Enabling better, smarter, more efficient government

Ontario Municipal Social Services Association Policy Conference

December 4, 2019

blueprint

analytics, design & evaluation

About Blueprint

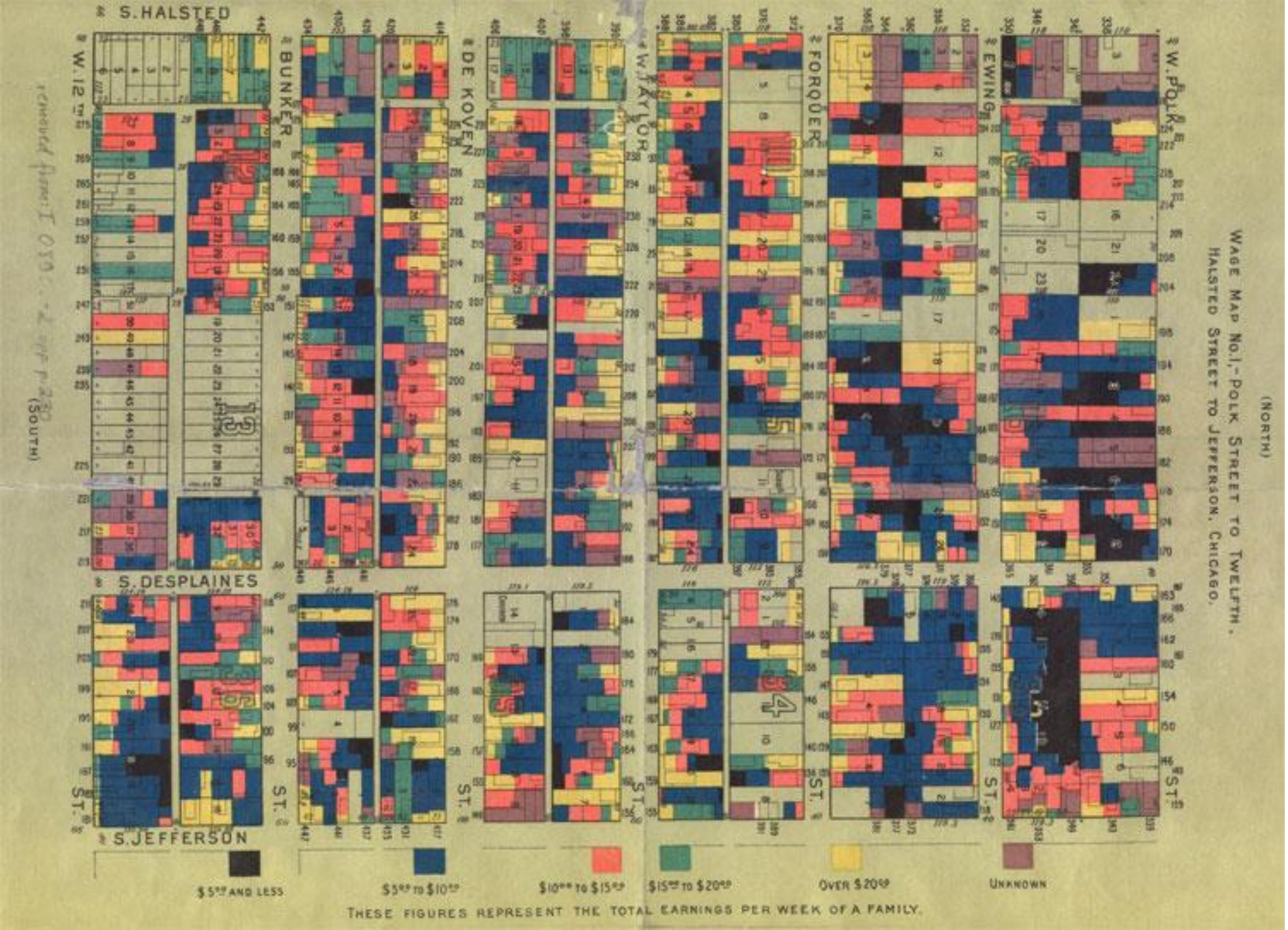
Blueprint is a non-profit research organization dedicated to improving the social and economic well-being of Canadians by helping to solve complex public policy challenges

We work with our clients to create solutions that are credible to a wide range of stakeholders, work in the real world and generate lasting impact

Introduction

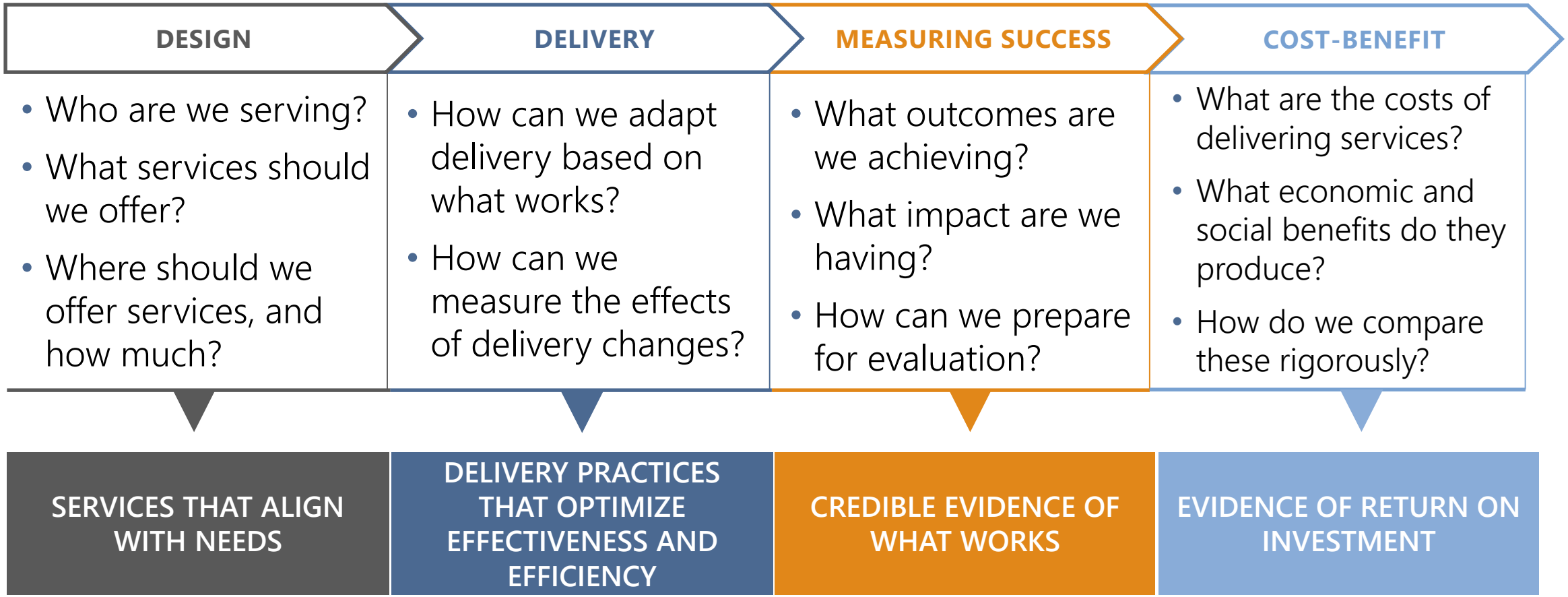
Data is being used in new and powerful ways to inform the design and delivery of government services

- Making decisions that lead to the best outcomes for individuals, families, and communities
- Using taxpayer dollars effectively, efficiently, and equitably
- Finding ways to move the needle on pressing social issues



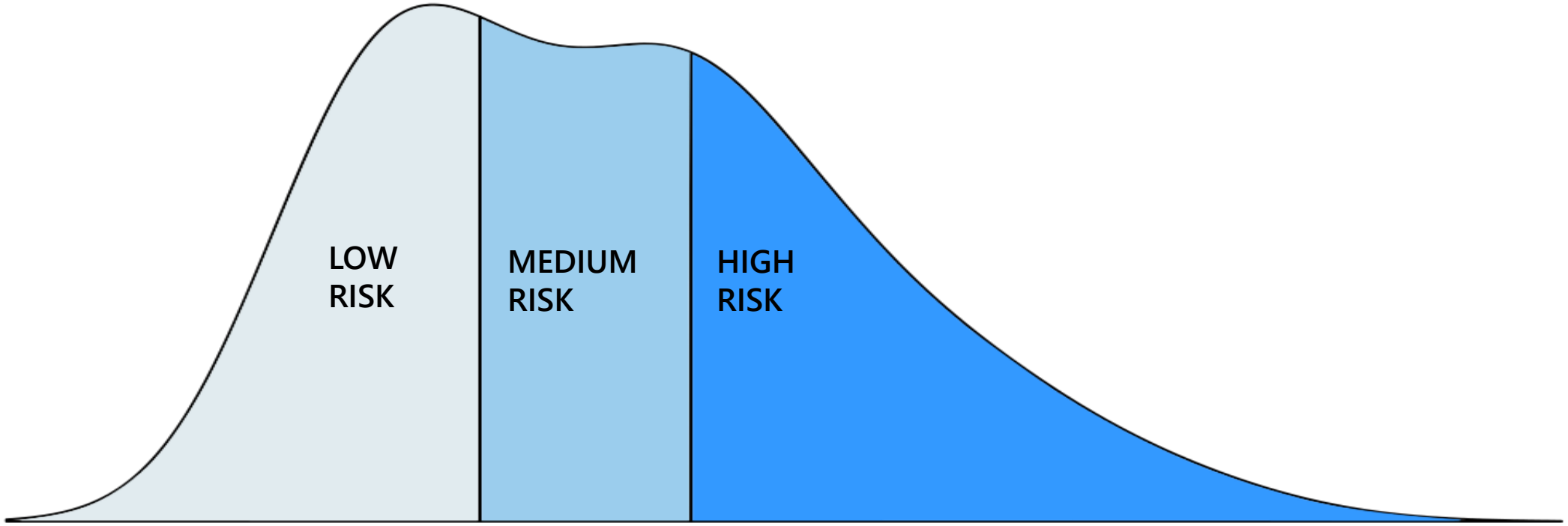
Data-driven decision making before it was big

Using data in decision-making



Deepening our understanding of client needs

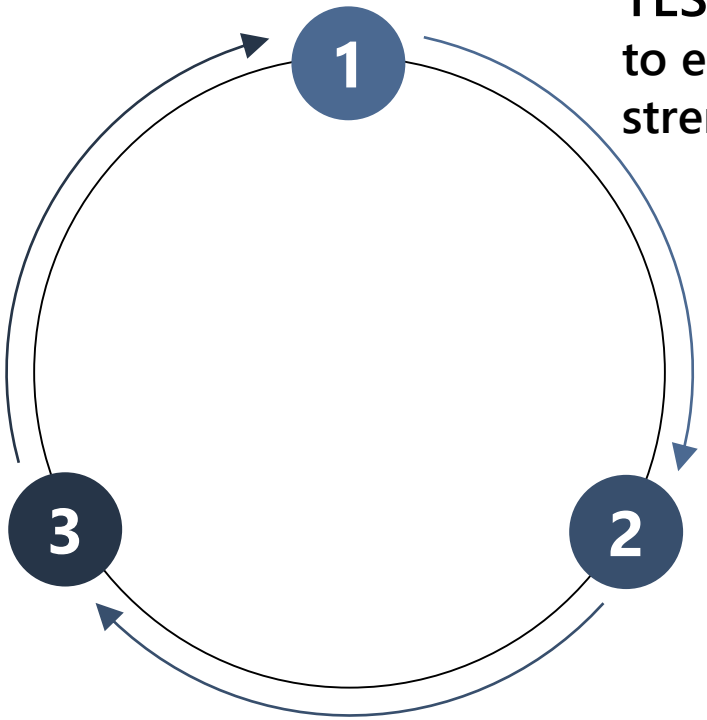
Client 'distance to the labour' market using predictive modelling



Increasing access to services

- Administrative data can be combined with geospatial data to:
  - Identify areas where clients and communities are under-served, or where there are areas of service overlap
  - Design service delivery networks that use the same resources, to connect more people to services they need

Use rapid cycle evaluation to improve performance



TEST new practices to respond to emerging needs and/or strengthen delivery

LEARN what works using administrative data and/or 'constituent voice' techniques

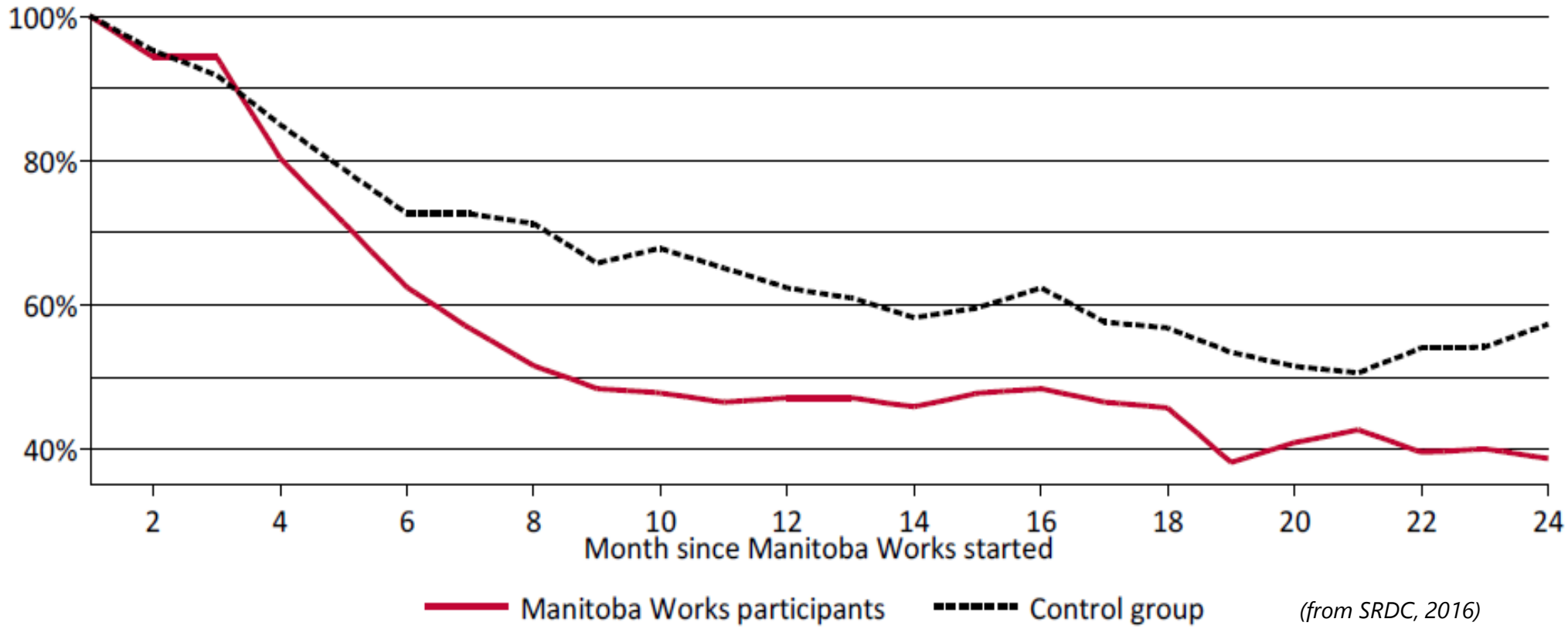
ADAPT practices to align with newly emerging evidence

Understanding what works, for whom, under what conditions

Administrative data can be used to generate credible estimates of service impact at low cost, across more contexts

- How do the outcomes of individuals we serve differ from those who we are not able to reach?
- How do clients who receive the new service differ from clients who receive existing services?
- Do some clients experience greater impacts than others?

Example – job placement program



(from SRDC, 2016)

Using data for cost-benefit analysis

- Calculating ROI requires:
  1. Credible estimates of service impact
  2. Credible estimates of delivery costs and value of benefits accrued
  3. The ability to measure both over time
- Comprehensive cost-benefit analysis is challenging, but partial analysis can still provide useful insights
- A comprehensive framework helps map out both what is important and what is feasible to measure

Cost-benefit framework – job placement program

	Participants	Businesses	Government	Society
Program costs	Cost	Cost	Cost	Cost
Direct transfers	Benefit	Benefit	Cost	Neither
Earnings increases	Benefit	Cost	Neither	Neither
Productivity increases	Neither	Benefit	Neither	Benefit
Tax increases	Cost	Cost	Benefit	Neither
Better health	Benefit	Neither	Benefit	Benefit
Lower risk behaviour	Benefit	Neither	Benefit	Benefit
Family outcomes	Benefit	Neither	Benefit	Benefit

Cost-benefit framework – job placement program

	Participants	Businesses	Government	Society
Program costs	Cost	Cost	Cost	Cost
Direct transfers	Benefit	Benefit	Cost	Neither
Earnings increases	Benefit	Cost	Neither	Benefit*
Productivity increases	Neither	Benefit	Neither	Benefit
Tax increases	Cost	Cost	Benefit	Neither
Better health	Benefit	Neither	Benefit	Benefit
Lower risk behaviour	Benefit	Neither	Benefit	Benefit
Family outcomes	Benefit	Neither	Benefit	Benefit

What's needed to use data more effectively?

- Organizational culture of data-driven decision making
- Moving beyond 'one-and-done' evaluation and narrow performance measures towards a 'learning agenda'
- Investment in tools and preparation of analyzable datasets
- Operational focus on continuous improvement and R&D
- Analytical expertise working alongside delivery expertise
- Collaboration and strong partnerships