

MEYER FOUNDATION | 2020

Progress Indicator Summary

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Progress Indicator Summary

The Meyer Foundation does not specify metrics we require our partners to track. We understand that systems change work is characterized by trial and error and that outcomes can take years to be realized and measured.

However, we do ask our partners to track their progress by classifying information they already collect into broad “progress indicator” categories. Progress indicators are measures of progress or specific achievements related to systems change work that are important benchmarks along the path to larger, systems change goals and population-level change.

These progress indicators are intended to:

1. provide a common way to identify and talk about progress and outcomes;
2. help us understand the progress of individual organizations and the impact that organizations working together have on broader movements to change systems in the region; and,
3. help our partners discuss their progress and impact with others.

This document lists each progress indicator category, how the Foundation defines the indicator, and examples of metrics that organizations may be tracking related to the indicator. The lists of example metrics are not exhaustive, and organizations may be tracking the progress indicators in other ways.

At the end of the grant period, we will ask you to tell us about your work over the term of the grant by reporting on your progress indicators. Meyer approaches grant reporting in a spirit of learning, not accountability or compliance. We encourage you to be candid with us about your successes and your struggles. Because we understand that systems change work does not proceed in a linear or predictable fashion, we will not base future decisions about funding on what you report on your progress indicators.

To develop this framework, we consulted the resources: *A Guide to Measuring Advocacy & Policy*, prepared for the Annie E. Casey Foundation by Organizational Research Services; *A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning*, developed by the Harvard Family Research Project; *Build Your Advocacy Grantmaking*, developed by Alliance for Justice Grassroots Action; and *Learning for Social Change: Evaluating Community Organizing*, developed by Center for Evaluation Innovation and Blueprint Research & Design for Philanthropy.

<i>Progress Indicator</i>	Definition	Example Metrics
<i>Constituent Power & Leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the leadership skills, capacity to advocate, and decision-making power of the people most connected to the issue the organization addresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in attitudes, skills, and knowledge • Changes in self-esteem and self-efficacy • Changes in stature within community or among decision makers
<i>Organizational Power</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to raise issue awareness, influence the narrative and proposed solutions, and increase the will to act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of relationships with decision makers, media, and influential figures • Changes in stature within community or among decision makers • Changes in membership • Changes in turnout to events • Policy wins
<i>Base-Building</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiting and retaining a large group of volunteer members from impacted communities who participate in and help direct and implement the work of the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in the number of members • Increased engagement of members
<i>Advocacy & Organizing Wins</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A major achievement reached when a decision-maker takes a desired action as a result of an organization/movement's influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy wins • Shifts in norms or content of debate • Holding the line against negative actions
<i>Meaningful Impact Following Wins</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of an advocacy, organizing, or policy win on those most directly affected by the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive outcomes for the constituents • Implementation of policies

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in practices • Public accountability for action or inaction • Sustained shifts in norms, narrative, or content of debate • Issue/policy-specific community impact metrics
<i>Organizational Capacity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability of an organization or coalition to lead, adapt, manage, and technically implement a system change strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes staffing • Changes in infrastructure • Changes in skills • Changes in resources • Infusing data and documentation into reflection • Use of data in refinement of strategy or tactics
<i>Public Will</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness of a (non-policymaker) target audience to act in support of an issue, campaign, or policy proposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in public involvement in an issue • Changes in the public narrative when describing the issue • Changes in the level of actions taken by champions of an issue • Changes in voter registration • Changes in voting behavior • Changes in the breadth of partners supporting an issue (e.g., number of “unlikely allies”)

Political Will

	<p>supporting an issue)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in media coverage (e.g., quantity, prioritization, extent of coverage, variety of media “beats,” message echoing) • Changes in awareness of campaign principles and messages among selected groups • Changes visibility of the of the organization’s messages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness of policymakers to act in support of an issue or policy proposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in support of the issue (e.g., number of “unlikely allies” supporting an issue) • Increased awareness of campaign principles and messages among selected groups • Echoing of organizational messaging from policymakers • Policymakers’ development of aligned policy proposals • Policymakers’ adoption of aligned proposals (e.g., ordinance, ballot measure, legislation, legally-binding agreements)

*Organizational
Visibility &
Recognition*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policymakers' implementation support (e.g., equity, adequate funding and other resources for implementing policy)• Policymaker's monitoring and enforcing aligned legislation and policy (e.g., holding the line on bedrock legislation)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identification of an organization or campaign as a credible source on an issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes in opportunities to serve as a subject matter expert (e.g. invitations to provide comment for an elected body, speak on panels, at conferences, in the community)• Changes in media coverage (e.g., quantity, prioritization, extent of coverage, variety of media "beats," message echoing)• Changes in awareness of point of view and messages among selected groups (e.g., policy makers, general public, opinion leaders)• Changes in engagement with the organizations' communications

*Issue
Awareness/Salience*

- Audience recognition that a problem exists or familiarity with the proposed solution the organization is advancing

- Changes in the number of people in the target audience reporting the issue is important to them
- Changes in the importance a target audience assigns an issue or proposed solution
- Changes in how an issue is presented, discussed, or perceived
- Changes in the narrative/framing of the issue

*New or
Strengthened
Advocates &
Champions*

- Previously unengaged individuals who act in support of an issue or position. High-profile individuals who adopt an issue and publicly advocate for it

Changes in the number of advocates recruited
Changes in the number of type of constituencies represented among advocates, including bipartisan or unlikely advocates and champions
Changes in the number and type of advocate actions to support issue

*New or
Strengthened
Partnerships &
Alliances*

- Mutually beneficial relationships among community and system partners, including nontraditional alliances, e.g., bipartisan alliances, unlikely allies, who support or participate in a system change strategy, coordinating

- Changes in number of partners supporting an issue
- Increased level of collaboration (e.g., coordination)
- Changes in alignment of partnership

<p>their work and acting together</p>	<p>efforts (e.g., shared priorities, shared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goals, common accountability system)• Changes in strategic alliances with important partners (e.g., stronger or more powerful• Relationships and alliances)• Changes in the ability of coalitions working toward systems change to identify and understand the issue and barriers
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