



Healthy Cities and Communities:
A Systems Approach to
Strengthening Families and
Children

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Welcome!



- **Part 1:** How was systems evaluation applied to Healthy Cities and Communities investment?
- **Part 2:** How can systems evaluation be applied across areas of your work?

About

First 5 San Bernardino (F5SB)



Funded through
Proposition 10 –
tobacco tax revenue



Focus areas- Early
Care and Education,
Health, Family
Support, and
"Systems"



Historically procured for
direct service, initiative
based investments.
As funds decrease, shift
toward **systems level**
investments.

About

Harder+Company Community Research



Social research and
planning firm



Offices in
San Francisco,
Sacramento,
San Diego
Los Angeles, California



We aim to help our clients
achieve social impact
through quality research,
strategy, and organizational
development

What did we do?



Overview

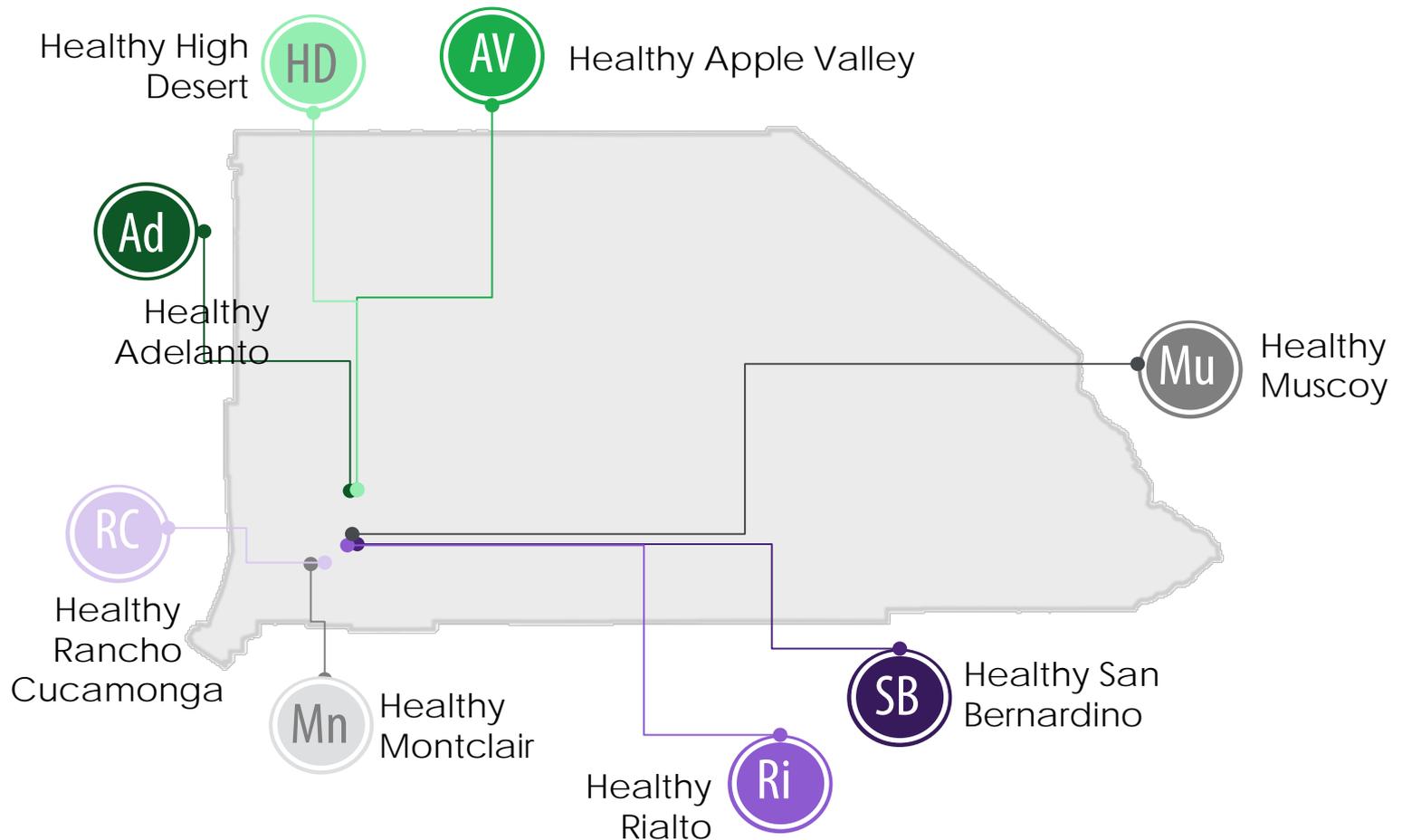
Healthy Cities and Communities (HCC)

Individual HCC have deep history in San Bernardino County. Coordinated county efforts began in 2006.

HCC initiatives embody a broad view of health, including behavior, the environment, and health systems

HCC bring cross-sector stakeholder together to impact community built environment, policies, and overall integration of health systems

8 HCCs Funded by F5SB



Why evaluate?

New kind of investment for F5SB. There was a need to show impact of funding.

Shift of evaluation from outcome evaluation to systems evaluation.

External evaluator critical in this effort due to time and focus necessary.

Evaluation of HCCs

Understanding the context

Communities come with different needs, assets, and champions.

Utilized systems thinking to make sense of HCC efforts.

Looked at how HCCs addressed

- **Integrated systems**
- **Built environment**
- **Policy**

Systems Evaluation

What is a system?

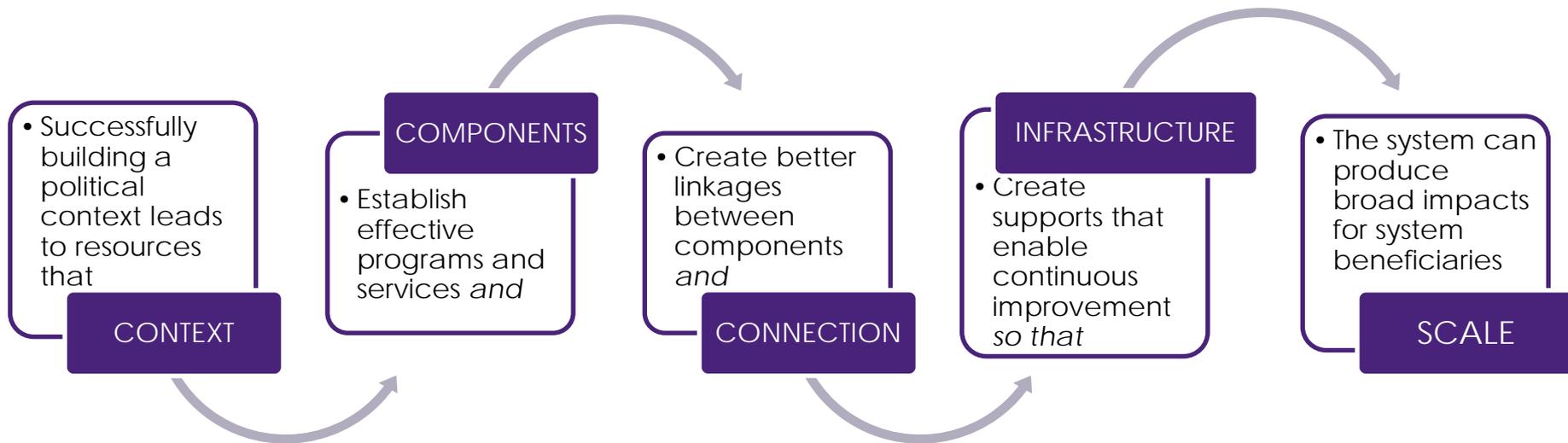
- “A system is a group of **interacting**, **interrelated**, and **interdependent** components that form a complex and unified whole.”

Pegasus Communications. *What is systems thinking?* (2007)

- Overall goal is achieved through the actions and interactions of its various components.

Systems Evaluation

How do we make sense of systems?



Systems Evaluation

Conducting the evaluation

Mixed methods
approach

Review of secondary
data, including
reports to the funder,
policy briefs, and
internal reports
shared by HCCs

In depth, multi-
stakeholder
group
interviews

What did we learn?



About HCC Initiatives

Champions matter;
HCCs with strong
city-level support
were able to effect
more substantial
systems change

The sustainability of
HCCs will be ensured
by focusing on the
systems work rather
than programs

The tools provided
via the evaluative
were useful to HCCs
for communicating
progress

About investing in & evaluating systems

Getting in
(and out of)
the way

Funder is just
ONE piece of
larger system

Grappling
with
ambiguity
and unclear
outcomes

About investing in & evaluating systems

Aligning expectations for what outcomes look like

Systems evaluation can help further link stakeholders

Systems evaluation takes a lot of resources

How can this be applied to your own work?



Activity

Pick a system

1. Early Childhood Education
2. Family Support
3. Health & Wellness

Map your system

- *What is this system trying to accomplish?*
- *Who are the "players" in the system?*
- *How do they interact with one another?*

**Identify potential
evaluation
opportunities**

Share out

- What stood out about the systems you saw around the room?
- How would you use this approach?



THANK YOU!

Stay connected!



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