BLUEPRINT
r + d
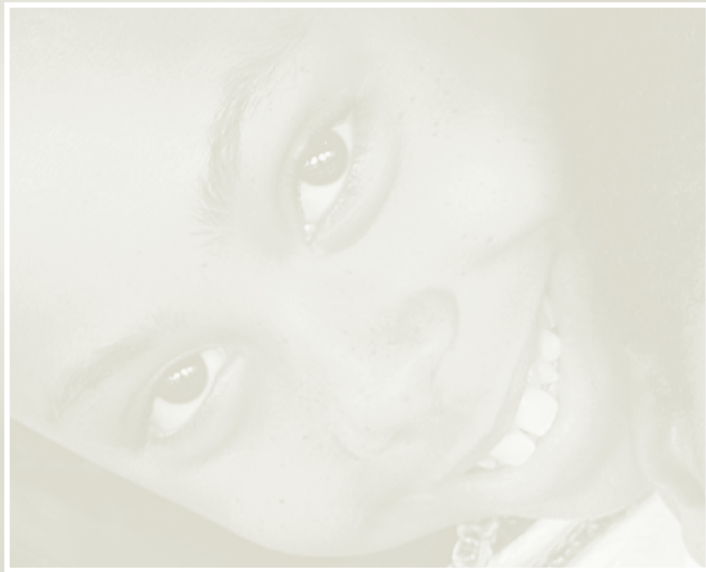
The Challenge of Assessing Policy and Advocacy Activities:

PART II—Moving from Theory to Practice

Funded by and prepared for:

OCTOBER 2006

Researched and written by:
Kendall Guthrie, Justin Louie and Catherine Crystal Foster
Blueprint Research & Design, Inc.

Foreword from The California Endowment

Over the last several years, The California Endowment has placed greater emphasis on the importance of policy change in our efforts to improve the health of Californians. We have increased our funding of small grassroots organizations to build their advocacy capacity and of statewide advocacy groups to educate policymakers about important health issues confronting the state. And, we support multipronged initiatives designed to advance policy goals related to a variety of high-priority issues, such as children's health and preventing obesity.

However, as we've sought to answer the question, "How do we know we're making a difference?" we came to realize that we didn't have the tools and frameworks to adequately measure the progress of our policy-related and advocacy work. Many of the models of evaluation developed for direct-service programs simply didn't apply.

Therefore, in 2004, we asked Blueprint Research & Design, Inc. to review the literature related to advocacy evaluation; conduct extensive interviews with leaders in the field of evaluation, philanthropy and advocacy; and provide a state-of-the-field report. In October 2005, we released the report, entitled "The Challenge of Assessing Policy and Advocacy Activities: Strategies for a Prospective Evaluation Approach." The report made several findings and recommendations on how to approach this kind of evaluation. In particular, the report identified seven principles for evaluating policy change work and proposed a framework for monitoring progress, assessing impact and deriving lessons.

During the course of that initial project, it became clear that there were many organizations, funders and evaluators who were equally interested in, and challenged by, this issue. In order to help both The Endowment and others, we brought together a small number of individuals representing the three key stakeholders in this work—evaluators, advocates and grantees, and funders—to engage in a dialogue using the findings of the report as the springboard for discussion. We sought to solicit feedback about the proposed framework and generate ideas on how to implement it.

This working session, held in March 2006, was structured around three key steps identified in the proposed framework:
- Articulating a rationale for how and why the project or grant will contribute to policy change;
- Defining measurable and meaningful benchmarks and indicators to assess progress; and
- Collecting and utilizing the data to inform and refine the work.

During the morning session, discussion groups were organized by stakeholder affiliation (advocates, evaluators and funders) so that participants could engage in candid conversations about the benefits and challenges associated with each step from their particular perspective. During the afternoon, the break-out sessions mixed advocates, evaluators and funders, and each group tackled one of the three steps in depth.

The discussions were provocative and challenging, as participants have seldom engaged with each other as peers this intensively, especially outside of individual project evaluations. Participants were candid in sharing their perspectives about evaluation and their sometimes-competing needs.

We are particularly pleased that there was strong support for the prospective approach outlined in the October report. Participants found the framework helpful, and offered important modifications and refinements as they worked through the various elements of the framework and discussed ideas on how to put it into practice.

In addition to the specific outcomes and recommendations, participants commented that the convening itself enabled them to learn about and understand the evaluation needs from the perspective of other stakeholders in a neutral setting and outside the dynamics of a specific evaluation. The forum also afforded participants the ability to forge new relationships and build trust, which is essential for making evaluation work for grantees as well as funders.

In writing this report, Blueprint has sought to capture and synthesize all of the very lively conversations that occurred in 10 different break-out sessions. To the extent that some comments were left out or misrepresented, we apologize. Our hope is that the themes and recommendations will inform and advance the field—both for those who attended the meeting and the many other funders, advocates and evaluators across the country working on this issue.

We thank all of the participants for taking a day out of their busy work lives to join us in this endeavor. We would also like to thank Bobbie Wunsch for facilitating the convening; Tom David and Gigi Barsoum for facilitating small group discussions; Amanda Rounsaville, Rhonda Ortiz and Rosavinia Pangan for note taking; and Concetta Hajek and Eileen Sullivan for assisting with logistics. We at The Endowment are committed to utilizing the findings in this report to inform our own approach to evaluation, and we welcome further ideas from our colleagues, grantees and evaluation partners on developing the tools and implementing the framework in order to make evaluating policy productive and constructive for all.

Barbara Masters
Director of Public Policy

Astrid Hendricks
Director of Evaluation

Table of Contents

Part I: Introduction

In October 2005, The California Endowment released a report, "The Challenge of Assessing Policy and Advocacy Activities: Strategies for a Prospective Evaluation Approach." Drawing on interviews with evaluation experts and Endowment stakeholders, as well as a literature review, it identifies some of the key issues in evaluating work on policy change and advocacy. The authors, Blueprint Research & Design, then present a framework for monitoring progress, assessing impact and deriving lessons from this type of grant making.

As part of vetting the report findings and determining how to implement its recommendations, The Endowment convened a small group of foundation staff, grantees and evaluators. After the presentation of the report's findings, meeting participants then engaged in a series of discussions on the main themes of the report. Discussion centered on implementation of three key steps: 1) developing a theory of change (an explanation of how certain actions and activities will lead to a desired policy goal), 2) defining benchmarks and indicators, and collecting the data, and 3) using findings.

This paper synthesizes the convening discussions in order to advance the conversation across the field on policy and advocacy evaluation. It is organized into two broad sections: the first section summarizes participants' overall feedback and recommendations on approaching policy and advocacy evaluation. These are:

- Understand and communicate the connections between policy change goals and broader social change.
- Clarify the funder's and grantee's overarching goals, including the assumptions about how they fit together.
- Spell out the goals and priorities for the evaluation.
- Create evaluation designs that have the flexibility to adapt to changes in the policy environment.
- Make language accessible and meaningful.

- Use multiple methods to achieve a fit with grantee culture, foundation needs and evaluation goals.
- Design evaluations that can meet the needs of multiple audiences and accountability relationships.

A second section provides specific suggestions from participants on developing a theory of change; defining benchmarks and indicators, and collecting data; and using findings.

Key Elements of a Prospective Approach to Policy and Advocacy Evaluation

The recommendations and framework for prospective evaluation described in the original report grew out of The Endowment's goals for evaluating its policy work, the needs of its grantees and the expertise of evaluators. The prospective approach was designed to help foundations:

- Set grant goals and monitor progress
- Assess impact at the grantee, program and foundation level
- Improve their programs and develop knowledge about effective strategies

Seven principles emerged to guide evaluation of advocacy and policy change. *(see page 6)*.

With these principles in mind, Blueprint outlined a four-step prospective approach to the evaluation of policy change and advocacy.

Steps for Developing a Prospective Approach to Evaluating Policy and Advocacy Work

Step 1

Agree upon a model for policy change.

Step 2

Develop a theory about how and why the activities lead to the ultimate policy change goal (often called a theory of change).

Step 3

Define measurable benchmarks and indicators for assessing progress and for building organizational capacity for advocacy; collect data on benchmarks.

Step 4

Share results with grantees and foundation staff to refine their efforts.

Guiding Principles for Policy and Advocacy Evaluation

1. **Expand the perception of policy work beyond state and federal legislative arenas.**

   Policy can be set through administrative and regulatory action by the executive branch and its agencies as well as by the judicial branch. Moreover, some of the most important policymaking occurs at the local and regional levels. Significant policy opportunities also occur during the implementation stage and in the monitoring and enforcement of the law or regulation.

2. **Build an evaluation framework around a theory about how a group's activities are expected to lead to its long-term outcomes.**

   Often called a theory of change, this process forces clarity of thinking between funders and grantees. It also provides a common language and consensus on outcomes and activities in a multi-organization initiative.

3. **Focus monitoring and impact assessment for most grantees and initiatives on the steps that lay the groundwork and contribute to the policy change being sought.**

   Changing policy requires a range of activities, including constituency and coalition building, research, policymaker education, media advocacy and public information campaigns. Each activity contributes to the overall goal of advancing a particular policy. Outcomes should be developed that are related to the activity's contribution and indicate progress toward the policy goal.

4. **Include outcomes that involve building grantee capacity to become more effective advocates.**

   These should be in addition to outcomes that indicate interim progress. These capacity improvements, such as relationship building, create lasting impacts that will improve the grantee's effectiveness in future policy and advocacy projects, even when a grantee or initiative fails to change the target policy.

5. **Focus on the foundation's and grantee's contribution, not attribution.**

   Given the multiple, interrelated factors that influence the policy process and the many players in the system, it is more productive to focus a foundation's evaluation on developing an analysis of meaningful contribution to changes in the policy environment rather than trying to distinguish changes that can be directly attributed to a single foundation or organization.

6. **Emphasize organizational learning as the overarching goal of evaluation for both the grantee and the foundation.**

   View monitoring and impact assessment as strategies to support learning rather than to judge a grantee. In an arena where achieving the ultimate goal may rarely happen within the grant time frame, and public failures are more frequent, emphasizing learning should encourage greater grantee frankness. It should also promote evaluation strategies and benchmarks that generate information valuable to both the grantee and funder, increasing grantee buy-in and participation. Finally, the foundation will be able to document more frequent "wins" in learning than in achieving policy change.

7. **Build grantee capacity to conduct self-evaluation.**

   Most advocacy organizations have minimal experience or skills in more formal evaluation methods. To date, most have relied primarily on information feedback from their extensive network of peers to judge their effectiveness and refine their strategies. To increase their use of formal evaluation processes, grantees will need training or technical assistance as well as additional staff time to document what actually happened. This additional work should help the nonprofit become more reflective about its own work, as well as provide more useful information about change to funders.

"Foundations and grantees should take more time at the front end of grants to understand each other's perspectives and formulate a plan of work with indicators that make sense for both sides."

– Grantee

Part II: Cross-Cutting Recommendations on Designing a Policy and Advocacy Evaluation

Throughout the day in various sessions, convening participants kept returning to seven key themes that relate broadly to conducting policy and advocacy evaluation. They are:

Understand and communicate the connections between policy change goals and broader social change. For many participants, policy change (changing laws or governmental or corporate policies) is a means to positive social change (changing social, political or economic systems to create a more equitable and just society). Policy change is often central to achieving social change because of the significant role that government plays in the allocation of resources and the lives of individuals. Yet some participants felt that many funders, advocates and evaluators get overly focused on policy change and lose sight of broader social

change goals. Viewing policy change as an end in itself can unintentionally narrow the range of potential strategies and activities available to reach the stakeholder's ultimate goals. In the worst cases, it may lead advocates to declare victory prematurely while social change remains unfinished and ultimate goals remain unmet. A single policy change may be inadequate to create social change; multiple policies may need to change before any social change is seen, or the policy change may need to be augmented with additional work such as making sure the policy is implemented correctly or focusing on changing public perception of an issue. Moreover, in some cases, one can advance social change without any specific change in policy, such as the use of grassroots organizing to build stronger communities. In designing an evaluation, understand how policy change goals relate to social change goals and consider including social change benchmarks when appropriate.

> "What is most exciting is imagining that we could establish an evaluation process that would help us be more effective in advocating for social change."
>
> *— Grantee*

Clarify the funder's and grantee's overarching goals, including assumptions about how they fit together. Convening participants stressed the value of funders making explicit their larger program goals. This communication should include a funder's assumptions about actions required to make change happen and how a grantee's individual project fits into that theory. Grantees said they often found themselves guessing the funder's goals for their work. Some funders might think that de-emphasizing the foundation goals mitigates grantee tendency to tell a funder what they want to hear. However, many convening participants noted that funder goals provide the necessary context for the grantee work. When funders make their goals clear, advocates can more effectively determine where their work does—or doesn't—align, what strategic opportunities are worth pursuing and what partnerships would be most beneficial. Grantee understanding of funder change strategy is essential in a multi-grant initiative, where each player needs to understand its role in working toward the ultimate goal. Care must be taken, however, to ensure that grantee goals and integrity are not compromised in order to bend to a funder's vision, but instead, that the grantee's authentic theory and activities contribute to a rich and coherent sum of grants.

Spell out the goals and priorities for the evaluation. Setting priorities for the evaluation up front—and communicating those priorities to all participants—ensures that evaluation design meets funder needs and that evaluators and advocates know

their roles and responsibilities. Grantees expressed concern that they did not always understand what funders wanted out of evaluation. Evaluations can serve many purposes, such as grant monitoring, grantee learning, funder strategy development and learning for the field. Setting clear priorities will help grantees understand the purpose of the evaluation and help evaluators develop a more focused, and therefore, usually, more effective design. Ideally, key stakeholders can identify potential uses and set priorities together.

The uses for the evaluation also help define the role of the evaluator. A project that requires the evaluator to provide ongoing feedback to help shape the future work will want an evaluator with a different role than one that requires an objective analysis of the project's success or failure. An evaluator in an "independent observer" role will likely have more clout when presenting findings to outsiders, but an evaluator in a "critical friend" role could provide more useful feedback for internal use.

> "Organizations need to be aware of all the ways that they can make change and be nimble and change when the environment calls for it."
> *— Evaluator*

Create evaluation designs that have the flexibility to adapt to changes in the policy environment. The most significant difference between an evaluation of typical direct-service work and policy or advocacy work is the frequent influence

of unpredictable and changing external forces. Therefore, flexibility must be a key component of any evaluation design. In essence, this means that evaluators will require more frequent informal, verbal check-ins with grantees and funders to make sure that the evaluation is aligned with the current and future work of the grantee. As well, benchmarks and process indicators will likely evolve as the project progresses. At the convening, many grantees noted that the shifting policy environment and staff turnover within the grantee organization often mean that benchmarks they negotiated a year ago may not be the best way to demonstrate impact a year later. A number of grantees at the convening expressed concerns that funders would view grantees negatively if they asked to change benchmarks or outcomes. So funders need to strongly communicate both up front and on a continuing basis that adjusting benchmarks to fit changing circumstances is acceptable—in fact, expected. If circumstances change dramatically, the evaluator may need to modify the methods to evaluate or even adjust the theory of change.

Make language accessible and meaningful. The convening provided a unique environment for funders, grantees and evaluators to engage in a frank discussion about evaluation. For the most part, the conversation went smoothly, but at times, there was a real cultural disconnect between evaluators and grantees, especially advocates from grassroots organizations. Evaluators can fall into speaking a social science jargon that grantees don't understand and may find off-putting. Evaluators' language, approach and objectives in an actual evaluation context may seem irrelevant or inaccessible to grantees. Evaluation may require activities that grantees view as burdensome or inappropriate in their cultural environment, especially if evaluators cannot communicate the purpose of the evaluation in a way that is relevant to the grantee. At the same time, funders and evaluators may feel frustrated that some grantees make it difficult to obtain the information needed to improve practice or justify continued funding.

To build the trust among stakeholders, both evaluators and funders should work hard to use terminology that is common, relevant and accessible to the entire evaluation audience. For example, convening participants suggested asking advocates to describe their "strategy for making change" rather than "theory of change." As well, "outcomes" can otherwise be described as "evidence of your organization's impact" or "ways you can tell your activities made something change." While there was a desire to replace the term "theory of change," no consensus developed around alternative terminology. Therefore, it may be more realistic to acknowledge that language needs to be tailored to the audience.

Use multiple methods to achieve a fit with grantee culture, foundation needs and evaluation goals. Convening conversations made it clear that there is no one, single right method for evaluating policy and advocacy. While many aspects

of policy and advocacy work can be evaluated using the benchmarking approach outlined in the initial report, there are other situations in which storytelling methods may be more appropriate. The key is choosing a method—or suite of methods—that fit with the level of the evaluation (i.e., individual grantee or group initiative), the project's activities and the evaluation priorities. For example, defensive work (holding the line) poses some unique challenges for measurement. Defensive actions are difficult to predict far in advance. Measuring "lack of change" is challenging—what benchmark do you set to show that advocates' work inhibited change? There are new methods that make qualitative data like storytelling less subjective and more systematic. For example, content analysis,[1] the Success Case Method[2] and the Most Significant Change technique[3] each have systematized processes that reduce the subjectivity of the information. Additionally, case studies have a long history of providing detailed storytelling information. In most cases, employing multiple methods is the best strategy to develop a compelling and documented story about the impact of a program.

> "One approach is to have a journalist write the evaluations to tell the story of a project."
>
> — *Evaluator*

Design evaluations that can meet the needs of multiple audiences and accountability relationships.
Because advocates work on behalf of others, advocacy grantees are accountable to a larger community as well as to their funders. They may answer to a geographic community, an ethnic group, an age group or other constituency. One funder suggested that grantees and funders consider viewing themselves as jointly accountable to the constituency on whose behalf they're working. Therefore, policy and advocacy evaluation must speak to the needs of multiple audiences and multiple accountability relationships including grantee board members and community residents. Funders, grantees and evaluators should be mindful that what is meaningful to funders is not always meaningful to grantees or community members, and benchmarks, indicators and results should be meaningful to the multiple stakeholders. Evaluators should also note that different stakeholders require different reporting formats. While foundation board members may want quantitative data, community members may find stories of success more compelling.

[1] Neuendorf, Kimberly A. *The Content Analysis Guidebook.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002.
[2] Brinkerhoff, Robert O. *The Success Case Method: Finding Out Quickly What's Working and What's Not.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. (2003).
[3] Davies, Rick and Jess Dart. (2005) The *"Most Significant Change" (MSC) Technique: A Guide to Its Use.* http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.htm. Also Dart, Jess and Rick Davies. (2003) A dialogical, story-based evaluation tool: The most significant change technique. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 24(2), 137–155.

Part III: Practical Ideas for Evaluating Policy and Advocacy Work

A key goal for the convening was to move beyond conceptual approaches to policy change and gather concrete ideas for implementing this type of evaluation—particularly developing theories of change, identifying benchmarks and indicators, and using results. The stakeholders brought to the meeting a wealth of practical experience evaluating policy and advocacy work through formal and informal strategies. This section synthesizes participant suggestions that surfaced through 10 different small-group discussions. For each step, we review the challenges and then present some ideas for getting started and implementation. It should be noted that participants had more experience in some areas than others. The discussions around a theory of change generated a variety of wide-ranging ideas. However, fewer participants had actually taken a policy evaluation all the way through to results, so there were inevitably fewer specific ideas to share on this topic.

Developing and Using a "Theory of Change"

The process of articulating an organization's theory about how and why a group's activities lead to long-term goals was familiar to funders and evaluators, but new to many nonprofits. A theory of change provides a road map for an advocacy effort and the framework for evaluators of policy and advocacy work. It can apply to a grant, a larger campaign or a foundation's broad initiative.

> "A Theory Of Change will be very useful to help direct providers incorporate more policy work."
> — *Funder*

Convening participants, including the nonprofits, universally agreed on the value in laying out stakeholder's assumptions about the pathways to reach ultimate policy goals and specifying how funders

and advocates expect their activities to make change occur. This process clarifies thinking and purpose. It promotes reflection about the roles of partners and adversaries. Significantly, it commits a group to a strategy that they own. Participants offered differing perspectives on what to call that process and how to go about it. In this report we use "theory of change" for consistency with our previous report and terminology used during the convening. But we also attempt, when appropriate, to use other language to describe this activity as a way to model more accessible terminology.

Challenges in Developing and Using a Theory of Change

Participants at the convening described a number of challenges they faced in making a theory of change process useful. The first challenge is making the process relevant to grantees, who often are more operationally than conceptually focused. Grantees may find it hard to step back from their current activities and take a big-picture view. Many grantees felt that they didn't have the luxury of engaging in an exercise in theory when they are dealing with immediate crises, often with thin staffing and little time. Therefore, it is a challenge to keep the process from becoming overly time-consuming and theoretical. In the end, the process is a tool to clarify thinking—not an end in itself.

All parties also described challenges around whose theory prevails—the funder or grantee. A grantee's ideas about how and why its strategies will lead to change can be confounded by the complex relationship between funder and grantee. As one seasoned advocate put it, "Internally, we can be excited about [our own] theory of change and the

---

Tools to Help Advocates Create a Theory of Change

Existing tools can help a grantee determine its proper role and set a course for change. Some include:

Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool
(The Alliance for Justice, 2005)

Mapping Change: Using a Theory of Change to Guide Planning and Evaluation,
(Grantcraft, 2006)

Making the Case
(Women's Funding Network, 2004)

Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results and Learning
(Organizational Research Services for the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004)

foundation may want to push us another way and we don't know if we're supposed to interrupt [to negotiate differences]." Several participants remarked on the difficulties of integrating a grantee's theory of change with a foundation's. Acknowledging how a grantee's and a funder's theory are the same, how they differ and how they can work together can lead to a more open, relaxed and effective partnership.

Getting Started: The Process

Beyond using more accessible language, as discussed above, participants identified a number of ways to make the process of creating a theory of change more manageable and potentially more successful.

Be conscious of the power dynamic between funder and grantee. Power inequality between a foundation and grantee can inhibit honest communication about goals and expected accomplishments,

especially when an advocate is selling itself in the grant-seeking process. It may, therefore, be productive for funders and grantees to establish a basic theory of change up front, and then refine the theory for a grant after the money has been awarded.

Involve the right parties. A number of participants noted the value of broad participation, some stressing the importance of grassroots community members and, at the other end of the spectrum, potentially including policymakers themselves. But an evaluator and funder sounded a cautionary note: Involve core stakeholders whose commitment and participation are necessary for the success of the initiative. Be careful of involving players who cannot be held accountable. While stakeholders without direct accountability can inject optimism and ambition, they may be less likely to create a theory of change that is relevant, practical and achievable.

Guiding Questions to Jump-Start the Process:
- What is the problem?
- What do you want to achieve?
- What is the dominant world view on this issue?
- Who has the power, and what needs to be shifted?
- What can you change in this particular time frame?
- How do you want to achieve your goal?
- What are the accelerators and inhibitors?
- What are the competing agendas?
- What do your adversaries want?
- Are you the right organization to do this project?
- What is your organization's capacity vis-à-vis the social change goal?
- Why are you going in a particular direction?
- How would your organization grow as a result of the activity or effort?

Use questions and techniques proven to draw out critical thinking. For some advocates, it is a challenge to identify the changes that result from their work rather than merely to describe their activities. They may need encouragement and assistance to make this shift and talk about their work more analytically. It can be helpful to start the process with guiding questions to help tease out stakeholders' implicit assumptions about the logic of their strategy. (See insert page 14). One participant suggested creating a story line (e.g., "I visualize the future— here's my story of how we'll get there."). Another approach asks grantees to write an imagined newspaper headline about the results of their project in five years. The grantee would then relate how the article would describe the key elements of the project's success. Grantees can also consider using an existing tool (see insert page 13). Users of the Women's Funding Network's *Making the Case*, for example, find it very helpful and easy to use for advocacy planning and evaluation, without confusing constituents with jargon. It uses the image of a town as the starting point for walking participants through the process of articulating their strategy. The town, its environment and the forces that affect it become metaphors for the different elements of the theory of change.

Create two different kinds of theories: one conceptual and one that is grant- or initiative-specific. A big-picture, generic theory of change can apply to the full range of a nonprofit's work and create a valuable overarching framework and context for action. A more specific and strategic theory of change can then help frame the agenda for a particular advocacy strategy at the heart of a grant or initiative. One grantee described, for example, creating a broad theory of social change for her organization and a more tactical theory related to passage of a particular bill.

Getting Started: The Content

Include a time component. A meaningful and useful theory of change should include more than a statement that actions A, B and C will lead to desired outcome D. It is important to think about and articulate expectations about what can happen in the short term, intermediate term and long term. Some activities need to occur rapidly in a defined time frame, while others are part of a slower building process. One evaluator spoke of a theory of change as a negotiation tool, a pictorial that shows the pieces of what could be done in the amount of time allotted, using funds from a particular grant. The negotiation involves a clear recognition of what can realistically be accomplished during the short time frame of the current grant, and what steps can only occur with a longer-term commitment.

Clearly articulate cause and effect relationships. A theory of change is most useful when it goes beyond a list of

> "It is important to have transparent communication between funders and grantees about the theories each is operating under and to sequence some parts of this conversation to occur after funding is approved."
>
> *— Funder*

outcomes or activities to specify the cause and effect relationship among activities and specific outcomes. It is easy to fall into the trap of equating activities with ultimate outcomes or failing to explain *how* an activity leads to desired change.

Incorporate the role of capacity building. Social and policy change require informed, engaged, and adaptive organizations and communities. Participants reiterated throughout the proceedings that building a grantee's capacity to advocate must be viewed as a critical component of a change strategy. Building advocacy capacity and momentum in the larger community plays an equally critical role in successful policy and social change. Consequently, capacity building must be considered early on in a project, and moved to the foreground in any strategic analysis of the paths to change.

Include a plan for ensuring progress beyond the grant period. Policy change—and concomitant social change—are long-term processes, grantees and evaluators emphasized. Any policy advocate needs to be able to look beyond a one-, two- or even five-year grant to see how change can be continuously implemented, monitored and sustained. The theory needs to contemplate how to maintain momentum and take steps to ensure that progress does not halt short of meeting longer-term goals. Changing a law, for example, doesn't guarantee that anyone will know about the change, that the change will be enforced, or that the results will be monitored to ensure that the change was the right one.

Think beyond linear change models. It is one thing to say that, for example, a grantee will take action A so that awareness of need B will improve so that outcomes C and D will be achieved. It is another thing to think hard about what will happen in the real world when the grantee begins taking action in a fluid environment. Participants suggested looking at feedback loops and potential

Benchmark – an activity or outcome defined in advance as one the evaluation is monitoring to see change or progress.

Indicator – the specific way in which a benchmark will be measured, or the measurement itself.

Process Indicator – measures an organization's efforts or activities to make change happen (number of meetings held or flyers distributed).

Outcome Indicator – measures change that occurs, ideally due in part to an organization's effort (partnerships strengthened as a result of meetings, attitudes changed after reading flyers).

unintended consequences of the actions taken to pursue an advocacy agenda. The involvement of partners in an advocacy strategy multiplies the variables even more, and advocates rarely go it alone. Actions by those trying to thwart the advocacy effort can have relevant and unanticipated consequences as well.

Implementation

Even among those participants who placed great value on the process of creating a theory of change, many were quick to warn against putting the theory on the shelf after initial development. As one evaluator commented, "There are more issues about implementation of a theory of change and changing it than developing it."

Flexibility and adaptation can be key to effectiveness. Evaluators, in particular, recommended looking at and using the theory of change regularly, and continuously reassessing what is feasible and valuable in the theory developed at the start of the project. Do the current strategies support the broad vision for change? Several participants issued a call to examine assumptions. People can become deeply invested in a strategy that may be wrong for the current environment or the participating players. As one participant put it, "You can all be on the same page, but it's the wrong page."

Defining Benchmarks and Indicators, and Collecting the Data

Policy or social change goals outlined in the theory of change will usually take years to achieve. Therefore, identifying appropriate benchmarks to track progress along the way is central to monitoring and evaluating policy and advocacy grants. Benchmarks serve like road signs on a trip, letting travelers know when they are getting closer to their final destination and when they may have steered off course.

Given the long time frame for policy change, both funders and grantees valued benchmarks that could help them document the impact of their work long before actual policy change occurs. Moreover, convening participants felt that the process of selecting benchmarks and indicators pushes stakeholders to get more concrete about what success looks like at different stages. It helps nonprofits and funders manage their expectations about what is reasonable to accomplish in a specific period. Advocates at the convening also saw value in pushing themselves to be more specific about articulating the standards by which they agree to be accountable—both to funders and to themselves. This stage in the evaluation design is also a good point to discuss and define capacity-building and constituency-building goals.

Challenges in Developing and Measuring Benchmarks and Indicators

The challenges in developing benchmarks and indicators include differences in stakeholder attitudes toward evaluation, developing meaningful ways of measuring or documenting change, and the burden of data collection on grantees. First, this

is a stage in evaluation where the cultural divide between advocates and evaluators is particularly apparent. Evaluators start digging deeper into issues of defining indicators and measuring, and therefore, are particularly prone to using jargon that may be alienating to grantees. Researchers must work especially hard at this point to make the process accessible and relevant to advocates who are not steeped in social science.

Finding meaningful measures of change is also a challenge. All stakeholders agreed that it is much easier to measure what advocates do (e.g., hold meetings, give speeches, meet with legislators) than it is to articulate and document the impact of their work (e.g., how reading brochures affects constituents' attitudes). Many advocates expressed concern that the push toward quantification marginalizes the ways of documenting success that are most compelling to their organization and constituents, such as storytelling. In turn, evaluators felt that advocates will need to be pushed to move beyond their comfort level—to articulate the changes that result from their work and be creative about documentation that is credible to multiple audiences. Finally, all stakeholders noted the challenge of collecting data without creating an undue burden on grantees, many of whom are small organizations that lack skills and capacity for data collection and analysis.

Getting Started: The Process

Develop benchmarks together. Defining benchmarks creates a space for grantees and funders to talk in an honest, collaborative and concrete fashion about what is feasible in the current environment. The process is as important as the end result because it surfaces assumptions and brings all parties to a shared understanding about reasonable goals. A theory of change gets parties aligned about broad concepts, but selecting and measuring benchmarks can reveal different expectations. For example: How many community meetings are reasonable to hold? How many people should we expect to participate in the campaign after such meetings? How will we measure a community member's commitment to the campaign's goals and ideals?

Allot adequate time. Overall, all stakeholders felt that more time should be devoted to selecting benchmarks—in part because the process is so essential for ensuring common and reasonable expectations about performance. It should involve more than an exchange of a few e-mails. However, they also noted that the amount of energy invested should be appropriate to the grant. For a relatively small, one-year grant it may be a matter of selecting a framework or pulling material from similar grants and using it to identify a few relevant milestones via a telephone conversation. For a multiyear grant or a multi-grantee initiative, more time is required, probably via in-person meetings. One funder said he has had good experiences with asking several of his grantees working on similar issues to come in for a joint discussion of their benchmarks. Funders save time and grantees benefit from helping each other work through the process.

Be mindful of data collection burdens. Grantees were particularly concerned about the burden of data collection. There was much debate—but no clear rules—on when an evaluator versus the grantee should collect data. Especially for smaller grantees, it may be more productive to build indicators from information that grantees are already collecting. Another suggestion is to bring in a journalist to interview participants and recount what has occurred rather than asking grantees to write up reports.

Getting Started: The Content

Pick a benchmark framework that matches the change process for your project. Grantees and funders, especially those lacking significant experience in policy work, are often at a loss as to where to start in selecting benchmarks. Stakeholders did not feel there was any single framework appropriate in all circumstances. The original paper identified six frameworks that can serve as starting points for the conversation. Two others emerged at the convening and are briefly described below. These frameworks provide examples of activities, strategies and types of outcomes associated with the social or policy change process.

Each framework highlights somewhat different aspects of the social or policy change process. (See Appendix A for a comparison.) It would be helpful for funders and evaluators to familiarize themselves with a number of frameworks. They can then work with the grantee to identify the one that seems most relevant to any particular project. Using the categories in the framework as a guide, they can then work together to identify benchmarks and indicators customized to their particular initiative.

Few convening participants had used any of these frameworks, since the practice of evaluating policy work is so new. Two members of the Women's Funding Network were extremely enthusiastic about the value of their framework, which identifies five types of change that contribute to social change:

- Shifts in Definitions/Reframing
- Shifts in Individual/Community Behavior
- Shifts in Critical Mass/Engagement
- Shifts in Institutional Policy
- Maintaining Current Position/Holding the Line

This framework is particularly useful because it is associated with an online grantee reporting tool that helps grantees organize and track their data. Because all grantees store their information in a common database, the tool provides some standard categories to help funders examine impact across grantees. Funders have used the tool to prepare reports for their boards about the collective impact of a grants portfolio. For example, a funder can call up and review results for all grantees working on a specific social change strategy—even when they are working on different issues and using different measures of success. This summation works in large part because all the grantees have a common, very long-term goal of supporting women and girls.

Participants recommended two additional frameworks at the convening. Innonet, a Washington, D.C–based evaluation firm, has organized its evaluation of the Coalition for Comprehensive Immigration Reform around a model presenting stages of the policy change process. To assess the progress of the coalition's work, they selected benchmarks and developed indicators associated with each stage:

1. Heightened awareness about an issue (Are people talking about it?)
2. Contribution to debate
3. Changed opinions/Getting allies
4. Changed policy
5. Policy change is implemented
6. Positive change in people's lives[4]

> "There is a project in New Mexico that had great self-reported benchmarks like 'important people start to disagree with me in public,' meaning that if the mayor or governor makes a statement that disagrees with you, you have made them address the issue."
>
> — *Funder*

A funder recommended a similar framework developed by his grantee, New Mexico Advocates for Children and Families. It also organized benchmarks according to stages of a policy process and includes examples of potential indicators for each stage. (See Appendix B.) The funder felt that this simple framework, captured in a single Excel spreadsheet, helped the grantee articulate and document its progress with language and evidence that seemed straightforward to advocates and informative to funders. The spreadsheet was organized to provide a quick overview of indicators at each stage.

Include outcomes for advocacy capacity building. Throughout the day, people continually emphasized the importance of viewing capacity building as a key outcome of advocacy grant making. The Alliance for Justice defined advocacy capacity building as "activities that build an organization's ability to sustain advocacy efforts. Examples include building partnerships with other organizations, securing a commitment by the organization's board to advocacy efforts, organizing constituency groups to influence policy, and strengthening the advocacy skills of staff, board and members."[5] Since our initial report was published, the Alliance for Justice has developed an excellent tool to help organizations identify key ways to strengthen their advocacy capacity.[6] Grantees can use this assessment to recommend some appropriate capacity-building outcomes they will commit to accomplishing.

Choose indicators that are meaningful— not merely measurable. It is much easier to measure what people do (process) than what change has occurred (outcomes). Nevertheless, everyone expressed a desire to move beyond process indicators. Said one evaluator, "For example, online advocacy is a big thing now, so I can measure how many people open an e-mail, but what are they doing with it? Do those numbers mean anything?"

---

[4] This model comes from the Oxfam Policy Department, cited in Chapman and Wameyo "Monitoring and Evaluation Advocacy: A Scoping Tool."
[5] *Build Your Advocacy Grantmaking: Advocacy Evaluation Tool, Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool.* Washington, D.C. Alliance for Justice. p. 3-4. (2005).
[6] Ibid.

Many participants suggested looking beyond measurement to consider actions as indicators of change, when appropriate. For example, indicators of reframing the debate might include an opponent or a new partner using your frame to discuss an issue. One advocate provided evidence of their organization's impact in organizing immigrant cleaners. In the organization's first year, the professional staff developed the proposed public policy priorities and presented them at board meetings. A year later, a core group of the immigrant cleaners had learned enough about the political environment to present their recommendations on policy priorities to the professional staff. The Women's Funding Network tool is particularly attuned to using qualitative measures and actions to systematically document change.

Storytelling and case studies are methods advocates felt were particularly useful both in demonstrating effectiveness and in explaining *how* change occurred. They are appropriate in:

- following activities that are especially difficult to anticipate, such as defensive work
- showing why the grantee "zigzagged" in its approach (when the environment changes, etc.)
- pointing out which opportunities were missed this time and could be taken advantage of next time with appropriate preparation and capacity building
- explaining how the grantee's actions fit into the bigger picture
- responding to different cultural norms regarding communication—many

advocates noted that their board members and community members find stories more compelling than bar charts
- capturing the results of community organizing that is geared toward capacity-building

Implementation

Consider having evaluators conduct debriefs after periods of intense activity. In evaluating an immigration reform campaign, Innonet decided to pay evaluators to debrief advocates every time there was an intense period of activity or when a key milestone was reached. Advocates could tell the story while it was fresh in their mind. However, the evaluators shouldered the burden of documentation. The process and write-ups provided advocates some built-in reflection time. Moreover, the process documented the story of the initiative as it evolved rather than waiting until the end of the campaign to look back retrospectively.

The process of selecting benchmarks may lead to revising a theory of change. Several participants said that the process of selecting benchmarks pushes strategy thinking to a new level and can spur people to consider their change strategy or theory of change. A theory of change is a big-picture mode—but often when it comes down to defining exactly what is meant by a particular outcome or benchmark, stakeholders realize they had very different ideas. Especially in more complex initiatives, one may need to view theory of change and benchmark selection in a somewhat interactive fashion.

Using Results

Effective policy and advocacy evaluation delivers information to stakeholders that serves two purposes: 1) it helps funders and grantees refine their strategies for policy change and 2) it documents the impact and value of advocates' work along the road to policy change, allowing everyone to celebrate successes. All other steps in an evaluation build up to this one: providing useful information. However, using results is also the step in policy evaluation where convening participants had the least experience to share. As an emerging area of practice, there are few evaluations that have been under way long enough to deliver results over several years. At the same time, stakeholders were articulate in describing what could be done to make evaluation results more useful.

> "The grantee and funder should be directly engaged in the evaluation so that data can be fed into coalition work … this means that the evaluation needs to keep up!"
>
> *— Grantee*

Challenges in Making Evaluation Results Useful

The biggest challenge revolves around delivering results in a more timely fashion and in formats accessible to the multiple audiences for policy work. Advocates felt that reports at the end of the project come too late to help them improve their work. Funders and advocates are seeking ways to shorten the time between data collection and delivering results.

Stakeholders also raised the challenge of talking about "failure." The changing environment and complexity of policy work means that advocacy grantees will more frequently not meet goals initially outlined in a grant. Advocates felt that failure was not a useful word when describing policy change work, and that everyone could learn much from projects that did not achieve all the desired results or go as planned. However, they noted the impediment created by the need for nonprofits to emphasize success in order to get new grants. Finally, several participants raised the challenge of getting beyond project-specific evaluations. They wanted more effort placed in drawing out lessons across projects and even across foundations working in the same issue area.

Getting Started: The Process

Identify audiences for evaluation and their information needs up front. A key factor in getting results used involves thinking through the intended audiences for an evaluation during the evaluation design process. This is particularly important in policy and advocacy evaluation when there are multiple audiences, often with different information needs. The steering committee for an advocacy campaign

has very different needs than trustees of a foundation, for example. Some audiences will be interested in the impact of the advocacy work. Others may care more about the process, such as which strategies were most successful in changing community leaders' opinions or in ensuring that new regulations are effectively implemented. Of course, it is usually cost-prohibitive to design an evaluation to maximally meet the needs of all audiences. So prioritizing is essential. However, making sure the evaluation design will deliver something useful to all key stakeholders will yield better participation in data collection and more bang for the evaluation dollar.

In large initiatives, consider using grantees to help interpret data. Advocates can be more than an audience for results. In some cases, their perspective can be very useful in making sense of evaluation data. Especially in large initiatives when an evaluator and funder are removed from the action, advocates can provide a very useful on-the-ground perspective as part of discussions on findings from survey and interview data.

Getting Started: The Content
Shift resources from final reports to interim updates. The changing nature of policy work requires a more iterative approach to evaluation, and the reporting plan should fit with that philosophy. Funders, grantees and evaluators at the convening recommended placing more emphasis on delivering interim results. Interim updates are more likely to help stakeholders shape their evolving strategy,

which is particularly important in the fast-changing world of policy work. Check-ins associated with interim updates also provide grantees and funders with a venue to help evaluators assess any ways the evaluation design should be adjusted to meet the evolving information needs of key players. Shorten the time between data collection and reporting by delivering information in less formal formats, such as presentations or short memos. This shift does not necessarily mean eliminating reports at the end of a project in all cases. Instead, stakeholders should think through when data will be most useful to them and design reporting timelines around it. If much of the evaluation information is delivered along the way, reports at the end of the project, when they are needed, can put more emphasis on reflection rather than summation.

Implementation
How you communicate is as important as what you communicate. The multiple audiences in policy and evaluation work not only have different information needs, their communication styles can also differ significantly. Evaluators who can deliver results in multiple formats, to match different communication styles, are more likely to get their results used. For example, trustees may want all findings summarized in one page that is easy to skim, using bullet points, data and charts. But that same approach would leave community members cold. They may be more engaged with stories that illustrate the impact of an advocate's work, with the data placed in appendices or footnotes. Getting

results used may involve writing up multiple reports—and the dissemination budget needs to take this into account.

Create more safe space to discuss when events do not go as planned and learn from these experiences. The path to policy change is strewn with supposed "failures"—bills that die in committee, proposed administrative regulations that get shelved, initiatives that can't muster support from two-thirds of the voters. Therefore, teasing out lessons from these events is an essential component of most policy evaluation. Yet all stakeholders said they usually have great difficulty discussing them in an honest fashion. Grantees were concerned that documentation might jeopardize future funding. Several evaluators recounted feeling intense pressure to present only successes, or feeling caught in the cross fire when their presentation to trustees documented that a high-profile initiative was not having the level of impact expected. Funders felt challenged about how to make grantees feel comfortable enough to talk about what didn't work.

Unfortunately, while everyone could describe this problem passionately, practical suggestions for addressing it were rare. In general, funders and evaluators who are seeking the knowledge gleaned when things do not go according to plan will need to conscientiously create a safe space for those discussions. The process can begin by setting reasonable expectations among funders, particularly trustees, before policy and advocacy initiatives begin about the

likelihood of setbacks along the way to policy change. These discussions are easier in longer-term grants, where funders and advocates have time to build up trust. Grantees may feel more comfortable sharing their lessons in groups of grantees facilitated by evaluators, who will not connect comments to specific grantee names.

Conduct more cross-project and cross-foundation evaluations. A number of convening participants suggested that funders devote more resources to highlighting lessons across advocacy projects and even across foundations working in the same issue area. Too often, program officers are siloed in their issue area and have no opportunities to compare the results of advocacy work across issue areas. For example, an evaluation could assess the effectiveness of different community organizing strategies or different types of foundation support to community organizing groups working in different issue areas. Grantees also requested more evaluation work that attempted to synthesize the knowledge across foundations working in the same issue area. They noted that much of their funding comes from a core set of funders focused on health care in California. They suggested that some effort from these funders to align their reporting and evaluation requirements when funding the same grantees could lead to more effective use of evaluation dollars, less grantee time devoted to creating slightly different reports for multiple funders, and more coherent knowledge of the field.

"Reflecting on the evaluation process helped me to recognize the importance of taking a step back from our immediate work and think about our long-term goals and the many strategies we must employ to reach them."

– Grantee

Conclusion

The convening of advocates, evaluators and grantees built off the momentum of Blueprint's original report and demonstrated the growing interest in evaluation of advocacy and policy change. This new report seeks to increase knowledge and connection among thought leaders and help stakeholders better understand each other's perspectives. Grantees, funders and evaluators each have distinct needs and often use different language to talk about evaluation and organizational learning. However, all stakeholders have a strong interest in discovering better ways to assess and document the success of advocacy and policy change work (especially interim success) and in understanding what worked so they can replicate it.

Rather than merely relating what people said at the convening, we chose to use this report to advance the dialogue. We sifted through, organized and analyzed all the ideas from the 10 different discussion groups. We wanted a paper that communicated the enthusiasm for improving practice in this area but also provided new information to help stakeholders start putting their ambitions for policy change evaluation into practice.

As the convening closed, participants identified several ways to continue building this community of practice. First, more people need to experiment with actual evaluations. It is time to move from talk to action. We hope that the many ideas in this meeting report will provide funders, advocates and evaluators practical suggestions to get started. Advocates can use the benchmark frameworks to identify more useful and change-oriented interim outcomes that they can include in grant proposals. Funders can use the process information to guide conversations with advocacy grantees. Evaluators can help funders and grantees clarify their assumptions—how their activities will lead to policy change, how policy change will lead to social change, and how an individual grantee's work fits into a larger initiative or funders' larger action plan.
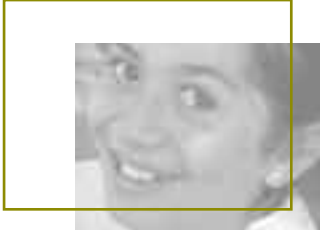
Second, stakeholders participating in policy and advocacy evaluations can share their experiences, including useful resources and tools they identify and develop, as well as information about what didn't work. Meeting participants were particularly hungry for both case studies that described details on how policy change evaluations were approached and what people learned—both about outcomes and about conducting this kind of evaluation. Already, the evaluation firm Innonet has developed an online Advocacy Evaluation Resource guide.[7] The searchable database provides links and short reviews for 40 resources. The more that advocates, funders and evaluators contribute to and learn from these resources, the more effective their work will become.

Third, policy work will require stronger partnership among funders, grantees and evaluators. The long-term nature of policy work and the risk of failure, combined with the need to continually adjust milestones, means that grantees, funders and evaluators need a deeper level of partnership and trust to engage in this work. Funders in particular, as holders of the purse strings, have an opportunity to forge new types of relationships between these policy partners.

There is a great deal more to learn about how to evaluate policy and advocacy work. The quality of thought put into the convening by its attendees is a testament to not only the importance of this work, but also the energy, insight and conviction of those engaging in it.

We hope that this meeting report can serve as a next step in the learning process for policy evaluation—a jumping off point for these attendees, and anyone interested in the issue, to engage in further discussion and experimentation. We look forward to watching this emerging community of practice evolve.

[7] http://www.innonet.org/index.php?section_id=101&content_id=480

Appendix A:
Comparison of Benchmark Frameworks

Organization	Categories	Focus
Liberty Hill	■ External—Social Change ■ Internal—Organizing and Capacity Building	Campaign or Community
Annie E. Casey	■ Impact Outcomes ■ Influence Outcomes ■ Leverage Outcomes Changes: ■ Public Will ■ Funding and Resources ■ Visibility ■ Policy and Regulation ■ Partnerships Services Practices	Campaign
Women's Funding Network	Arena of Change: ■ Definitions/Reframing ■ Individual/Community Behavior ■ Shifts in Critical Mass/Engagement ■ Institutional Policy ■ Maintaining Current Position/Holding the Line	Campaign
Action Aid/Institute for Development Research	■ Policy Change ■ Strengthening Civil Society and Building Social Capital ■ Increasing Democracy	Community

| Samples	Strengths	Drawbacks
N	Simple to explain. Applicable in wide range of settings. Emphasis on capacity-building goals. Can provide an overlay to framework that includes more detailed categories for external goals.	No examples of benchmarks or strategies.
Y	Provides many detailed examples. Best information on measurement strategies, including sample tools. Recognizes that organizations often cannot attain change at impact level, so creating influence and leverage are significant outcomes.	Focused on community improvement, with policy change as a strategy. Therefore, outcomes not organized in ways most relevant to policy projects. Examples very specific to children and family issues.
Y	Built on theory about what makes change happen that grows out of interviews with grantees. Single tool connects developing theory of change with identifying benchmarks. Written in very accessible format. Included as part of online grant reporting tool that can help program officers look across grantees.	No concept to capture capacity-building outcomes. Policy is viewed as a strategy for social change rather than focal point of process. Fewer examples than other tools.
N	Applicable to wide range of projects. Emphasizes capacity-building.	While this framework can provide guidance on benchmarks, it includes no examples.
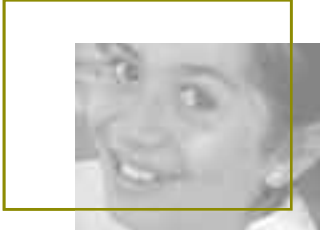
continued.

Organization	Categories	Focus
Collaborations that Count	■ Infrastructure Outcomes ■ Developmental Outcomes ■ Policy Outcomes	Community
Alliance For Justice	■ Outcomes ■ Progress Towards Goals ■ Capacity Building Efforts Cross-Cutting Activities: ■ Policy Change ■ Coalition Building ■ Constituency Involvement ■ Mobilization ■ Network Building ■ Media Advocacy	Campaign
Innonet (from the Oxfam Policy Department)	Arena of Change: ■ Heightened Awareness About an Issue ■ Contribution to Debate ■ Changed Opinions/Getting Allies ■ Changed Policy ■ Policy Change is Implemented ■ Positive Change in People's Lives	Campaign
New Mexico Advocates for Children and Families	■ Stage 1: Issue Framing ■ Stage 2: Message Building ■ Stage 3: Education/Coalition Building ■ Stage 4: Media Coverage ■ Stage 5: Message Echoing ■ Stage 6: Growth in Support	Campaign

Samples	Strengths	Drawbacks
Y	Emphasizes capacity-building as well as policy change. Provides examples especially relevant to collaborative efforts.	Difference between definition of infrastructure and development outcomes is fuzzy.
Y	Most detailed set of policy-relevant interim and long-term outcomes.	Not built on theory of how change happens so doesn't draw connections or suggest any order between the outcomes.
N	Specific, yet broadly applicable to the process of change that happens within an advocacy campaign.	No focus on capacity building. No examples.
Y	Specific. Lists potential indicators at each stage.	Directed primarily on relationship between media and policy change. Not focused beyond policy change or on other tactics.
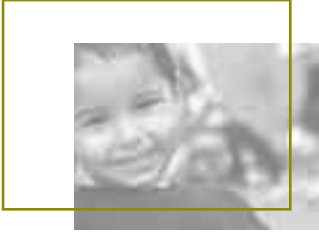
Appendix B:
Measures of Policy Change at Different Stages
*Developed by the New Mexico Advocates for Children and Families*

Stage One	Stage Two	Stage Three
Survey of preliminary data and research completed (e.g., child poverty is related to poor health outcomes, and the rate in NM is high). - current policy is reviewed and it is not adequately addressing the issue. - value-based message about the issue is developed.	**Policy briefs:** - how many? - distributed to whom? - # people recv'g? **Newsletters:** - # people recv'g? **Media coverage:** - # of print and broadcast stories mentioning the issue. - # of times the issue appears; period of time (i.e., over several months?). - kinds of media outlets (i.e., public radio? weekly papers?). - did the message appear in the media coverage?	**Educational efforts aimed at ally organizations and policymakers:** - across the state? - how many? what kind? **Ally organizations adopt the issue:** - send research to their constituents, include it in their newsletters. - agree to include the issue as part of their agenda. - their staff participate in "training of trainers." - the message is formally adopted by ally organizations who agree to use the message when talking about the issue. **Educate policymakers:** - # mtgs w/ individuals. - # committee presentations. - legislator introduces bill.

Stage Four	Stage Five	Stage Six
Issue/messages are directly addressed; debated by "targets" or opposition:	**Media coverage echoes the message:**	**Legislation / administrative changes are proposed:**
- talk show debates? #? who?	- how many?	- how much support? For example, legislation introduced? Heard in committee? Heard on the floor? Bipartisan support? Administrative rules change suggested?
- # op-eds, letters to the editor, etc., that are in response to your media coverage and message.	- how important is the outlet?	
- opponents use your frame to refute the message (ex: Medicaid is NOT an economic engine).	- what page does the story appear on?	**Ally organizations support the legislation/policy change and mobilize grassroots support.**
- important community leader refutes your message (ex: the Governor).	- does your message appear early in the story?	
Media coverage improves:	**Key policymakers echo your message in a public venue, written materials or the press:**	
- press coverage is more accurate and not simplistic.	- how important/ influential is the messenger?	
- # of earned media stories increases.	- was the venue important?	
- talk shows about the issues on public and commercial radio or TV, and in other languages.	- public figure, nonpolicymaker echoes your message.	

"The next **challenge** is to go to the next level and figure out what it takes to **create** systemic **change** – including grassroots organizing and civic participation – and how to **evaluate** that!"

– *Funder*
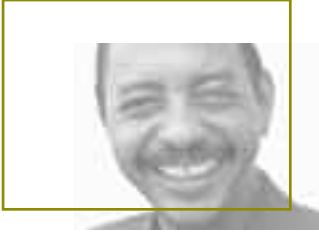
Appendix C:
Convening Participants

Lupe Alonzo-Diaz
Latino Coalition for a Healthy California

Ernesto Barahona
St. John's Well Child and Family Center

Flor Barajas-Tena
Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)

Ignatius Bau
The California Endowment

Dan Baum
Innovation Network

Paul Beaudet
Wilburforce Foundation

Bill Beery
Group Health Community Foundation

Judith Bell
PolicyLink

Ellen Braff-Guajardo
The California Endowment

David Chatfield
Californians for Pesticide Reform

Julia Coffman
Harvard Family Research Project

Michael Cousineau
University of Southern California

Don Crary
The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Heriberto Escamilla
Philliber Research Associates

Annette Gardner
Institute for Health Policy Studies, UCSF

Harold M. Goldstein
California Center for Public Health Advocacy

Howard Greenwald
Group Health Community Foundation

Greg Hall
The California Endowment

Paul Harder
Harder+Company Community Research

Susan Hoechstetter
Alliance for Justice

Laura Hogan
The California Endowment

Mia Hubbard
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

Irene Ibarra
The California Endowment

Stephen Isaacs
Isaacs/Jellinek

Jennifer Ito
SCOPE—Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education

Tammy Johnson
Applied Research Center

Jackie Kaye
The Atlantic Philanthropies

Thomas Kelly
The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Linda Kite
Healthy Homes Collaborative

Stewart Kwoh
Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California, Inc.

Andrea Lee
Mujeres Unidas y Activas

Ted Lempert
Children Now

Kim Lewis
Western Center on Law and Poverty

Karen Linkins
The Lewin Group

Peter Long
The California Endowment

Thomas Lonner
Foundation for Health Care Quality

Dori Makundi
Women and Families Network

Lisa Mandel
Children's Law Center of Los Angeles

Eric Manke
California Safe Schools Coalition

Ricardo Millett
Independent Consultant

Chingwell Mutombu
Women's Foundation of Minnesota

Lina Paredes
Liberty Hill Foundation

Alonzo Plough
The California Endowment

Ehren Reed
Innovation Network, Inc.

Jane Reisman
Organizational Research Services (ORS)

Sarah Samuels
Samuels & Associates

Marion Standish
The California Endowment

Rebecca Stark
PICO California

Diane Takvorian
Environmental Health Coalition

Dania Wasongarz
The Children's Partnership

Barbara Webster-Hawkins
The California Endowment

Winnie Willis
The California Endowment Board

Ellen Wu
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network

Peter York
TCC Group