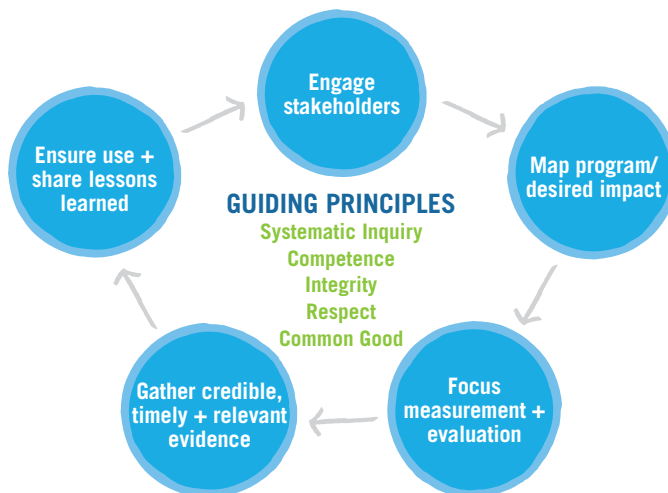# STRATEGIC EVALUATION

## HOW CAN STRATEGIC EVALUATION BENEFIT YOU?

Our theory-driven approach to program evaluation is comprehensive and involves four general steps:

1) **Map**: Develop program theory of action and theory of change
2) **Focus**: Formulate and prioritize evaluation questions
3) **Gather**: Collect and analyze data using the most rigorous methods possible
4) **Share and learn**: Communicate and reflect on the answer to the questions

First, we facilitate an evaluation-focusing session with stakeholders to develop a common understanding of how a program is presumed to solve a problem. This common understanding of program theory helps evaluators and stakeholders identify and prioritize evaluation questions. We then guide the process of answering the evaluation questions of most interest using the most rigorous methods possible given the practical budget, time and organizational constraints. We share evaluation findings with stakeholders and funders in ways that support effective decision making, action taking, and organizational learning. This process is iterative. After moving through these steps, re-mapping and re-focusing guide the development of the next phase of evaluation. This process is essential to building a body of credible evidence, continuous improvement, and to solving complex problems.

Engage stakeholders

Ensure use + share lessons learned

Map program/ desired impact

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**
Systematic Inquiry
Competence
Integrity
Respect
Common Good

Gather credible, timely + relevant evidence

Focus measurement + evaluation

## WHAT PROBLEM DOES STRATEGIC EVALUATION SOLVE?

**People and organizations are drowning in data and starved for wisdom**. They need to ask and answer the key questions about the social, environmental, educational and health impacts they are making in the world. Scattershot or overly academic research and evaluation are problems that over half of the organizations on the planet are wrestling with today — thanks to the data deluge; increasing demand for evidence of program impact; and changes in how social, environmental, educational, and health programs are funded.

The solution, then, is systematic inquiry that leverages what we know about organizational learning — best practices for co-creating knowledge, technology tools, and complex problems. Data2insight partners with organizations to collect, analyze, and synthesize credible and actionable evidence to measure, learn and improve processes and impact. Our systematic, theory-driven approach to evaluation results in informed decisions and action that our clients are using to solve complex problems like diversifying the STEM workforce, homelessness, high school drop-out, improving youth health and well-being, and addressing climate change.
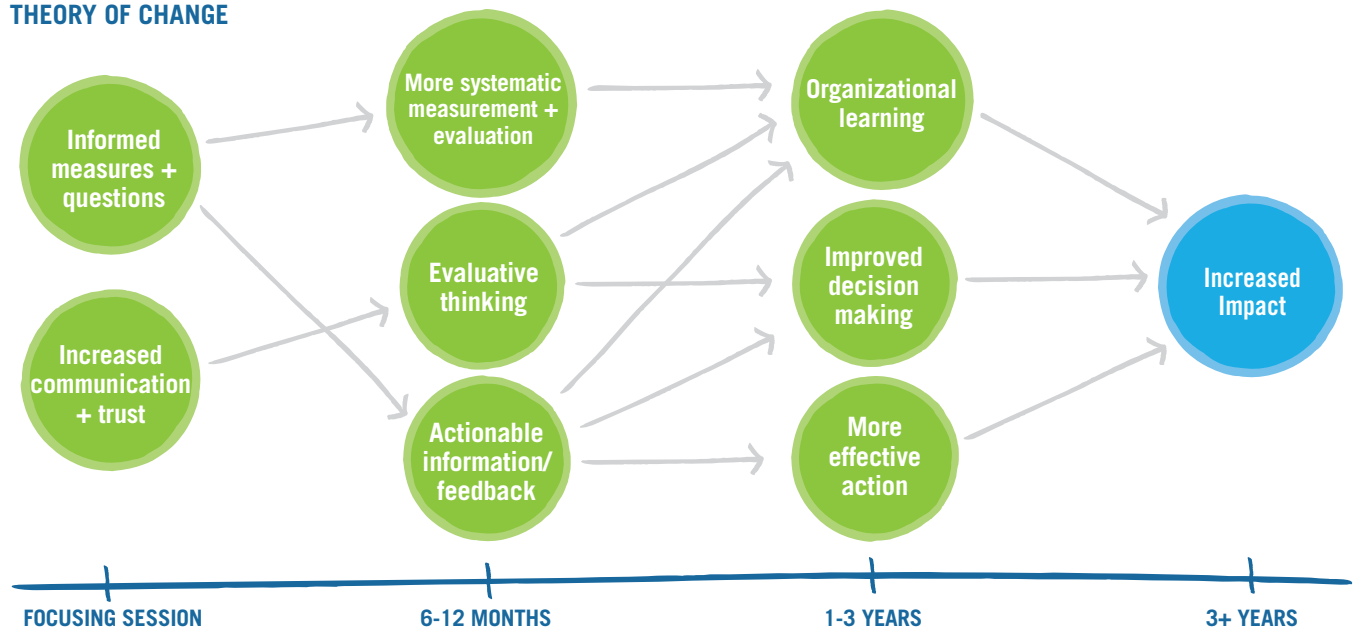
## HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THIS?

Our evaluation practice is guided by the American Evaluation Association principles:

1) **Systematic Inquiry**: Conduct systematic, data-based inquiries
2) **Competence**: Provide competent performance to stakeholders
3) **Integrity**: Display honesty and integrity in our behavior, and attempt to ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process
4) **Respect**: Respect the security, dignity and self-worth of respondents, program participants, clients, and other evaluation stakeholders
5) **Common Good** (AKA Responsibilities for General and Public Welfare): Articulate and take into account the diversity of general and public interests and values that may be related to the evaluation

## HOW DOES STRATEGIC EVALUATION HELP OUR CLIENTS?

1) Creates an explicit and testable program model
2) Facilitates development of concrete, specific evaluation questions that, when answered, are useful for program development, organizational learning, and reporting to funders
3) Builds organizational capacity for more sophisticated data management and use
4) Supports making verifiable claims about how, why, and for whom programs and services work based on credible evidence
5) Facilitates valuable conversations across stakeholder groups
6) Builds time for reflection that is necessary for effective program development

### THEORY OF CHANGE



FOCUSING SESSION     6-12 MONTHS     1-3 YEARS     3+ YEARS

## SELECT STRATEGIC EVALUATION SERVICES CLIENTS

Ada Developers Academy

Brandeis University

Edmonds Community College

Northwest Association for Biomedical Research

Seattle Public Utilities

Technology Access Foundation

University of Washington

Washington Global Health Alliance

Zeno Math

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