WHAT'S THE RIGHT MIX?
LESSONS LEARNED USING A
MIXED-METHODS EVALUATION APPROACH

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Presentation Overview

- Our challenge

- Healthy & Active Communities Initiative

- Evaluation Plan

- Lessons learned

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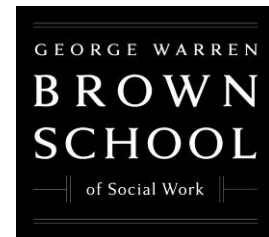
Evaluation funded by the Missouri Foundation for Health

Washington University in St.Louis

Our Challenge

- How do we provide a realistic picture about the H&AC Initiative while accounting for:

  - Long length of Initiative

  - Large Initiative scope

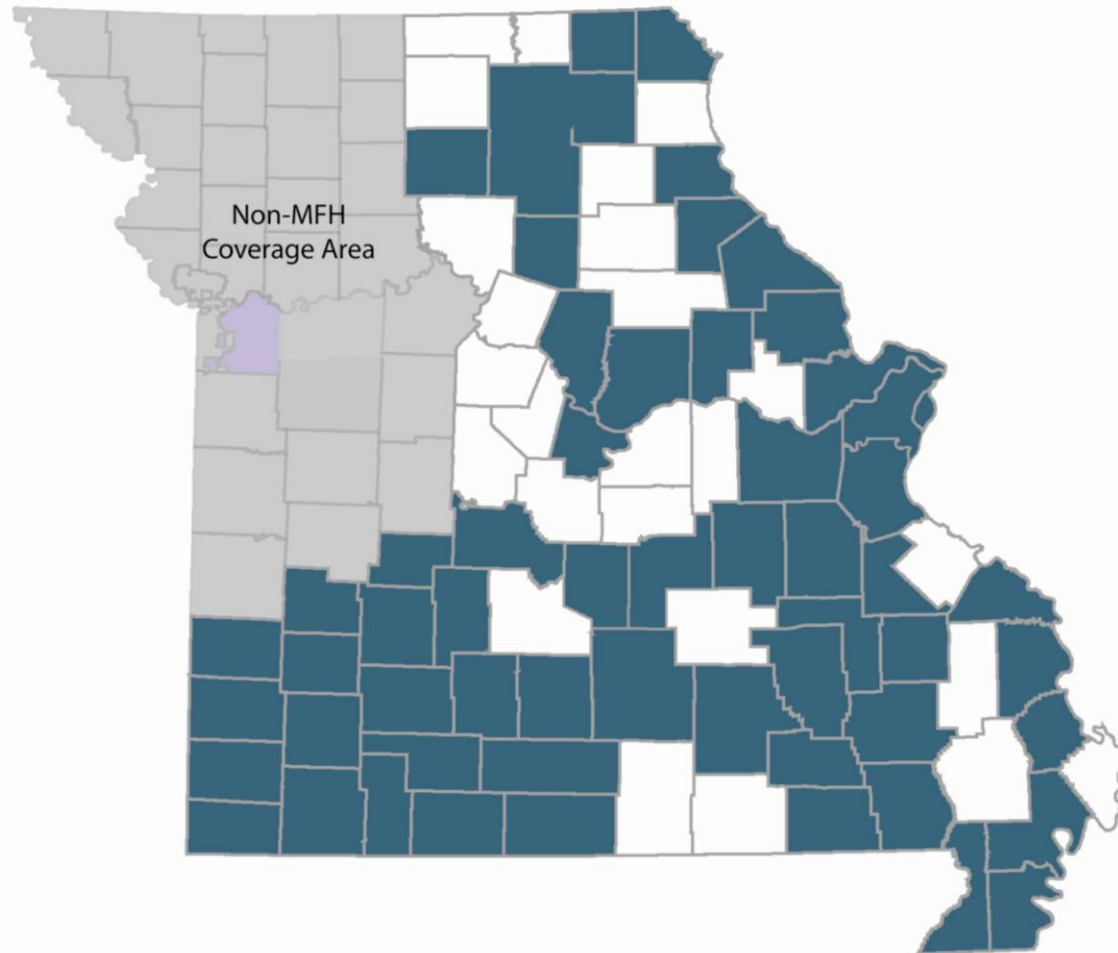 - Highly diverse set of grantees

Healthy & Active Communities Initiative
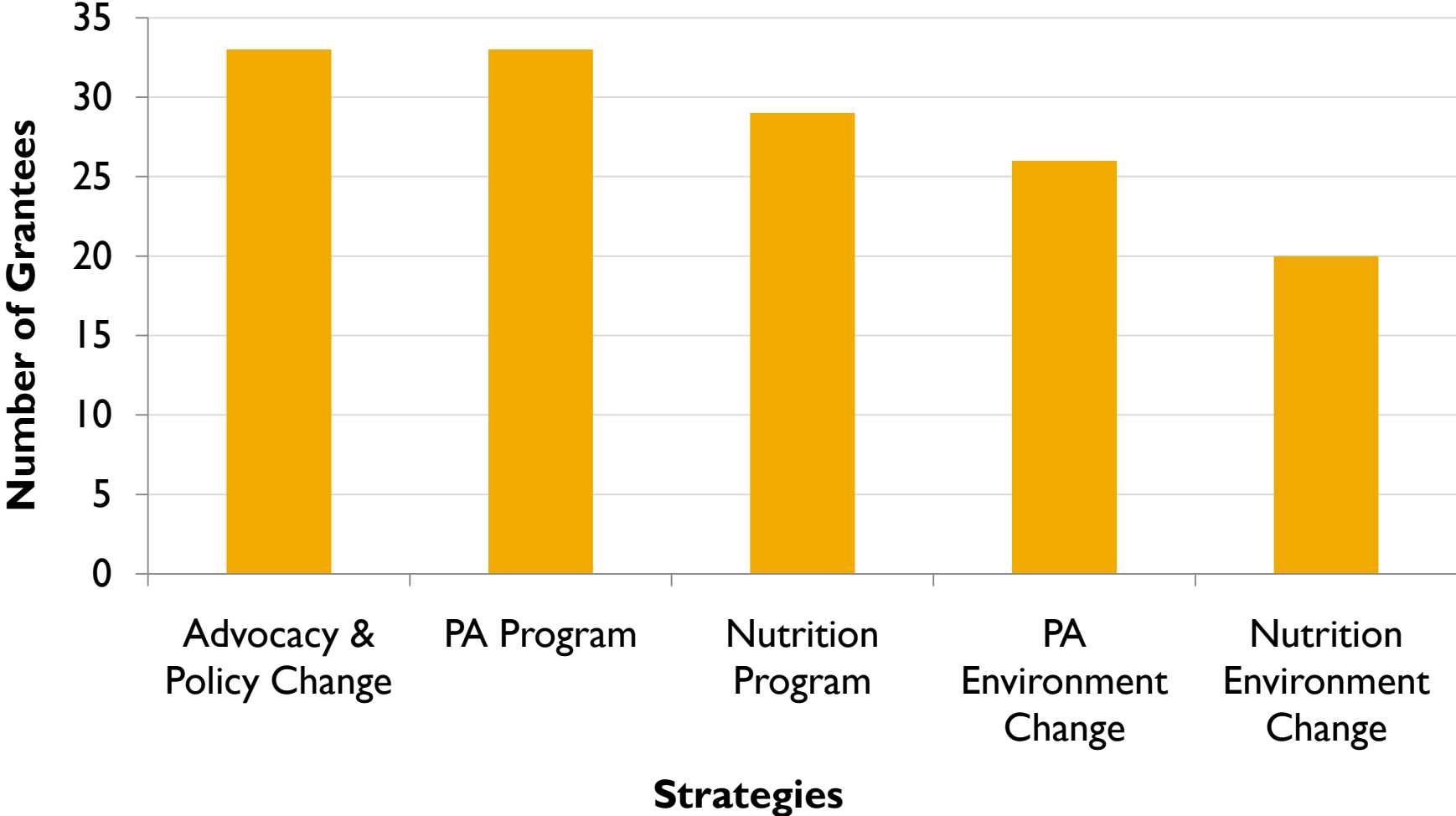
Overview

Healthy and Active Communities (H&AC) Initiative

- 2005 – Missouri Foundation for Health launched nine-year initiative to reduce obesity rates in Missouri
- Initiative goals:
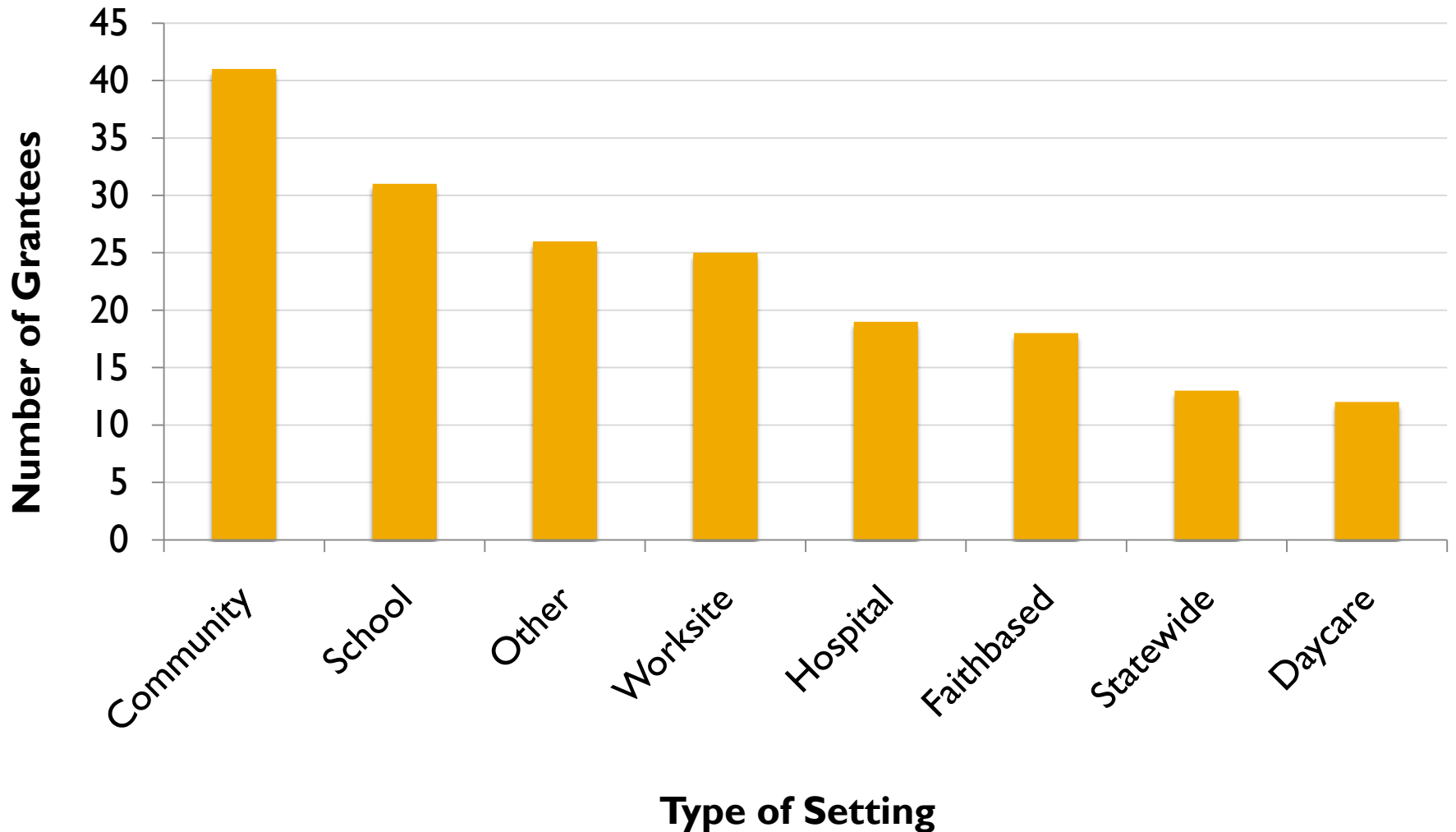 - Sustainability
  - Partnerships
  - Leadership

H&AC Initiative – State Coverage

Non-MFH Coverage Area

Diverse Focus of Projects

Variety of Settings

Healthy & Active Communities

Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Plan Development

Gathered Information and Input

MFH, Grantees, Capacity-Building Teams, Experts

Implemented Data Collection

Developed Logic Model

Developed Data Collection Instruments

Indentified and Prioritized Evaluation Questions

Identified Appropriate Data Sources
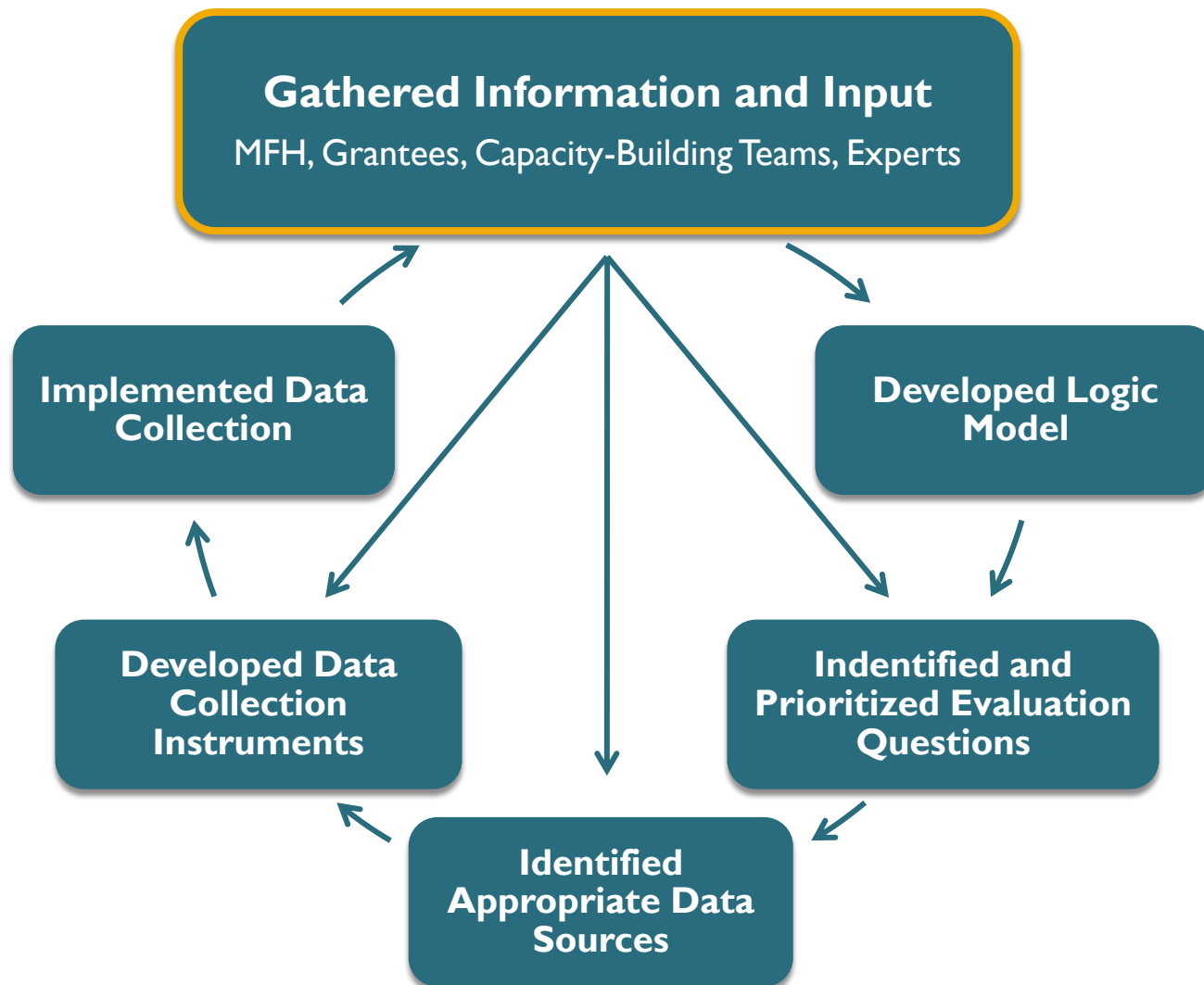
Evaluation Focus

- Program capacity
- Program reach
- Partnerships
- Policy and environmental changes
- Sustainability
- Behavior Change

Mixed Methods Approach

- Quantitative Data
  - Web-based monitoring system
  - County-level surveillance data

- Qualitative Data
  - Semi-structured interviews
  - Policy assessments

H&AC Core Data Set

Data Source	Indicators

Quantitative
 Web-based data collection system
	• Program reach
	    • Settings
	    • Geographical areas
	    • Populations affected
	• Program partnerships (partner type, contributions)
	• Organizational capacity (staffing, training, funding)

Qualitative Semi-structured interviews	• Capacity of organizations • Extent of partnerships • Essential skills needed to implement program • Sustainability • Lessons learned

The Monitoring System

- Centralized location for grantees to:
  - Submit their program data
  - Monitor their progress over time
  - Generate reports to meet their program needs

- Allows for collection of data across all H&AC grants
  - Monthly and quarterly data collection

The Monitoring System

Semi-structured Interviews

- Goal: provide more depth to data
  - Key project stakeholders
  - Administered twice within 3-year grant period
  - Average about one hour in length

Example: The Partnership Picture

- Through the collection of both quantitative & qualitative data, we know:
  - Types of partnerships
  - Role and contributions
  - Most critical partners
  - Missing partners and resources
  - Changes over time

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- Evaluation Planning
  - Stakeholder participation is critical
  - Keep plan focused and realistic
- Mixed methods approach
  - Identify core data set & most appropriate method
  - Realistic in scope of data collection
  - Keep in mind that each type of data only provides one perspective

Lessons Learned

- Implement a continuous feedback loop
  - Obtain stakeholder feedback throughout every step
  - Get grantee buy-in
  - Share data in a timely manner

Contact Information

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