtedly need to do more). But there is another approach that can contribute to the objective that we have not talked about as much: ***performance management***.

Performance management means an effort to explicitly and regularly define and measure performance (the ways you are having influence), so that they can be adjusted and improved to help you better serve the community. It can provide a framework for communicating to funders and others an answer to the question “How do NNIP partners know that their work is making a difference?”

As a way to stimulate thinking about this, we are updating a “guidebook” on the topic that was drafted several years ago, but never finalized. All partners obviously monitor their performance in some ways now. The guidebook documents techniques that are being used (within and outside of NNIP) to help you better understand the possibilities. It will be outlined in today’s session and revised based on your reactions.

It should be clear that “performance management” is different from “evaluation.” Performance management is something program managers do themselves to make their own programs work better in the short and medium term. Evaluation, in contrast, is most often done by outsiders after the fact and focuses on long-term results. Evaluation should be a part of the agenda of local data intermediaries, but partners have

suggested that developing performance management techniques warrants priority and provides NNIP partners with techniques they can adopt and implement immediately with little or no external assistance.

**The purpose of this session then is to explore and discuss these performance management concepts, including types of positive influence, techniques for measuring influence outcomes, and a framework for getting started with performance management. NNIP partners from Oakland and Providence will also share their experiences, successes, and challenges with implementing performance management locally.**

**Presenters:**

- Tom Kingsley, Urban Institute
- Jake Cowan, NNIP Consultant
- Steve Spiker, Urban Strategies Council
- Rebecca Lee, Providence Plan

**Questions for Discussion**

1. What are you trying to achieve? What does success look like?
2. What strategies and tactics are used to achieve influence? How can performance management help NNIP partners determine effective strategies and tactics for achieving influence?
3. What performance management data are NNIP partners collecting now? How is it being used?
4. What barriers exist for NNIP partners in practicing performance management? How are they overcome?