

Conclusion

The market for evidence on effectiveness will never be straightforward due to the diverse needs of users. However, in an ideal world, we can envision a robust supply chain that both helps to ensure decision makers get the right amount and type of evidence to inform their intervention decisions, and helps to improve and expand the pool of effective interventions. The recommendations in this report can move us in this direction by substantially improving the supply chain and better connecting it to decision makers' needs.

We believe it is important to start by implementing fixes toward the beginning of the supply chain. Ideally, evaluators and purveyors would share all completed studies with the relevant clearinghouses. Clearinghouses consolidate and validate studies for all interventions in their domains and make information about interventions at all parts of the evidence spectrum available to users in a clear and usable format. Clearinghouses then provide or direct users to intermediary resources, where information is synthesized into best practices. Researchers and others use the intervention evidence and synthesis to develop new interventions and improve the effectiveness and evidence-base of others.

For decision makers, clearinghouses would provide user-friendly websites with information and tools to guide selection of interventions. An integrated third-party site then connects decision makers to peers to learn about implementation of interventions. More importantly, clearinghouses and other information sources direct decision makers to a vibrant adviser market where they can receive hands-on support. Advisers also proactively reach out to decision makers to encourage them to think about evidence on effectiveness. They also leverage clearinghouses and other information sources to guide decision makers in selecting interventions that are appropriate for their contexts and can be implemented with fidelity. Researchers then evaluate these intervention implementations, which leads to a virtuous cycle of evidence refinement and development, further strengthening the supply chain.

The market for evidence on effectiveness has progressed impressively in recent years and is moving in the direction of the ideal world described above. In particular, the clearinghouses are doing great work at making evidence on effectiveness available to a variety of users and filling what was previously a significant disconnect in the supply chain. We identified the six supply chain

gaps to help clearinghouses and other information sources continue to develop and improve.

Implementing the recommendations in this report will require efforts from all involved in the market. **Clearinghouses** will need to play a central role as the primary aggregators of evidence on effectiveness. The **sponsors and funders of clearinghouses** will need to support improvements, such as through allocation of additional resources, revised mandates, or simply advice and encouragement. However, even an ideal set of clearinghouses will not be sufficient to change behavior and ensure the use of evidence on effectiveness. Other players in the field must support and complement their efforts. In particular, the **federal government** will need to lead the national conversation about evidence and support the many other actors who play important roles in this market. **Researchers and synthesizers** will need to work with clearinghouses to make the right information about interventions available. They also should continue to use the available evidence to further improve the pool of effective interventions. **Foundations** need to direct and support the use of evidence on effectiveness through their grantmaking and advocacy. Finally, **state and local leaders** will need to work alongside all of these actors by engaging in the market for evidence on effectiveness and using evidence to make informed decisions.

The recommendations from this study could help make strong progress towards the ideal market for evidence on effectiveness by filling the existing gaps in the supply chain. However, our recommendations focus mainly on the market for information and by themselves will not lead to increased use of evidence. The realignment of major funding sources is necessary to support interventions that are achieving results and building their evidence. And the market will not grow unless interventions continue to be created, evaluated, and refined.

Given the large number of actors and relatively limited resources in this market, collaboration and coordination will be essential. It also will be important to focus on continuous improvement and not on final judgments about what works. Most importantly, it will be critical to stay focused on our end goals: a healthy market for evidence on effectiveness, greater investment in the most effective solutions, and ultimately, better outcomes for vulnerable children, families, and communities.

Alex Neuhoff is a partner in The Bridgespan Group's New York office. Simon Axworthy is a manager, Sara Glazer is a case team leader, and Danielle Berfond is a consultant, all working out of the New York office.