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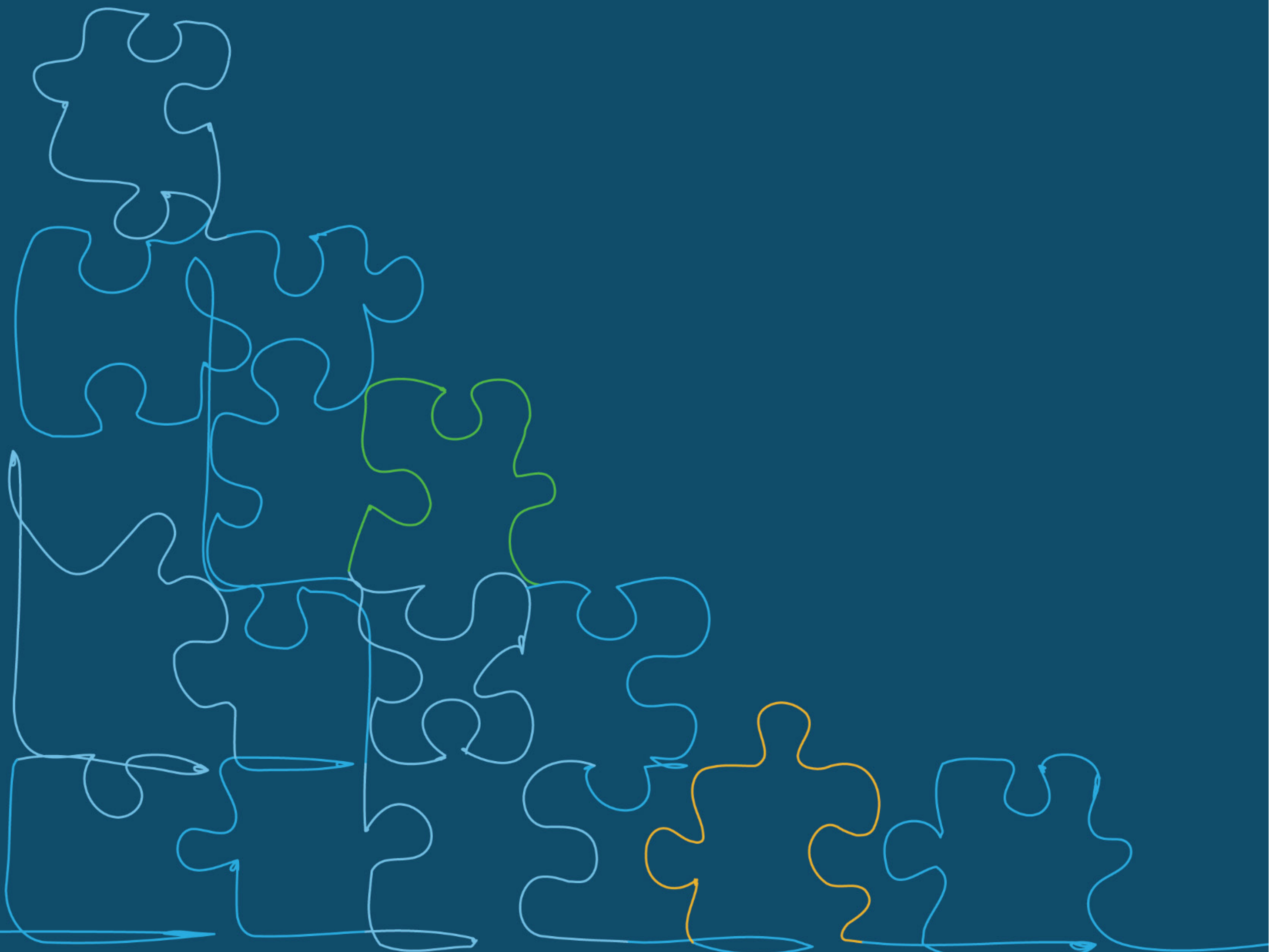

BOOSTING UPWARD MOBILITY

A PLANNING GUIDE FOR LOCAL ACTION

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STEP EIGHT

Develop Your Measurement Plan and Consider Sustainability

In Step 7, you were guided to develop your community vision statement, theory of change, and logic model. Step 8 guides you in creating a Measurement Plan with which to track progress toward your goals and to draft a short section on sustainability that describes how you will sustain the momentum generated during the Mobility Action Planning process. The ongoing measurement and evaluation of the progress of MAP's strategic actions is essential to effective implementation and, ultimately, success. Creating a Measurement Plan based on the Logic Model you defined in Step 7 will provide a guide for accountability, continuous learning, and any necessary alterations on your way to impact. Ideally, every input, output, and outcome you defined for the strategic actions in your Logic Model will have a matching measure of progress that will make up your Measurement Plan.

Below, you will learn about sources and methods for choosing your progress measures for each component in the Logic Model as well as who to assign responsibility for gathering measurement data and reporting progress. You'll also learn ways to communicate results as they occur in the short, medium, and long term throughout implementation, and you'll learn how to adapt based on progress reported along the way

Please remember that Section 8 should be used in tandem with Section 7 as you are building your Logic Model.

As you develop your Measurement Plan, remain mindful of our Framework for Boosting Mobility and Advancing Equity, which we outlined in Step 1. For your actions to be successful, they should challenge racial inequities, contribute to change at the systems level, and improve the lives of the people you serve. The best way to track the outcomes of the time, energy, money, and planning invested into your strategic actions is to proactively define what progress means for each strategic action while keeping these principles in mind.

Step 8.1 Develop Your Measurement Plan

Your Measurement Plan should have two main components: (1) a measurement table that lists the measures you will use to track progress on your strategic actions and (2) a description of who will be charged with measurement and evaluation activities as the MAP actions are implemented and how they will do it. The Learning and Evaluation Lead on the Mobility Coalition should oversee the development of the Measurement Plan, taking care to ensure all stakeholders remain engaged and informed throughout the planning and measurement process. The Data Lead will also be critical in identifying measures of progress. They may choose to engage a team of individuals well suited to advise in this role based on their experience, understanding of the actions, or involvement with the process. This is a great opportunity to solicit the help of **research organizations**, **anchor institutions** (such as universities or hospitals), or other **community-based organizations** that specialize in gathering and analyzing data on your chosen strategic actions. These partners can suggest measures, raise questions about feasibility and capacity, and help clarify definitions at this stage in the process. Though this phase may involve specialized expertise, the full Mobility Coalition should be continually engaged and informed throughout. Ultimately, the full Mobility Coalition will give final approval to the measures and plans.

To build the Measurement Plan, this team should go through the draft Logic Model and assign measures to the inputs, outputs, and outcomes that will help the coalition understand whether progress is being made. Progress measures must use reliable and consistently collected and calculated data to enable evaluation and comparison over time. If any of your measures are ratios, you must ensure that the data source and collection for both the numerator and the denominator remain consistent. It is also important to consider how long you will need to track the information and how feasible it will be to continue collecting it at the same standard with which you begin.

Some of the data sources you used to uncover insights about mobility in your community in Step 5 may be helpful here. If the Mobility Coalition found something in the data that inspired a strategic action, that same data source may be a good contender for tracking progress over time. Valid data for measuring progress can come from a variety of potential sources, such as the following:

- Publicly available national data sources, including the **Mobility Metrics**
- Local administrative data
- Qualitative evaluations such as survey or poll data
- Direct observation, focus groups, and community reporting
- Documenting notable actions, policy reforms, and/or implementation efforts
- Internal data on costs, staffing, and/or participation in programming, community events, and more

Keep in mind that to adequately target systems-level change, the measures you choose ought to be specific, supported by data and evidence, easy to use, and should measure the something about the system that underlies a program, not just a program itself. For further information on what types of measures best capture systems change, consult this Urban Institute brief, "Boosting Mobility and Advancing Equity through Systems Change" (Deich, Fedorowicz, and Turner 2022).

INPUTS

Input measures may reflect the amount or quality of the resources, human labor, relationships, technology, or investments being applied to implement the strategic action. Examples of input measures include dollars spent, number of staff, technology needed, and partnerships.

OUTPUTS

Output measures are likely to rely on administrative data that are locally collected and should measure how much of something was done or how well it was done. Output measures are where you might track the development of new partner relationships, increases in staffing or other resource capacity, and changes being made to the structure or hierarchy of decisionmaking. Examples of output measures include number of workshops facilitated, satisfaction ratings of programs, or number of people served.

OUTCOMES/GOALS

Outcome measures should capture the consequences of outputs. The measures for which you choose to track progress on outcomes should help reveal whether the intended people are being helped or intended conditions are being changed. Measures that track outcomes also include the status of policies that block or support your impact goals, and changes in prevailing narratives or norms. Frequently, you may use the **Mobility Metrics** as outcomes measures, or you may select other measures that are more likely to show change in the shorter term. Examples of outcomes measures include median household income, poverty rate, crime rate, or overall health.

Below, we provide a sample measurement table filled out based on the example strategic actions described in the Logic Model in Section 7. The columns in light blue show the measures assigned to each component of the Logic Model.

Financial Well-Being Example: Measurement Table

Strategic action	Inputs	Input measure	Outputs (short-term goals)	Estimated timeline	Output measure	Outcomes /goals (short- and medium-term)	Estimated timeline	Outcome measure	Impact (long-term goal)
Conduct research to determine what the local living wage is	Research budget Research partners Data on local wages and cost of living, disaggregated by race, gender, or neighborhood	Amount of research budget spent Local living-wage determination	Employers increase wages in X number of new jobs to get close to, or match, the local living wage	6 months	# of institutions and employers committed to, or having already, raised wage # of jobs with increased wages # of jobs paying living wage or higher	Jobs pay living wages that support the cost of living and allow for savings Jobs provide benefits, including paid sick time, and opportunities for advancement	18 months – 2 years	# of county residents working jobs with cost-of-living wages or higher # of county residents with savings Median household income # of county residents that claim the state-level earned income tax credit # of county residents in jobs that provide adequate benefits	All residents achieve financial well-being
Engage with anchor institutions and major employers to discuss opportunities to raise wages	Partnerships with anchor institutions, banks and financial institutions, and major employers	# of institutions and employers solicited # of institutions and employers partnered (e.g. committed to raising wage) # of jobs paying living wage or higher	Employers create X # of new jobs with benefits and opportunities for advancement	12 to 18 months	# of institutions and employers committed to, or having already, raised wage # of jobs with increased wages # of jobs paying living wage or higher				
Form a coalition with the other municipal financial empowerment offices in our state	Connections to other city financial	# of offices solicited # of offices partnered	The state or local government enacts a state or local EITC to boost the after-	12 months	# of organizations signed on to partnership				

Strategic action	Inputs	Input measure	Outputs (short-term goals)	Estimated timeline	Output measure	Outcomes /goals (short- and medium-term)	Estimated timeline	Outcome measure	Impact (long-term goal)
to advocate for a state-level EITC	empowerment offices	Qualitative assessment of strength of each partnership	tax income for more workers		# of low income county residents targeted with outreach				
Partner with local banks and financial institutions to offer new low- to no-fee products and enroll new clients with low incomes	Connections to local banks and financial institutions	# of offices solicited # of offices partnered Qualitative assessment of strength of each partnership	Banks and financial institutions offer quality, non-predatory financial products	12 months	# of organizations signed on to partnership # of low income county residents targeted with outreach	Banks and financial institutions enroll X # of new members in savings accounts with low- to no-fees	1-2 years	# of low- or no-fee accounts opened for low-income county residents	

Even after you have chosen measures to the best of your ability, keep in mind that this process is flexible to adjustment. You may discover that your strategies have shifted course significantly enough to require new measures or that different measures better reflect your strategic actions' goals, more accurately capture impact, or are simply more feasible to collect and track. If so, you should adapt your approach accordingly. If there is a lot of ambiguity around what measures of success would be best for a given strategic action, consider piloting the process with a wider selection to examine the effectiveness of the success measures defined, with a plan to revise or narrow down your scope once you have collected more experience and insight.

After completing the Measurement Table, the Mobility Coalition should clearly define who is responsible for data collection, outcome analysis, and sharing progress in a timely manner so the coalition can adjust as needed. Because several individuals may be charged with measurement and evaluation, you may find it helpful to fill out a RACI chart (available in the supplemental materials for this step) for each measure so it is clear who is responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed in data gathering.

Finally, your Measurement Plan should include the necessary steps required to gather data and track progress throughout the lifetime of implementation. This may include finalizing data-sharing agreements, determining funding resources and sustainability, projecting needed staff capacity, or planning to survey community members. For example, if you plan to use surveys or focus groups to understand outcomes for community members (such as by asking if people are better off than they were before), make sure to include the timing and resources required to execute those plans.

Once your internal team has put together the draft Measurement Plan, the Evaluation Lead should host a meeting with your Mobility Coalition to solicit approval for it. The Mobility Coalition should approve the final set of measures after debating the merits and drawbacks of each recommendation and coming to a consensus around which measures are the most logistically feasible, are most sustainably collectible, capture the outcomes related to your priorities, and will provide enough information for continuous learning.

Step 8.2 Reengage the Community

Deep and meaningful community engagement remains an important step even as you are developing and finalizing your Measurement Plan. You might also ask community members their advice on which measures are most important to them to include in your Measurement Plan. When engaging community members or soliciting feedback through a qualitative assessment, we suggest these general guidelines:

1. Be sure to include frontline staff and people who work in the organizations that implement programs and policies.
2. Consider offering incentives such as a meal, snack, or temporary child care to improve participation or thank participants for their time and effort. Incentives should be proportional such that they compensate participants for their time but do not coerce participation.

3. When drafting questions, examine your language and content for clarity, accessibility, objectivity, and collectability. If you have a Mobility Coalition member with expertise in this area, reach out to them for help or advice.
4. Share your final determinations with the community as a “gut check” that any conclusions or interpretations hold up under public scrutiny.

Step 8.3 Establish Processes for Reporting and Accountability

Your Measurement Plan will primarily function as a tracker of progress for your strategic actions and will help ensure accountability among relevant stakeholders. By defining the frequency of reporting for the measures you choose for each outcome, output, and input, you have started to set up a schedule for collecting, reporting, and sharing progress. As you prepare to release your MAP publicly, it’s important to have a plan for how and when you will engage stakeholders and the community to inform them of the ongoing results of this effort.

When determining your plans for sharing and learning, the Learning and Evaluation Lead should consider how, when, and to whom these progress measures will be reported and communicated. Will these measures be reported to the full Mobility Coalition with a consistent frequency? At what point will certain successes or failures be communicated to the public? Who will make that decision, and how can your team be proactive and thoughtful about the language used in those communications? Which measures could demonstrate the need for a pivot if the intervention doesn’t appear to be producing the impact you’re hoping for?

Be timely and transparent with updates on the progress and failures of your strategic actions, because these are the key insights on which your continuous learning will be based. For many efforts, especially in the early years of implementation, it may be hard to determine whether you are witnessing success or failure, because these terms are subjective to various descriptions and perspectives. Nevertheless, general trends as well as stasis are important to track and report on.

As with earlier stages in this planning progress, you should remain intentional about regularly informing the broader Mobility Coalition and the public about the progress of your efforts. This will help you maintain community investment in the project, increase trust between the community and the coalition partners, and create regular feedback loops to learn what’s working and what’s not. We recommend the following reporting frequencies for different components of your MAP:

- **Biannually:** Every six to eight months, report on the inputs and outputs for each strategic action. Make sure to answer the following:
  - Are we doing what we said we were going to do?
  - Have we held ourselves accountable for shared responsibilities?

    - (Internally) Are there any adjustments that need to be considered or made to budgets, scheduling, staffing, or planned measurement?
- **Annually:** Approximately every year, report on the outputs for each strategic action, first to stakeholders and then to the public. Answer the following:
    - What outputs and outcomes are we seeing?
    - Have we addressed what is not working?
    - Do we need to modify any inputs or actions?
- **Every three to five years:** Every few years, report on your progress toward outcomes. Create a public progress report that details any achievements that deserve celebration and any inputs or actions that required adaptation. Answer the following questions:
    - What positive changes are we seeing among the community or population we hope to impact?
    - What persistent challenges exist that may require a new approach or new thinking?
    - What have we learned about the systems change ecosystem in our community?

Any plan for reporting progress will be contingent on the timeline and frequency of reported results (based on data collection and evaluation) and should consider what method of dissemination will be most likely to reach, and be understood by, target audiences and the community at large. For further guidance and insight on how best to tailor communications that support your goals, please consult this Urban Institute brief, Framing Communications to Drive Social Change (Peiffer and Gallagher 2021). For further guidance on how to strategize communication efforts, please consult this Urban Institute resource and this Policy Impact Plan Template.

Step 8.4 Consider Sustainability

Before releasing the MAP publicly, consider how the Mobility Coalition will sustain momentum around its strategic actions. We know from the work with the inaugural Upward Mobility cohort that sustainability is a primary concern when creating a MAP. Mobility Coalitions want to ensure that interest and enthusiasm in the work does not fade once the plan is released. Community members want equity efforts to be accountable and follow through on their plans.

One way to plan for MAP sustainability is to consider internal and external dynamics for the “who” and the “how” for each of your strategies. The table below illustrates how these dynamics overlap and questions to consider when they do.

	Internal	External
Who	**Questions to consider:** Who from our team is best positioned to ensure this work continues? Are there plans for the work to continue if staff or leadership changes? **Might include:** Internal government working groups, internal government champions, internal project leads	**Questions to consider:** Which partners are needed to ensure this work continues? Where are there gaps in our internal team that could be filled by external people? **Might include:** Champions outside of local government, community advisory boards, nonprofits, funders with aligned priorities
How	**Questions to consider:** Where is our team well positioned to carry out this work, and are there gaps? What do we still need to learn? What does my team need to do to ensure this work continues? **Might include:** Team trainings, internal feedback loops, redundancy in responsibilities, leveraging data, grafting MAP strategies over existing initiatives, MAP adoption and launch activities	**Questions to consider:** What needed work cannot be executed within our local government to sustain this plan? What can partners provide to sustain our MAP strategies? Is there adequate funding outside of the government to sustain the work? **Might include:** Regular community feedback sessions, investment from private parties, service delivery with nonprofits

Source: Lee Evans, "What Does It Take to Design a Sustainable Mobility Action Plan?" (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2022), https://upward-mobility.urban.org/what-does-it-take-design-sustainable-mobility-action-plan.

Other Sustainability Considerations

Your range of strategic actions likely involve many different organizations with different levels of staffing and capacity. However, for implementation to be effective, continuity and sustained engagement are key to the execution of those actions. It is important to help your partners stay motivated and engaged by highlighting short-term successes as they occur. It's equally important to encourage flexibility in the face of unexpected barriers, so that medium- and long-term goals aren't undermined by short-term failures.

When reporting on the progress of any strategic action, it is important to be specific about who is responsible for the outcomes, who was impacted, and most importantly, the value and importance of these results in the context of your long-term goals. By identifying both implementing staff and funders who allow the work to continue, you will create a positive feedback loop that will validate and maintain funder interests and ensure that the resources needed to achieve success are not lost to time or disinterest.

Step 8.5 Make a Plan for Continuous Learning and Evaluation

Assessing the progress of the strategic actions in your MAP is not a discrete process contingent on specific intervals of reporting; it should be ongoing once your actions are under way. By continuously tracking progress, the Mobility Coalition will learn how things are going and adapt to any signals that actions or measures are not going as hoped. Any failures to achieve an intended goal or benchmark are critical opportunities for learning. Importantly, such moments are valuable touchpoints for considering whether you are falling short because of (1) exogenous factors outside of your control, (2) ineffective implementation, or (3) unrealistic or misguided expectations about how change occurs (as laid out in your Theory of Change).

Additionally, continuous learning is important because it helps you to track not only whether things are succeeding or failing but also *why* they are succeeding or failing. By asking staff responsible for implementing strategic actions why they think things are working or not working, you will gain critical insights about the conditions and systems characteristics needed to boost mobility from poverty and advance equity. For more on continuous learning, see the Continuous Learning Framework at the end of this step, which details three progressive types of learning.

Step 8.6 Write the Relevant Components of Your MAP

As you near the end of your Mobility Action Planning process, you'll want to prepare the versions of your measurement plan and sustainability considerations that will appear in your Mobility Action Plan.

MAP Component: Measurement Plan

MAP Component: Sustainability Considerations

Your sustainability considerations may also include your plans for continuous learning and improvement. See the supplemental materials at the end of the section for templates that can help you write these sections.

STEP 8 REVIEW CHECKLIST

- [ ] The Mobility Coalition has created a Measurement Plan by assigning measures to the input, output, and outcome elements of the logic model.
- [ ] The Mobility Coalition has shared the Measurement Plan with the community for feedback.
- [ ] The Mobility Coalition has established a plan for reporting and accountability.
- [ ] The Mobility Coalition has made a plan for continuous evaluation and learning.
- [ ] The Mobility Coalition has considered sustainability.
- [ ] The Mobility Coalition has created a version of its measurement plan and sustainability considerations to be included in the final MAP.

STEP EIGHT

Supplemental Materials

1. Continuous Learning Framework
2. RACI Chart
3. Blank Measurement Table

Continuous Learning Framework

Use the guided questions below to reflect on how well your strategic actions are going.

Type of learning	Questions
Single loop *These insights point you to strategies for improving logistics and execution*	What are we learning about what we are doing? 1. What are the strengths and limitations of our strategic actions? 2. What are the strengths and limitations of the relationships and processes we have leveraged to implement our strategic actions? 3. What are the strengths and limitations of the capacity and resources we currently have?
Double loop *These insights will give you a better understanding of context and the relationships you must strengthen or leverage*	What are we learning about our assumptions, understanding, and thinking? 1. What challenges are we trying to address with our implementation? How or why do these come up? 2. What are the systems, or in what context, is our challenge embedded? How does this inform our choices? 3. What are the strengths and limitations of our current measurement strategy? 4. What are the strengths and limitations of our current implementation strategy?
Triple loop *These insights point you to the landscape that is informing your work and the assumptions that need to reinforced or challenged*	What are we learning about how we are being? 1. What emotional triggers are tied to this strategic action? 2. What habitual responses inform this action and its measurement? 3. What social norms and group dynamics are relied on during implementation and measurement? 4. What individual or shared values (or narratives) are informing the implementation or measurement of this action?

*** This worksheet has been adapted from The Tamarack Institute.[22]

RACI Chart

Fill out the table using the letters R, A, C, and I to assign responsibilities for certain measures to specific organizations.

- Responsible (R) parties do the work required to complete the activity.
- Accountable (A) parties delegate the work, provide support, and hold responsible parties accountable to deadlines and requirement.
- Consulted (C) parties periodically provide input on the activity based on their level of expertise or involvement with relevant activities.
- Informed (I) parties are those who are kept in the loop on all progress that is made.

Measure	Individual or organization 1	Individual or organization 2	Individual or organization 3	Individual or organization 4
Input measure				
Output measure				
Outcome measure				

Blank Measurement Table

The following is a blank template that you can adapt as necessary to clearly identify the progress measures for each aspect of the logic model underpinning each of your strategic actions.

Strategic action	Inputs	Input measure	Outputs (short-term goals)	Estimated timeline	Output measure	Outcomes/goals (short and medium term)	Estimated timeline	Outcome measure	Impact (long-term goal)