Linking M&E to Impact Evaluation:
Start with what you have

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Mercy Corps’ approach to IE

• Test broad theories of change

• Aim for transferable knowledge

• Focus on limited set of key programming questions

Maximizing existing data

- Plausibility assessment
- Generate ‘relative’ counterfactuals
- Basis for a matched design within an ex post IE
Plausibility Assessment: Overview

**Purpose:** Determine if a full IE is warranted, and/or where to focus primary data collection

**Method:** Review of existing research / evaluations; analysis of existing data to test presumed links

**Sources:** Systematic reviews; program M&E data; secondary datasets with relevant measures

Resource: 3IE database of systematic reviews, [http://resources.3ieimpact.org](http://resources.3ieimpact.org)
Plausibility Assessment: Application

Youth Civic Engagement – Assumed Outcomes

Civic Engagement

- Local Civic Action
  (volunteer / community service, civic group membership)
- Electoral Activities
  (voting, participation in campaign meetings or rallies)
- Political Voice
  (petitioning, protesting, or joining together with others to raise an issue)

Outcomes Tested

- Social Capital
  (shared social identity, trust, tolerance, respect for pluralism)
- Propensity Towards Political Violence
  (views on use of force to promote political objectives, stability)
- Economic Engagement
  (employment status, income, plans to pursue a career)
Youth Civic Engagement – Links Found

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Relative Counterfactual: Overview

**Purpose:** Generate evidence on the relationship between an intervention and the expected impacts

**Method:** Test correlations between intervention measures (e.g. intensity of program participation/exposure) and any outcomes observed

**Sources:** Data on program implementation, from routine M&E or gathered as part of outcome surveys

Resource: Rick Davies’ posting on this topic, [http://ow.ly/6mmP3](http://ow.ly/6mmP3)
1) Gather program implementation data
   • How long have you participated in Global Citizen Corps (GCC)?
   • Which GCC activities have you participated in, at what frequency?
   • How often per month on average did your group meet with GCC staff?

2) Link M&E data to outcome data
3) Analyze correlations
Matching: Overview

**Purpose:** Construct a comparison group from which to generate counterfactual evidence

**Method:** Statistical matching procedures based on observable characteristics (e.g. propensity score matching)

**Sources:** Oversampling (at endline) with inclusion of key variables needed to make good matches; data from application forms

Matching: Application

Youth applicant data:

• Socio-demographics: Gender, age, education, ethnicity, religion, father’s occupation
• Past activities and exposure: Extracurricular activities, involvement in global (social) issues, if they have lived or traveled abroad

New data from endline survey:

• Financial status of family, employment status, marriage status, student status
• Size of town they live in, access to and use of the internet
Summary

- Exploit secondary data sources and existing studies
- Build in implementation data to outcome surveys
- Develop and measure more continuous variables

THANK YOU