When A Challenge Gets Stuck

A practical worksheet for deciding whether your district needs a different kind of solution.

1. YOUR STUCK CHALLENGE

Name one challenge in your district that keeps resurfacing despite repeated efforts.

2. WHAT DO YOU RECOGNIZE?

- [ ] Is a particular population over-represented in this problem?
- [ ] Has the challenge become chronic?
- [ ] Have the usual approaches failed to reach the people most affected?

3. DOES IT NEED A DIFFERENT KIND OF SOLUTION?

Have you asked the people experiencing the problem what they need - and listened?

- [ ] Do they have trust in, or a relationship with, the resources on offer?
- [ ] Have you tried this before and watched it fail to stick?
- [ ] Are you treating a symptom or the cause?
- [ ] Is the 'good enough' option quietly letting the problem get more chronic over time?

4. EVALUATE THE SOLUTION

- [ ] Does it help more people use the space and reach services that already exist - or mainly move people along?
- [ ] For the over-represented population, does it reach them differently - or repeat what has not worked?
- [ ] Does it engage the affected community as partners - or treat them as recipients?
- [ ] Who designed it, and were affected people at the table?
- [ ] When it gets hard, does it bend or break?
- [ ] Does it deepen outside dependence - or move toward community ownership?

How are you going to apply this in your downtown?

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