

# Results Based Accountability: the Whole Picture

POPULATION ACCOUNTABILITY

**RESULT:** What quality of life do we want for people in our community?  
*Examples: All babies in Vermont are born healthy. All people in Addison County are safely, affordably and permanently housed.*

**EXPERIENCE:** What would these conditions look like if we could see them?

**INDICATOR:** How can we measure these conditions?  
 1-3 pieces of data that represent the status of this RESULT in our community

**BASELINE & STORY:** How do things look? How are we doing?  
 INDICATOR over time (baseline & projection)  
 Who is/isn't achieving this result?

**WHAT WORKS:** What will it take to get the results we want?  
**Include:**  
 Low cost ideas                      Best practices  
 No cost ideas                        Promising models  
 Wild ideas                              Theory/research  
 Unusual ideas                        Knowledge of community

**PARTNERS:** Who are the partners with a role to play?

**STRATEGIES/ACTION PLAN:** What do we propose to do?

**STRATEGIES**  
*contribute to the RESULT but no single strategy is accountable for the whole result*

**\*ACCOUNTABILITY BOUNDARY\***

**\*CROSS WITH INTENTION!\***

PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

**Strategy 1**  
 By Whom?  
 What?  
 For whom?

**Strategy 2**  
 By Whom?  
 What?  
 For whom?

**Strategy 3**  
 By Whom?  
 What?  
 For whom?

**Strategy 4**  
 By Whom?  
 What?  
 For whom?

**OTHER INFLUENCES**

**For each Strategy:**  
 Who do we serve?  
 What do we do?  
 How good of a job are we doing? (Baseline, trend and story)  
     How much?  
     How well?  
     Anyone better off?  
 Who are the partners with a role to play?  
 What works or could work to do better?  
 What do we propose to do?

### **What is Results-Based Accountability™ (also known as RBA)?**

Per Mark Friedman, A disciplined way of thinking and taking action that communities can use to improve the lives of children, youth, families, adults and the community as a whole. RBA is also used by organizations to improve the performance of their programs

And, I would add so much more:

### **Why use RBA?**

The process is easily understood and can be applied to any program, organization, collaboration, etc.

A structured method for important conversations – sometimes for the first time!

Sets the “right” level of accountability

Fosters collaboration and consensus

Clarifies roles – helps avoid mission creep

Uses data and transparency for decision making, evaluation and reporting

Movement in Vermont towards using this system- state level, funders circle, coalitions, non-profits

### **That said, some cautions:**

It is a straightforward process but not necessarily an easy one – strategic planning, program evaluation, communication, data gathering, etc. are complex processes that take time, thoughtful consideration, trial and error, navigation of emotions like fear and unease.

Change is hard and needs commitment and strong leadership

This is not a one time and done process – it is a forever process

Doesn't work if one person is driving the work – needs all hands on deck

Not solely an internal process – requires working with partners, compromise, more time...

Lots of funders are new to this and learning – you own some of the responsibility of setting them straight if they have it wrong. Say Kate McGowan gave you permission!!