



# **Focus Area:** **Government Data for Evidence Building**

July 2021

# Overview of Focus Area Scope

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## Scope of Topics

- Data provider needs and capacity: use this as a driving force to ultimately shape how data feeds into federal agencies and then into NSDS (or similar access point)
  - Take a multi-pronged approach from a local perspective: (1) need to feed data into NSDS and (2) learn how to build capacity through skills emphasis; skills and capacity are needed for transformation through evidence-based policymaking
  - Emphasis on data providers as the starting point. What challenges do they face?
- Building subject matter expertise for data within NSDS and/or making connections with agencies providing the data
  - Need expert guidance so users can utilize datasets appropriately
  - Develop educational component for NSDS to expand user base beyond just PhDs
- Identify and recommend solutions for federal legislation and regulations that prevent data sharing
  - How can published guidance, regulations, and best practices improve data sharing and reduce inconsistent implementation of policies
- Identify potential barriers in the current system that hinder government data sharing at all levels
  - Use these barriers to identify root causes and possible solutions

# Initial Low-Hanging Fruit

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## Potential Quick Wins

- Frequent barriers with state and local stakeholders receiving different interpretations of the same regulations – should explore if there is a better way to create consistent interpretations about what is and is not allowed.
  - CEP told OMB to put out guidance on where agencies are being too conservative implementing policies – this guidance could open doors to better data sharing
  - Could recommend areas where additional guidance is needed and encourage publishing best practices for federal, state, and local levels
- Start with some of the basic requirements of the Evidence Act and then connect these to on-going work in the state and local sector
  - Example: NCHS is using privacy-preserving record linkage (PPRL)—one tool for preserving individual confidentiality—to link data between agencies.
- Use existing research that spans federal and state organizations to look at barriers encountered at the federal and state/local level
  - Example: Bruce Meyer’s work at the University of Chicago improving poverty estimates by using benefits data

# Committee Discussion

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## Discussion Questions

- Committee input on using UI system as a pilot program
- What barriers exist to sharing data at all levels?