

Building Rural Livelihood



A Thinking and Action Framework for Designing RDP Program and Grantmaking Efforts



The RDP Question:

How can community foundations
use *grantmaking and program* activities
to *enhance the economic security*
of *low-income rural families*
and the *communities* where they live?

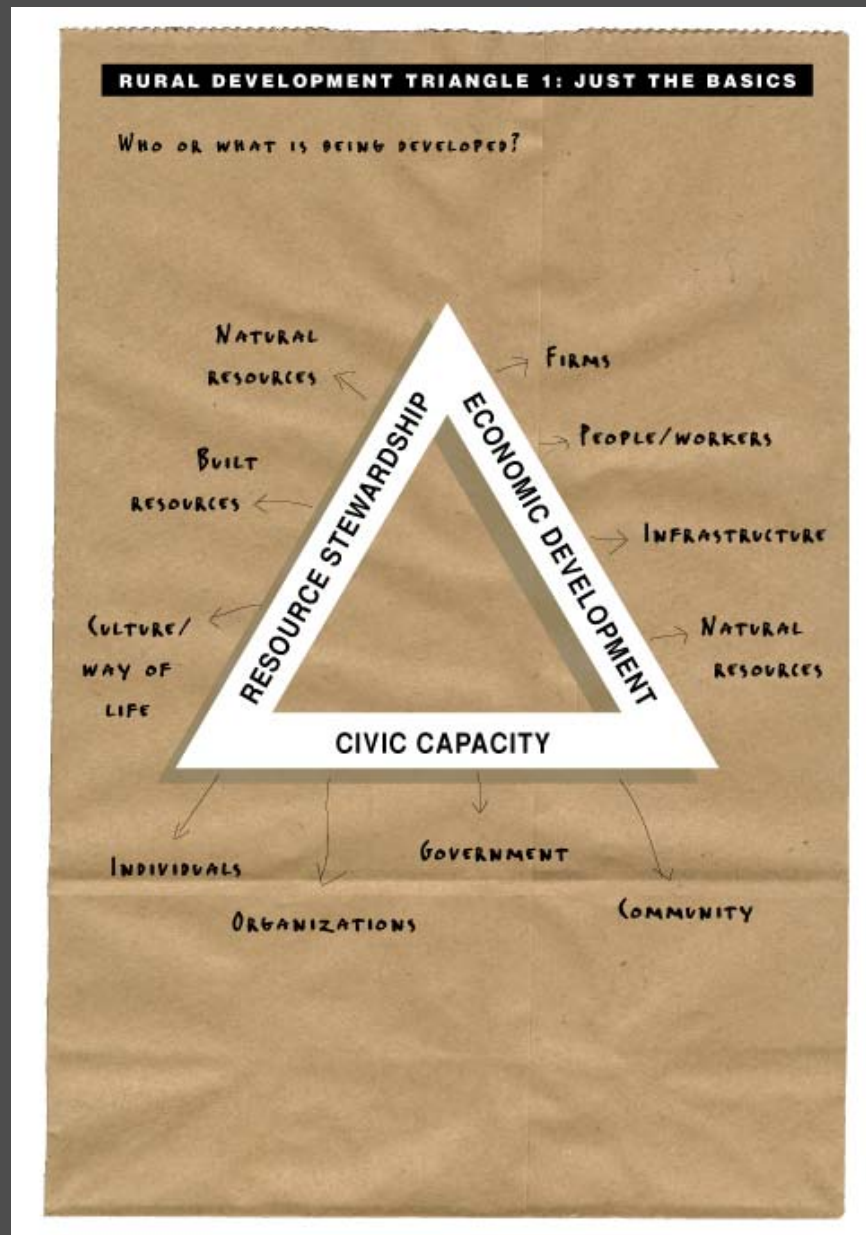
Dance the *BRL Four-Step*

- Think Rural
- Take Notice (of RDP Maxims)
- Know Yourself First!
- Navigate the *RDP Program Design Circle*

Step 1: Think Rural



What does it mean to improve
rural futures?





Economic Development

...covers development of the
broad economic base as well as
targeted economic opportunities
for the disadvantaged

Greater equity,
in terms of the distribution of wealth and income,
is an important core value
to keep in mind and promote
when making economic development decisions.



Resource Stewardship

...means that *natural resources*, the *resources built by people*, and the *culture and way of life* of the community and its people are both *used well today* and *preserved* for the use of future generations.

Over time,
a community must steward
its natural resources and way of life
if development is to be maintained
at a healthy and *sustainable* level.



Civic Capacity

...refers to the ability of a community's citizens to work together over a sustained period to shape a collective future

....

...includes building individual skills, organizational competence, and community will, connections and effectiveness.

It is the *base* from which development decisions - and development action - takes place.



Triangle Truisms

- *Joint appearances.* Some approaches connected to one side or aspect of the triangle are identical or closely related to approaches on other sides.
- *Impact happens.* Choose any one approach on any side; now think of how pursuing that approach might affect prospects or aspects of each of the other two sides - it most surely will - for good or ill!
- *Tension will out...* On the "for ill" side of that equation, there is some inherent tension among decisions made on the different sides of the triangle.
- *And so can synergy.* On the "for good" side, you might be able to devise a development approach that engages development on all three sides in a healthy way.

Signs of a Healthy Community

Healthy

- ➊ Optimism
- ➋ Collaboration
- ➌ Solving problems
- ➍ Challenge ideas
- ➎ Focus on the future
- ➏ Diversity
- ➐ Sharing power
- ➑ "We can do it"

Unhealthy

- ➊ Pessimism
- ➋ Confrontation
- ➌ Solution wars
- ➍ Challenge people
- ➎ Re-debate the past
- ➏ Exclusion
- ➐ Hoarding power
- ➑ "Nothing works"

Step 2: Take Notice

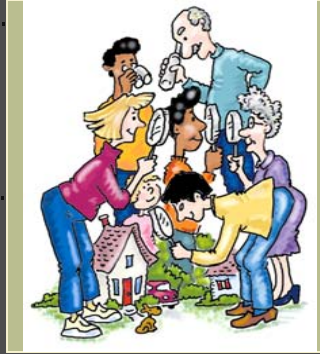


Start up pointers (or maxims)
from RDP practice



Take Notice:

- ❖ There is no cookie cutter approach; wholesale replication of someone else's rural development strategy is not your best route
- ❖ Don't reinvent rural development wheels
- ❖ Be a neutral agent for change, not a competing actor
- ❖ You are creating the path you are walking; prepare yourselves to be in constant touch and to be flexible



Step 3: Know Yourself (First)



Gauge your foundation's
rural readiness.



1. What is the current rural capacity, motivation, and *mojo* of your community foundation?

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- Staff and board rural connections
- Board and advisory meeting minutes
- Review of existing workload
- Board and staff rural "will"

2. What have you learned from your foundation's *rural experience*?

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- Program and grantmaking history
- Grantee reports
- Evaluation and learning activities and reports

3. What is your community foundations's *image* with potential rural "customers"?

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- Rural donor lists
- Rural or rural-savvy donor interviews
- Rural nonprofit scan
- Rural nonprofit interviews or surveys
- Rural philanthropic scan

4. What do and don't you *know about* your rural regions, issues organizations and people?

R E S O U R C E S

- Rural media (newspapers, radio stations)
- Rural civic and business groups
- Rural social service groups and churches
- Associations/alliances of nonprofits
- Other philanthropic organizations
- Rural community meetings
- Research and data *(p.30)*

5. What is your *foundation's rationale* for involvement in efforts focused on low-income rural communities and populations in your state or region?

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- You need a shared board and staff answer to this question because...
-Rural people and rural players will ask you!
- *To develop one, we recommend you proceed to.....*

Step 4: Navigate the RDP Program Design Circle



Taken our thinking from Steps 1-3, how will we use our program and grantmaking efforts to enhance the economic security of low-income rural families and communities?

THE RDP PROGRAM DESIGN CIRCLE

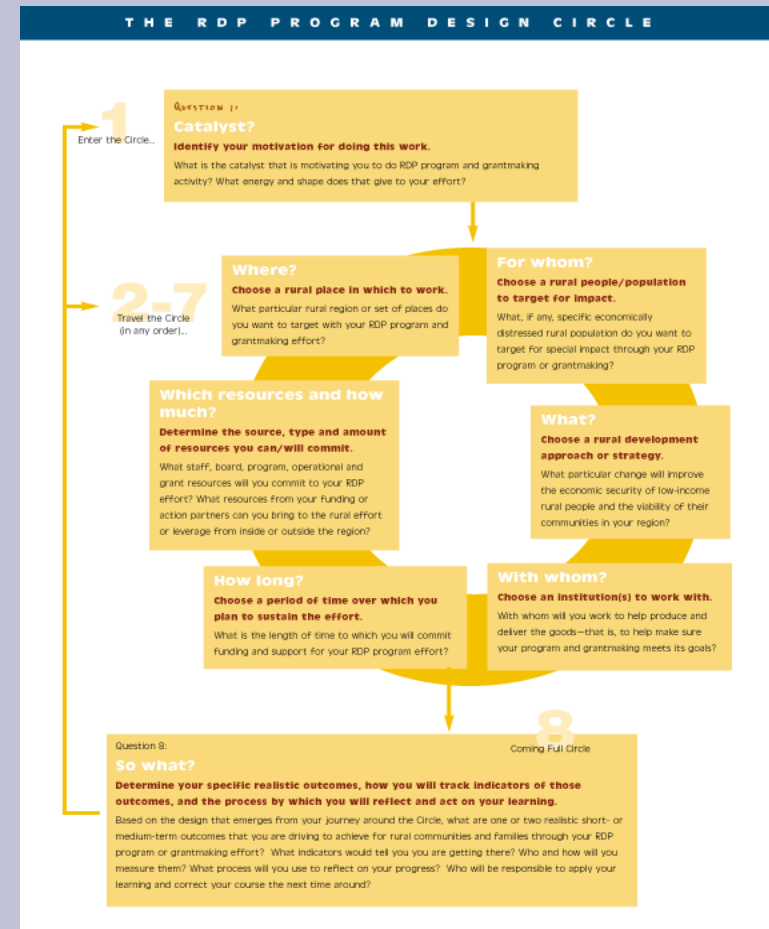


The Circle has Eight Questions

Question 1	The Middle 6	Question 8
<p>Catalyst?</p> <p><i>Identify your motivation for doing this work</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where? • For whom? • What? • With whom? • How long? • Which resources and how much? 	<p>So what?</p> <p><i>Determine your outcomes, how you will track them and how you will act on what you learn.</i></p>

- Enter: Answer Question 1–Catalyst?
- Travel: Answer the Middle Six questions in the order that you know the answers.
- Check the Horizon: Note how each answer reduces or produces options for the remaining questions.
- Weigh and Choose: Develop and consider options (and pros and cons) for questions for which you do not have a clear answer.
- Continue...through question 7
- Come Full Circle: Answer Question 8 – So What?
- Repeat as needed!

To navigate the Circle...



For each Circle Question, the Framework Workbook Offers you:

• A brief “Introduction”

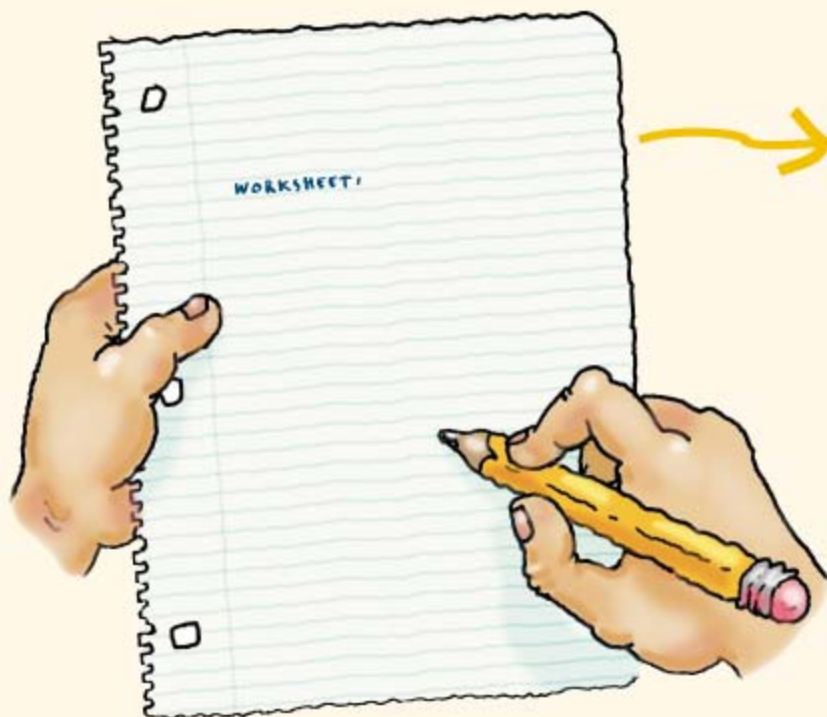


• A “Tool” for thinking about the question



And...

A Worksheet!



INSTRUCTIONS: THIS WORKSHEET ASKS YOU TO NAME HOW LONG YOU WANT TO CARRY OUT THE PARTICULAR RDP PROGRAM/GRANTMAKING EFFORT YOU STARTED WORKING ON IN THE CATALYST WORKSHEET AND IN ANY FUTURE MIDDLE SIX WORKSHEETS, AND TO REFLECT ON HOW THAT CHOICE MIGHT AFFECT YOUR ANSWERS TO THE REMAINING RDP DESIGN CIRCLE QUESTIONS (IF ANY).

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON PAGING PAGE...

THE HOW LONG? WORKSHEET: YOUR QUESTION # _____

TIMEFRAME ISSUES	NOT A FACTOR	LIKELY TO STALL OR IMPACT YOUR EFFORTS	
		Small	Large
Organizational Capacity			
Long Distances			
Staff Resources			
Grantee and/or Community Capacity			
Partnerships with Other Organizations			
New Skills			
New Core Business			
Seed Funding			
Financial Acumen			
Other?			

HOW ANSWER BELOW: DOES THIS HOW LONG? CHOICE CLEARLY INFLUENCE OR RESTRICT YOUR ANSWERS TO ANY OF THE OTHER MIDDLE SIX RDP PROGRAM QUESTIONS? IF YES, HOW?

QUESTION	No	Yes	If yes, IN WHAT WAY?
When?			
For whom?			
What?			
With whom?			
With how many resources?			

WHAT EFFECT WILL THE CONDITIONS OF THIS HOW LONG? CHOICE LIKELY HAVE ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF YOUR RDP PROGRAM EFFORT OVER THE LONG TERM (OR ON YOUR EXIT STRATEGY)? _____

Question 1: Catalyst?

Identify your motivation for doing this work.

***What is the catalyst that is motivating you to do RDP program and grantmaking activity?
What energy and shape does that give to your effort?***

Your RDP Catalyst

Internal	External	Cares	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CF Board and Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CF role as regional leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CF unrestricted funds to rural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CF Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural community leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific rural CED issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural endowment challenge with grant \$\$
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CF Board Member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural donor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural places in general 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donor-advised/pass-through funds for rural area/issue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CF Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metro/out-migrated donor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific rural place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endow rural area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bequest/Gift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific rural organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endow rural issue field of interest fund

Who is your RDP Catalyst(s)?

What is your Catalyst's:

- Care:

- Action:

Does your Catalyst affect your answers to:

- Where
- For whom?
- What?
- With whom?
- How long?
- Which and how much resources?

Remember

- Answer the next six questions in the order that you know or feel confident of the answers.....
- Answering each question in this six may help you with the next by reducing or producing clearer options.

Question _?: Where?

Choose a place in which to work.

What particular rural region or set of places do you want to target with your RDP program and grantmaking effort?

Where? Choices

- One rural community area
- Several or all rural communities within a sub-region
- A sampling of rural communities/areas selected from the entire region
- Every rural community within your region
- The entire rural region (rather than individual communities)

The Big *Where* Issues:

- Proximity vs. Spread
- Organizational priorities
- Staffing
- Choice of intermediary/technical assistance provider
- Will less be more *or* Will more be more?

So.. *Where* will you work?

And....

Does your *Where?* affect your answers to:

- For whom?
- What?
- With whom?
- How long?
- Which and how much resources?

Question _?: For Whom?

Choose a rural people/population to target for impact.

What, if any, specific economically distressed rural population do you want to target for special impact through your your RDP program or grantmaking?

The For Whom? Targets

Rural Population Segments

- Employment/Occupation Groups
- Gender Groups
- Ethnic/Racial Groups
- Geographic Groups
- Family Status Groups
- Age Groups
- Disabled Groups
- Disaster-Struck Groups

Conditions that Perpetuate Poverty

- Income-Poor
- Asset-Poor
- Benefits-Poor
- Lack Employment Opportunities
- Lack Employment Ladder
- Lack Employment Supports
- Lack Dependent Services

Choose a population and/or condition that you want to affect



So..For Whom do you seek impact?

And....

Does your *For Whom?* affect your answers to:

- Where?
- What?
- With whom?
- How long?
- Which and how much resources?

Question _?: What?

Choose a rural development approach or strategy.

What particular change will improve the economic security of low-income rural people and the viability of their communities in your region?

The *Six Whats* of RDP Program and Grantmaking

<i>Strategy 1</i>	<i>Strategy 2</i>	<i>Strategy 3</i>	<i>Strategy 4</i>	<i>Strategy 5</i>
Improve Employment	Strengthen Families	Strengthen Nonprofits	Increase Civic Capacity	Steward Natural and Cultural Resources

And...Strategy 6

Address Potential Necessary Conditions
(to enable the other 5 Strategies)

Some *What* Truths:

- Your impact on the rural families and economies is likely to be once-removed
- Your grant's impact on the rural families and economies is determined more by approach than by scale
- All CED is local: What looks like community and economic development varies by community.
- No matter what you fund, civic capacity building is always in order
- Program design ripple effects are as important as project impact effects

So... *What* development approach will you support?

And....

Does your *What?* affect your answers to:

- Where?
- For Whom?
- With whom?
- How long?
- Which and how much resources?

Question _?: With Whom?

Choose an institution(s) to work with.

With whom will you work to help you deliver the goods – to help make sure your program and grantmaking meets its goals?



With Whom?

Three Potential Partner Categories

- **Grantee Partners**
at the community level
- **Delivery/Technical Assistance Partners**
at the regionwide or RDP initiative-wide level
- **Resource Partners**
at any level

With Whom to Consider:

- What organizations are already in the mix?
- What type, quality, quantity of service do they offer? Is it in rural areas?
- How well positioned/respected are they in rural areas?
- Can you help build their capacity while they help build your impact?

The *With Whom* for *What* and *Where* Strategic Choice Spectrum

Your Spectrum Choices	<p><i>Support as is</i></p> <p>existing rural CED/ anti-poverty activities/projects/ Institutions</p>	<p><i>Influence or change</i></p> <p>existing rural CED/ anti-poverty activities/projects/ institutions</p>	<p><i>Design/manage /fund</i></p> <p>brand new rural CED/anti-poverty activities/projects/institutions</p>
Fundamental Question in Making the Choice	<p>Is some activity/project/institution already doing the job – and only needs financial support to expand?</p>	<p>What value can the CF add to this activity/project/institution through its RDP effort that will last beyond it?</p>	<p>Would this activity/project/institution exist or be happening without the CF's RDP program doing it?</p>
Level of CF Effort/ Involvement	<p>Light (to medium)</p>	<p>Medium (on up to heavy)</p>	<p>Heaviest</p>

So... *With Whom* will you work?

And....

Does your *With Whom?* affect your answers to:

- Where?
- For Whom?
- What?
- How long?
- Which and how much resources?

Question _?: How Long?

Choose a period of time over which you plan to sustain the effort.

What is the length of time to which you will commit funding and support for your RDP program effort?



How Long Issues:

Will these stall or expedite your efforts?

- Your Organizational Capacity
- Long Distances
- Staff Resources
- Grantee and/or Community Capacity
- Partnerships with Other Organizations
- New Core Business
- Seed Funding
- Financial Planning/Acumen

So...*How Long* will you sustain this RDP effort?

And....

Does your *With Whom?* affect your answers to:

- Where?
- For Whom?
- What?
- With Whom?
- Which and how much resources?

Question _?: Which Resources, and How Much?

Determine the source, type and amount of resources you can/will commit.

***What staff, board, program, operational and grant resources will you commit to your RDP effort?
What resources from your funding or action partners can you bring to the rural effort or leverage in from inside or outside the region?***

Mapping your RDP Resources

Let's say you know the following about your RDP Design:

- **Catalyst:** Your Statewide Economic Development Council (SEDC) challenges rural communities to increase the level of philanthropic dollars invested in their CED efforts by 20% over the next three years.
- **Your RDP Effort:** Provide rural nonprofits that are doing CED with mini-grants, monthly peer meetings and one-on-one technical assistance to do CED program evaluation and outcomes measurement during the first year of the three-year SEDC challenge period.
- **Outcome:** By the end of three years, nonprofits will regularly use evaluations to develop stronger CED programs; as a result, they will leverage additional funding from private foundations and donors.

Mapping your RDP Resources

In House Assets	Match?	Resources Needed?	Match?	Resources to find?
CF Staff with 15 years of evaluation experience		Expertise in evaluation and outcomes measurement		Only .5FTE of qualified staff available - must supplement with new staff or consultant
		Administration and program staffing (1.5 FTE = \$60 K)		
Board member is president of local college - offers free meeting space		Meeting facility		
		Meeting expenses		
Well-respected donor offers \$10,000 from advised fund		\$3,000 incentive grants to 7-10 non-profit grantees (&21-30,000 total)		At least \$35,000 in additional operating, discretionary or donor gifts
\$10,000 in CF discretionary funds available		Staff Travel Expenses (\$2,500)		

*So... Which Resources and How Much
will you commit to your RDP effort?*

And....

Does your Which and How Much affect your answers to:

- *Where?*
- *For Whom?*
- *What?*
- *With Whom?*
- *How long?*

Question 8: So What?

Determine your specific realistic outcomes, how you will track indicators of those outcomes, and the process by which you will reflect and act on that learning.

- *What are one or two realistic short- or medium-term outcomes that you are driving to achieve for rural communities and families through your RDP program or grantmaking effort?*
- *What indicators would tell you you are getting there?*
- *Who and how will you measure them?*
- *What process will you use to reflect on your progress?*
- *Who will be responsible to apply your learning and correct your course the next time around?*

RDP Measurement and Learning Process

Four Components

- Outcomes
- Indicators and Measures
- Tracking Plan
- Reflection Process

Outcomes are...

...significant changes in the lives of people, communities or organizations that you seek through your RDP program or grantmaking

There are two outcome levels:

- **Community-level outcomes:** the results you seek at the community level that your grantees/participants are responsible for producing
- **Community foundation-level outcomes:** the results you are responsible for producing in your grantees/participants that enable them to produce the community-level outcomes.

Indicators and Measures

are...

● *Indicator*

One observable condition that you can measure or assess in some way to show that change in an outcome is being achieved

● *Measure*

One way to quantitatively or qualitatively assess change in an indicator.

Tracking Plan Components

- How can we find or produce a baseline measure?
- From whom will we collect information on the measure during the program period?
- What tools and partners will we need to collect data on the measure over the program period?
- When and how often will we collect this information?
- How can we design data collection to fit into the normal workflow Tracking Plan?
- Who will be responsible for collecting and compiling the data?

Reflection Process Components

- Who is included?
- When will the reflection/learning activities and sessions take place?
- What materials are needed?
- When and how often will we collect this information?
- Who will facilitate the reflection sessions or activities?
- Reflection/learning sessions or activities.
- Who will adjust your RDP course based on the learning?

Why bother with....

RDP Measurement and Learning Process

- You can work with your grantees or program participants on **mid-course corrections** during the course of a grant.
- You can paint a **clear picture** for the community and donors of the specific good you are trying to produce (or have produced) with the resources they have entrusted to you.
- If your funded efforts have fallen short of your expectations, you likely will be able to **explain why**.
- You will be able to **apply learning** from this effort to design more effective **future** RDP grants and programs.



So What?

It's the end of this presentation,

That's what!