FROM SILO TO SYSTEM

WHAT MAKES A SYSTEM OPERATION LIKE A SYSTEM?
A “SILO-ED” APPROACH

- Independent Judiciary
- Compartmentalization of entities within the justice system
- Competition for resources
- Competing or even conflicting policies and practices
- Net result = fragmented system focused on efficient processing of people and cases
- Little attention to overall systemic improvement focused on fundamental principles of fairness, equity, impartiality, and due process
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Rather than looking at individual points in the system, study aimed to better understand what works systemically

Primary questions addressed:
- What is qualitatively different about jurisdictions that have improved process and outcomes for the criminal justice system?
- Are there common themes and characteristics that distinguish them as systems?
- How are they able to reach shared visions and achieve meaningful change when others cannot?

Focused on the characteristics, environment, structure, and culture of local criminal justice systems
METHODOLOGY

- Case studies of successful systems
- Selection criteria:
  - National reputation for initiating and sustaining system change efforts
  - Systemic initiatives based on the use of evidence-based practices
  - Collaborative decision making among key justice system stakeholders
  - Geographic region, population density, and socio-demographics of population served
EIGHT LOCAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS

- Hennepin County (Minneapolis), Minnesota
- Johnson County (Olathe), Kansas
- Jefferson County (Louisville), Kentucky
- Contra Costa (Martinez), California
- Multnomah County (Portland), Oregon
- Allegheny County (Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania
- Travis County (Austin), Texas
- Maricopa County (Phoenix), Arizona
- System Factors
  - System culture
  - Collaboration
  - Leadership
  - Structure
  - Resource allocation
  - Use of data for planning and evaluation

- Operational Policies & Practices
  - Decision making
  - Use of evidence-based practices
  - Outcome orientation

- Case Processing
  - Fairness
  - Equity
  - Impartiality
  - Due Process
DEFINING ELEMENTS OF SYSTEM & SUCCESS

- Culture of collaboration
- Detailed problem analysis and on-going evaluation of *system* performance
- Orientation toward solutions and innovation
- Cross-system education
- Integrated system structure
Collaboration = working together toward common purpose, sharing a vision, preparing & implementing plans

- Institutionalization of collaboration
  - Creation and maintenance of a change environment
  - Structured collaborative efforts & creation of forums for collaborative work
  - Creation of mid- to line-level opportunities for collaboration
Common Purpose & Shared Vision

- Broad vision aimed at system outcomes
- Balance between diversion and sometimes disparate goals of different organizations
- Shared “rewards”
- Shared power and decisionmaking
- Trust
  - Shared responsibility
  - Accountability to each other and to the public
  - Transparency among parts of the system and to the public
- Premium placed on quantitative data
- Data from all agencies and at the system level
- Use of system-level metrics
- Data driven analysis of root cases of pervasive and emerging issues
- Willingness to use data to critically evaluate system, system initiatives, and individual agencies
ORIENTATION TOWARD SOLUTIONS & INNOVATION

- Willingness to experiment
- Multi-faceted approaches based on data
- Avoidance of “band-aid” solutions
- Quality, not quantity
- Whole system responses when appropriate
- System support of individual agency innovation
- Active not passive change tactics
“Cross-fertilization” (e.g., training for judges on supervision strategies, training for prosecutors on risk assessment, training for magistrates on pretrial release options, etc.)

- Tool for ensuring all stakeholders have shared understand and baseline knowledge
- On-going education on research and evidence-based approaches
SYSTEM STRUCTURE

- Systems all grounded in the same Constitutional principles
- Organized in ways deeply steeped in the history of jurisprudence in the US
- Role of the judiciary paramount to collaboration and ability of a system to innovate
  - Multiple levels of court require significant effort to ensure a common approach
  - Judicial education critical for ensuring a focus on policy and practice
  - Judicial teamwork
IMPLICATIONS

- More proactive role in collaboration
- Focus on several of NACM’s Core modules and competencies
  - Leadership
  - Strategic planning
  - Court governances
  - Purposes and responsibilities
  - Public trust and confidence
  - Educational development
  - Accountability and court performance