Process to Develop a Shared Measurement System for Maine State Nutrition Action Council (SNAC)

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Summary
U.S. federal nutrition programs are required to coordinate efforts across a variety of public health sectors by convening SNACs. Evaluation of state-level collaborations is encouraged; however, most SNACs do not have an established framework. To align efforts, track progress, and share successes, Maine SNAC developed a shared measurement system based on tenets of collective impact. The shared measurement system captured data from a variety of SNAC members for development of infographics. The infographics provided a compelling way to showcase collective impact.

Program Description
Maine SNAC meets quarterly to support strategies on obesity prevention, nutrition, and food security. Two subcommittees collaborated on goals to promote participation in school meals and increase use of federal nutrition benefits among program recipients.

Objective
The purpose of this project was to demonstrate how a shared measurement system can be utilized to track data and measure progress toward achieving mutual goals of a SNAC.

Methods
Altarum, the external evaluator, worked with Maine SNAC leaders to develop logic models and an evaluation framework based on the mission and workplans of the Maine SNAC. A shared measurement system was then developed to aggregate data from multiple sources using common process and outcome measures aligned with the framework. A template was distributed to SNAC members to compile data on these measures. Altarum reviewed and summarized collected data to prepare an infographic on the SNAC’s success in reaching goals.

Results
In 2021-2022, the shared measurement system captured data from 14 Maine SNAC members from 5 sectors. Data included surveys (3 sources), federal assistance program participation (3 sources), social marketing analytics (5 sources), and nutrition incentive program sales/redemption (2 sources). The shared measurement system demonstrated successes of SNAC initiatives:
• School Meal Benefit toolkit was disseminated to 1,206 stakeholders and a social media campaign reached 34,909 Mainers.
• Postcards to increase purchasing power of federal nutrition benefits reached up to 41,636 Maine households.

Two infographics were produced and distributed to more than 50 state, federal, and non-governmental organizations.

Conclusions
Presenting tabulated data in an infographic is an appealing way to highlight collective impact. This process can be replicated in the future by other SNACs or coalitions.

Maintaining a shared measurement system allows for the systematic compilation of data from multiple partners to demonstrate progress toward achieving mutual goals.

Aligning Efforts | Tracking Progress | Sharing Successes | Achieving Accountability