

City of Oakland DRE Team Workshop: Results-based Accountability

Aug. 13, 2021 | Darlene Flynn, Jacque Larrainzar, Ayanna Allen

What is this doc?

This doc captures my notes from a 2.5-hour workshop presented by the city's incredible Dept. of Race and Equity. This is a city training and I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to participate. These notes capture a lot of verbatim content shared by Darlene and her team. Attribution should go to the DRE team.

RBA overview

- ☐ RBA has been around for a while, not a new method
 - ☐ Mark Friedman founder of RBA, Erika Bernabei - consultant to DF
 - ☐ Racial justice and equity was not baked in de facto when developed but works well with it.
- ☐ Workshop is supplemental training provided to city employees (not required)
 - ☐ DRE also offers Advanced Racial Equity Academy next session begins September 13th, 1p-3:30p (registration: Ayanna at asallen@oaklandca.gov)
- ☐ Level-setting
 - ☐ "You can't be neutral on a moving train" —Howard Zinn
 - ☐ Train is in motion and pre-designed to head in a certain direction, with certain inequities baked into the rou
 - ☐ Intention isn't enough when the train is in motion; we are the only ones who can change its direction; if we do nothing/sit back, the train ends up where it was destined to go

What is it

- ☐ Data-driven
- ☐ Starts with ends; works backwards to means
- ☐ Establish results/outcomes of community well-being
- ☐ Use desired results to drive decision-making
- ☐ Benefits

- ☐ Improves lives
- ☐ Gets from talk to action more quickly
- ☐ Common sense process easy to understand
- ☐ Helps surface assumptions/challenges that can be barriers to innovation
- ☐ Builds collaboration & consensus
- ☐ Uses data and transparency to support accountability for both actors and acted upon

DRE framework

- ☐ Disaggregated data, interpreted with community, is used consistently and constructively (eg not reinforcing deficit thinking)
- ☐ Solutions focus on root cause, so they're more likely to disrupt/shift racially-disproportionate outcomes
- ☐ Problem-solving relationships ensure team can course-correct constructively, rather than blaming people/community/team because we understand the outcomes are embedded in the systems themselves

Data

- ☐ Both RBA & data require **culture shift** around data and measurement
 - ☐ Transparent, non-punitive, culture of analysis and *use* that is *different* from compliance reporting
 - ☐ Communities aren't blamed for system failures
 - ☐ Rationale and decision-making is transparent to community (share our work)
 - ☐ Begin with data you have, build better data as you go (we almost never start with the data we want; start with proxy data, qualitative, etc, whatever we have, then add quant and better measures)

Accountability

- ☐ State of being accountable; especially an obligation/willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's own actions
- ☐ What does it look like to "hold someone accountable"?
 - ☐ Hard to define because accountability is applied to oneself—it starts with us, is internally-driven

- ☐ Exercise:
 - ☐ Who are you accountable to in this work?
 - ☐ OO members
 - ☐ How do you know you've met your obligations?
 - ☐ They keep coming back, provide positive feedback, and are consistent contributors to the group/projects
 - ☐ How do you account for results to your community?
 - ☐ Share out details of decisions
 - ☐ Ask for input on decisions
- ☐ Applying RBA to our accountability work (at the city)
 - ☐ Population-level accountability: community wellness/quality of life measures (disaggregated by race), using Oakland Equity Indicators
 - ☐ Performance accountability: are service recipients better off? Are BIPOC better off? How are they perceiving impacts on their well-being?

RBA Definitions

- ☐ Population definitions
 - ☐ *Result or Outcome*: Condition of well-being for children, adults, families, or communities
 - ☐ *Indicator or Benchmark*: A measure which helps quantify the achievement of a result
- ☐ Performance definitions
 - ☐ *Performance measure*: How well a program, agency or service system is working. There are 3 types:
 - ☐ How *much* did we do?
 - ☐ Often easier to measure, can be measured from a distance
 - ☐ How *well* did we do it?
 - ☐ Is anyone better off? Are BIPOC communities better off? And how do we know?
 - ☐ More complex but most important measure
 - ☐ We can't know without being in the community and hearing from the community
 - ☐ Examples
 - ☐ Safe community: Result
 - ☐ Crime rate: Indicator/benchmark
 - ☐ Average police dept. response time: performance measure

- ☐ Educated workforce: Result/Outcome
- ☐ Adult literacy rate: Indicator
- ☐ People have living wage jobs & income: Result/Outcome
- ☐ % of people with living wage jobs and income: Indicator
- ☐ % of participants in job training who get living wage jobs: Performance Measure
- ☐ From ends to means: start with your outcomes, then define your indicators, then your performance measures
 - ☐ If we focus too much on means, we ignore the ends and miss the *connection* between means and ends (why we are doing this in the first place)
- ☐ **Critical**
 - ☐ **The whole community cannot experience well-being if communities of color experience disproportionately lower rates of well-being.**
 - ☐ **Outcomes should be stated positively (e.g. health, not sickness), to disrupt deficit thinking and enable us to visualize what's actually possible**

Exercise

- ☐ What is a condition of well-being (results) that you want for ppl in your community?
 - ☐ People (racially proportionate) feel their gov represents and supports them, and that they are a part of decision-making
- ☐ What would these conditions look like if you could see or experience them?
 - ☐ People vote, run for office, show up to city meetings, submit public comments, can have nuanced conversations about different issues impacting their lives, at rates similar to their population representation
- ☐ What indicators would you use to measure it?
 - ☐ Increase in # comments submitted
 - ☐ Increase in voting rates,
- ☐ Reflections
 - ☐ How to scaffold from long-term outcomes to short-term measures
 - ☐ Eg reduced pollution (long-term outcome), fewer permits issues to polluting business types (short-term measure)
 - ☐ How does a library measure literacy?
 - ☐ How to measure qualitative outcomes?

How to bring a racial equity lens to real life conversations

- ☐ Respond in a culturally relevant, contextualized manner connected to the vision you have for racial equity
 - ☐ Requires knowing your vision for racial equity!
- ☐ Move beyond *any* community and name the specific communities impacted by inequity (BIPOC—and *which* BIPOC?)
- ☐ Describe *whose* vision the picture reflects?
- ☐ Does it reinforce a deficit orientation?
- ☐ Does it authentically reflect what a result means in Oakland?

Ways to come up with indicators

- ☐ Look elsewhere, then apply local lens
- ☐ <probably some stuff I missed>

Root cause analysis is critical

- ☐ Keeps us from accepting the dominant narrative or implicit biases or assumptions
- ☐ Should be completed *with* impacted communities
- ☐ Ask why 3-5 times to move past superficial understandings of the source of racial disparity to get to underlying cause/history (what are the causes/forces/power dynamics at work?)
 - ☐ Why are people poor? Because they don't have high-paying jobs.
 - ☐ Why don't people have high-paying jobs? Because they don't have advanced education.
 - ☐ Why don't they have advanced education? Because they
- ☐ Use skilled, preferably multiracial, facilitation to push back on views that reinforce racism and actively surface the historic and present day root causes underlying assumptions
 - ☐ The “why” process sometimes surfaces embedded racist assumptions that need to be disrupted

Brainstorm solutions

- ☐ No one project or strategy will solve the problems, but over time they will work together to do so
- ☐ Identify a large number of strategies in multiple categories

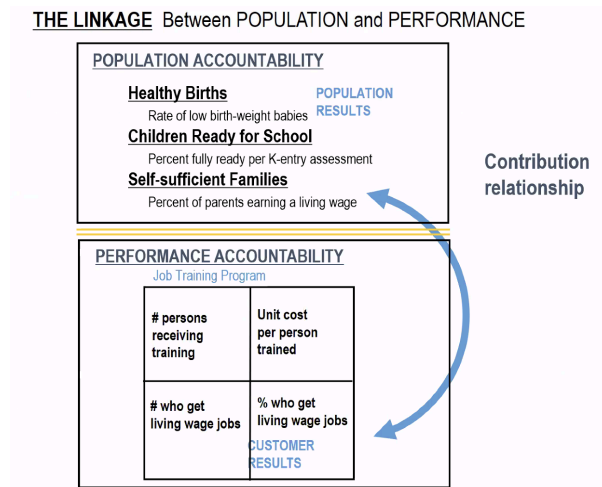
- ☐ This is different than evidence-based practices, which don't always apply a racial equity lens
- ☐ Categories for brainstorming
 - ☐ Low-cost/no-cost ideas (low-hanging fruit)
 - ☐ Ideas identified through community knowledge
 - ☐ Promising practices
 - ☐ Evidence-based practices
 - ☐ Out-of-the-box/"Imagine if" ideas
- ☐ **Don't get too attached to solutions before consulting with and gathering community wisdom.** Lead with allyship attitude — run alongside, don't run ahead of the communities we hope to serve.

Connect performance measures

- ☐ Steps
 - ☐ Identify programmatic solutions that are connected back to one or more indicators
 - ☐ Preference for solutions that address root causes
 - ☐ Identify performance measures that show how your work is connected to those indicators and use those performance measures to track your impact over time
- ☐ You're not holding a single program/project to do all the lifting toward an outcome indicator; but we need to be able to see how it plays into/connects/feeds the indicator.
- ☐ **So: program delivery metrics (eg % of program grads w/ living wage jobs) are different from population-level measures (eg % of pop with living wage jobs), but they become more granular proxies for pop-level measures and you can see the direct relationship.**
- ☐ Examples
 - ☐ How much did we do?
 - ☐ # orgs/people served
 - ☐ # activities
 - ☐ How well did we do?
 - ☐ % common measures (eg workload ratio, staff composition, % staff fully trained)
 - ☐ % activity-specific measures (eg % people completing activity)

Application

THE LINKAGE Between POPULATION and PERFORMANCE

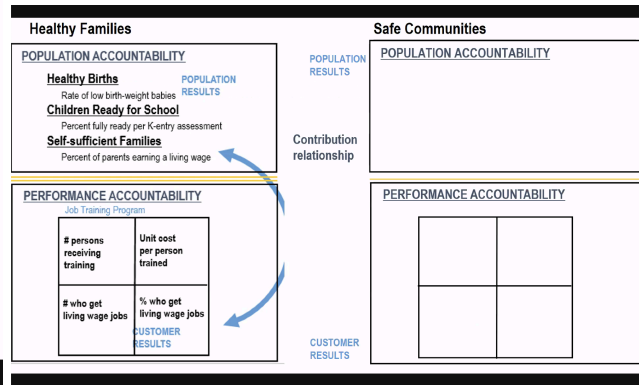


- ☐ First purpose of performance measures is to *improve performance*
 - ☐ This goes against culture; performance measures are often used as judgment, followed by punishment/consequence/reward
 - ☐ We must allow ourselves to shift focus to the outcomes we want to see, to reframe as a process of discovery and growth and envisioning the future.
 - ☐ We don't need everyone, we just need *enough*.
- ☐ Different kinds of progress
 - ☐ Data
 - ☐ Population indicators: actual turned curves, movement for better away from baseline
 - ☐ Program performance indicators:
 - ☐ Storytelling

What's next? Putting it to work

Developing Performance Measures

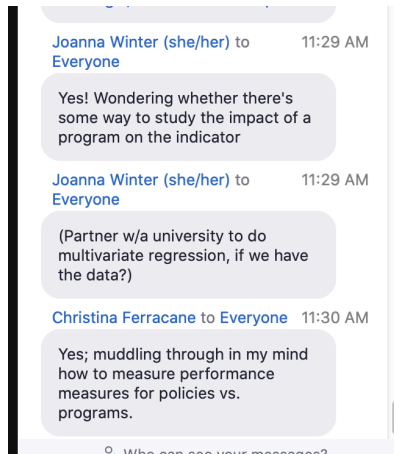
How much did we do?	How well did we do it?
# organizations/ people served # activities (by type of activity)	% common measures e.g. workload ratio, staff composition, % staff fully trained/culturally competent % activity-specific measures e.g. % timely % people completing activity/training attendance rate, % correct and complete
Is anyone better off? Who? How do we know?	
#/% skills/knowledge e.g. knowledge of how to start a small biz #/% attitude/opinion e.g. feel a sense of belonging in the organization #/% behavior e.g. school attendance, residents included in decision-making #/% circumstance e.g. working, in stable housing	



- ☐ Track 1: Population accountability
 - ☐ Establish results
 - ☐ Establish indicators
 - ☐ Create indicators report card
- ☐ Track 2: Performance accountability
 - ☐ Performance measures, for programs, projects, brigade
 - ☐
- ☐ Write it down.
 - ☐ Who's doing what, when?
 - ☐ What resources are needed?
 - ☐ Is this long-term or short-term?
 - ☐ What is the active role of community leadership in making these decisions?

Misc thoughts/notes/questions

- ☐ Elective office is a punitive rewards system that forces short-term thinking and therefore inadvertently often undermines this work. Which is why administrative staff is so critical.



Resources shared

- ☐ For good examples of how cities have measured attitude/opinion you can look at <https://www.oecd.org/statistics/measuring-well-being-and-progress.htm>
- ☐ For methods of engaging BIPOC communities in the creation of results, indicators, and performance measures look at the guide I just shared with you or you can also look at <https://portlandmeansprogress.com/metrics> with examples of how to measure opinion and how to involve BIPOC
- ☐ For planning related topics check this: <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OPCD/Demographics/communityindicatorsreport2020.pdf>
- ☐ Erika Bernabei - here is her webpage; <https://www.equityandresults.com>
 - ☐ Here is the link to guide she prepared: Racial Equity: Getting to Results. https://www.racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/GARE_Getting_toEquity_July2017_PUBLISH.pdf
- ☐ Mark Friedman; wrote a book called "Trying Hard Is Not Good Enough" <https://www.policylink.org/node/38541>
- ☐ Aaron Zisser, CPRA, Oakland Police Commission
 - ☐ Just formed [Ad Hoc Community Policing Commission](#)