



How can RESEARCH Advance Community Priorities?

Research can *activate* work around a community priority:

- Illuminating and humanizing a social problem (case study, phenomenology, ethnography)
- Defining/assessing the scope of a social problem in a particular community (canvass, survey, focus group, geographic analysis)
- Creating community education/advocacy materials that communicate the existence and nature of a social problem (civic journalism, community organizing)

Research can provide *context* for work around community priorities:

- Identifying, analyzing relations among, and distinguishing between existing, related efforts and actors in the locality/region (canvass, survey)
- Situating an issue or community priority in historical and theoretical landscapes (historical, archival, content analysis)
- Identifying and facilitating access to needed services for populations impacted by a social problem (canvass, focus group, secondary source analysis)
- Identifying existing assets, funding sources, and other resources that could support community efforts (canvass, secondary source analysis)
- Defining policy platforms in relation to existing legislation or proposals (policy research)

Research can inform the *actions* undertaken to effect community change:

- Engaging client/community voice, talent, and power to shape possible interventions (surveys, focus groups, community-based participatory research)
- Highlighting local/national models with which to compare possible interventions (case studies, best practices analysis, secondary source analysis)
- Analyzing possible interventions in light of their relatedness to existing assets/their activation (canvass, SWOT analysis)
- Identifying relationships between social problems and other factors/variables in a community (correlational, causal-comparative, geographic analysis)
- Explaining interventions in light of theoretical constructs (action research, grounded theory research)

Research can help *evaluate* community change efforts:

- Identifying assessable outcomes against which effects can be measured (secondary source research; historical; best practices analysis)
- Assessing intervention effectiveness by comparing community members who participated in an intervention to those who did not (experiments, quasi-experiments, longitudinal studies)
- Engaging client/community voice to identify and evaluate effects of interventions (surveys, focus groups, phenomenologies, case studies)
- Assessing resource utilization and efficiency of interventions (canvass, financial analysis)
- Assessing reactions of other, less-immediately-involved parties such as funders and traditional- or social-media-based publics (social media analysis, survey, content analysis)
- Exposing social change efforts to review and critique by an informed community of experts and peers (presentation, publication)
- Documenting the actions and evaluations of actions undertaken by communities working for social change (*sistematizacion*, archiving, communicating)