



## Questions?

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## Evaluation Research & Consulting

Across the U.S., there exist many different kinds of programs, interventions, policies, and initiatives that seek to strengthen communities and the people who live within them. Some programs aim to distribute food to those who are hungry, or encourage them to make healthier food choices. Food hubs and good food business incubators are also on the rise. Other community leaders seek to reduce crime and poverty, advance economic development opportunities, provide skills to the hard-to-employ, expand affordable housing, help low-income families build and leverage assets, and improve public health, especially in the area of diet-related diseases. Meanwhile, CDFIs are focused on microloans and other types of community lending. And here we have named only a few types of community-focused efforts. But are these projects resulting in the intended effect? Evaluation addresses this question and many more, including:

- How could the program, policy, etc., be improved?
- Has it resulted in its intended effects?
- What is working well? What is falling short? Why?
- Are there unintended consequences, either good, bad, or neutral?
- Even if things seem to be going okay, or even well, is there another strategy or approach that would generate a better result?
- What was the theory of change that guided the initial effort? Has your framework of how “your world works” changed, or does it need to change or at least adapt to unforeseen circumstances? If so, why? What have you learned along the way?
- How could an evaluation strengthen your organizational/strategic plan and broader goals and programs?

**MG is expert at providing a neutral, third-party, systematic, evidence-based approach** that addresses these and other questions. Many funders require evaluation. Some do not. Either way, evaluation is an extremely valuable tool. Some organizations wait until a program is fully planned – or completed – before considering and starting an evaluation process. While conducting an evaluation is worthwhile at any stage of the game, we find it is best to envision the evaluation early, before the project even gets started.

**We can help develop a theory of change:** What are you trying to accomplish and why? For example, if you and your team run a food bank system, you might be trying to solve hunger. Does that involve feeding everyone (addressing the symptom), or going further: solving hunger (addressing the causes). Why are some families experiencing hunger in the first place? What default socioeconomic system is currently in place that results in some families missing meals? How does this system work? How do you propose to make a meaningful, lasting difference? We help you think through these and other questions. Then we draft an evaluation framework and solicit your feedback. We have a wide range of methodologies and approaches depending on measurement and program goals; your situation is unique and we provide a custom response.

**It is always a good time to think through how you seek to change your world for the better, and how you intend to measure results. Call today to begin the conversation.**