Monitor Institute
by **Deloitte.**

Bright spot practices
More effectively putting decision-making at the center

Spreading these bright spot practices could help the field gain traction on a better future in which social sector organizations more effectively put decision-making at the center.

1 Information for on-the-ground decision-making is prioritized

- Reduce grantee reporting burden and simplify what's needed by funders to minimize diversion of time and resources
- Begin with data needed by front-line for decision-making and build reporting requirements from there
- Leverage data as by-product of user actions and transactions when possible
- Support the development of low-cost tools useful for front-line users
- Attend to totality of data collectors' and data users' experience, addressing individual motivations and abilities

2 Learning is embedded and continuous

- Embed experimentation, hypothesis-testing, and course correction to continuously improve
- Focus on what works and what doesn't for improvement rather than identifying success and failure
- Focus on closing feedback loops with behavior change as a result of new learnings
- Create incentives for data use, learning, and adaptation throughout the organization
- Maintain a supportive learning environment that is open to new ideas and differences of option, and that provides time for reflection
- Develop concrete learning processes and practices with clear purpose and goals
- Have leadership promote and reinforce the value of learning processes and practices

3 There is greater investment in monitoring, evaluation, and learning capacity

- Ensure nonprofits have sufficient resources for funder data requests, including funding for monitoring, evaluation, and learning design
- Promote broad and in-depth data-oriented capacity building that integrates data use into organizational culture and leadership practices, technology, data processes, and strategy development
- Provide "embedded resources" to help organizations better use data and evaluative thinking
- Promote peer, individual organization, and group learning and training
- Create time for more and deeper discussions between funders and grantees about learnings, including what hasn't worked

4 The data and methods needed to inform decisions are available

- Invest in data and analytics infrastructure needed for learning and decision-making
- Incentivize good data collection throughout the data supply chain by making sure it's relevant to data collectors and informed by user needs
- Support the development of tools for non-expert users
- Use compatible applications across the organization to enable timely and ongoing data sharing, with the ability to parse information in different ways