NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR STATE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMS

45th ANNIVERSARY

# Rapid Cycle Learning with ROMA

HANCOCK™ SOFTWARE
PLATINUM SPONSOR

2023

ANNUAL TRAINING
CONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 25 - 29

GRAND RAPIDS

# In this workshop we will:

- Review of our history of performance management

- Identify how Rapid Cycle Learning supports the use of ROMA

- Discuss using Rapid Cycle Learning with ROMA to learn more about your efforts and achievements

- Consider the impact of a Growth Mindset

# Our Performance Management History



Results-Oriented Management and Accountability
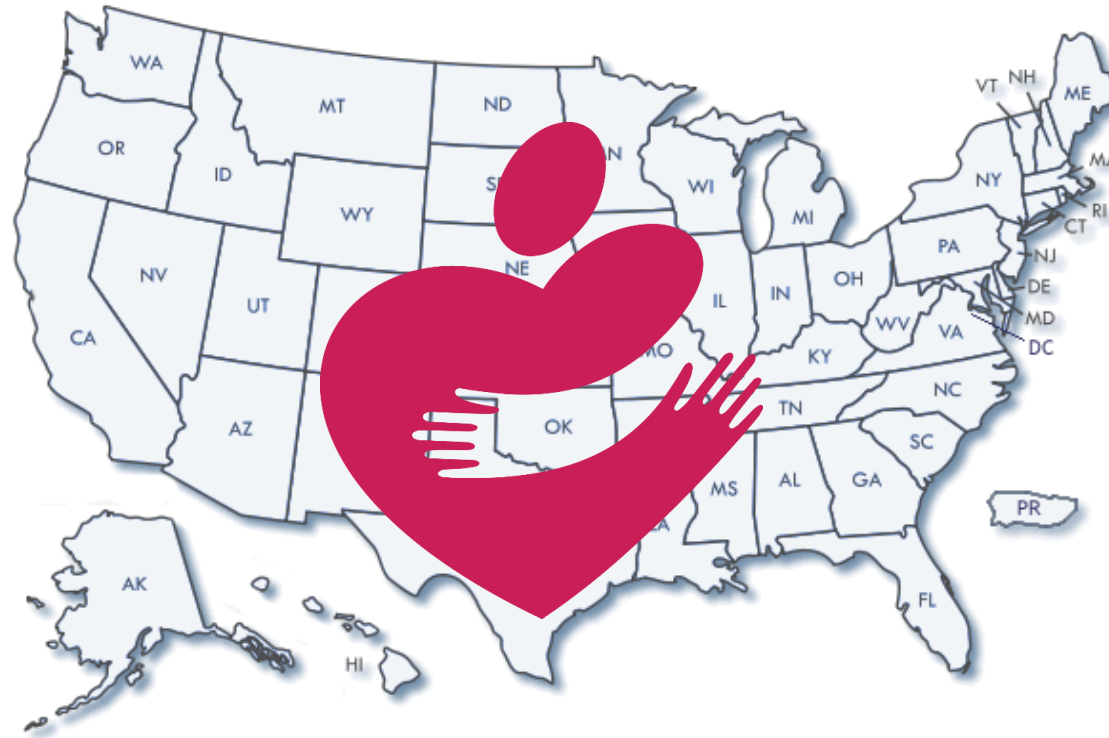
Family     Agency

Community

# Community Action Network

*Red, Blue, Purple States*

*Board and Staff on All Sides of the Aisle*

1000+ Agencies  |  44 State Associations  | 50+ State CSBG Offices| National Partners

More than 15 million served

*We work together to promote workable solutions that connect more families to opportunity*

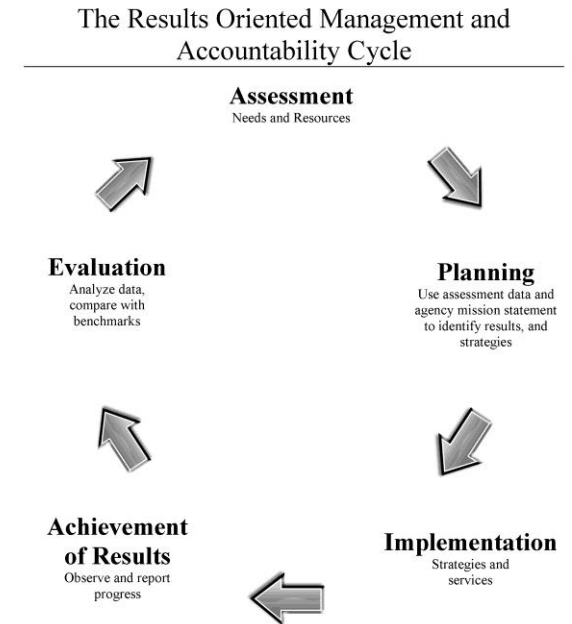# Community Action leaders need to work together to ensure the Network is strong.

- In order for a CAA to be truly 'healthy,' it must be continually striving to find better ways to use programmatic resources to help people move out of poverty.

- Programs operated by a CAA must <u>contribute to the agency's overall mission</u>, and each program must <u>achieve measurable outcomes</u> that help to change the lives of low-income people.

*NASCSP Standard Monitoring Principles and Practices*

# What is ROMA?

- ROMA is a **complete management and accountability process based on commonly accepted business practices** that is focused on the results achieved because of what your agency does.

- Principles have been specifically adapted for the anti-poverty focus of the Community Action network.
  - In the early days of ROMA, people thought about "the ROMA report" which was the report sent by each state to demonstrate the results of the local agencies.
  - But it has always been an approach to all aspects of management as well as the reporting!

- **It has been the national system of identifying what our network does for over two decades.**



The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle

**Assessment**
Needs and Resources

**Planning**
Use assessment data and agency mission statement to identify results, and strategies

**Implementation**
Strategies and services

**Achievement of Results**
Observe and report progress

**Evaluation**
Analyze data, compare with benchmarks

# What is ROMA, Continued...?

## Results Oriented Management and Accountability

- This means that agencies should be **"results oriented"** (that is focused on the changes they will make)

- And that orientation should be an integral part of all of the **management activities** throughout the agency.

- And that there should be processes in place to assure **accountability at all levels**.

# Government Performance and Results Act

Passed by congress in 1993 In response to a renewed emphasis on accountability, purpose of act:

Improve federal program effectiveness and public accountability

by promoting a new focus on results, service quality and customer satisfaction...

and to help Federal managers improve service delivery,

by requiring that they plan for meeting program objectives

and by providing them with information about program results and service quality.

# GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRAMA) took a new look at accountability for all recipients of federal funding.

In 2011, CSBG was zeroed out in President Obama's proposed budget. We heard that the President would have to cut things "I care deeply about, like community action programs."

There were criticisms that our data was confusing and didn't prove that we were creating change.

Community Action leaders responded and committed to making reforms to CSBG that would improve results for individuals with low-incomes and communities.

# IM 144: State and Federal Accountability Measures and Data Collection Modernization

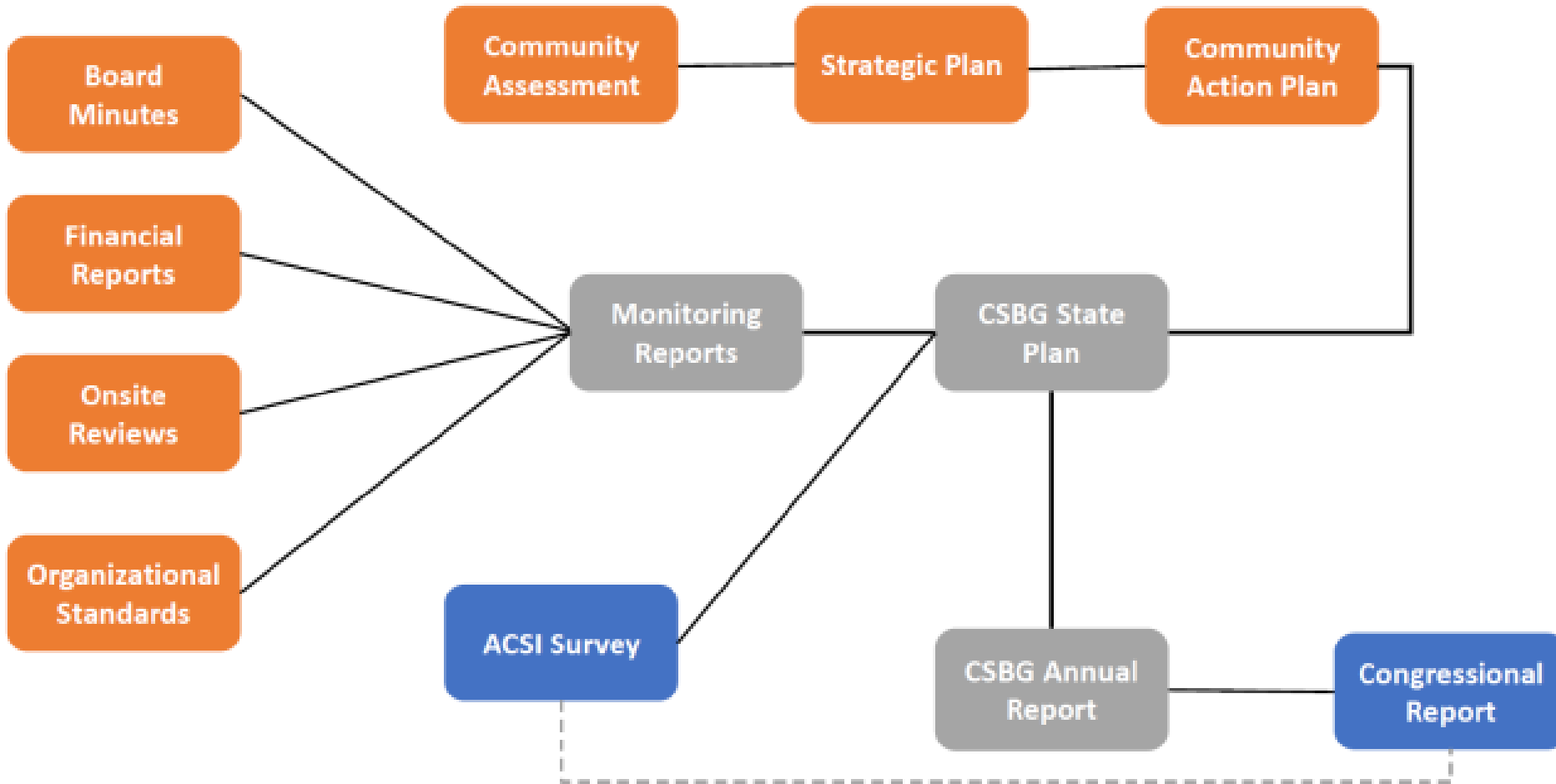IM 144: State and Federal Accountability Measures and Data Collection Modernization,

"We must look at all levels of the CSBG Network – local, State, and Federal – to assess and increase CSBG impacts. The CSBG Network is far-reaching and nationwide. Together, we have the potential to achieve even greater results, in every community, by improving our accountability to one another, our customers, and our communities." October 2, 2015

# CSBG Performance Management Framework

- Local Organizational Standards
- State and Federal Accountability Measures
- Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA)
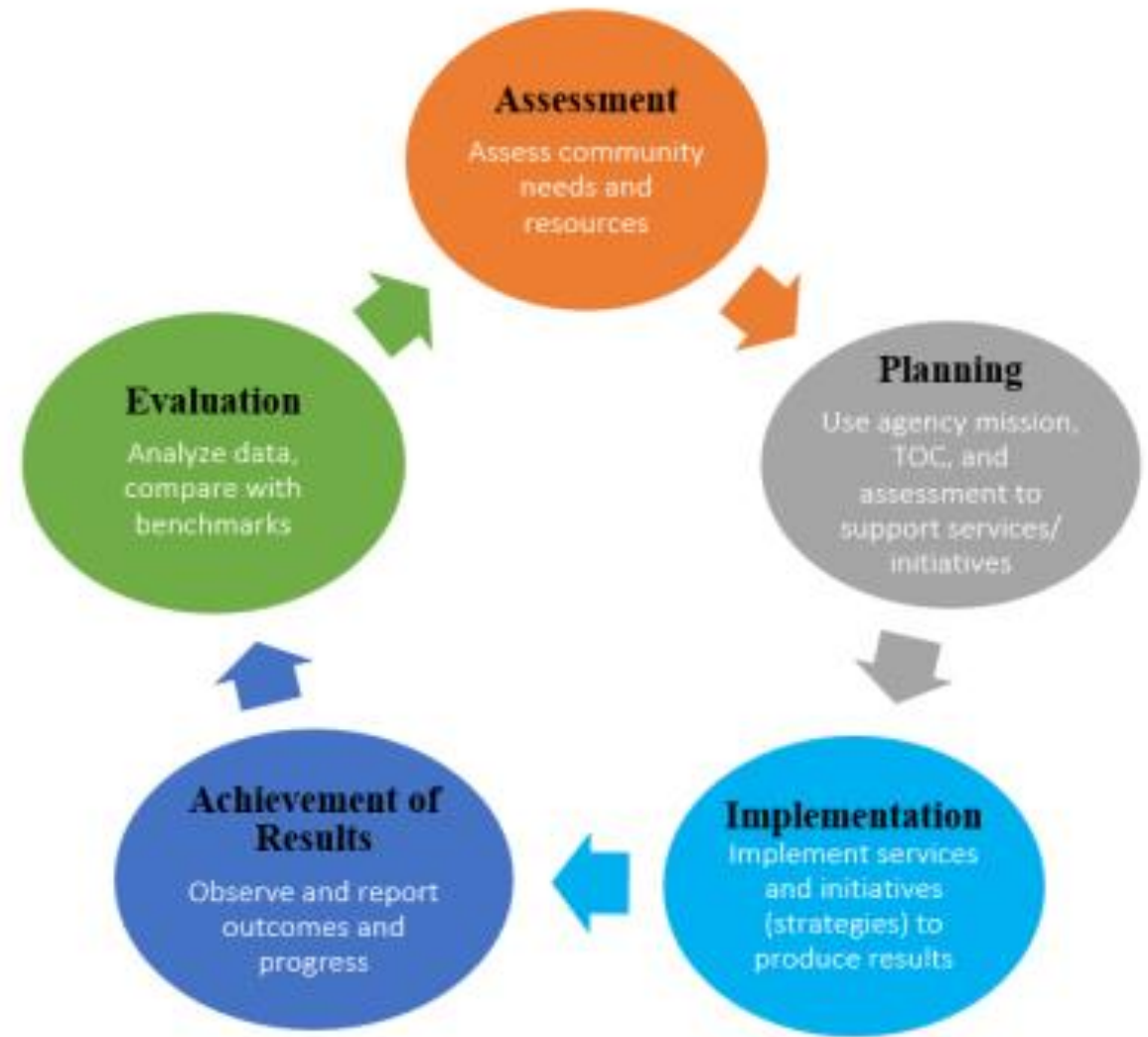- CSBG State Plan
- CSBG Annual Report
- ACSI Survey

# Connecting Accountability

Building on the ROMA Foundation

ROMA has provided local entities with a means of not only "telling their story better," but of "telling a better story." ."

**Assessment** — Assess community needs and resources

**Planning** — Use agency mission, TOC, and assessment to support services/ initiatives

**Implementation** — Implement services and initiatives (strategies) to produce results

**Achievement of Results** — Observe and report outcomes and progress

**Evaluation** — Analyze data, compare with benchmarks

# Key Additions to ROMA

National Theory of Change (TOC)

Local TOCs

CSBG Annual Report

Increased focus on community level work

Increased focus on analysis and use of data

Emphasis on the integration of all phases of the ROMA cycle

# ROMA

A system for continuous quality improvement enabling the Community Action network to measure, analyze, and communicate performance.

# ROMA Next Generation

A system for continuous quality improvement enabling the Community Action network **at all levels (local, State, Federal)** to measure, analyze, and communicate performance.

*OCS, States and CAAs use performance data to achieve greater stability and economic security for families and communities.*
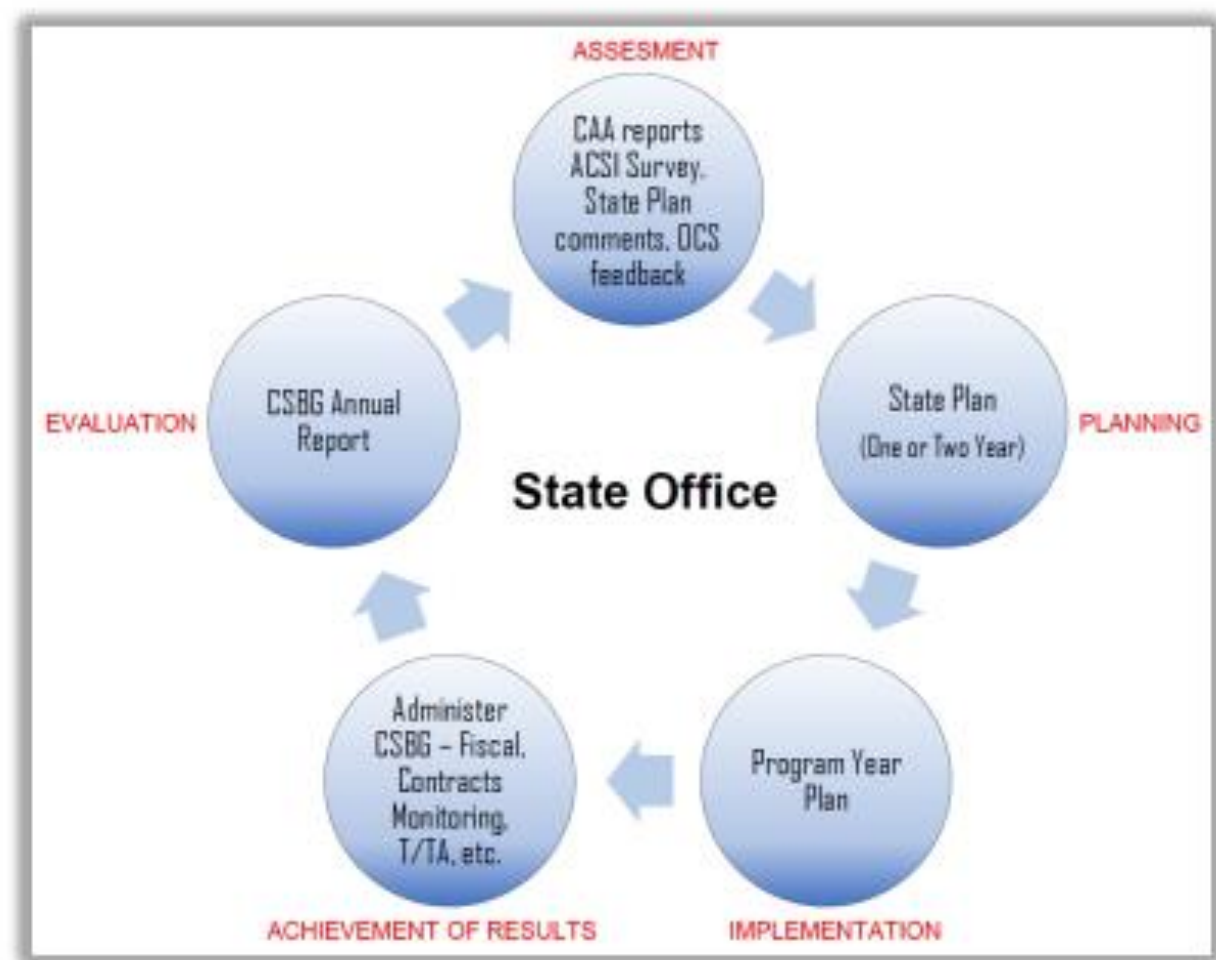
# The National Community Action Network Theory of Change
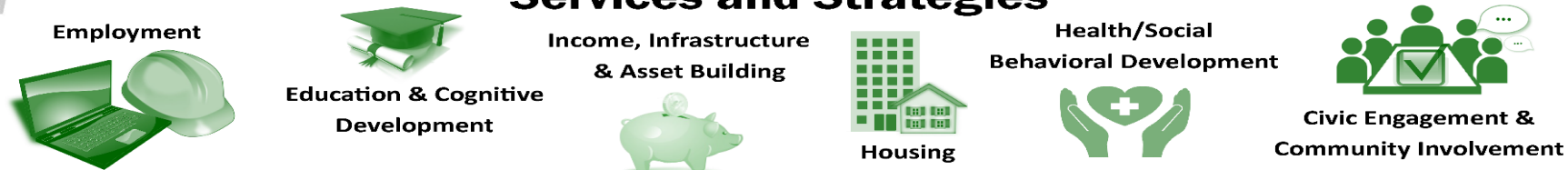
## Community Action Goals

**Goal 1:** Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

**Goal 2:** Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

**Goal 3:** People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.

## Services and Strategies

Employment

Education & Cognitive Development

Income, Infrastructure & Asset Building

Housing

Health/Social Behavioral Development

Civic Engagement & Community Involvement

## Core Principles

- Recognize the complexity of the issues of poverty
- Build local solutions specific to local needs
- Support family stability as a foundation for economic security
- Advocate for systemic change
- Pursue positive individual, family, and community level change
- Maximize involvement of people with low incomes
- Engage local community partners and citizens in solutions
- Leverage state, federal, and community resources

## Performance Management

How well does the network operate? ⟷ What difference does the network make?

- Local Organizational Standards
- State and Federal Accountability Measures
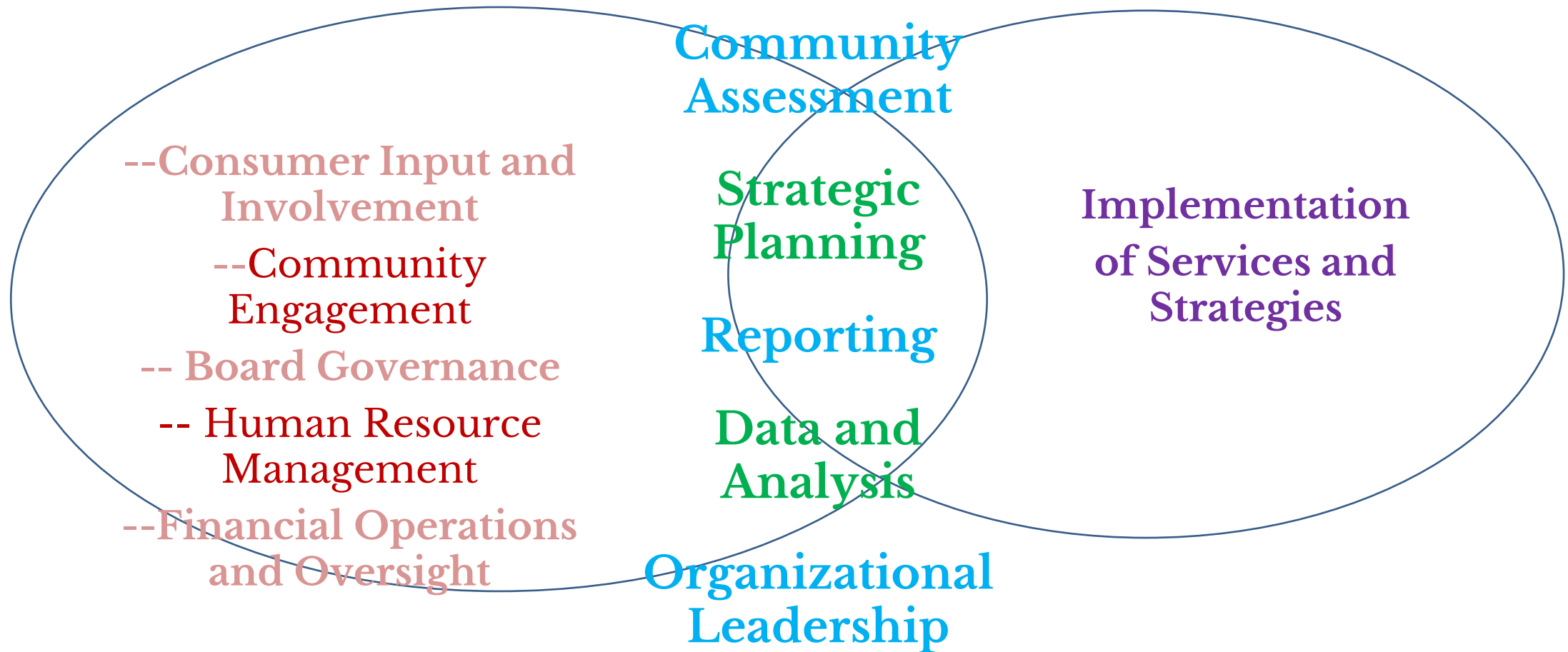- Results Oriented Management and Accountability System

- Individual and Family National Performance Indicators
- Community National Performance Indicators

*A national network of over 1,000 high performing Community Action Agencies, State Associations, State offices, and Federal partners supported by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) to mobilize communities to fight poverty.*

This publication was created by NASCSP in the performance of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services, Grant Number 90ET0451.

Material from Intro to ROMA 5.1, 2020

45th ANNIVERSARY

# Organizational Standards

# ROMA Cycle

--Consumer Input and Involvement

--Community Engagement

-- Board Governance

-- Human Resource Management

--Financial Operations and Oversight

Community Assessment

Strategic Planning

Reporting

Data and Analysis

Organizational Leadership

Implementation of Services and Strategies

# CSBG ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD 4.3:

The organization's Community Action plan and strategic plan **document the continuous use of the full Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle** or comparable system (assessment, planning, implementation, achievement of results, and evaluation).

# PEAAK

| Performance | Evaluation | Accountability | Accessibility | Knowledge |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Community Needs Assessment<br>• ACSI<br>• Organizational Standards<br>• Accountability Measures*<br>• ==ROMA Next Gen== | • Organizational Standards<br>• Accountability Measures<br>• ==ROMA Next Gen==<br>• Monitoring<br>• Oversight | • Monitoring<br>• Oversight<br>• CSBG State Plan<br>• CSBG Annual Report | • Making the CSBG Story available<br>  ✓ OCS Annual Report<br>  ✓ Congressional Report<br>  ✓ CSBG Performance Management website | • How well do you know your CSBG Story?<br>  ✓ CSBG State Plan<br>  ✓ CSBG Annual Report<br>  ✓ CSBG Performance Management website |

# CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
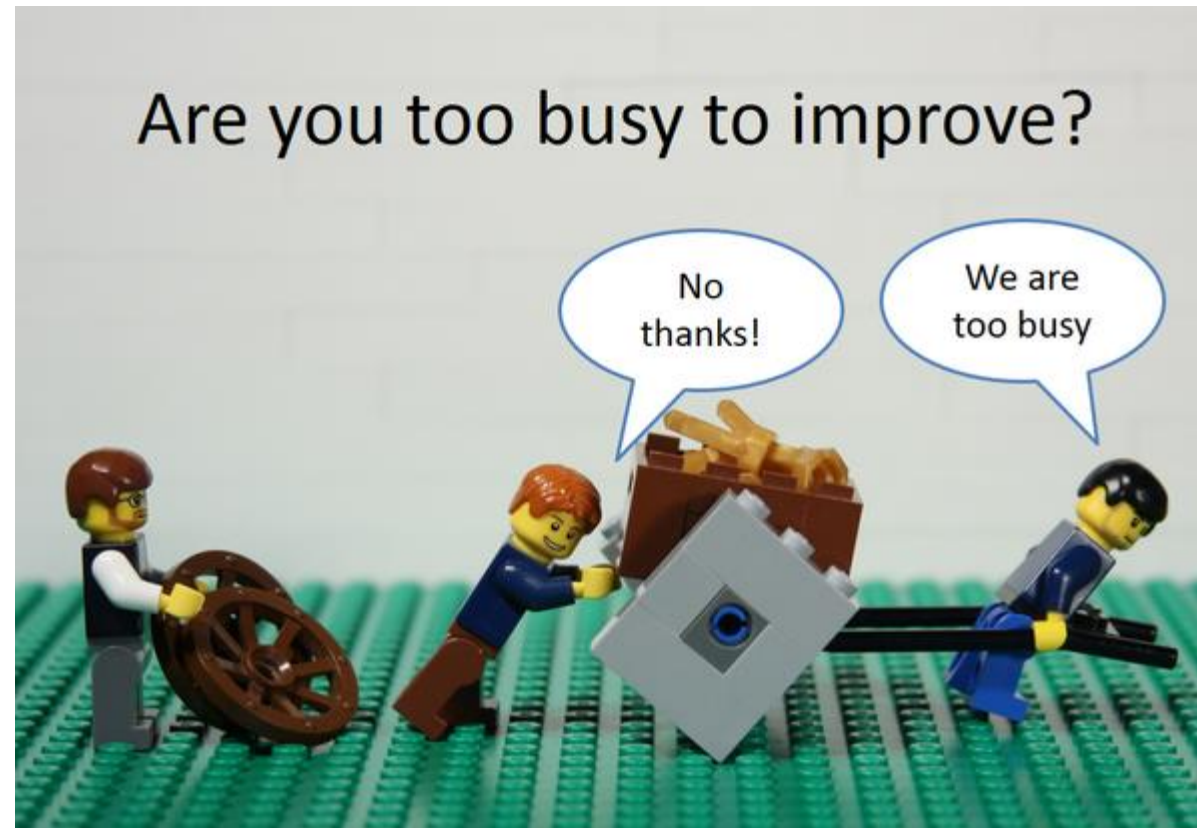
# CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

CQI works within the larger framework of performance management, to engage staff in monitoring the implementation of services and strategies to assure highest quality and impact.

- CQI is the systematic process of identifying and describing what has happened.

- Studies have shown that using an inclusive, continuous improvement approach may help organizations build critical buy-in for implementing change, promote a learning culture, and allow staff to feel more ownership over improvement processes (Sharrock 2018; Tichnor-Wagner et al. 2017).



#52256616

Purpose:
To achieve higher levels of performance

Results maintenance
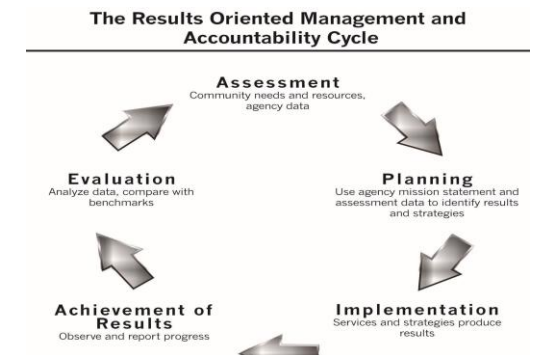Performance improvement, achievement of objectives

***Continuous Quality Improvement is an ongoing cycle of collecting data and using it to make decisions to gradually improve program processes.***
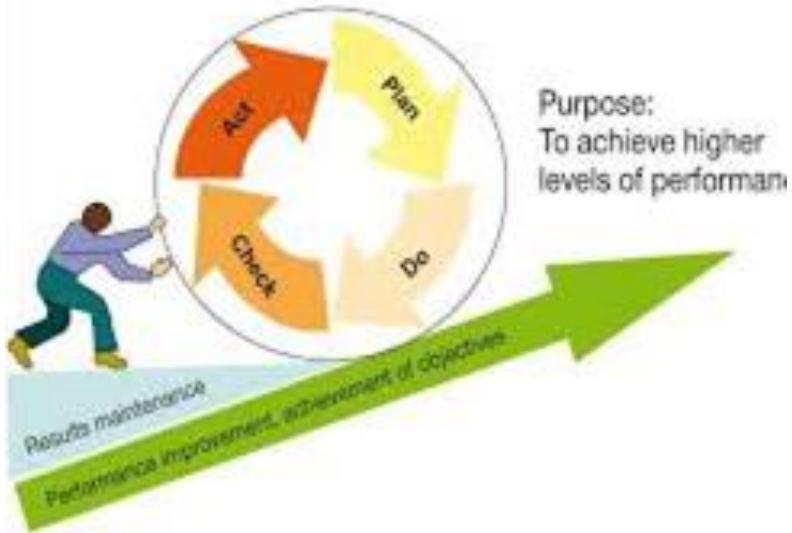
This should sound familiar, as it follows the actions identified in the ROMA Cycle.

***Once you collect data, then you :***

- ***Consider what can be done differently and make a plan for new action.***

- ***Apply the new action.***

- ***Observe and gather data about the new action and what is happening as a result of the change.***

- ***Analyzing the data and continue learning and revising.***

**The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle**

**Assessment**
Community needs and resources, agency data

**Evaluation**
Analyze data, compare with benchmarks

**Planning**
Use agency mission statement and assessment data to identify results and strategies

**Achievement of Results**
Observe and report progress

**Implementation**
Services and strategies produce results

# WHAT ARE RAPID LEARNING METHODS?

*Rapid learning methods intend to expedite program improvement and enhance program effectiveness.*

*They use data to test implementation and improvement efforts in as close to real time as possible.*

*Many rapid learning methods leverage iterative cycles of learning in which evaluators and implementers (and sometimes funders/ policymakers) discuss findings, interpret them, and make adaptations to practice and measurement together.*

*These methods can support data-driven decision-making in practice, in the spirit of ongoing improvement.*

# Rapid Cycle Learning
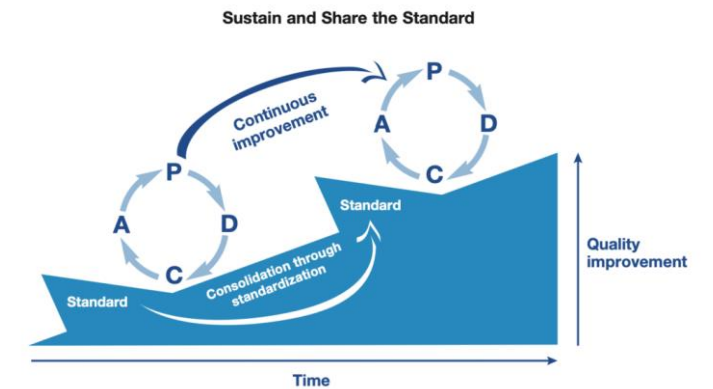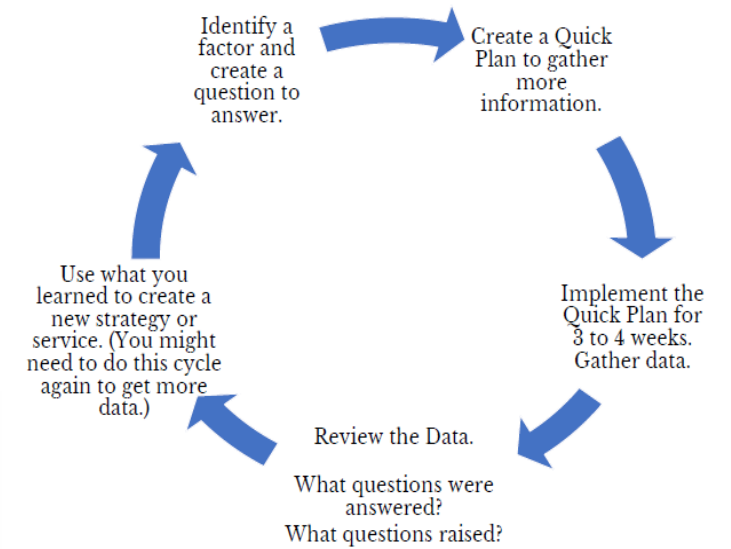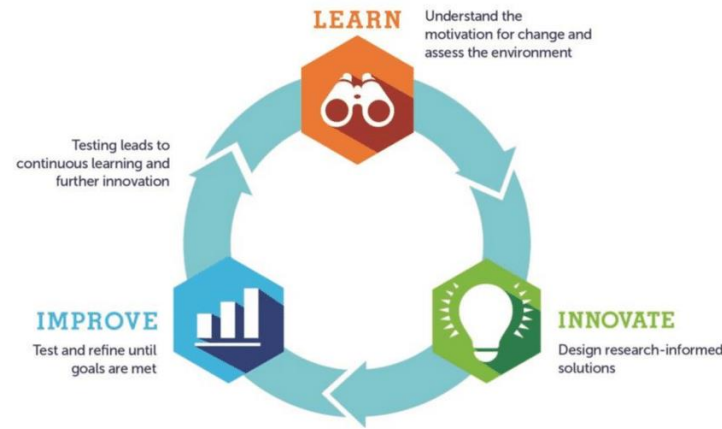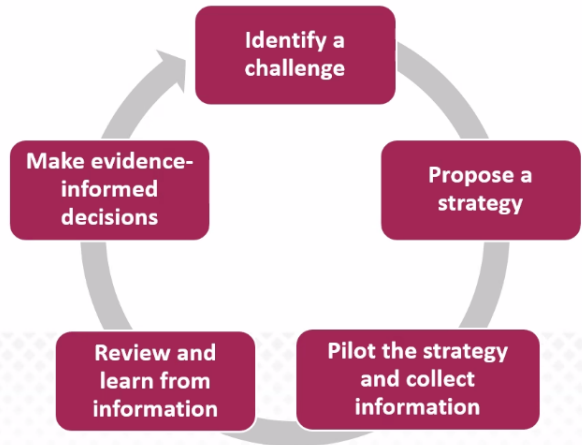
# Rapid Cycle Learning supports the use of ROMA

## Let's Hear how it all works together!

# RCL supports ROMA!

# How does RCL support ROMA?

## ROMA: Planning step

**How RCL can support:**

- Overcome decision paralysis.
- Start small by piloting before rollout.

## ROMA: Implementation step

**How RCL can support:**

- Identify implementation barriers.
- Pilot supports to address barriers.

## ROMA: Results and evaluation steps

**How RCL can support:**

- Respond to missed benchmarks.
- Develop strategies to address challenges.

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Office of Community Services

CSBG
Community Services Block Grant

# What can be improved?

- When they are confronted by urgent problems, human services professionals are often required to seek quick solutions.

- Urgent problems are often complicated, however.

- Adopting a solution prematurely, increases the risk of not solving a problem, or worse, tackling the wrong problem.

- Pausing and then strategically solving problems can be beneficial to those affected by the problems.



Are you too busy to improve?

No thanks!

We are too busy
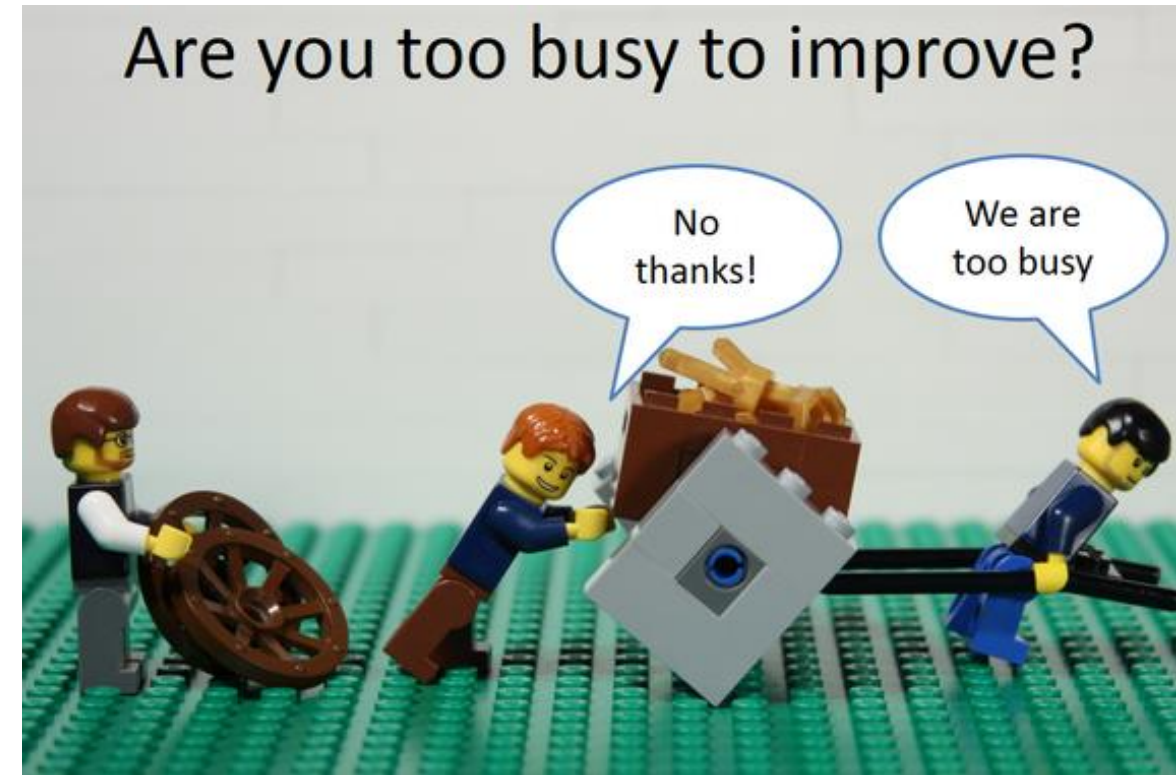
# ROMA Cycle-Traditional Process

- Typical time frames for Assessment and Planning happen over 3-5 year periods.

- We know that both of these processes can be done more frequently to enable agencies to do course corrections if needed.



The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle

**Assessment**
Community needs and resources, agency data

**Planning**
Use agency mission statement and assessment data to identify results and strategies

**Implementation**
Services and strategies produce results

**Achievement of Results**
Observe and report progress

**Evaluation**
Analyze data, compare with benchmarks
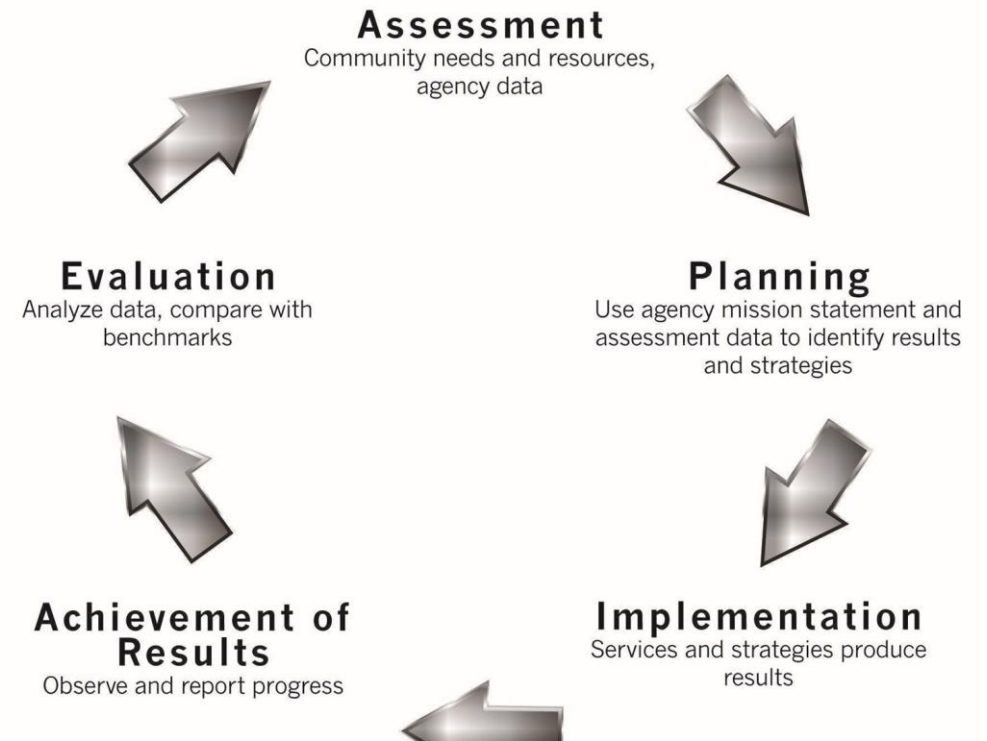
# Rapid Cycle Learning and Evaluation

- **Focus on collecting data <u>early</u> and <u>often</u> in planning phases.**
- **Use the data to make decisions for the next steps and continue to observe and test your assumptions as you move forward.**
- **Frequently evaluate the effectiveness of your actions.**

## Rapid Learning Cycles in Product Development

### Rapid Learning Cycles

Definition → Concept → Design → Validation → Launch

**Pull Learning Forward:** Learn as much as possible here to uncover problems early and make better decisions

**Push Decisions Later:** Maintain flexibility as long as possible here so that we can respond as we learn more, and as the market changes.

Copyright Rapid Learning Cycles Institute 2017

Identify a factor and create a question to answer.

Create a Quick Plan to gather the data you have and identify what additional data you need.

Implement the Quick Plan to gather data. (No more than 3 to 4 weeks).

Review the Data.

What questions were answered?
What questions raised?

Use what you learned to create a new strategy or service. (You might need to do this cycle again to get more data.)

Association of Nationally Certified ROMA Professionals

# RAPID LEARNING USING THE ROMA CYCLE

Gain Deeper Understanding of a Specific Issue or Factor

Basic ROMA Cycle Activities

Evaluation

Assessment

Reporting

Planning

Implementation

Identify a factor and create a question to answer.

Create a Quick Plan to gather the data you have and identify what additional data you need.

Implement the Quick Plan to gather data. (No more than 3 to 4 weeks).

Review the Data What questions were answered, what questions raised?

Use what you learned to create a new strategy or service. (You might need to do this cycle again to get more data.)

Plan to implement the new strategy or service

Try out the changes

Gather more data

Revise if necessary

Changes become standard practice

Association of Nationally Certified ROMA Professionals

# Rapid ROMA

## Applying Lessons from COVID/Crisis Responses
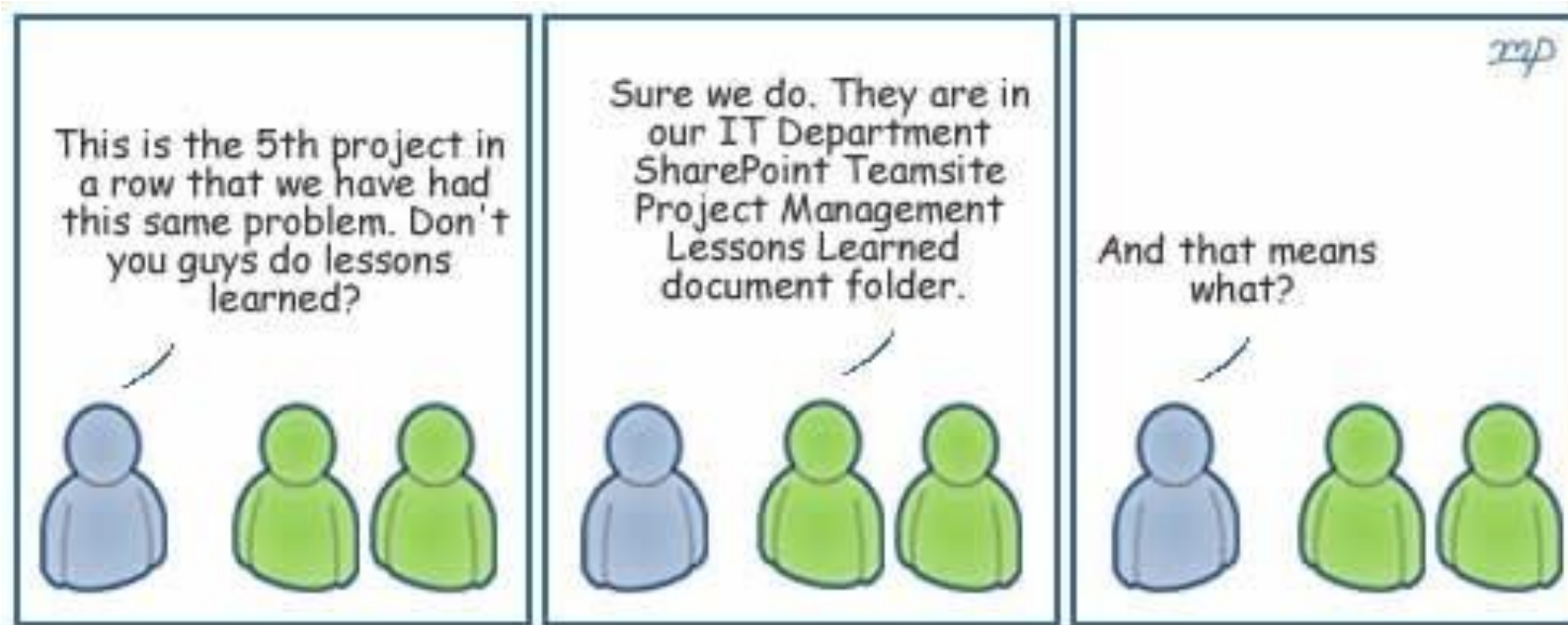
# "Rapid" ROMA Cycle–Frequent, Periodic Checks

- The process of frequent, periodic checks will allow an agency to see a problem situation in "real time" so that they can make changes for improvement.

- This can also allow them to see successes that can be highlighted for advocacy and marketing.

- This process includes identifying a single factor and asking a question about how changing that factor will produce improved results!

*Changes to the needs, plans, and targets are likely to happen.*

- Effective agencies have a quick and easy process to allow for amendment to their plans that embraces a continuous learning process
  - IE, develop a check in process to update the plan if needed.
  - Respect the on-going nature of assessing needs while conducting routine business


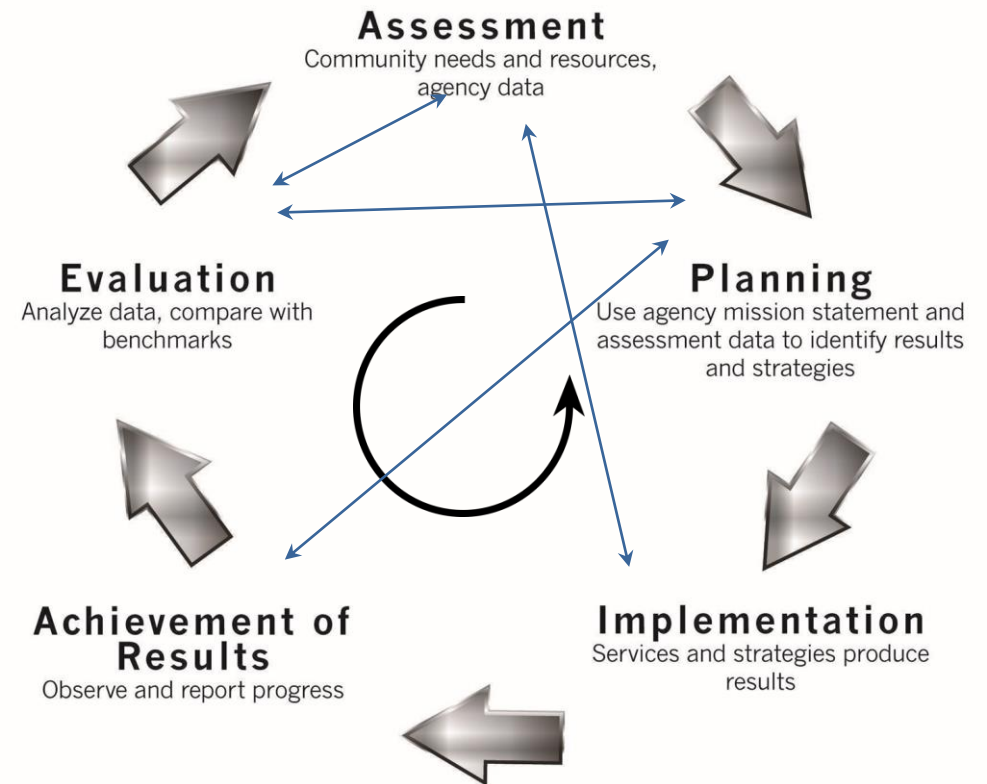THINGS WILL CHANGE

THE THINGSWESAY.COM

# IMPLEMENTATION ISN'T JUST IMPLEMENTATION!

During implementation, agencies need to be:

- Observing and Reporting Progress
- Evaluating
- Reassessing
- Planning
- Modifying, expanding, correcting and (possibly) cancelling implementation



The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle

**Assessment** — Community needs and resources, agency data

**Planning** — Use agency mission statement and assessment data to identify results and strategies

**Implementation** — Services and strategies produce results

**Achievement of Results** — Observe and report progress

**Evaluation** — Analyze data, compare with benchmarks

# DATA FOR DECISION MAKING

Establish a process to review data frequently (monthly? quarterly?) so you have a current picture of the agency functioning.

In this way agencies can gather data (to turn into information) that will demonstrate the most critical areas of success AND provide ideas about what decisions need to be made for the next steps.

- Review inquiries/requests for service or information
  - Agency service data – what is the agency doing?
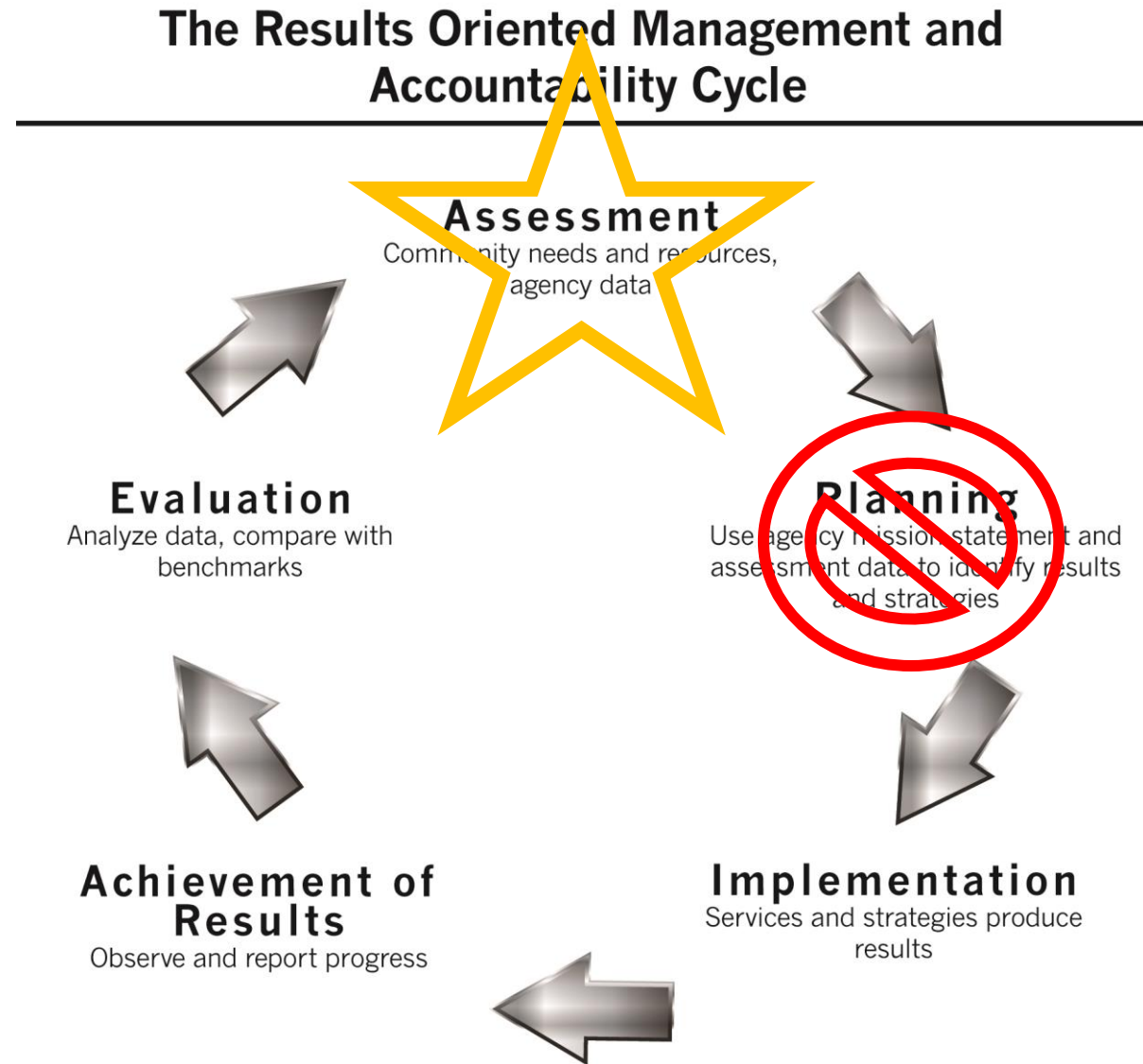  - Have you been meeting the needs?

# *HOW WILL YOU KNOW?*

❑ What **indicators** will measure progress towards the goals?
❑ What **evidence** will identify that the outcomes have occurred?



Indicators — Evidence

Without sufficient understanding of the need, we could make plans and identify interventions that are incorrect!



The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle

**Assessment**
Community needs and resources, agency data

**Planning**
Use agency mission statement and assessment data to identify results and strategies

**Implementation**
Services and strategies produce results

**Achievement of Results**
Observe and report progress

**Evaluation**
Analyze data, compare with benchmarks

# Group Activity

# Forming a Question:
# Are you exploring or explaining?

## Two different kind of questions

# Exploring

When we are exploring, we have data questions.

This kind of data collection is about something that is currently unknown but could be potentially answered.

| Where do the majority of students in my neighborhood go to school? | What's the level of rent burden within my community? | How many parks are within a mile of my home? |

These are discrete questions that have answers that can be provided using data.

# Explaining

Explaining starts with an answer you got by collecting and analyzing data and goes deeper.

You know the specifics about an issue, but the data does not tell you "WHY?"

This kind of question is about getting a clear understanding of the factors behind an important point that you already have evidence for.

# Explaining, Continued...

- You're essentially saying we believe this thing, and then you are working to prove that – or you could find out that you are wrong.
  - My neighborhood has limited opportunities for good and services (grocery stores, drug stores, employment, education).  Why are there no stores?  Is there a way that stores could be brought into the community?
  - We have low attendance at our new parenting education program. What is the demographic profile of the parents who attend/don't attend? What are the barriers or issues facing the individuals who have not continued to attend?  What are the support that are allowing others to be successful?

# Contextualizing

- While industry data might represent products, in our work, data almost always represents people.

- The counts, the percentages, the household incomes represent real people and the work that we do should always be done respectfully with thoughts of the dignity of others.

- It's important to represent assets and strengths alongside any needs or deficits.

- Numerical data, whether it's statistics, charts, tables, and data, is extremely valuable in understanding and describing the real world, but it's never a substitute for the perspective and experience of real people.

- It is always worth talking to the people who the data represents and trying to use that information to help understand the data better.

- Recognize that context is critical to exploring and explaining data.

# Framing the description of the situation

- Victimizing:

  The community of Jollyfield has been held back by racist policies. It is a low-income neighborhood because of the lack of opportunities.

- Derogatory:

  The community of Jollyfield is poverty ridden and most of the adults are unemployed.

- Needs Based:

  The community would require considerable investment to make any changes and the investment would have to come from state or federal government.

- Asset-framing

  The neighborhood of Jollyfield is historically low income and it has a higher level of unemployment than many other parts of the region. We find that neighbors regularly help each other, and the neighborhood church plays a critical role in creating new developments and opportunities for residents.

# Where can we do better?

- Equity-infused rapid-cycle learning can help organizations make evidence-informed changes by elevating the voices of staff, families, and community partners

- Maximum feasible participation  is a part of our legislation. Seeking out and including all perspectives in our decision making processes is in our community action DNA.
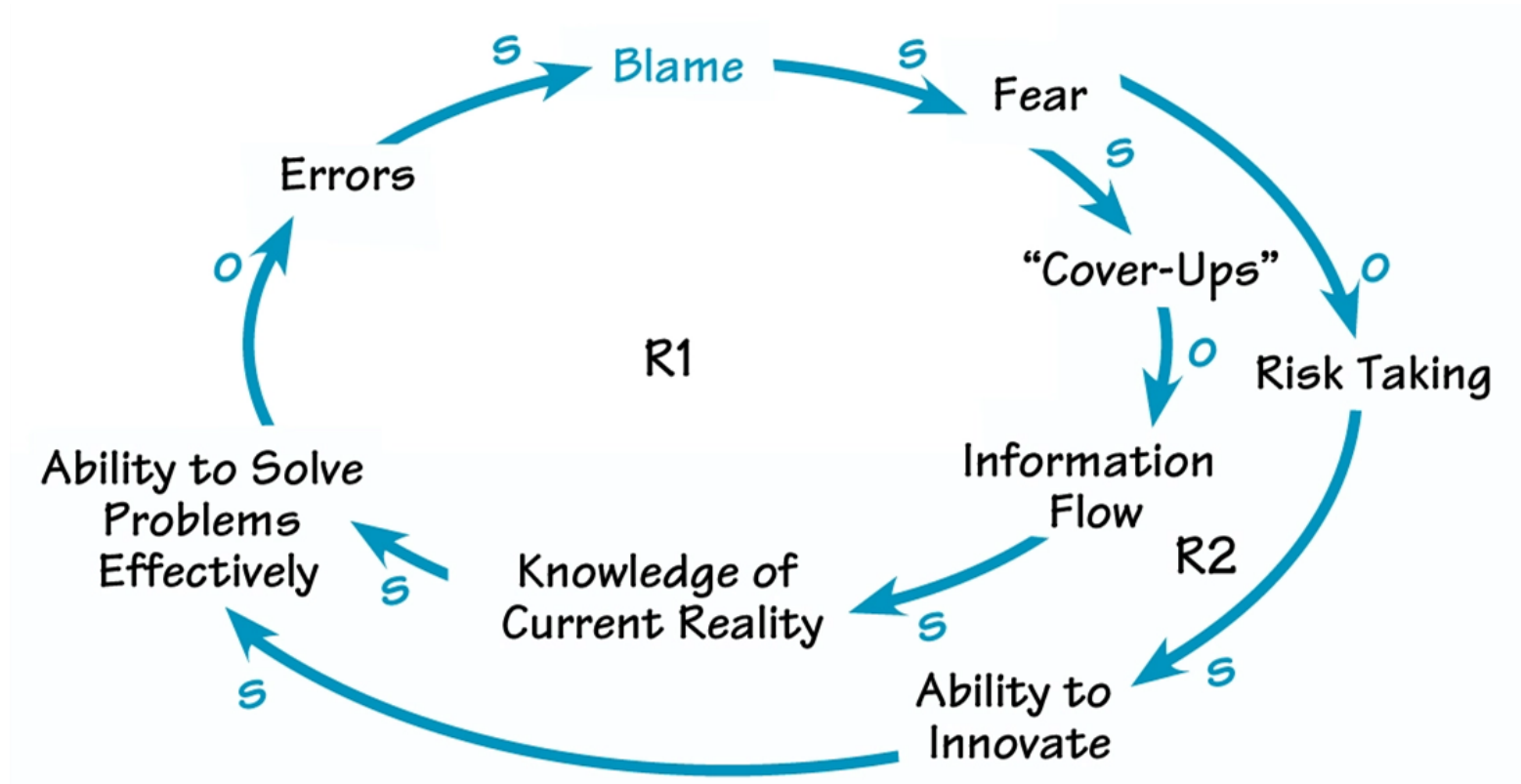
# A Growth mindset comes from the belief that your abilities can be developed through effort.
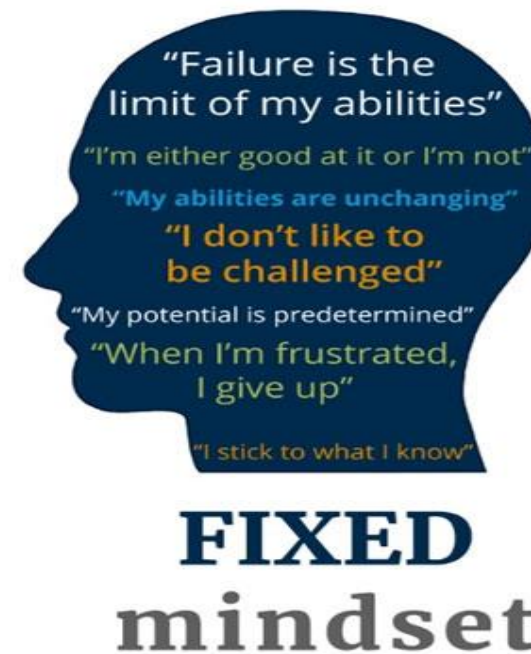
# Blame slows information flow and reduces innovation



**Blame causes fear, which increases cover-ups and reduces the flow of information. The lack of information hinders problem solving, creating more errors (R1). Fear also stifles risk taking and discourages innovation (R2).**

# Blame vs. Accountability

| | Blame | Accountability |
|---|---|---|
| **Level of Problem Analysis** | ***Individual***<br>"Let's find out who made that mistake and point the finger at them." | ***System***<br>"Is there anything in our systems and structures that increases the likelihood of error and reduces the chances of creating the results we want?" |
| **Focus** | ***Person***<br>"Who did it?"<br>"What you did was wrong." | ***Problem***<br>"What happened here?" |
| **Intent** | ***Punishment***<br>"It's your fault and I'll make you pay." | ***Performance***<br>"Let's see what we need to do to get the results we want." |
| **Outcome** | ***Cover-up No Learning***<br>"I won't reveal my mistakes. It's not worth it to take risks." | ***Openness, Learning***<br>"I want to talk about this mistake so we can all learn something and do a better job next time." |

# Use Rapid Cycle Learning with ROMA Principles to Address Agency Needs

Go back to the basic principles, starting with "what is the need?"

Using data from statistical sources, qualitative community input and your staff responses, identify what is needed in this "new normal" time period.

Once you have described situations that you need to strengthen and those you need to modify or abandon, you can plan services and strategies to try out.

Try changes – but check in on the impact of the changes FREQUENTLY! Don't just implement changes and think you'll come back in a year to see what has happened!!

# What will you do next?

What ideas do you have to use Rapid Cycle Learning to support ROMA principles and practices?

# Contacts

Barbara Mooney, Ed. D., NCRP

- Director, Association of Nationally Certified ROMA Professionals
- barbaramooney@windstream.net

Carey Gibson, MSW, NCRP, CCAP

- Deputy Director, Association of Nationally Certified ROMA Professionals
- careylgibson@gmail.com

Please scan here to complete the evaluation for this session!