

Demystifying Outcome Measurement in Community Development

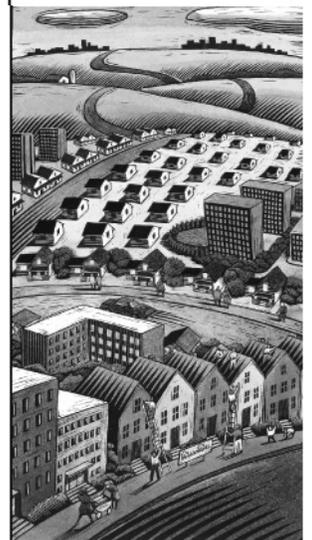
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Abstract

This study aims to describe outcome measurement and to explore to whom outcomes matter, how outcomes are measured, and the costs and benefits of undertaking outcome measurement at the level of a community development organization (CDO). Several funders in community development began requiring outcome reporting in 2005. Outcome measurement is a way to produce important evidence about long-term outcomes in a manner that may be useful both for funders and CDOs. Its process includes articulating an organization's long-term goals, identifying indicators to evaluate progress toward those goals, implementing a system to track the indicators, analyzing the findings, and reporting results to stakeholders. Outcome measurement is distinguished from performance measurement, which focuses on immediate outputs or short-term outcomes. Also, outcome measurement does not aim to meet the standards of academic research.

This study found consensus among funders and CDOs that the benefits of outcome measurement are well worth its costs. Implementing outcome measurement provides the most value to CDOs if the process allows sufficient flexibility and if CDOs are committed to the effort required. Primary benefits for CDOs consist of enhanced strategic planning and management, better positioning with respect to competition for funding, and better communication and community relations. The study recommends that funders and intermediaries increase transparency about their objectives to CDOs in order to mitigate confusion and mistrust. Funders are also cautioned against valuing outcome information ahead of other considerations. The study further recommends collaboration among outcome measurement experts and funders to create consensus around terminology and reporting requirements.

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Methodology

The findings and conclusions presented in this study were generated through several research methods. First, literature from the developers of relevant outcome measurement frameworks, systems, tools and data sources was consulted, in addition to relevant publications and Web sites related to the topic. Then information was gathered and interviews were conducted at a symposium entitled “All in Good Measure: Building Your Toolkit to Evaluate Capacity, Performance and Impact” in June 2006 during the NeighborWorks Training Institute in Kansas City.

In addition, the following public meetings were conducted in August 2006 during the NeighborWorks Training Institute in Washington, DC:

- Policy briefing and discussion on August 14, 2006, with leading community development experts at NeighborWorks America headquarters;
- Focus group on August 15, 2006, with nonprofit leaders interested in and informed about outcome measurement; and
- Workshop open to all attendees of the NeighborWorks America Training Institute on August 15, 2006.

Interviews were conducted with 36 individuals, including professors, researchers, industry consultants, community development practitioners, funders of community development organizations, intermediary representatives, policymakers, policy analysts, and the developers, administrators and users of outcome measurement frameworks, systems and tools. Findings rely heavily on these interviews.

The paper also draws significantly from the following surveys of two outcome-measurement systems which were selected for in-depth review. The second survey involves a much smaller group than the first, and they vary in other significant ways. Both surveys, however, provide valuable, early feedback about outcome measurement.

- *United Way Outcome Measurement Program*: An internal survey (“UW Survey”) of program directors was performed in August 1999. Results are based on 298 responses out of the 391 mailed confidential surveys.¹
- *Success Measures Program and Success Measures Data*: An evaluation (“SM Survey”) took place in June 2006 and involved the 18 organizations of the Success Measures Pilot Program of NeighborWorks America. It is based on 33 responses received of 45 online survey requests and telephone interviews with 15 of the 18 executive directors of participating organizations.²

¹ United Way of America: *Agency Experiences with Outcome Measurement, Survey Findings*. Alexandria VA, 2000. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/agency_experiences.cfm.

² NeighborWorks America: *An Evaluation of the NeighborWorks® Success Measures Pilot Program*. Washington, DC. Conducted by EnCompass LLC, August 2006.

The selection of resources for the study began with a NeighborWorks America document released in June 2006 entitled “Community Development Evaluation Storymap & Legend” (NW evaluation map).³ It contains 67 “resources” categorized into three “distinct but intersecting types of evaluation.” Outcome Evaluation (Part III) includes 33 resources. Another six resources were added to this list, based on conversations with funders and practitioners. Those resources that did not provide outcome measurement at the neighborhood or community level were eliminated, leaving 14 to 17 resources. From this list, two comprehensive systems were selected based on longevity, relevance to community development organization (CDO)–type operations, and portability (their ability to be used by different CDOs in different settings). Although an indefinite measure, longevity was considered to be a reasonable indicator that the resource had value.

As a result, this study is based more on *systems*, which focus on primary data, than on *tools* and *data sources*, which focus on secondary data.

³ NeighborWorks America: “Community Development Evaluation Storymap & Legend.” The document was presented and discussed at a symposium in Kansas City on June 28, 2006, entitled “All in Good Measure: Building Your Toolkit to Evaluate Capacity, Performance and Impact.” Web site accessed on June 28, 2006, at www.nw.org/network/training/documents/CommunityDevEvalStorymap.pdf.

Executive Summary

Anything having to do with evaluation creates discomfort for practitioners, but usually piques the interest of funders. Outcome measurement, however, offers the potential to soften the divide between them by meeting funders' needs while also providing valuable, usable benefits to grantees. Interest in outcome measurement has indeed increased substantially in recent times; however, the topic is largely misunderstood.

What is it? Terminology around outcome measurement is used inconsistently in community development. Generally, “outputs” are the direct results of program activities, while “outcomes” are the benefits or changes that result from those outputs. “Impacts” usually refer to medium- to long-term benefits at the community level. “Indicators” are indirect measures that serve to gauge progress toward outcomes. In practice, the term “indicator” is often used interchangeably with the term “outcome,” although they are very distinct concepts. “Outcome measurement” is distinguished from “performance management,” which focuses on outputs. It is also important not to expect outcome measurement to be academically rigorous. While some of it sounds like formal research, proving causality beyond reasonable doubt is not its chief priority.

To whom do outcomes matter? Funders, governments, and community development intermediaries (“intermediaries”) are requiring increasing levels of accountability and are primarily driving the surge of interest in outcome measurement. Outcome- or results-oriented evaluation grew in popularity across many fields during the 1990s. Many private funders of community development also began asking for outcome information earlier. But since 2005, some funders in community development have actually begun requiring it. While now common, the requirements of outcome reporting are still relatively new, and funders are very interested in staying abreast of the topic to better understand their options.

How are outcomes measured in community development? Interest in outcome measurement has been followed by rapid growth in the development of its resources. A few examples are discussed in order to better understand outcome measurement in community development. The present study revealed two major themes. First, it is important to keep outcome measurement simple. All experts recommended focusing on a few key outcomes and indicators rather than attempting to cover all the programs of a CDO. Second, all experts emphasized the importance of adequate training or technical assistance, given the roadblocks and challenges that often hinder groups from fully implementing the process.

The two systems selected for in-depth review are the United Way of America's approach to outcome measurement (“UW approach”) and the Success Measures Program and Success Measures Data System (“SM system”). Both are CDO-oriented and focus on measuring medium- to long-term outcomes. They are distinguished from other examples of outcome measurement systems that are more concerned with outcomes of federal agency programs and focus their data collection on short- to medium-term outcomes.

What are current issues in outcome measurement? A significant number of organizations have been using either the UW approach or the SM system for over ten years, but outcome

measurement is still a nascent field, and its resources continue to evolve rapidly. Current issues in this field involve conflicting uses for outcome measurement; standardization of outcomes and indicators; primary versus secondary data; and the further simplification and improvement of outcome measurement systems.

Are the benefits worth the costs? Outcome measurement provides CDOs with information and feedback that are useful in real time and that are arguably more feasible than traditional types of evaluation for already overburdened organizations. While funders have driven the recent growth of outcome measurement, some systems have originated with practitioners. Primary benefits of outcome measurement for funders and intermediaries include reporting for their own stakeholders and increasing grantee accountability. Primary benefits for CDOs consist of enhanced strategic planning and management, better positioning with respect to competition for funding, and better communication and community relations. Another benefit for CDOs is that outcome measurement facilitates a connection to future staff when turnover occurs.

CDOs have made changes in strategy and programs as a result of their outcome evaluations. One organization obtained new funding for a child-care facility, another increased its post-purchase counseling services, and a third formed new partnerships between a social service agency, credit union, and CDO, all to address critical needs identified by an outcome measurement process.

Some experts view outcome measurement as the research and development (R&D) “arm” of the community development industry, because it helps track trends to determine whether the organization is reacting appropriately to a changing market or community. Implementation of outcome measurement requires organizations to set up structures that focus attention on current community needs.⁴ In addition, outcome measurement has the potential to validate the success of programs that historically have been underfunded because their value has been difficult to prove (e.g., community-building and organizing).

Despite the drawbacks, dangers and fears relating to outcome measurement, there was consensus among all experts interviewed that, overall, the benefits of outcome evaluation are worth its costs. Implementing outcome measurement can be very valuable to CDOs if they have the flexibility to think through their outcome and indicator data independently. The value for CDOs also depends significantly upon their own effort and commitment, which includes giving responsibility to a lead person to push the process forward.

Considerations for CDOs. Industry professionals have confirmed that outcome reporting is rapidly becoming commonplace in community development. For CDOs interested in outcome measurement, consideration should be given to internal capacity, expected costs, and training and start-up needs in order to determine the resources that fit them best.

⁴ “Common Myths Regarding Outcome Measures,” *National Resource Center E-Newsletter, Best of the Best*. Compassion Capital Fund. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at www.ccfbest.org/outcomemeasurements/commonmyths.htm.

Implications for funders and other stakeholders. There are several things that funders, governments, intermediaries, and other stakeholders can do to make outcome measurement more attractive to CDOs, mitigate mistrust by grantees, and provide value to the entire field:

- **Increase transparency to grantees.** This includes disclosing funders' own objectives with regard to outcome measurement.
- **Do not rely on or consider outcome data first and foremost for funding purposes.** To avoid mistrust on the part of grantees, funders are cautioned that outcome evaluation should not be the "end-all and be-all" in making funding decisions.⁵ They should continue examining the information that has traditionally been considered for funding.
- **Wait a few years before starting to use outcome data, and consider multiyear funding.** Funders must pay attention to interim reporting, but should withhold final judgment on a program for at least two to three years to ensure the data can be relied upon. Many funders are moving toward multiyear grants in order to address the issue of sufficient timing and data collection.
- **Emphasize education and training for key staff.** One of the most valuable things funders and intermediaries can do is become very diligent about their own learning by ensuring that key personnel understand outcome measurement: its myths, terminology, benefits for CDOs, and current issues, such as the ways in which overstandardization and overprescription can affect benefits for grantees.
- **Support improvements in tools.** Experts agree that improvement in data-collection tools and infrastructure to do the analysis would be easy with the right technology and would be particularly desirable for CDOs.
- **Collaborate with other funders and intermediaries.** Reaching agreement on *common terminology*, and decreasing the variety in *formats* and *requirements* for outcome reporting would help the entire field. However, it is important to balance overprescribing outcomes and indicators, or standardizing for the purpose of aggregating and comparing outcome information, with the purpose of providing CDOs with the flexibility that will allow them to benefit from the process. Funders are also encouraged to *simplify* outcome measurement systems and make them *easier* to implement, but with the same caveat — to avoid becoming too prescriptive. Greater collaboration between *secondary data experts* and experts who focus on *primary data* is also recommended.

Many of the issues between funders and grantees revolve around trust. Relationships can be pushed into a downward, destructive spiral by excessive mistrust, while a better relationship can bring about important benefits for both grantees and funders. Outcome measurement even has the potential to create synergy between grantees and funders. An outcome measurement process that balances benefits that are important to both sides can engage all their active interests and help them meet each others' needs simultaneously.

⁵ NeighborWorks America: *An Evaluation of the NeighborWorks® Success Measures Pilot Program*, Washington, DC. Conducted by EnCompass LLC, August 2006.

I. What Is Outcome Measurement?

Outcome evaluation is the process of defining an organization's long-term goals and using data to evaluate progress toward those goals. **Outcome measurement** is the latter stage of this process, though the term is often used to refer to the entire process, as it will in this report.

Outcomes are not what the program itself did but the consequences of what the program did.

— Harry P. Hatry⁶

A. What Are Outcomes?

A significant amount of confusion about outcome measurement revolves around the meaning of the word “outcome.” While “**outputs**” are the direct products of program activities and are frequently measured in terms of the volume of work accomplished, “**outcomes**” are benefits or changes for individuals, populations or neighborhoods during or after program activities.

The basic concepts seem simple, but even experts in the field make mistakes with terminology. Part of this is caused by the significant gray areas between many of the terms.

NeighborWorks America further describes **outcomes** as follows:⁷

- intended change that results from the organization's work;
- what success looks like;
- not achievable in a short time; probably takes multiyear efforts;
- may be the cumulative result over years;
- more likely to come from the organization's strategic plan than the annual operating plan;
- often the result of overlapping work from multiple lines of business;
- don't need to show 100% direct cause/effect correlation; show a contribution to it.

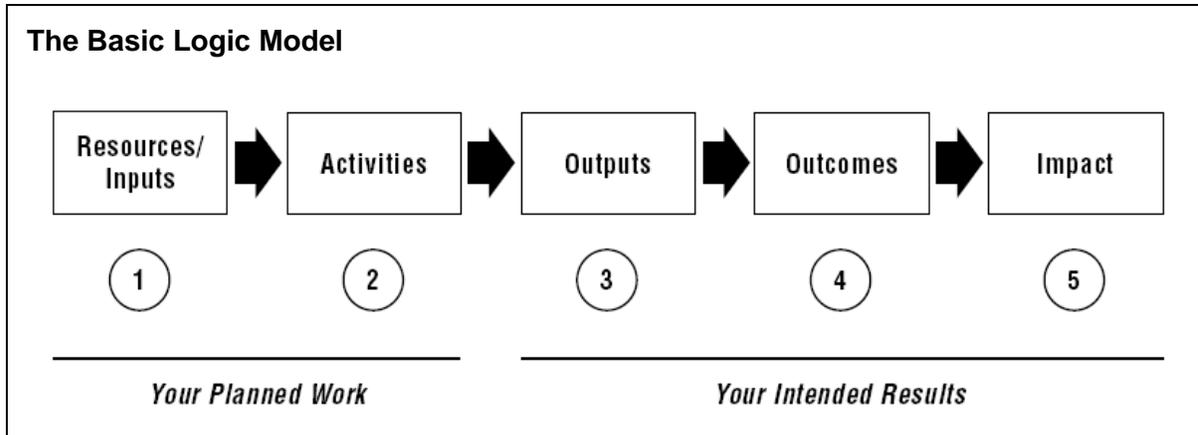
B. Logic Models and Theories of Change

Understanding outcomes is easier after an introduction to the logic model, a method of linking specific resources and activities to the greater goals of an organization. The Urban Institute prefers to use the term “outcome sequence chart” for the resulting form.⁸ The Kellogg Foundation has an entire guidebook with various types and examples of logic models. The following figure represents a basic form.

⁶ Hatry, Harry P. Principal Research Associate and Program Director at the State Policy Center of the Urban Institute. “What Types of Performance Information Should be Tracked?” In Dall Forsythe, ed., *Quicker, Better, Cheaper? Performance in American Government*, Rockefeller Institute Press, Albany, NY, 2001, p. 21.

⁷ NeighborWorks America, Organizational Underwriting FY2007, memo to all network organizations, entitled “Community-level Outcome Goals and Measurements.”

⁸ The Urban Institute, *Key Steps in Outcome Management*, 2003. Web site accessed on July 10, 2006, at www.urban.org/uploadedPDF/310776_KeySteps.pdf.



Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation, *Logic Model Development Guide*⁹

“Theory of change” is another term used often in community development. It represents a way to evaluate outcomes that occur well into the future, while recognizing that a variety of initiatives are employed to achieve the change. This method involves identifying and breaking down the assumptions behind a program.¹⁰ It would ask, for example, “Why does providing financial literacy counseling lead to more homeownership among participants? What are the assumptions behind this assertion?”

These exercises are simple but performing them often leads to important realizations about strategy. After breaking down a program by articulating each component of a logic model, or thinking about the assumptions underlying how a program will lead to intended results, several ideas often surface immediately on how the program can be improved.

C. What Outcome Measurement is Not

Performance Measurement vs. Outcome Measurement

Evaluation can be divided into three “distinct but intersecting” categories: capacity assessment, performance measurement, and outcome evaluation.¹² Historically, community development has been focused on *performance measurement*, which evaluates outputs, or direct results, such as the number of housing units delivered, volunteer hours, or number of homebuyer counseling sessions held.

**You have to know the
RPMs you’re running at,
but you also want to know
which road you’re on.**

— Brooke Finn,
NeighborWorks America¹¹

⁹ W.K. Kellogg Foundation, *Logic Model Development Guide*, Battle Creek, MI, 2001, p. 1. Image used with permission. Web site accessed on August 22, 2006, at www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf.

¹⁰ It has been argued that any assessment of observable outcomes is based both on a series of minute assumptions about unobservables and a broader “theory of change” that suggests how various elements fit together to produce the desired outcomes. Kubisch, Anne C., Carol H. Weiss, Lisbeth B. Schorr, James P. Connell, “Introduction,” in *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives*, Aspen Institute, Washington, DC, 1995, pp. 1–22.

¹¹ Conversation with Brooke Finn, Director, Office of Program Integration and Planning, NeighborWorks America, September 2006.

¹² NeighborWorks America Evaluation Map.

This information is still important, but CDOs are now being asked to also report on longer-term effects.

Outcome measurement evaluates “outcomes,” which are the benefits or changes that are consequences of the program activities and their results, such as how the new housing affected the participants or the neighborhood. Another way to describe the difference is that performance management strives to evaluate *efficiency*, while outcome evaluation strives to identify and measure *effectiveness*.¹³ For example, performance measurement seeks to know whether the staff is delivering quality counseling sessions, while outcome measurement seeks to know whether the level of financial literacy and participant confidence is increasing, whether participants are averting “predatory” choices, and, on a long-term basis, whether neighborhood stability is increasing.

NeighborWorks America has adopted evaluation tools and practices to address all three areas of evaluation, but this is not the case with many other funders. Many United Ways, for example, focus primarily on outcome information and do not require separate reports on performance (although some performance data are embedded in the outcome reports).

Funders have been buying counts. Now they want to buy “people are better, lives are changed.”

— *United Way of America, 1997*¹⁴

Traditional Evaluation vs. Outcome Measurement

Outcome evaluation is also different from traditional evaluation, which involves the formal research methods appropriate to social science. Traditional evaluation is generally performed by an academic or consultant¹⁵ who follows rigorous methods. Further, evaluators are supposed to be objective third parties who neither engage in nor influence program implementation.¹⁶ In outcome measurement, CDOs measure their own outcomes. Training and guidance in methods of random sampling, data analysis and reporting are provided by outcome measurement frameworks and systems. However, CDOs choose their own indicators, arguably allowing them to only select those that demonstrate positive trends. Skeptics also argue that definitively attributing a change to a specific CDO program or activity is impossible because many different variables affect the same people and community. One expert maintains that even the traditional social sciences have not established ways to identify and measure cause-and-effect relationships adequately for many outcomes of community development work.¹⁷

¹³ Conversation with Nicolas P. Retsinas, Director, Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University, September 2006.

¹⁴ United Way of America, “The Focus is On Outcomes,” Alexandria, VA, October 1997. Web site accessed on August 6, 2006, at www.national.unitedway.org/outcomes/library/nvfocus.cfm.

¹⁵ Interview with George McCarthy, Senior Program Officer, Development Finance and Economic Security, Ford Foundation, August 2006.

¹⁶ W.K. Kellogg Foundation, *Logic Model Development Guide*, Battle Creek, MI, December 2001, p. 102. Web site accessed on August 22, 2006, at www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf.

¹⁷ The methods developed by George Galster to assess property value impacts have been considered a major step forward in this regard. Please see publication referenced in Footnote 33. Interview with Thomas Kingsley,

Another expert asserts that the purpose of outcome measurement, however, is not to prove causality but to support improvement.¹⁸ Proponents of outcome measurement acknowledge that community development is not a science and do not attempt to produce indisputable data. Information that indirectly demonstrates a correlation between activities and outcomes, coupled with an articulated theory of change or logic model, has proven to be very useful. This is true particularly given that most CDOs currently provide either no data or only anecdotal information about long-term effects of programs.

Notwithstanding the skepticism described here, many private funders, community development intermediaries (“intermediaries”), governments, and other involved parties are increasingly requiring outcome information in addition to traditional performance data.

D. The Process

Several frameworks and systems are designed to take organizations through the outcome measurement process. Nearly all of them begin by asking, “What are the organization’s intended outcomes?” Some methods encourage a participatory process and try to include stakeholder input at the outset. Building consensus among a range of stakeholders can prove challenging, but many experts consider this stage a critical step in the outcome measurement process. The next stage is identifying indicators for tracking progress toward intended outcomes. While such outcomes may not be apparent until the distant future, there may be quantitative or qualitative information that can demonstrate that the program is on track toward those long-term goals. Next is the design and implementation of the measurement or data-gathering phase. Then comes analyzing and interpreting the data, and reporting the results to stakeholders. Some systems provide additional guidance about using results to inform organizational strategy, thus completing the feedback loop. An illustration of a sample process appears on page 20.

Outcome Measurement is a process of regular monitoring of the results of a program...against agreed-upon goals and objectives.¹⁹

—Source: *United Way of Greater Toronto*

E. Describing Outcomes and Impacts

The terminology used in the logic model indicates that “inputs” or “resources” are used to perform “activities,” which lead to “outputs.” This is relatively clear, but beyond this point the terminology gets fuzzier. First, outcomes can be grouped in a variety of ways:

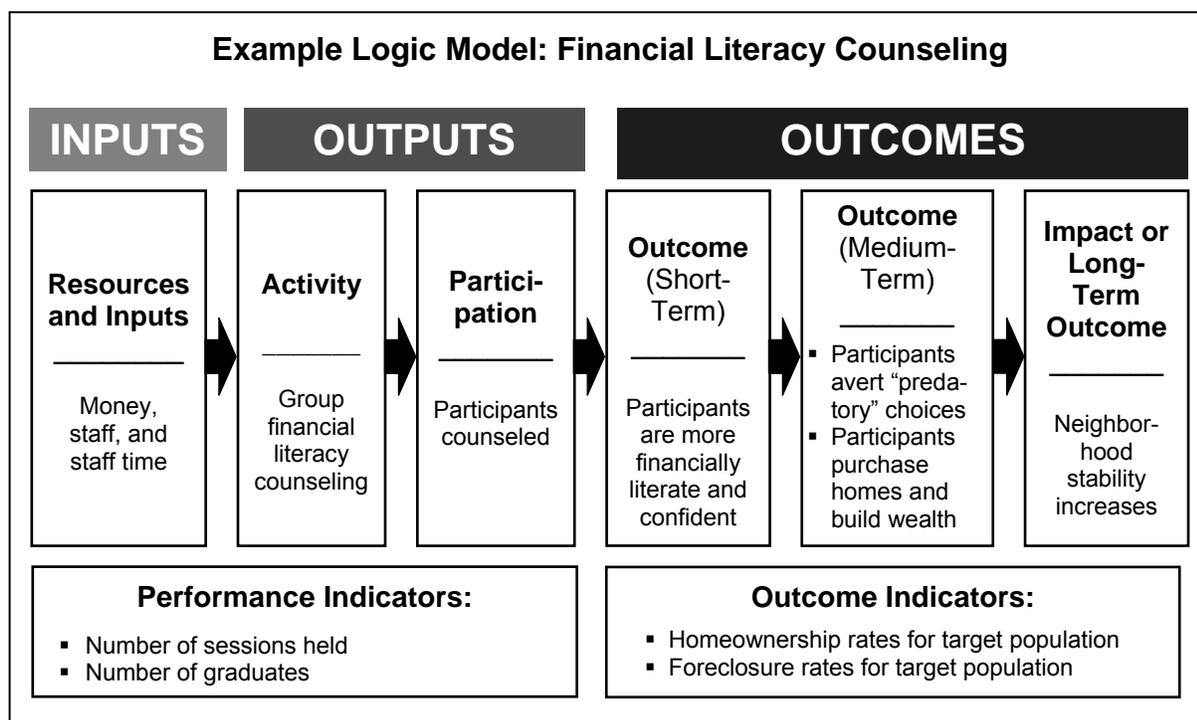
Director, National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) and the Center for Public Finance and Housing at the Urban Institute, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

¹⁸ Interview with Roger Wood, Manager, Impact Design and Learning at United Way of America, August 2006, and correspondence January 2007.

¹⁹ United Way of Greater Toronto, “Glossary of Selected Terms,” *Program Effectiveness Organizational Development (PEOD) Guide for Agencies*. Web site accessed on September 7, 2006, at www.uwgt.org/peod/glossary3.pdf.

Types of Outcomes

Time. This marks the most important difference between outputs, short-term outcomes, medium-term outcomes, long-term (or end-) outcomes, and impacts. The terms are often confused with one other and used interchangeably because there are wide gray areas between them. Also, the time required to perceive benefits varies significantly among different programs and activities; therefore, the definitions cannot be completely standardized across the board. Frequently, when funders ask for outcomes they intend for CDOs to identify long-term outcomes, but they end up receiving medium-term data. “Interim outcome” is the term often used to refer to a medium-term outcome, and some outcome measurement systems designed for federal agencies even use hybrid terms, such as “performance outcome.” The following figure is an example of a logic model for a community development program.



Individual Level vs. Community Level. Human service organizations tend to focus on individuals. Their long-term outcomes are often based on individual- or household-level benefits. Long-term change for individuals is also applicable to community development (e.g., homeownership education helping to bring about more first-time homebuyers), but neighborhood-wide or community-level change is also very important (e.g., increased neighborhood stability). NeighborWorks America calls these “community-level outcomes.” Appendix A provides several examples. United Way of America similarly distinguishes “program outcomes” from “community outcomes,” and also adds the hybrid term “community impacts.”²⁰

²⁰ *Program outcomes* are defined as “changes that program activities intend to create in program participants.” *Community outcomes* are defined as “changes in a defined community population brought about by changing conditions in the community.” *Community impacts* are defined as “improving lives by mobilizing communities

What Are Impacts?

Technically, impacts are just changes in organizations, communities or systems expected to occur if benefits to participants are achieved. In practice, the terms outcome and impact are often used interchangeably. In contemporary outcome measurement theory, however, “impact” nearly always refers to medium- to long-term or community-level change, while the term “outcome” refers to the broad spectrum of benefits over various time periods and levels.

“Outcome” as Used in This Report

For the purposes of this study, the word “outcome” will be used to span the broadest spectrums — from the short- to medium- to long-term, and from the individual- to household- to neighborhood- and community-levels. If a more specific meaning is intended, it will be specified.

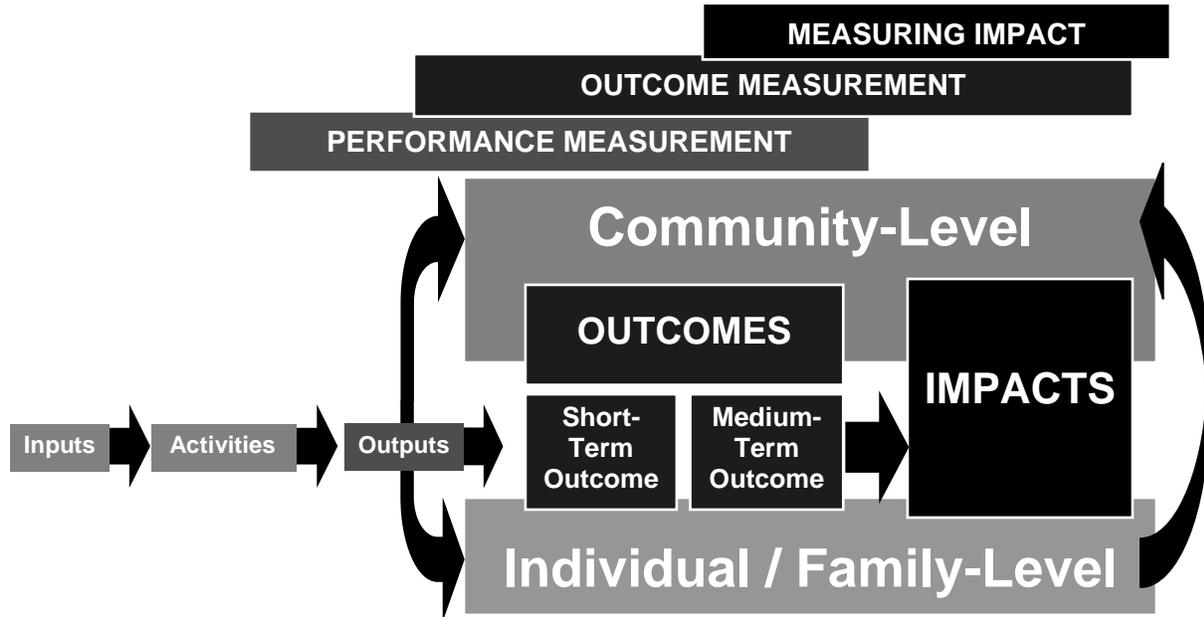
F. Outcomes vs. Indicators

Another common point of confusion is the difference between “outcomes” and “indicators.” An indicator is a means of counting or measuring progress toward a goal. Usually, indicators are proxy measures or indirect types of data. For example, in the context of neighborhood revitalization, an outcome may be to be perceived as a neighborhood of choice which attracts residents and businesses back to the community. An indicator for this outcome might be a change in the number of vacant homes or in the homeownership rate.²¹ Further, these examples of “outcome indicators” differ from “performance indicators,” which are ways to track progress toward performance goals. Sometimes an indicator can also be an outcome, but the concept behind each term is distinct. The following figure illustrates a spectrum of definitions, with further details and a few examples.

to create lasting changes in community conditions.” Community United Way of America, “Connecting Program Outcome Measurement to Community Impact,” Alexandria, VA, 2005. Web site accessed on June 26, 2006, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes.

²¹ NeighborWorks America, Organizational Underwriting FY2007, memo to all network organizations, “Community-level Outcome Goals and Measurements,” July 14, 2006, p. 3. Attached as Appendix A.

Spectrum of Definitions



| PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT OUTPUTS (short-term outcomes) | OUTCOME MEASUREMENT OUTCOMES (medium-term, interim, or program outcomes) | MEASURING IMPACT IMPACTS (long-term or end outcomes) |
|--|--|--|
| <p>OUTPUTS</p> <p>Outputs are the direct products of program activities and are usually measured in terms of the volume of work accomplished.</p> <p><i>EXAMPLES:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of units built or rehabbed • number of people counseled | <p>OUTCOMES</p> <p>Outcomes are the benefits or changes for individuals or populations during or after participating in program activities.</p> <p><i>EXAMPLES:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wealth creation • pride in homeownership • stabilization of housing costs | <p>IMPACTS</p> <p>Impacts are changes in organizations, communities or systems expected to occur if benefits to participants are achieved.</p> <p><i>EXAMPLES:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong homeownership market • increased community involvement |

| INDICATORS | |
|--|--|
| <p>Indicators are data points or statistical measures that reflect the state of complex social, economic, or physical conditions. "Benchmark" is a term used interchangeably with "indicator" (Urban Institute).</p> | |
| <p><i>Examples of Performance Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report on rental housing units and accessibility: persons with new or improved access, or increase in standard public service • number of persons stabilized (homeless shelter) • number of units delivered for persons with AIDS | <p><i>Examples of Outcome Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monthly housing cost and affordability • quality of housing • residential property values — residential • voting rates • years of affordability |

| EXAMPLE OF SPECTRUM | |
|--|------------|
| Short-Term Outcome | 1–3 years |
| Long-Term Outcome | 4–6 years |
| Impact | 7–10 years |
| <p><i>Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Logic Model Development Guide, p. 10.</i></p> | |

| TERMS USED INTERCHANGEABLY |
|---|
| Impact (Ford Foundation) |
| Long-Term or Community Outcomes (United Way of America) |
| Community-Level or Long-Term Outcomes (NW America) |
| End Outcomes (Urban Institute) |

G. Outcome Measurement vs. Measuring Impact

Four examples of outcome measurement systems are described briefly in this study, and all will be broadly referred to with the term *outcome measurement*. However, two of the systems will be distinguished by introducing a second, slightly different term.

Outcome Measurement. For the purposes of this study, the term “outcome measurement” will be used broadly to describe a range of frameworks, systems and tools. It is an umbrella term that will include “impact measurement.” Also, it will be used interchangeably with the term “outcome evaluation.”

Impact Measurement. For the purposes of this study, “impact measurement” will be used to differentiate specific systems, such as the United Way and Success Measures systems, which seek to evaluate medium- to long-term outcomes and impacts primarily at the level of the CDO. These systems focus on collecting medium- to long-term outcome and impact data, which are evaluated from the perspective of the CDO itself.²² As a result, the CDO’s own outcomes and goals are emphasized.

The remaining two examples of systems that will be discussed are designed for federal agencies and tend to focus on outputs, short-term outcomes, and some medium-term outcomes. Primarily performance data, based upon preset outcomes and indicators, are collected from grantee municipalities, agencies and organizations. The data are reviewed, aggregated and analyzed, and long-term outcomes are extrapolated and reported by federal agencies at the national level. The evaluation work of these systems is more similar to traditional research, in that the volume of data is much greater and more standardized.

²² The terms “measuring impact” and “impact measurement” have been used in some articles and research; however, the developers themselves refer to their systems as “outcome measurement” systems, as does most literature. Zielenbach, Sean, Research Director, the Housing Research Foundation, “Measuring the Impact of Community Development,” *Communities and Banking*, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, Fall 2004, pp. 3–9. Web site accessed on February 4, 2007, at www.bos.frb.org/commdev/c&b/2004/fall/Fall04.pdf.

II. Should Outcomes of Community Development Be Measured?

A. To Whom Do Outcomes Matter?

The previous section might leave a reader wondering whether all this effort is just an intellectual exercise with no practical purpose. Do outcomes really matter?

While some CDOs seem to have a natural propensity for doing outcome measurement, most practitioners are not enthusiastic at the mention of “evaluation” or “results.” In fact, these terms generally evoke a natural anxiety about reviewing mistakes, flaws and inefficiencies. The underlying fear is that improving evaluation methods will make it easier to identify less efficient activities or organizations, leading to funding cuts. In some cases, this discomfort about evaluation is understandable, but usually in outcome measurement it is exaggerated and unnecessary.

Nonprofit agencies often ask if outcome measurement is just a fad that, if ignored long enough, will go away. The consensus of the field is a resounding “No.”

—United Way of America²³

History

Results-oriented evaluation has been growing across many fields since the early 1990s. High-profile scandals involving nonprofit organizations brought issues of transparency and reporting to the forefront of public policy and private funding organizations. The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 required federally funded programs to develop a strategic plan with outcome-related goals and objectives, develop annual performance plans with output- and outcome-related goals, and report annually on progress toward achievement of these goals.²⁴ While aimed primarily at federal agencies, the act has also had some trickle-down effect.²⁵ Outcome requirements are now reaching the level of CDO operations. Funders in community development face pressure resembling what funders of the international development field faced only a few years ago. Given that perhaps the largest funder for both of these fields is government, federal funding and programs have been among the first to step up their requirements.²⁶

Increasing Popularity of Outcomes

Due to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act,²⁷ even organizations that are not publicly traded are required to disclose their operations more than ever. This increasing demand for transparency and accountability across diverse fields is also reaching CDOs. A course offered through the NeighborWorks America Training Institute, “Measuring the Impacts of Neighborhood

²³ United Way Outcome Measurement Network. Web site accessed on September 25, 2006, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes/library/ndpaper.cfm.

²⁴ Horsch, Karen, “Questions and Answers: Interview with Harry Hatry and Joe Wholey,” *The Evaluation Exchange*, Volume IV, No. 1, 1998. Web site accessed on February 4, 2007, at www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrp/eval/issue10/qanda.html.

²⁵ Interview with Lee Higgins, Applied Research Manager, NeighborWorks America, August 2006.

²⁶ Conversation with Brooke Finn, Director, Office of Program Integration and Planning, NeighborWorks America, September 2006.

²⁷ More specifically, the Public Accounting Reform and Investor Protection Act of 2002.

Revitalization,” saw a substantial increase in enrollment between 2005 and 2006.²⁸ Outcome measurement has gained popularity, at least partly in response to the demand just described.

Of the three private community development funders interviewed for this report, two recently began requiring their grantees to report outcomes. The third has always required outcome projections and reporting. Special funding for outcome measurement is also made available by all of the funders interviewed, all of whom are not insignificant ones in the field.²⁹ Details are provided in Appendix B.

Diversification of Funding Sources

Another trend which has reached the nonprofit sector is the decrease in direct government funding and an increase in funding from private and indirect or intermediary sources. This trend necessitates evaluation that appeals to these types of funders. On the positive side, outcome measurement systems often bring about improved communication and understanding about the work of CDOs, which improves their positioning with respect to competition for funds.

B. Can Outcomes in Community Development Be Measured?

While most people in community development acknowledge that outcomes are highly important, many question whether it is even possible to measure outcomes of specific community development activities. There are two aspects to this question.

Causality and Correlation

First is the concern about causality. It is one of the biggest issues in outcome measurement and the primary reason that skeptics question its utility. Even if a CDO can identify a positive trend in the community, it is easy to argue that shifts in the real estate market, the economy, or any of a host of variables caused the change.

In a discussion of sustainable community development, Alan Greenspan stated that “effective research must isolate the variables that best convey the impact of a program, define the specific data that must be collected, and develop a system for maintaining and retrieving the data over time.”³⁰ He acknowledged, however, that conducting research on community development and economic empowerment programs presents an immense challenge, in part because the intended effects may not become apparent for a relatively long period of time. In other words, the challenge is to quantify the marginal effect of a program.³¹

²⁸ Interview with Kathy Bailey, Training Manager for the Neighborhood Revitalization Track, NeighborWorks America Training Institute, August 2006.

²⁹ Interview with Lee Higgins, Applied Research Manager, NeighborWorks America, August 2006.

³⁰ Greenspan, Alan, Chairman, Federal Reserve Board, “Remarks by Chairman Alan Greenspan: The Federal Reserve System’s Community Affairs Research Conference, Sustainable Community Development: What Works, What Doesn’t, and Why,” Washington, DC. March 28, 2003. Web site accessed on February 4, 2007, at www.federalreserve.gov/boarddocs/speeches/2003/20030328/default.htm.

³¹ *Ibid.*

Greenspan also noted one of the most significant challenges of social research in general: the inability to maintain a control group. It is very problematic to attempt to compare trends in the same neighborhood during different periods or across different neighborhoods, because the variables are infinite and cannot be isolated to any significant degree.

Several studies attempting to measure the outcomes of HUD's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOPE VI programs have been conducted and more are currently being pursued. These are large, formal research undertakings. One study concluded that the overall relationship between CDBG spending and neighborhood quality improvement is encouraging, but so far not conclusive in terms of positive correlation with specified measurable results.³² The study suggested that "perhaps the best way to think about the design and use of a performance measurement system such as that developed here would be as a tool to help communities interested in assessing their own community development performance."³³ (Note that the term "performance measurement" is used differently than in the present study.) Additionally, four major studies of the neighborhood effects associated with the HOPE VI program suggest that "there have been dramatic improvements in the neighborhoods surrounding some HOPE VI developments. However, the data from the studies are not sufficient to reliably estimate the degree to which HOPE VI, as opposed to other factors, *caused* these changes."³⁴

These studies are examples of traditional research. But even these thorough, well-funded studies find it challenging to prove that large-scale development projects can be linked unambiguously to neighborhood improvement. Thus it would seem even more difficult to link much smaller community development programs or organizations to specific outcomes in their communities.

All of this confirms that direct causality is indeed difficult to prove. On the other hand, a strong case can be made for correlations between activities and outcomes or outcome indicators in a neighborhood. The author of one of the four HOPE VI studies, discussing causality in another article, describes the encouraging potential of outcome measurement:

Given the complicated nature of causality, the community development industry should be realistic about its ability to demonstrate impact. Funders must move away from a mindset that seeks to attribute outcomes to a specific actor or to judge an organization on impacts that are largely outside of its control. At the same time, organizations must clearly articulate the particular role that they play in a community development project. By collecting, analyzing, and reporting useful, mission-relevant data, the community development industry can enhance overall knowledge, improve

³² Walker, Chris, Chris Hayes, George Galster, Patrick Boxall, and Jennifer Johnson: "The Impact of CDBG Spending on Urban Neighborhoods," Washington, DC: Urban Institute Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center, August 2002. Web site accessed on February 4, 2007, at www.urban.org/publications/410664.html.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Popkin, Susan J., Bruce Katz, Mary K. Cunningham, Karen D. Brown, Jeremy Gustafson, and Margery A. Turner: "A Decade of HOPE VI: Research Findings and Policy Challenges," Washington, DC: Urban Institute and the Brookings Institution, May 2004, p. 42.

outcomes, and make a more compelling case for the importance and effectiveness of its work. — Sean Zielenbach³⁵

Traditional evaluation also has its negative features, especially the time and cost associated with engaging external consultants to do the work. Interviewee George McCarthy, a funder who has also worked as an evaluation consultant, stated that outcome measurement systems like Success Measures are producing information that is much more valuable to CDOs and at a far lower cost. He explains that the results of traditional evaluation usually do not make it back to the participating CDOs, who most need them. Even when final reports are provided to the evaluated groups, often their format is not geared for nor useable by them. McCarthy also notes that traditional methods make evaluation and assessment seem negative and even punitive, with “external consultants peering over the shoulders of practitioners.”³⁶ As a funder, he believes that the self-assessment, self-reporting and joint learning that are being established for measuring outcomes, and also for improving delivery and services, are a quantum leap ahead of the traditional model of evaluation. He finds them to be a more effective use of funds, and “a better way for CDOs to get feedback in real time — to improve services.”³⁷

Another evaluation expert argues that it is extraordinarily difficult to tell how programs influenced specific outcomes in any credible way: usually, the major determinants of what has happened in a given context are not things that neighborhood organizations can control (e.g., trends in the regional economy or the housing market).³⁸ This brings us to the next issue.

Context

While context is important in private-sector evaluation, for nonprofits it is absolutely essential. CDOs often work in neighborhoods struggling with multiple disadvantages, ranging from low wages to inadequate public transportation and overburdened schools and services. It is not easy for a CDO to demonstrate it is making an impact, especially when indicators are still trending downward, albeit at a slightly decreased rate. It is already challenging to bring about changes that will show up in definite trends, but many additional variables can also contribute to any change that does occur. For example, if a large factory closes there may be masking of any community economic development achievements. Larger, more traditional studies can partly address issues of context by examining larger community samples.

Primary data methods can be more specifically focused and thus avert some of the problem, and CDOs can include narrative notes about the context in which their activities take place. Nevertheless, most experts acknowledge the need for a better way to account for context, and it remains an open issue.

³⁵ Zielenbach, Sean, op. cit.

³⁶ Interview with George McCarthy, Senior Program Officer, Development Finance and Economic Security, Ford Foundation, August 2006.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Interview with Thomas Kingsley, Director, National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) and the Center for Public Finance and Housing, at the Urban Institute, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

C. Are the Benefits of Outcome Measurement Worth the Costs?

All frameworks and systems cite similar reasons for undertaking outcome measurement. The United Way guidebook describes the two primary reasons in detail: “to see if programs really make a difference in the lives of people,” and “to help programs improve services.”³⁹ But is it worth the time and effort for community-based groups to measure outcomes?

A private-sector evaluation consultant, discussing outcomes in the private sector, reports that in his experience no one has ever objected to the notion that performance and outcomes are important. But he finds it rare for organizations to actually have a process of establishing and focusing on the outcomes that matter most.⁴⁰ Common myths about outcomes are that CDOs know their intended outcomes, their goals, and their client or community needs sufficiently, such that they are already incorporated into plans. People often take offense to the notion that they do not know this information, particularly those in management, for whom awareness and grasp of organizational goals are core parts of their job. The consultant also reports that fewer than ten out of more than 10,000 goal statements with which he has worked set forth real outcomes. Ninety-nine percent of the goal statements involved, instead, performance goals.⁴¹ Also, in practice it takes diligence for organizations to stay in touch with the needs of their clients and communities. Outcome evaluation sets up structures that help organizations remain focused on the most appropriate and urgent needs.⁴²

Other fears about outcome measurement, however, may be more valid. For example, there is fear that federal funding may shift away from community development. There are issues of trust between funders and grantees. And there is a related fear about the ways outcome information may be used, in addition to the lack of trust created by mixed messages from funders. United Way’s goals for outcome measurement were noted in the beginning of this section. Embedded in the first goal, “to see if programs really make a difference in the lives of people,” are subgoals which are not mentioned in the guidebook but that are sought by all funders, if implicitly. The first subgoal is accountability, and the second is acquiring information for their own outcome reporting in order to assess the outcome of their grant-making. Although most funders will assert that they are not supposed to judge grantees based on outcomes and that the focus is on learning, practitioners are not completely convinced that this is the case.

Another fear is that outcome goals will be overemphasized within an organization. While this concern is greater for performance goals than for outcome goals, it is still a problem. These fears and potential problems will be discussed in more detail later in this study.

³⁹ *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*. United Way of America, Alexandria, VA. 1996.

⁴⁰ Smith, Douglas K., *Make Success Measurable! A Mindbook-Workbook for Setting Goals and Taking Action*, John Wiley: New York, 1999, pp. 8–9.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² “Common Myths Regarding Outcome Measures,” *National Resource Center E-Newsletter, Best of the Best*, Compassion Capital Fund. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at www.ccfbest.org/outcomemeasurements/commonmyths.htm.

III. How Are Outcomes Measured in Community Development?

Resources available for outcome measurement are divided into three categories: tools, data sources, and systems and frameworks. Two impact measurement systems, the SM system and the UW approach, will be analyzed in further depth for strengths, weaknesses, costs and benefits. These two systems are geared specifically toward community organizations and will be highlighted throughout this report. Examples of other resources will also be provided.

A. Tools and Data Sources

Tools and data sources are usually based on secondary or indirect data for specific target areas, populations or other features of program services.⁴³ Tools are available for use in many different stages of the outcome measurement process, but most of them apply to the data gathering, analyzing and tracking functions for clients and communities. They range from spreadsheets and data systems to Web-based applications and specialized software. Some of these types of tools are provided within frameworks and systems, and others are available independently. Data sources, such as simple datasets and portals for publicly available resources, provide secondary data for the outcome measurement process. Sometimes a tool is utilized to filter, aggregate or better display the information within a data source.

Many tools and data sources are listed in the NW evaluation map. A notable example is DataPlace by KnowledgePlex (Fannie Mae Foundation). This Web-based, free resource provides access to and displays data from the neighborhood to the national level in customizable maps, charts, statistical tables and other formats.⁴⁴ There are plans to add the America Community Survey to DataPlace, as well as data from an additional 27 cities.⁴⁵ The potential for communities to upload their own data is also being investigated.⁴⁶

Overall, unfortunately, very little secondary data are currently available at the sub-city level, as confirmed in a recent NeighborWorks America report. Appendix C summarizes the indicators that were common among the ten cities in that study.⁴⁷ This is changing, however. To improve the availability of data, networks have been established to provide guidance, support and advocacy toward this goal. The National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ This site currently contains data from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses (demographic, economic, housing and social characteristics), the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (home mortgage applications and loans), the Section 8 Expiring Use database (neighborhood- and property-level data on federally assisted housing at risk of loss), and the Consolidated Plan special tabulations (data on housing needs according to household income level). DataPlace by KnowledgePlex, About Us. Web site accessed on September 12, 2006, at www.dataplace.com/about_us.html. An on-line demonstration is available at blog.dataplace.org.

⁴⁵ Fannie Mae Foundation has asked National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) and the Urban Institute to be the primary data content providers for DataPlace. Interview with Thomas Kingsley, Director, National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) and the Center for Public Finance and Housing, at the Urban Institute, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

⁴⁶ Interview with Troy Anderson, Managing Director, Knowledge Management and Interactive Applications, Fannie Mae Foundation, June 2006.

⁴⁷ Clemmey, Jason, NeighborWorks America, 2006 NeighborWorks America Summer Internship Program, *Community Development Outcome Indicators Research Report*, Summer 2006.

(NNIP) of the Urban Institute, established in 1996, is such a network.⁴⁸ Beyond serving as just a source for data, it is a collaborative effort by the Urban Institute and local partners to further the development of neighborhood information systems and their application in local policymaking and community-building.⁴⁹

B. Systems and Frameworks

Many method-based systems and frameworks have evolved around the collection of primary (or direct) data, such as surveys or focus groups assessing resident satisfaction and self-esteem, and how programs affect participants or specific communities.

Framework is a term used in the NW evaluation map and refers to a method or approach to program planning and outcome analysis. Often a framework consists simply of a guidebook or manual about an outcome measurement process.

System, in this report, refers to a framework or method which also includes tools, such as sample surveys, focus group instructions and sample questions, tips, and software. Some systems began as frameworks and, over time, developed tools and training programs that allow organizations to do the work without consultants. Appendix D lists a few examples of frameworks and systems, including their offerings.

Appendix E provides examples of specific outcomes of community and neighborhood revitalization, along with ideas for indicators, and some resources and tools for tracking them. The indicators listed in Appendix E are similar to the ones that follow:

Benefiting Neighborhoods: Concrete Ways To Measure Impacts⁵⁰
Sean Zielenbach

Recommendations to measure the impact of community development on neighborhoods:

- Assess physical improvement to the property in question;
- Examine the condition of the surrounding properties;
- Measure changes in area property values;
- Track new private investment; and
- Gauge changes in crime rates.

Source: *Communities and Banking*, Fall 2004.

⁴⁸ NNIP aims to democratize data by improving its availability and the usefulness of its format. One of its tenets is to serve multiple users while emphasizing the use of such information to build capacity in poor communities. Advances in hardware, address-matching and GIS software, automated administrative data, and local institutional development have made neighborhood indicator systems more feasible. Interview with Thomas Kingsley, Director, National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) and the Center for Public Finance and Housing, at the Urban Institute, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

⁴⁹ Additional information is available in a report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), which recently reviewed 29 key indicator systems. This report defined a set of options for Congress and the nation for considering further development of such comprehensive key indicators systems. Government Accountability Office: *Informing Our Nation: Improving How to Understand and Assess the USA's Position and Progress*. Washington, DC. November, 2004. Web site accessed on September 1, 2006, at www.gao.gov/new.items/d051.pdf. Also see www.gao.gov/npi.

⁵⁰ Zielenbach, Sean, op. cit.

Two Impact Measurement Systems

Described next are two systems or approaches that focus on long-term outcomes and impacts. Both refer to themselves as *outcome* measurement systems, but are called *impact* measurement systems in this study to bring light to their emphasis on medium- to long-term outcomes. These two systems are also more interested in getting to community-level outcomes, rather than individual- or household-level outcomes. Moreover, they emphasize the planning and management role of outcome measurement for community groups, beyond just the reporting function intended to satisfy funders.

United Way of America's United Way Outcome Resource Network ("UW approach"). This approach relies heavily on "logic models."⁵¹ It is used by approximately 450 of the 1,300 United Way agencies, including most of the larger United Ways, and by several thousand of their grantee agencies nationwide. (Many CDOs receive United Way funding.) Although outcome measurement is not formally mandatory, all United Ways are encouraged to assist the organizations they fund to learn more about outcome measurement. United Way of America also encourages all local United Ways to require their funded organizations to identify and measure their outcomes. Although the levels of the requirements vary, United Ways typically require funded agencies to identify program outcomes, develop logic models and measure funded programs.⁵²

Success Measures Program and Success Measures Data System ("SM system"). This is a participatory evaluation program designed to document outcomes, measure impact and inform change.⁵³ It was launched in 1997 by the Development Leadership Network (DLN), a national network of community economic development practitioners.⁵⁴ As of August 2007, over 100 organizations sponsored by 10 funding partners currently use the SM system, and the number is projected to rise. One quality unique to SM is that it was originated by practitioners. SM is housed at NeighborWorks America and operated as a nonprofit fee-for-service social enterprise. Currently one-third of participating organizations are NeighborWorks organizations. One of the fundamental ideas of the system is that it should not be mandatory; however, NeighborWorks America affiliates receive incentives to use the system.⁵⁵

⁵¹ United Way Outcome Measurement Resource Network. Web site accessed on February 4, 2007, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes.

⁵² Interview with Roger Wood, Manager, Impact Design and Learning at United Way of America, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

⁵³ Approximately 300 practitioners adopted the evaluation framework and participated in working groups, and approximately 50 community-based organizations field-tested the system based on 44 outcome indicators. The F.B. Heron Foundation, "Impact," New York, NY, 2003. Web site accessed on February 4, 2007, at www.fbheron.org/viewbook_impact2.pdf.

⁵⁴ The Development Leadership Network (DLN), formed in 1987, is a national network of culturally diverse individual community economic development practitioners, dedicated to nurturing membership personal leadership capacity and skills to facilitate community empowerment and to influence the practice of community economic development. Web site accessed on October 17, 2006, at www.pratt.edu/picced/resource/dln.htm.

⁵⁵ Interview with Maggie Grieve, Senior Manager, Success Measures, NeighborWorks America, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

of three, selecting outcomes from a list of three, defining outcomes, and selecting indicators from a list of 23 on which to report.⁵⁹

Both systems collect data that involve primarily outputs and short-term outcomes, with the ultimate goal of getting to longer-term *outcomes*. However, most of the planning, identification of outcomes and indicators, the analysis, and the reporting are meant to be performed by each federal agency after the performance data are aggregated up to that level.

C. Common Themes

After reviewing all of these systems, many common themes surfaced. Following are two that are especially important.

Simplicity: Focus on a few outcomes and indicators. Rather than listing and attempting to measure outcomes for every program or line of business in an organization, experts generally recommend emphasizing a few central outcomes and, likewise, a few indicators that are important to track.⁶⁰ Choosing those focused few outcomes and indicators is very challenging, but this very process is one of the primary benefits of outcome measurement. The resulting succinct, articulated plan becomes very useful for communicating with other funders and intermediaries as well as with the community. CDOs themselves also find that limiting the focus of their outcome measurement process helps their mission and their work to be more easily understood.⁶¹

Training or technical assistance is necessary. The developers of the systems studied for this report have found training or technical assistance to be critical to the outcome measurement process. Most interviewees agreed that outcome measurement is not something easily picked up from a guidebook and put into practice. Organizations have often started the process and then set it aside unfinished at one of the many common sticking points. Some systems emphasize a lead staff person or consultant to be in charge of pushing the process forward when such difficulties arise. Both the UW approach and the SM system have performed internal surveys and interviews to obtain feedback concerning the adequacy and effectiveness of their trainings. Following are some survey responses that support the need for assistance in dealing with difficulties.

⁵⁹ Designed for grantees of the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Program (HOPWA), and the Emergency Shelter Grants Program (ESG). "CPD Outcome Measurement System." PowerPoint presentation. Web site accessed on July 6, 2006, at www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/library/webcast063005/perfmeasurespresentation.ppt.

⁶⁰ This interviewee noted that his agency always tried to encourage agencies not to pick too many indicators, but rather to focus on three or four of the strongest indicators and also to look at the data that is more readily available. Interview with Steve Gustafson, former Senior Grants Manager at Greater Twin Cities United Way, now at Phyllis Wheatley Community Center, Minneapolis, MN, August 2006.

⁶¹ An example is Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago, which chose just two outcome indicators: quality of housing and visual attractiveness of the neighborhood.

| Areas of Difficulty (per Respondents to the UW Survey) | <i>Percent Strongly Agreed</i> | <i>Percent Somewhat Agreed</i> |
|--|--|--|
| Identifying manageable data collection method(s) | 26% | 42% |
| Identifying relevant outcome indicators | 18% | 48% |
| Identifying appropriate outcomes | 24% | 41% |
| Finding/developing appropriate data collection tools (e.g., survey questionnaires, case review forms) | 16% | 57% |
| * Per internal survey, United Way of America, <i>Agency Experiences with Outcome Measurement, Survey Findings</i> . Alexandria VA, 2000. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/agency_experiences.cfm | | |

IV. Results from Outcome Measurement (Systems and Frameworks)

While the discussion in this section can be applied to all outcome measurement frameworks and systems, it is primarily based on feedback on two impact measurement systems, the UW approach and the SM system.

A. Impetus

While the surge of interest in outcome measurement appears to be primarily funder-driven, CDOs have also initiated outcome measurement, often implementing pieces of the process as special needs arise.⁶² Five users of UW systems were asked whether they would perform outcome measurement, even if it were not required to by their funders. All five answered a resounding “yes.” One respondent explained that outcome reporting is being required more and more by other funders. Overall, however, few CDOs have prioritized outcome measurement enough to implement it.

A private funder observes that while some organizations have a natural propensity to do outcome measurement, others may agree to undertake the process but are not sold on its value to them. A crucial factor may be the presence or absence of a particularly analytical leader or staff member; the funder suggests that most community development professionals prefer to spend more resources “doing” rather than “proving.” To address this tendency, she suggests that funders should focus on the big picture of outcome measurement, and improve those systems that make implementation easier for CDOs.⁶³

B. Benefits and Costs

Overall Benefit vs. Cost

Respondents to surveys and interviews affirmed overwhelmingly that outcome measurement systems have been beneficial, on the whole.⁶⁵ One significant source of bias to consider is that grantees will tend to answer favorably to any request from a funder. (United Way is a funding source for the respondents to their survey. Success Measures is an optional fee-for-service program at NeighborWorks America, but the participants in the Success Measures Pilot are

I do not see [United Way outcome reporting] as a burden. Overall [the system] provides a plus.

— Marcos Beleche⁶⁴

⁶² For example, one CDO created an elaborate logic model for its programs during a period of board and staff turnover, but did not implement a full outcome measurement process. None of its funders requires outcome measurement, nor has the CDO been exposed to available systems or their benefits and costs. Conversation with Jeremy Liu, Executive Director, Asian Community Development Corporation, Boston, MA, November 2006.

⁶³ Interview with Lois Greco, Senior Vice President and Wachovia Regional Foundation Evaluation Officer, Wachovia Regional Foundation and Wachovia Regional Community Development Corporation, August 2006.

⁶⁴ Interview with Marcos Beleche, Director of Community Organizing and Resident Resources, Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation, Boston, MA, July and August 2006.

⁶⁵ All five users of UW systems interviewed answered “yes” to the question, “Generally, are the benefits worth the costs?” All three private funders interviewed answered “yes” to the question, “Overall, do you feel benefits are worth the costs?” On the other hand, two funders indicated that it is still early in the process and that the final answer to the question will become more apparent with time. Most respondents to the UW Survey and the SM Survey answered similarly.

funded by NeighborWorks America.) There is also the “happy user bias”: satisfied users are more likely to respond to surveys than unhappy users. While these sources of bias should be considered, the research conducted for this report nevertheless strongly points to the conclusion that outcome measurement is indeed considered to be worth its costs. Several interviewees — funders and CDOs alike — did not even find the question worth asking. For them, the endeavor is simply necessary, and they prefer to search for ways to make outcome measurement more affordable for CDOs to implement. One active user of the SM system recommends including the cost of evaluation and outcomes analysis as part of the standard costs of doing business, rather than something new and extra.⁶⁶

Benefits for CDOs

Of the 15 directors interviewed for the SM Survey, five noted they are already using the results of their outcome evaluations, and all 15 respondents expected their findings to help shape programming, business planning, budgeting and fundraising.⁶⁷ The two impact measurement systems focus on slightly different benefits for CDOs. Better communication seems to be the benefit most valued for grantees using the UW approach, while improved management and participation seem to be the primary benefits of the SM system.

Strategic Planning and Management. Some of the most valuable benefits that outcome measurement provides CDOs is in the area of strategic planning and management.

- **Planning.** Undertaking outcome measurement pushes organizations to create the space and time to rethink their goals and assumptions carefully. As previously noted, some experts view outcome measurement as the research and development (R&D) arm of the community development industry.⁶⁸ As does R&D, outcome measurement helps track current and future trends to determine whether the organization is responding appropriately to a changing market or community. These practitioners believe that their systems can be integrated into the routine of CDO management, just as R&D is incorporated into the standard practice of many firms. Rather than seeing it merely as more work, it is seen as a valuable shift in the way work is done.⁶⁹ One practitioner highlighted the damaging lack of just such a practice in community development.⁷⁰ Again, the goal of outcome measurement is not to improve efficiency but rather to confirm or improve effectiveness.

⁶⁶ Conversation with Rodney Fernandez, Executive Director, Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation, who presented the agency’s approach at a June 2006 symposium in Kansas City hosted by NeighborWorks America entitled “All in Good Measure: Building Your Toolkit to Evaluate Capacity, Performance and Impact.”

⁶⁷ NeighborWorks America: *An Evaluation of the NeighborWorks® Success Measures Pilot Program*, Washington, DC. Conducted by EnCompass LLC, August 2006.

⁶⁸ Interview with Susan Naimark, Senior Program Associate, NeighborWorks America, National Initiatives and Applied Research, June and July 2006.

⁶⁹ Some experts believe 5% to 10% of a CDO budget to be reasonable for such a function; others find 10% too high. Interviews with Susan Naimark, Senior Program Associate, NeighborWorks America, National Initiatives and Applied Research, June and July 2006.

⁷⁰ Interviews with Marcos Beleche, Director of Community Organizing and Resident Resources, Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation, Boston, MA, July and August 2006.

- **Management.** It was affirmed often in surveys and interviews that outcome measurement helped organizations to communicate about and focus their staff around common goals. Most interviewees reported sharing outcome reports with their boards of directors. Improved record-keeping was another common benefit.
- **Good Information in Real Time.** Outcome measurement also provides insight into issues or problems much more rapidly than does traditional evaluation for CDOs. Thus, adjustments can be made to strategies and programs in real time.⁷¹ Several private funders noted, in fact, that they care much more that groups are learning from the outcome measurement process and making adaptive changes based on the results, rather than simply achieving their target outcomes.
- **Motivation for Staff/Morale.** It is motivating for the individuals who work day in and day out in CDOs to see evidence of program success. The feedback gives staff a heartening sense of accomplishment.⁷²
- **Succession.** The structures that are set up in the process of outcome measurement also enable the organization to create a connection to future staff and create a smoother transition when turnover occurs.⁷³

Competition for Resources. An obvious but often underappreciated benefit for CDOs is that outcome measurement helps to position them to compete for external resources more effectively.

Better Communication and Community Relations. Without question, outcome measurement provides CDOs with data and analysis which helps them with marketing, outreach and other communications activities. Users of the UW approach have emphasized the value of the one-page summary, which states concisely what the organization seeks to do and how it intends to accomplish its goals. SM system users similarly use the “Benefits Picture” (summary) for marketing purposes. Rooted in the participatory evaluation model, the SM system provides the additional benefit of encouraging better communication with stakeholders both from the outset and throughout the outcome-measurement process. Even the simple act of reaching out to stakeholders and the community attracts allies and partners, fostering good relationships.

Benefits for Funders, Intermediaries, and Others

Generally, any benefit that outcome measurement provides to CDOs is also good for funders, intermediaries, and other involved parties. However, stakeholders also have additional priorities. Two important benefits for funders became apparent from this study.⁷⁴

⁷¹ One funder maintains that the information produced by CDO outcome measurement is much more valuable to them than the results from expensive evaluations. Interview with George McCarthy, Senior Program Officer, Development Finance and Economic Security, Ford Foundation, August 2006.

⁷² Interview with April Bordeau, Director, Sheltering Wings Center for Women (a United Way grantee and user of UW outcome measurement system), Indianapolis, IN, August 2006.

⁷³ “Common Myths Regarding Outcome Measures,” *National Resource Center E-Newsletter, Best of the Best*, Compassion Capital Fund. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at www.ccfbest.org/outcomemeasurements/commonmyths.htm.

Reporting for Own Stakeholders. Private funders and intermediaries are under increasing pressure to report the outcomes of their grant-making activities to their stakeholders, who want to know if funds are being allocated as effectively as possible. Outcome measurement has been able to generate useful data in a way that is feasible for already overburdened CDOs.

Grantee Accountability. The ubiquitous benefit, always sought of grantees, is greater accountability, including increased orientation toward results.

Outcome measurement is also seen as a healthy alternative to more patronizing mandates. It is viewed as a method that empowers CDOs, supporting them as they improve their own effectiveness. Funders who really respect their grantees and see them as true partners tend to gravitate toward outcome measurement. One expert has even observed changes in the internal culture of many grantee organizations over a period of time as outcome measurement becomes internalized.⁷⁵

Costs

Generally, the SM system seems to involve a greater investment of time than the UW approach, particularly in the up-front development time required by its participatory features. On the other hand, the added investment can yield information that has a greater degree of depth and usefulness. For example, benefits gained from improved public relations often compensate for the additional investment. Opinions differ on this matter. One private funder maintains that Success Measures provides valuable information and is much easier and less expensive relative to traditional academic analysis.⁷⁶ Another expert still finds the SM system too resource-intensive for individual community groups.⁷⁷ One UW system user states that at the beginning of implementation, the process seemed like excessive work, but as he used the system over a number of years, he discovered more and more advantages for ever decreasing investments in time. He also noted that some of the data became more useful when he had accumulated multiple years worth.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Three funders were interviewed, all of whom help manage the SM system. Additional funders and their viewpoints were also represented at a June 2006 symposium hosted by NeighborWorks America entitled “All in Good Measure: Building Your Toolkit to Evaluate Capacity, Performance and Impact.”

⁷⁵ Interview with Don Buchholtz, Senior Director, Community Impact, United Way of Massachusetts Bay, September 2006.

⁷⁶ Interview with George McCarthy, Senior Program Officer, Development Finance and Economic Security, Ford Foundation, August 2006.

⁷⁷ Interview with a leader in a nationwide effort to improve and democratize secondary data, Thomas Kingsley, Director, National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) and the Center for Public Finance and Housing, at the Urban Institute, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

⁷⁸ Interviews with Marcos Beleche, Director of Community Organizing and Resident Resources, Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation, Boston, MA, July and August 2006.

C. Drawbacks, Dangers and Fears

Besides the costs in time and money, there are also drawbacks, dangers and fears related to outcome measurement. Some seem exaggerated while others appear legitimate.

Natural Fear of Evaluation

In some cases, the unpleasant perceived consequences of a negative evaluation are certainly justified. Finding out that a program is not effective, however, is not always bad news. Negative feedback can be very useful,⁸⁰ and sometimes it is simply necessary to find out if things are not working well. It is also part of the mission of most funders to help build capacity to address such issues.⁸¹

The truth is, in most social and human services...little change is evident. So you have to report that finding. But that doesn't necessarily point to a negative result. I try hard with all of my clients to get them thinking about "how can we use our evaluation to help us improve our service delivery." When you think of it this way, negative results can be as important as positive ones.

— Dawn Smart⁷⁹

Increased Competition and Diminished Morale

Practitioners also fear that competition for funding will increase and that the structure of the competition will change in ways unfavorable to them. Some nonprofit professionals are less motivated by competition; the impression that producing outcome information will pit them against other programs and organizations diminishes their collaborative spirit. Of 298 respondents to the UW Survey, nearly one third agreed or strongly agreed that implementing program outcome measurement did, in fact, lower the morale of program staff.⁸² Other community development professionals are able to set aside such thoughts about competition and embrace outcome measurement for the benefits it offers to them, either because they find it necessary, or because they simply want to know what outcomes they are achieving in their communities.

⁷⁹ Smart, Dawn, "Issues and Challenges of Outcome Measures — Keeping Your Outcome Measures Simple," July 7, 2004, *National Resource Center E-Newsletter, Best of the Best*, Compassion Capital Fund. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at www.ccfbest.org/outcomemeasurements/measuressimplified.htm.

⁸⁰ Conversation with Mark A. Calabria, Senior Professional Staff Member, United States Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, October 2006.

⁸¹ Conversation with Brooke Finn, Director, Office of Program Integration and Planning, NeighborWorks America. September 2006.

⁸² 11% strongly agreed and 19% somewhat agreed. United Way of America, *Agency Experiences with Outcome Measurement, Survey Findings*. Alexandria VA, 2000. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/agency_experiences.cfm

Fear of Shift in Federal Funding

As noted earlier, a series of changes have occurred with respect to reporting requirements for federal agencies and intermediaries, and these are trickling down to CDOs.

One interviewee who used to work with ROMA (a system discussed earlier) in a previous position at a community action agency, remembers that his office spent hundreds

of hours on reporting, only to find that funding was nevertheless cut at the federal level.⁸⁴

The fear that federal funding may shift away from the agencies that fund community development is justified, and it remains an open issue. Still, organizations such as HUD and NeighborWorks America are continuing to implement outcome measurement in hopes that well documented results will help preserve and build support for their programs.

It's better to be looked over than overlooked.

— Mae West⁸³

Fear and Danger that Funders Will Misinterpret or Misuse Outcome Information

Some CDOS fear that once outcome objectives are articulated and measured, funders will use them to evaluate organizations unfairly. And the challenge of getting grantees to trust their funders with outcome information persists.⁸⁵ Many funders, community development intermediaries, and others involved in evaluation assert that community groups will not be held to their outcome objectives, nor strictly evaluated based upon them. But several funders confirmed it is quite possible to use outcome information in ways that are negative to community groups.⁸⁶ One interviewee noted that there is an admittedly inappropriate tendency to make judgments about programs based on outcome information across similar organizations, despite differences in their missions. He also acknowledged that there are cases in which organizations have not been able to make the leap to outcome measurement and have in fact lost their funding.⁸⁷

On the other hand, the Heron Foundation, for example, stands by its assertion that it has not used outcome information in a way negative to CDOs.⁸⁸ Also, it is part of NeighborWorks America's mission, and that of many funders, to help build overall capacity beyond just funding the top producers.⁸⁹ The Wachovia Regional Foundation points out that it funds grantees for up to five years, which means that if there are delays or changes in the funded

⁸³ Quoted by Maria Gutierrez, Vice President for Organizational Development, LISC National Office. Symposium hosted by NeighborWorks America in June 2006 entitled "All in Good Measure: Building Your Toolkit to Evaluate Capacity, Performance and Impact."

⁸⁴ Conversation with James Hall, Executive Director, Pocatello NHS NeighborWorks Homeownership Center, Pocatello, ID, August 2006.

⁸⁵ Conversation with Brooke Finn, Director, Office of Program Integration and Planning, NeighborWorks America, September 2006.

⁸⁶ Interview with Lois Greco, Senior Vice President and Wachovia Regional Foundation Evaluation Officer, Wachovia Regional Foundation and Wachovia Regional Community Development Corporation, August 2006.

⁸⁷ Interview with Steve Gustafson, former Senior Grants Manager at Greater Twin Cities United Way, now at Phyllis Wheatley Community Center, Minneapolis, MN, August 2006.

⁸⁸ Interview with MaryJo Mullan, Vice President, Programs, The F.B. Heron Foundation, August 2006.

⁸⁹ Conversation with Brooke Finn, Director, Office of Program Integration and Planning, NeighborWorks America, September 2006.

projects, the Foundation is able to adjust the grant agreement.⁹⁰ Discussions with several funders suggest that there is a general spirit of focusing on the greater goal of getting at and measuring outcomes for the benefit of the field as a whole. There appears to be little desire or pressure to use outcome information negatively. Yet CDOs' skepticism continues to be justified.

Fear and Danger of Overemphasizing Measurable Outcomes

Another fear in community development is that those specific outcomes chosen for tracking will become the focus of the organization, rather than outcomes aligned with thoughtfully determined priorities. Of 298 respondents to the UW Survey, 46 percent of respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that "implementing program outcome measurement led to focus on measurable outcomes at the expense of other important results."⁹¹ An early study of community development outcomes described the fear associated with the evaluation movement, as well as its power and promise. The author noted that "you know the evaluation was positive if it forced the organization to question its strategy and rethink its logic model, and you know it was negative if the organization guided and prioritized its work because funding depended on it, even if the organization was not held to those specific outcome goals."⁹² This risk is lower when implementation of outcome measurement is initiated by the CDO, as it is with most current participants of the Success Measures program. But the question remains whether the differing goals can be balanced: whether effective outcome measurement can be achieved without compromising flexibility and without causing an overemphasis on measurable results.

D. Impacts of Doing Impact Measurement

Despite the potential costs and drawbacks, many organizations have implemented an outcome measurement process and have already changed or adjusted the direction of their work as a result. Following are some specific examples:

- **Low Income Investment Fund, California.** This organization learned that low-income families were having difficulty keeping their jobs and maintaining adequate housing because they were having trouble with child care. Although profit margins were thin in that line of business, they heard from the community that affordable child care was a critical need. As a result, the organization used general support funding to write planning grants and put together a plan for a program to finance the construction and expansion of child-care facilities in the San Francisco Bay Area. The program successfully received the funding it sought.⁹³

⁹⁰ Interview with Lois Greco, Senior Vice President and Wachovia Regional Foundation Evaluation Officer, Wachovia Regional Foundation and Wachovia Regional Community Development Corporation, August 2006.

⁹¹ United Way of America, *Agency Experiences with Outcome Measurement, Survey Findings*. Alexandria, VA, 2000. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/agency_experiences.cfm.

⁹² Briggs, Xavier de Souza, and Elizabeth J. Mueller with Mercer Sullivan, *From Neighborhood to Community: Evidence on the Social Effects of Community Development*. New York: Community Development Research Center, New School for Social Research, 1997.

⁹³ Interview with MaryJo Mullan, Vice President of Programs, The F.B. Heron Foundation, August 2006.

- **Northern Area Association in Detroit.** This organization was focused on expanding its affordable housing activities when it began the Success Measures process. The results, however, taught the organization that economic development was a priority for the community. The staff realized that residents were less concerned about new housing construction than they were about a lack of services such as grocery stores. The organization decided to partner with a neighboring housing developer and redirect its energies toward commercial real estate. They created a marketing plan to help attract new retail services into the community, and then went further to initiate commercial revitalization efforts such as façade improvements in commercial areas, micro-lending to neighborhood residents and neighborhood business owners, and technical assistance for businesses.⁹⁴
- **DASH for LaGrange Inc.** A resident satisfaction survey revealed a need for a community center. The data this organization collected allowed it to obtain local government support to develop a center and provide the services people wanted.⁹⁵
- **Montana Homeownership Network.** This agency determined that its homebuyer education program was working well, but through an outcome-measurement process it discovered a need to improve postpurchase counseling. As a result, that service was expanded.⁹⁶
- **Guadalupe Centers in Kansas City.** This social service agency was highly attuned to the needs of its clients through surveys and feedback loops in program evaluations. The organization had been doing a great job building programs, and its funding was secure. But through an outcome-measurement process, it learned about a need for increased homeownership and access to financial services. As a result, it acquired a neighborhood-based credit union and is building relationships with local banks, in addition to partnering with a CDO that advances homeownership opportunities for first-time, low-income homeowners.⁹⁷

Of the five users of UW systems interviewed, four also provided examples of how measurement impacted their organizations, sometimes leading them to realign their focus or assist them in making difficult decisions. One UW expert observed that when everyone in an organization comes to understand their logic model, the process almost inevitably leads to a change in the culture of the organization. He believes that this has happened in most of his grantee organizations, many of whom have reported outcomes for five to ten years.⁹⁸ It is therefore clear that impact measurement works very well for some CDOs.

⁹⁴ Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, *Success Measures Guidebook*, 2005, Chapter 3, “Success Measures in Action,” p. 10.

⁹⁵ Conversation with Brooke Finn, Director, Office of Program Integration and Planning, NeighborWorks America, September 2006.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Interview with MaryJo Mullan, Vice President of Programs, The F.B. Heron Foundation, August 2006.

⁹⁸ Interview with Steve Gustafson, former Senior Grants Manager at Greater Twin Cities United Way, now at Phyllis Wheatley Community Center, Minneapolis, MN, August 2006.

V. Issues and Analysis

A. Current Issues

A significant number of organizations have been using either UW or SM outcome-measurement systems for over ten years. However, outcome measurement in community development is still a nascent field, and all its systems, tools and data sources are undergoing rapid change.

Conflicting Uses, Mixed Signals

One significant feature of outcome measurement is that it yields multiple benefits for both funders and grantees; the problematic side of this fact is that some benefits can be emphasized to the detriment of others. Funders and community development intermediaries themselves have multiple goals for outcome measurement. First, funders seek to increase accountability and gain a better understanding of the work of their grantees. Second, many funders have a genuine interest in helping CDOs improve their effectiveness by incorporating outcome measurement into their strategic planning and management processes. A third interest of funders, however, is using outcome information to respond to pressures to report their own organizations' outcomes. This usually involves aggregating the outcomes of their grantees. It would be ideal for a funder to achieve all of these objectives simultaneously. In practice, however, confusion is created when community groups are asked both to think independently about their intended outcomes and to fit them into specified standards. Differing goals have led to mixed messages.

With respect to the United Way and NeighborWorks America, the goal of reporting aggregated outcomes was not a priority in the past. Grantees have been allowed flexibility to arrive at intended outcomes independently.⁹⁹ This may be changing. Success Measures, as a system, emphasizes the participatory process. Its senior manager notes that Success Measures' spirit is much more collaborative and cooperative than mandate-driven.¹⁰⁰ But like many funders, Success Measures' host, NeighborWorks America, is under pressure to report on outcomes to its own stakeholders. While most community development funders interviewed seem to respect the value outcome measurement offers to CDOs, there will be new challenges to balance reporting needs with CDO benefits, as they work to obtain information that can be aggregated for this purpose.

Standardizing Outcomes and Indicators

A related topic currently under debate is whether CDOs should be required to report on outcomes and indicators in a standardized form, with some variation allowed based on the types of services offered. On the one hand, grantees often appreciate preconstructed

⁹⁹ Of 298 respondents to the UW Survey, only 15% of respondents strongly agreed, and 33% somewhat agreed, that there was a "lack of flexibility in the use of outcome measurement due to external constraints (e.g., other funders, contractual obligations)." United Way of America, *Agency Experiences with Outcome Measurement, Survey Findings*. Alexandria, VA, 2000. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/agency_experiences.cfm.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Maggie Grieve, Senior Manager, Success Measures, NeighborWorks America, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

outcomes and indicators because it makes their work faster and simpler. It also helps funders to aggregate outcome information and report impacts for a broader region. And it makes it easier for researchers and policymakers to communicate more effectively about achievements in a field, which could ultimately lead to more funding for the industry as a whole.

On the other hand, it is arguable that if CDOs are provided standard outcomes on which to report, they may not take the time to think through the outcomes they intend to achieve in a community and to freely report the data that best represents their goals. Some funders already find it challenging to keep grantees from skipping the planning and prioritizing process. It is easy to jump ahead to implementation stages by copying or applying standard indicators, and then work backwards to fill in outcome goals for reporting purposes. This is an issue particularly when outcome reporting is mandatory. Increased standardization also allows funders to compare community groups in ways that could be both positive and negative for CDOs.

Many individual United Ways, as well as United Way of America, are currently debating this issue about standardizing some outcomes and indicators. There are proponents on both sides. Some believe that standardization of outcomes simplifies the reporting process without any loss of integrity to the measurement process. Others feel that it is essential that outcomes reflect exactly what each program is designed to accomplish, otherwise outcome data will not be relevant. One expert believes that to standardize outcomes for similar yet different services resembles doing staff performance reviews for employees with differing job descriptions based on one set of standard criteria. In other words, the outcome data may not do justice to the program being measured.¹⁰¹ Another expert is more optimistic. While acknowledging that no set of measures can do justice to understanding the richness and complexity of communities, she favors the development of a core set of “objective” measures that could be used across regions, with each community adding its own idiosyncratic measures to that core set.¹⁰²

Some United Ways already provide drop-down boxes with preconstructed outcomes and indicators from which to choose. The Greater Twin Cities United Way has attempted to compromise by requiring a limited number of standard outcomes and indicators. Beyond that, it allows grantees to track additional outcomes that they consider relevant.¹⁰³ The Success Measures system also includes standard outcomes and indicators, but a significant number of choices which are all specific to community development are provided as well, thus covering a wide range of possible outcomes.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Roger Wood, Manager, Impact Design and Learning at United Way of America, August 2006.

¹⁰² Interview with Charlotte Kahn, Director, The Boston Indicators Project (NNIP partner) of The Boston Foundation, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007. Further information at www2.urban.org/nnip/loc_list.html#boston.

¹⁰³ Interview with Steve Gustafson, former Senior Grants Manager at Greater Twin Cities United Way, now at Phyllis Wheatley Community Center, Minneapolis, MN, August 2006.

Primary vs. Secondary Data

Currently outcome measurement *systems and frameworks* rely mostly on primary or direct data (e.g., visual attractiveness and resident satisfactions surveys). Outcome measurement conducted by United Ways relies almost entirely on primary data collection. The same is true for Success Measures. Only one of its five types of tools is designed to utilize secondary data.¹⁰⁴ Many *tools and data sources* based on secondary or indirect data are also now available (e.g., homeownership, vacancy and employment rates).

It would seem ideal use both types of information, but each system and tool requires time for training and implementation, thus it has been difficult for CDOs to focus on both well. On the other hand, it is rapidly becoming easier to incorporate secondary data into primary data-based outcome measurement systems.

One interviewee finds that the focus on primary data is inherent to outcome measurement, as outcomes involve benefits for people: “You have to measure the benefits received by the individuals receiving assistance.”¹⁰⁵ It is also possible that primary data is the very type that gets to the heart of community development and revitalization. Another theory is that the dearth of secondary data at the neighborhood level historically has led to the more rapid development of measurement systems based on primary data.

Some experts are concerned that easily accessible data will tempt CDOs to choose outcome goals based on the types of data that are more readily available. Some experts are biased toward the benefits of secondary data, and others are more focused on primary data. While most experts did not seem substantially polarized in their views, the prejudice does seem to exist and may explain the sense of wariness the two types of experts have with one another. What is clear, however, is that collaboration between these two groups would benefit the field of outcome evaluation tremendously, now more than ever.

Simplifying and Improving Outcome Measurement Systems

The Heron Foundation emphasizes three principles for evaluation: “Keep it simple, keep it practical, and keep it tied closely to impact on people and communities.”¹⁰⁶ Outcome measurement is already regarded as a simplified version of traditional evaluation, and many of the systems discussed in this report have already gone through several stages of improvement and streamlining. Still, one of the first issues that CDOs raise about outcome measurement systems is the complexity involved and the staff time required. They ask whether the process can be simpler.

Interviewees noted that CDOs particularly dislike and find cumbersome the data collection and analysis phases. They agreed that improvements in data collection tools and infrastruc-

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Maggie Grieve, Senior Manager, Success Measures, NeighborWorks America, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Roger Wood, Manager, Impact Design and Learning at United Way of America, August 2006.

¹⁰⁶ The F.B. Heron Foundation, “Impact,” New York, NY, 2003. Web site accessed on February 4, 2007, at www.fbheron.org/viewbook_impact2.pdf.

ture to perform analyses would be very valuable to CDOs and should be much easier with the right technology. For example, Success Measures provides data-collection tools on SMDS. A funder suggested that it would help to have an added capability for survey results to be scanned directly into the system.¹⁰⁷ Web-enabled systems generally provide a greater level of user-friendliness and utility, and many systems appear to be moving in this direction.¹⁰⁸ All interviewees who used UW systems indicated that reporting has become much easier over the years.¹⁰⁹

Some changes have already been considered and are coming soon. One user of a UW system reported that his local United Way is shifting to multiyear funding commitments beginning in 2008. He believes that this will make the system much more responsive, since many results do not occur on an annual basis. He believes that metrics used in a five-year plan are a much better way to measure impact.¹¹⁰ Besides improvements in current outcome measurement systems, an idea for a modified outcome measurement process was posed by one professional. He suggests first obtaining a snapshot view of a neighborhood or community through secondary data, such as a DataPlace report. The next phase could consist of using limited focus groups or surveys to supplement the external snapshot. He suggests a new guidebook that would detail this process.¹¹¹

B. Analysis of Benefits and Costs

Some systems are offered free of cost by funders to grantee CDOs. Others are offered for a fee, but there seems to be less concern about the cost in dollars than the investment of staff time. Nearly half the respondents to the UW Survey at least somewhat agreed that implementing outcome measurement diverted resources from existing activities.¹¹² Other users believe that their investment of time decreased after initial use. They compare outcome measurement to going to college or to research and development.¹¹³ And relative to traditional or academic evaluation, the time and money expended are much less. Most experts agree, however, that there is room for some improvement among the systems.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Lois Greco, Senior Vice President and Wachovia Regional Foundation Evaluation Officer, Wachovia Regional Foundation and Wachovia Regional Community Development Corporation, August 2006.

¹⁰⁸ SMDS is Web-enabled for reporting, recording and compiling data. *An Evaluation of the NeighborWorks® Success Measures Pilot Program*, Washington, DC. Conducted by EnCompass LLC, August 2006.

¹⁰⁹ Previously, the capacity and capability of computer hardware and software, along with staff time, were found insufficient or inadequate for a majority of programs. United Way of America, *Agency Experiences with Outcome Measurement, Survey Findings*, Alexandria, VA, 2000, p. 13. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/agency_experiences.cfm.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Mossik Hacobian, Executive Director, Urban Edge (a United Way grantee and user of UW outcome measurement system; also a member of NeighborWorks network and user of Success Measures Program), Boston, MA, August 2006.

¹¹¹ Interview with Thomas Kingsley, Director, National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) and the Center for Public Finance and Housing, at the Urban Institute, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

¹¹² United Way of America, *Agency Experiences with Outcome Measurement, Survey Findings*. Alexandria, VA, 2000. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/agency_experiences.cfm.

¹¹³ Interview with Susan Naimark, Senior Program Associate, NeighborWorks America, National Initiatives and Applied Research, June and July 2006.

Outcome evaluation also provides structures in an organization that help it maintain organizational priorities through changes in staffing.¹¹⁵ And it results in better marketing, outreach, and, eventually, better positioning of the organization externally, as funding continues to be competitive. A general fear about evaluation is that greater competition will cause a decrease in morale. On the other hand, outcome information confirms achievements in the community, which inspires staff and enhances morale.

Outcome measurement does not have to be elaborate. Nor does it require a major expenditure of funds. Attention to a couple of key elements can keep organizations from designing elaborate evaluations they can neither afford nor sustain.

— Dawn Smart¹¹⁴

The fear that federal funding may shift away from the community development field may be justified, and this remains an open issue. Organizations such as HUD and NeighborWorks America are striving to implement outcome measurement in the hope that documented results will help preserve and build support for their programs. CDOs also wonder whether funders can be trusted with outcome information. Many experts in the field believe this fear is justified. Nevertheless, additional training for funders and intermediaries, increased transparency, and greater awareness about the issues can soften this negative dynamic.

Another question left unanswered is whether it is possible to achieve effective outcome measurement without compromising flexibility and without causing an overemphasis on those results that are more readily measurable. Again, greater knowledge about the issue on the part of both funders and CDOs would partly mitigate this risk. A greater impact may be attained through a system or process that allows CDOs sufficient flexibility. If organizations are allowed to choose outcome goals freely, they have a greater chance of being true to the mission of their organization or the needs of the community, rather than the goals of their funders or those that are easier to measure or aggregate for comparisons.

Are the investments, costs and drawbacks of outcome measurement, then, worth the benefits to CDOs? If an outcome measurement system emphasizes aggregating data for higher-level reporting, at the expense of flexibility for CDOs, the process may not be as worthwhile for CDOs. The same could be true if a CDO does not commit the required effort and leadership to the process. Otherwise, respondents to surveys and interview subjects agreed overwhelmingly that the systems with which they have worked have delivered a net benefit.

Undertaking the outcome measurement process has led many CDOs to discover opportunities to address critical needs in the community, and they have made substantive changes in their strategies and programs to meet those needs.

¹¹⁴ Smart, Dawn, "Issues and Challenges of Outcome Measures — Keeping Your Outcome Measures Simple," July 7, 2004, *National Resource Center E-Newsletter, Best of the Best*, Compassion Capital Fund. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at www.ccfbest.org/outcomemeasurements/measuressimplified.htm.

¹¹⁵ "Common Myths Regarding Outcome Measures," *National Resource Center E-Newsletter, Best of the Best*, Compassion Capital Fund. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at www.ccfbest.org/outcomemeasurements/commonmyths.htm.

VI. Conclusions

The concept of outcome measurement is no longer brand new, but its popularity and pervasiveness in the nonprofit arena and community development is relatively novel.

To Whom Do Outcomes Matter? Increasingly, outcome reporting is becoming important to funders and governments, as the demand for more accountability continues to rise. This interest in outcomes does not appear to be temporary. While growth in the popularity of outcome measurement has been driven primarily by various types of funders, CDOs have often initiated the process, and not all systems have originated with funding institutions.

Can Outcomes Be Measured? Given that it is not possible to establish a control group in community development evaluation, proving causality remains one of its most difficult challenges. Traditional research is expensive, and thus its utility is limited. However, a compelling case can be made for the usefulness of CDOs gathering indirect data that demonstrate a correlation between activities and outcomes, particularly when accompanied by an articulated theory of change or logic model. Outcome measurement provides a middle-of-the-road method to yield important and useful evidence about long-term outcomes in a manner that is feasible for both funders and CDOs. Another part of the challenge of measuring outcomes is accounting for the specific context in which CDOs operate. This area continues to require more attention.

Are the Benefits Worth the Costs? Despite the drawbacks, dangers and fears of doing outcome measurement, nearly all parties agreed that the benefits of the process are worth its costs. Implementing outcome measurement can be very valuable to CDOs if they are provided with the flexibility to think through their outcomes and indicators independent of biases. Its value for CDOs also depends on their own effort and commitment, including the presence of a lead proponent who ensures that the process moves forward. It would be prudent for funders to take benefits for CDOs into consideration when they adjust their reporting requirements. Conversely, it is in the best interest of CDOs to learn about and use available systems and tools that fit their needs before less ideal ones are imposed upon them.

Many experts also have a special aspiration with respect to outcome measurement. They hope that for efforts that historically have been underfunded (e.g., community-building and organizing), outcome measurement may provide enough evidence to make it possible to preserve or even expand them.

A. Considerations for CDOs

For community development organizations interested in outcome measurement, the following issues should be considered:

Capacity. Can staff resources be devoted to the effort? Is there enough support in the organization to undertake the process? Options include hiring a technical assistant or utilizing the trainings offered by some outcome measurement systems. Having a lead staff person well trained on the topic is highly recommended. Many CDO directors interviewed for a Success Measures study favored making use of development officers, grant writers and managers or

marketing and communications staff with evaluation experience.¹¹⁶ Another consideration is the likelihood of staff turnover or reassignment of the lead individual.

Expected Costs. Are adequate funds available for evaluation? Can any funder be approached to subsidize at least initial costs? While many guidebooks and other resources are available free of cost, training and technical assistance require a much greater level of time and commitment.

Training and Start-Up. Before their system became automated, Success Measures used to estimate that one-quarter of a full-time staff person was required per year per organization to perform outcome measure-

ment. More recent feedback indicates that the time required is far less. The Success Measures training program consists of three two-day workshops over a 12-month period. Up to 16 hours of one-on-one coaching and technical assistance is also provided, via phone, e-mail, and Web conference. Interviewees using UW systems reported that outcome reporting took an average of two staff days per program per year (excluding training time). The time required for each process generally decreases after the initial year of implementation.

Resources that Fit Best. What are the organization's priorities for performing outcome measurement? Would it benefit from a comprehensive system that supports its strategic planning and management functions?

It is extremely important that people who will be involved in this sort of thing get acclimated to it as early as possible... This will help people understand the outcome focus and inculcate the values and understanding needed to create the culture change required of a results-based approach.

— Harry Hatry¹¹⁷

WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO SUCCESS

A nonprofit should have the following characteristics to successfully develop and implement an outcome management process:

- (1) Leadership support (from top management)
- (2) Commitment of time and staff resources
- (3) Program stability and a stable organizational environment
- (4) Computer capability

Source: *The Urban Institute*¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Other choices of trainees included neighborhood directors, resident services staff, property managers and community organizers, as well as compliance and loan officers. NeighborWorks America, *An Evaluation of the NeighborWorks® Success Measures Pilot Program*, Washington, DC, conducted by EnCompass LLC, August 2006.

¹¹⁷ Horsch, Karen, "Questions and Answers: Interview with Harry Hatry and Joe Wholey," *The Evaluation Exchange*, Volume IV, No. 1, 1998. Web site accessed on February 4, 2007, at www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrp/eval/issue10/qanda.html.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

One private funder acknowledged that outcome measurement and evaluation are a difficult area for CDOs, “with a lot of information coming at them at once.” She explained, however, that the work done up front will help CDOs “improve their programs, which will allow them to help more people.” In turn, this will bring them more funding.¹¹⁹

B. Implications for Funders, Intermediaries and System Developers

Current issues in the field involve conflicting uses for outcome measurement; standardization of outcomes and indicators; preferences for primary versus secondary data; and further simplification and improvement of systems. There are several things that funders, governments, intermediaries and other stakeholders can do to address the root issues, many of which revolve around trust. By considering the following ideas, funders can avoid a destructive, downward spiral with regard to mistrust and also encourage more CDOs to embark on an outcome measurement process.

Increase transparency to grantees. When funders have multiple objectives, their communication to grantees or system users often include mixed messages. The pressure for funders to report their own aggregated outcomes is not likely to end, so it would help tremendously for funders, intermediaries and CDOs to be keenly aware of the implications of this added complexity for CDOs, and to increase transparency about their goals. This includes revealing funder objectives with respect to outcome measurement, in order to mitigate confusion and mistrust. For example, funders could clearly communicate that specific elements of an evaluation process are designed for the funders’ own reporting requirements, while other specific steps are left more flexible so that CDOs have the opportunity to reap the strategic planning and management benefits of the process.

Do not rely on or consider outcome data first and foremost for funding purposes. Funders are cautioned that outcome evaluation should not be the “be-all and end-all.”¹²⁰ An expert at United Way recommends against funding decisions based solely on outcome data and regrets having seen it occur. He notes that other data, including program output information and agency-level management data, can be extremely valuable. He further encourages funders to take into account the *quality* of the data collected, how well it is *aligned* with the organization’s objectives, what the grantee *learned* from the process, and the level of *effort* put forth by the organization.¹²¹ As a result, funders can preserve trust with their grantees. United Way of America makes numerous resources available (not posted on its Web site) for such decision-making to their funder agencies, including reports and guidance as to how funders can provide technical assistance as well as how they can collaborate with each other.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Interview with Lois Greco, Senior Vice President and Wachovia Regional Foundation Evaluation Officer, Wachovia Regional Foundation and Wachovia Regional Community Development Corporation, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

¹²⁰ NeighborWorks America, *An Evaluation of the NeighborWorks® Success Measures Pilot Program*, Washington, DC. Conducted by EnCompass LLC, August 2006.

¹²¹ Interview with Roger Wood, Manager, Impact Design and Learning at United Way of America, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

¹²² Interview with Steve Gustafson, former Senior Grants Manager at Greater Twin Cities United Way, now at Phyllis Wheatley Community Center, Minneapolis, MN, August 2006.

Wait a few years before starting to use outcome data and consider multiyear funding. One interviewee recommended that funders should wait at least two to three years before starting to use outcome data. While funders certainly must pay attention to interim reporting, they should withhold final judgment until the information gains some depth. Many funders are also moving toward multiyear grants in order to address timing and data collection issues.

Emphasize education and training for key staff. Funders, governments, and intermediaries often incorrectly assume that they already know enough about outcome evaluation. In fact, one of the most valuable things funders and intermediaries can do is become very diligent about internal training. Key personnel should understand its myths, terminology, current issues, benefits for CDOs, and ways in which overstandardization and being too prescriptive can affect potential benefits for grantees.

Support improvements in tools. There is consensus that the right technology could improve data collection tools and the infrastructure to analyze outcome data. Such developments would be very valuable to CDOs.

Collaborate with other funders and intermediaries. Working together to decrease variability in outcome measurement requirements would benefit the field tremendously.

- ***Terminology.*** This is one of the areas of confusion that impedes wider implementation of outcome measurement. The first section of this report attempted to illuminate the major points of confusion over terminology. One private funder concurs that it would help CDOs if funders and intermediaries collaborated to use terminology more clearly and consistently. She recommends using similar survey methodologies, and even believes that a common set of indicators could be feasible as a step toward reducing variability when making comparisons.¹²³
- ***Requirements and format.*** CDOs have expressed concern that there are too many different formats among funders and intermediaries for outcome reporting.¹²⁴ CDOs have noted that it would be very helpful for them if funders collaborated and agreed upon similar reporting requirements. In attempting this, however, it is crucial to seek an effective balance. Funders may need to require some unique information to aggregate data, in order to report outcomes to their own stakeholders. Further, CDOs are drawn to systems that are in fact simple and easy to implement. However, having too many preconstructed outcome and indicator formats may compromise the more important benefits that outcome measurement provides to CDOs, with negative implications for both grantees and funders. Before developing preconstructed outcome and indicator parameters, careful thought and debate are recommended.

¹²³ Interview with Lois Greco, Senior Vice President and Wachovia Regional Foundation Evaluation Officer, Wachovia Regional Foundation and Wachovia Regional Community Development Corporation, August 2006.

¹²⁴ Of 298 respondents to the UW Survey, 27% strongly agreed and 28% somewhat agreed that there exist “conflicting evaluation methodologies required by funders.” United Way of America, *Agency Experiences with Outcome Measurement, Survey Findings*. Alexandria, VA, 2000. Web site accessed on July 28, 2006, at national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/agency_experiences.cfm.

- *Simplification.* In general, increasing the simplicity and user-friendliness of current outcome measurement systems would also benefit the field. Funders should emphasize simplicity as a contribution to capacity building.
- *Collaboration between groups of experts.* Some outcome measurement experts are biased toward the benefits of secondary data and others are biased toward primary data. There is a sentiment of suspicion between the two groups for which their differing priorities are at least partially responsible. Fortunately, most experts do not seem to be significantly polarized. Collaboration between these groups of experts could yield tremendous value to the field.

Industry professionals agree that reporting on outcomes is quickly becoming a commonplace requirement in community development. One practitioner notes that CDOs cannot afford to go about doing their work without thinking critically about the impact they expect to perceive, as well as measure. This practitioner further reflects that perhaps CDOs' need for strategic planning would be best met if both the CDO and its funder or intermediary are motivated to participate. If the task is completely internalized it may become a burden. Yet if in-depth planning is mostly externally driven, it may not facilitate the type of transformation that is needed in the field of community development.¹²⁵

Outcome measurement is ripe with the potential to create synergy between grantees and funders. The right type of outcome measurement system, which balances benefits for both grantees and funders, carries the possibility of engaging all of their interests and meeting each of their needs simultaneously.

¹²⁵ Interview with Marcos Beleche, Director of Community Organizing and Resident Resources, Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation, Boston, MA, July and August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

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All interviews were conducted by the author between June 23 and October 31, 2006.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Four Examples of Community-Level Outcomes

This page of a memo from NeighborWorks America to its network organizations provides examples of the type of community-level outcome information they requested in 2006:

Examples:

Example 1: The target neighborhood will be viewed as a neighborhood of choice.

| Indicators | Measurements | Data Source | Frequency of Reporting | Responsible Party |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Increasing homeownership | % of homeownership: track change over time | Census and ownership records | Annually | Homeownership Director |
| Fewer vacant homes | % or # of vacant homes: track change over time | City building condition surveys | Biannually | Real Estate Development Director |

Example 2: Resident satisfaction increases in target neighborhood.

Metric: Qualitative, subjective, resident-generated information.

Tool: Periodic surveys of resident groups using resident satisfaction survey (Source: NTI course materials and *Success Measures-Resident Satisfaction with Neighborhood*). Surveys shall be prepared and administered to support comparative historical analysis.

Reporting: Comparative presentation of survey results with descriptive text, charts, and graphs.

Schedule: Biannual

Staff: Community organizers

Example 3: Increase community involvement on the part of residents of target neighborhood.

Indicator 1: In three years, the residents surveyed will report an increase of 20% in their civic engagement, including:

- (a) voting in local and state elections
- (b) subscribing to a local newspaper
- (c) belonging to a religious institution

Measurement tool: Success Measures Survey: Participation in Community Organizations

Indicator 2: In five years, the homeowners surveyed will self-report an increase of 15% in their neighborhood participation, including:

- (a) talking with neighbors
- (b) learning neighbors' names
- (c) discussing local conditions/issues with neighbors

Measurement tool: Success Measures Survey: Sense of Community

Example 4: High-quality affordable housing will be available to more South Boston neighborhood residents.

Indicator of Success 1: By 2010, 25% fewer households will live in overcrowded or substandard housing.

Measurement: City housing department annual housing quality data by census tract

Indicator of Success 2: By 2010, the number of households paying a disproportionate share of their income for housing will be reduced by 30%.

Measurement: City housing department annual survey of housing affordability

7/14/2006

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Source: NeighborWorks America (Organizational Underwriting FY2007) memo to all network organizations, "Community-Level Outcome Goals and Measurements," July 14, 2006.

Appendix B: Funder and Intermediary Outcome Reporting Requirements

Following are responses to questions regarding outcome reporting requirements:

| Funders and Intermediaries | Is outcome reporting required? | Do you provide funding for outcome measurement or require a particular system? |
|--|---|---|
| Ford Foundation ¹²⁶ | Before a grant is made, grantees are required to identify specific outcomes they would like to achieve in the short- and long-term, as well as to identify ways that outcomes can be measured. This became a requirement during the last funding year, although the Ford Foundation has been requesting this information for the last three to four years. Currently, this funder is also trying to build into their organization, ways to <i>measure</i> impact. | No specific tools or systems are required; organizations are encouraged to use Success Measures. Ford Foundation has provided extra funds for use of the Success Measures system by CDOs that use a very innovative approach and by successful groups, as it is particularly important for them to demonstrate outcomes. Much more funding has been contributed to Success Measures itself. |
| The F.B. Heron Foundation ¹²⁷ | Since the Foundation's inception in 1992, it has required outcome projection and reporting that the grantees identify as priorities and which are aligned with the Foundation's programs. The Foundation also works with grantees to understand their thinking about impact, recognizing that the field has a long way to go in improving and demonstrating impact. | As a general support funder, the grantees can use all, some, or none of the Foundation grants to develop outcome-based approaches and systems, but there must be evidence that the grantee is on the path to improving and demonstrating impact. No particular system is required, but the Foundation began funding Success Measures before it was sponsored by NeighborWorks America, when it was with the Development Leadership Network. It now has an incentive program offered to all grantees to enroll in Success Measures. Those who go through orientation and determine that it is a good fit for them, sign a contract with the system and receive 75% of costs from the foundation for the first two years. The Foundation currently supports up to about 25 grantees. |
| NeighborWorks America ¹²⁸ | Requires all 240 NeighborWorks Network organizations to identify community-level outcomes (beginning in 2005). They do not yet require outcome <i>measurement</i> , but the expectation is that organizations will measure these outcomes in the next few years. | No specific tools or systems are required. However, funding for 75% of the fees for Success Measures is provided through an incentive program and a competitive process. |

¹²⁶ Interview with George McCarthy, Senior Program Officer, Development Finance and Economic Security, Ford Foundation, August 2006.

¹²⁷ This Foundation itself is also adapting Success Measures both, as an internal accountability measure and, in fairness, as the Foundation asks the same questions of grantees. The work is found to be "hard and humbling." Interview with MaryJo Mullan, Vice President, Programs, The F.B. Heron Foundation, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

¹²⁸ Interview with Maggie Grieve, Senior Manager, Success Measures, NeighborWorks America, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

| Funders and Intermediaries | Is outcome reporting required? | Do you provide funding for outcome measurement or require a particular system? |
|---|--|---|
| United Way of America ¹²⁹ | <p>Although outcome measurement is not “mandatory,” all United Ways are encouraged to assist the organizations they fund to learn more about outcome measurement. United Way of America also encourages all United Ways to require these funded organizations to identify and measure their outcomes. Although the level of the requirements varies, United Ways typically require funded organizations to identify program outcomes, develop logic models, and measure funded programs.</p> <p>The United Way approach is used by approximately 450 of the 1,300 United Ways and several thousand grantee agencies nationwide. The 450 includes most of the larger United Ways.</p> | <p>Many United Ways require use of their system for reporting.</p> <p>All grantees are provided a guidebook and trainings at no extra cost. There are nominal fees for some of the additional trainings.</p> |
| Individual United Ways | <p>Outcome measurement began as a voluntary process for some United Ways and later became mandatory. For example, the United Way of Massachusetts Bay deemed outcome training and reporting mandatory in 1997. Their first mandate was required attendance at trainings, and outcome reporting was expected and assessed, but agencies have not been disqualified from funding for not doing so.¹³⁰</p> <p>Another example is the Greater Twin Cities United Way, which began requiring outcome reporting in 2002.¹³¹</p> | See above. |
| Wachovia Regional Foundation and Wachovia Regional Community Development Corporation ¹³² | <p>Grant application requires community impact: short-term (1 year), intermediate (2-3 years), and long-term (3-5 years) outcomes.¹³³</p> <p>This funder has always required outcomes, as well as outputs, since its inception in 1998. The funder became much more focused on neighborhood-level outcomes when they refined their program strategy three years ago.</p> <p>Quarterly progress reporting is required on all grants, with particular emphasis on milestones early on, and outputs and outcomes as the grants mature. The funder is aware, for example, that many outcomes will not become apparent for five years.</p> | <p>Currently in an experimental phase with Success Measures, and providing funding for ten grantees currently in their first year with Success Measures.</p> <p>For now, Wachovia Regional Foundation is funding both the first year’s total expenses for new grantees and subscription fees for continuing grantees. The interviewee also anticipates approval for an additional year (average grants are for three to five years), and hopes that, subsequently, CDOs who are trained will see the value of outcome measurement and continue to pay the smaller annual subscription fee for Success Measures on their own. She noted that the costs Wachovia Regional Foundation currently covers do not necessarily reflect what will happen in subsequent years with new cohorts.</p> <p>Previously, Foundation officers, including the interviewee, walked grantees through and provided technical assistance for outcome reporting.</p> |

¹²⁹ Interview with Roger Wood, Manager, Impact Design and Learning at United Way of America, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

¹³⁰ Interview with Don Buchholtz, Senior Director, Community Impact, United Way of Massachusetts Bay, September 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

¹³¹ Interview with Steve Gustafson, former Senior Grants Manager at Greater Twin Cities United Way, now at Phyllis Wheatley Community Center, Minneapolis MN, August 2006.

¹³² Interview with Lois Greco, Senior Vice President and Wachovia Regional Foundation Evaluation Officer, Wachovia Regional Foundation and Wachovia Regional Community Development Corporation, August 2006, and correspondence, January 2007.

¹³³ Wachovia Regional Foundation grant application. Web site accessed on August 29, 2006, at www.cybergrants.com/wachoviaregionalfoundation/development_preview.

Appendix C: Common Indicators Available at the Sub-City Level

Toward enhancing the development of NeighborWorks America's Community Revitalization Indicators project, 10 cities were examined for neighborhood data sources: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Charlotte, Corvallis, Fort Wayne, Jacksonville, Oakland, Salt Lake City and Seattle. A report summarized sources at the sub-city level that gather annual information with a common set of indicators. It appears that many cities had some education and crime data available free of charge, and that the most common available indicators included the following:

- Crime:
 - Crime Rates
 - Juvenile Arrest Rate
 - Aggregate
- Employment:
 - Employment and Unemployment Rates
 - Medium Home Income
 - Poverty Rate
- Housing:
 - Tenure
 - Vacancy Rate
 - Foreclosures
- Education:
 - Test Scores
 - School Enrollment
 - Drop-out Rate

The report also highlights two cities that were exemplary in data availability: the City of Charlotte-Mecklenburg County and Seattle. However, NeighborWorks America Community Fellow Jason Clemmey reports that many organizations are making progress toward creating local consortia for data sharing and developing the most significant indicators for measuring outcomes.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Clemmey, Jason, NeighborWorks America, 2006 NeighborWorks America Summer Internship Program, *Community Development Outcome Indicators Research Report*, Summer 2006.

Appendix D: Examples of Outcome Measurement Frameworks and Systems

Following are a few examples of outcome measurement frameworks and systems and their offerings.

| | United Way Outcome Resource Network | Success Measures Program and Success Measures Data System | Getting to Outcome Model (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (GTO Model) | Kellogg Guidebook | Urban Institute |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Focus Area | Broad Nonprofit | Community Development | Human Services | Grantees | Community Development |
| Guidebook | <i>Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach</i> | <i>Success Measures Guidebook, Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation</i> | <i>Getting to Outcomes 2004</i> | <i>W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook</i> | <i>Key Steps in Outcome Management (and several others)</i> |
| Year(s) Published | 1996 | 1999 / 2005 | 1999 / 2004 | 1998 | 2003 |
| Website Link | national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/mpo/ | www.successmeasures.org/SMDS/AboutSmds.aspx | www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/2004/RAND_TR101.pdf | www.wkcf.org/pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub770.pdf | www.urban.org/uploadedPDF/310776_KeySteps.pdf |
| Training versus Consultants | Grantees are provided trainings at no extra cost. There are nominal fees for some of the additional trainings. | Training consists of three 2-day workshops over a 12 month period. Technical assistance and coaching between workshops is also provided. (\$7,500) | Consultants / technical assistance highly recommended | Consultants / technical assistance highly recommended; list of consultants provided | Working group or consultants recommended |
| Planning approach / tool | Program Outcome Model | Benefits Picture | GTO-04 Logic Model (pp. 6–7 of guidebook) | Guidance on outcome evaluation and examples of outcomes models (pp. 28–37; also see Kellogg's Logic Model Guide) | Guidance on outcome sequence charts or logic models (pp.8, 11) |
| Data collection tools (e.g., sample surveys, focus group questions, etc.) | Varies among United Ways. Some None. Some provide sample surveys. | Yes | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Appendix E: Examples of Community and Neighborhood Revitalization Outcomes, Indicators, and Resources and Tools for Measurement

Community and neighborhood revitalization can comprise many outcomes: short-, intermediate- and long-term. Following is one set of outcomes, recommended indicators, and seven measurement resources and tools for measuring these outcomes, derived from a course taught at the NeighborWorks America Training Institute, Course NR 121, “Measuring the Impacts of Neighborhood Revitalization.” These particular tools and resources were chosen because they are largely available across the country, they allow study over a period of time, and they are inexpensive or free.¹³⁵

| ACTIVITY / STRATEGY | OUTCOME | INDICATOR | RESOURCE / TOOL | OBJECTIVE(S) | NOTES |
|--|--|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| Marketing efforts directed toward neighborhood “gatekeepers” that describe the neighborhood as a great place | People with choices will choose to live, work, and worship in our neighborhood | Neighborhood Perceptions | TOOL: Focus Groups | Within two years, real estate agents participating in our focus groups will use positive descriptive words when talking about our neighborhood 85% of the time. Within two years, most real estate professionals participating in our focus groups will describe their perception of the neighborhood as good or excellent. | Gathering both qualitative and quantitative data on these opinions is recommended. |
| | | | TOOL: Key Informant Interviews | Within two years, real estate agents participating in our interviews will use positive descriptive words when talking about our neighborhood 85% of the time. Within two years, most real estate professionals participating in our interviews will describe their perception of the neighborhood as good or excellent. | Examples of key informants include gatekeepers, market influencers/movers, “leads” (early indicators), real estate professionals, lenders, appraisers, and neighborhood leaders. |
| Providing financing and technical assistance for home improvements | The neighborhood will show evidence of pride through well-maintained properties and streets | Physical Appearance | TOOL: Rating Scale Observations: Housing | Within two years, 80% of homes in the neighborhood will be rated as good or very good by visual survey, compared to 65% at baseline. | It is recommended to use comparison groups, train, test, cross-test, and use technology (e.g., digital camera or PDA) Survey can be collected by mail, phone, group, door-to-door, by intercepting people, or mixed mode. Appendix F is an example of a Visual Attractiveness survey. |
| | | | TOOL: Rating Scale Observations: Visual Attractiveness of Neighborhood | Within two years, 80% of homes in the neighborhood will be rated as good or very good by visual survey, compared to 65% at baseline. | |

¹³⁵ Interview with Kathy Bailey, Training Manager, Neighborhood Revitalization Track, NeighborWorks America Training Institute, August 2006.

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| ACTIVITY / STRATEGY | OUTCOME | INDICATOR | RESOURCE / TOOL | OBJECTIVE(S) | NOTES |
|---|--|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| Provide small grants for block club beautification projects that are initiated and implemented by residents on a block level. | Residents will feel more confident about the future of the neighborhood | Resident Satisfaction | TOOL: Survey – Resident Satisfaction with Neighborhood | <p>Within two years, 85% of neighbors will express feeling more confident about a positive future for their neighborhood as measured by a resident survey, compared to 66% at baseline.</p> <p>Within two years, 85% of neighbors will identify neighborhood conditions as good or excellent as measured by a resident survey compared to 70% at baseline.</p> | <p>Survey can be collected by mail, phone, group, door-to-door, by intercepting people, or mixed mode.</p> <p>Appendix G is an example of a Resident Satisfaction survey.</p> |
| Providing the tools and techniques to facilitate investment in the neighborhood housing stock | It will make economic sense to invest in our neighborhood | Private Investment | RESOURCE: Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) | <p>Within two years, the mortgage lending rate as measured by HMDA data will increase to a level two points higher than the city as a whole.</p> <p>Within two years, the mortgage lending rate as measured by HMDA data will increase by a rate 2% higher than the rate citywide.</p> | <p>DataPlace provides easy access to this data free of charge at www.dataplace.com.</p> <p>The data is also available at www.ffiec.gov.</p> |
| Increasing opportunities for owner occupancy in the neighborhood | Our neighborhood will be a neighborhood of choice | Demand for Housing | RESOURCE: Multiple Listing Service (MLS) | <p>Within two years, home values will increase at a rate of 5% higher than city rates as measured by MLS data</p> <p>Within two years, the days-on-market for neighborhood homes will be equal to averages citywide.</p> <p>Within two years, the spread between asking and selling price will diminish to a spread equal to the average citywide</p> <p>Real estate sales in our neighborhood will increase by 10% between January 1 and December 3, with all sale prices at least 90% of asking price.</p> | <p>Note: Access to MLS data generally requires a state real estate agent license. A relationship with a real estate agent may help an organization obtain MLS data free of charge. Sometimes the same data is available on other websites.</p> <p>This data is available at: www.mls.com.</p> |

Note: These resources and tools can be used in many different ways. For example, information can be obtained for a single block as compared to a much larger area. And one year of Multiple Listing Service data on the average time that homes are on the market in a given area will provide shorter-term information, while five years of the same data will provide a different view.

For more information and instructions, please refer to Community and Neighborhood Revitalization Program of Study, NeighborWorks America Training Institute, at www.nw.org/network/training/courses/default.asp?course=ucrsdetailAll1.asp?course=NR121.

Appendix F: Example of a Visual Attractiveness Survey (as referenced in Appendix E)

Data Collection Tool: Visual Attractiveness of Neighborhood (SM H 7.1b)

Instructions & Visual Assessment Key:
Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 = Strongly agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neither agree/disagree, 2 = Disagree and 1 = Strongly disagree, please select the response that best fits your observation and describes your feeling about each of the following statements. 0 = Not applicable.

Observer name: _____ **Time of observation (am/pm):** _____
Date of assessment: _____
Identify the streets, blocks or boundaries covered in this assessment: _____

| Neighborhood Residential Areas | | | | | |
|--|-----------|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| The overall condition of the exterior of the houses and/or apartment buildings (the structure, roof, windows, doors, porches, steps) is generally satisfactory or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| There are few to no houses or apartment buildings that are vacant and abandoned or in need of major repairs. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| The maintenance of the front and side yards visible from the street, including fences, walkways and driveways, is generally satisfactory or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| The houses and/or apartment buildings present an appealing visual aspect or lend historic character to the neighborhood. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Neighborhood Open Space | | | | | |
| The area has adequate parks, playgrounds or other public open spaces. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Parks and playground areas welcome visitors through appealing design, landscaping and/or other features. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Neighborhood Commercial/Institutional Areas | | | | | |
| Business and storefront facades in the neighborhood generally are in satisfactory condition or better and present a welcoming appearance to passersby. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Business and storefront facades present an appealing visual aspect or lend historic character to the neighborhood. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Institutional buildings (such as libraries, schools and churches) fit in with or reinforce the identity of the neighborhood. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |

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Appendix F: Example of a Visual Attractiveness Survey (continued)

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Sidewalks and Pedestrian Access | | | | | |
| The sidewalks in the neighborhood handle the volume and types of pedestrian activity adequately or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| There are enough crosswalks to handle the level of pedestrian activity in the area adequately or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Streets, Traffic and Parking | | | | | |
| Street surfaces in the neighborhood generally are in good repair and there are no ruts or potholes. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| The size of streets and the volume and speed of traffic are all appropriate to the neighborhood, and streets safely accommodate pedestrian activity. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Parking in the neighborhood is satisfactory or better to meet the needs of residents and their visitors. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Lighting | | | | | |
| Street lighting in the neighborhood is sufficient to illuminate pedestrian pathways and access to homes. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Signage | | | | | |
| Street signs are visible and large enough to help people identify where they are. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Neighborhood identification signs help reinforce the identity of the area. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Maintenance | | | | | |
| Cleanliness of the neighborhood is generally satisfactory or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Potential Problems | | | | | |
| Cleanliness of the neighborhood is generally satisfactory or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| There are few or no abandoned buildings in the neighborhood. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
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Appendix F: Example of a Visual Attractiveness Survey (continued)

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| There are few or no vacant, unkempt lots in the neighborhood. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| There are few or no abandoned cars in the neighborhood. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| There is little or no evidence of illegal dumping in the area. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| There is little or no graffiti evident in the neighborhood. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Overall visual attractiveness of the neighborhood is satisfactory or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Other observations: | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
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Appendix G: Example of a Resident Satisfaction Survey (as referenced in Appendix E)

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Data Collection Tool: Resident Satisfaction with Neighborhood (SM C 9.1a) | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| 1. Please identify your neighborhood by name and either define its boundaries or name the street intersection nearest your house or apartment. | | | | | |
| 2. How long have you lived in this neighborhood or near this location? | | | | | |
| Less than 1 year | 1 - 5 years | 6 - 10 years | 11 - 20 years | 21 - 30 years | More than 30 years |
| SECTION 1 | | | | | |
| Instructions: Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 = Strongly agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neither agree/disagree, 2 = Disagree and 1 = Strongly disagree, please select the response that best describes your feeling about each of the following statements. | | | | | |
| 3. The condition of houses and apartments in the area is satisfactory or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| 4. There are affordable houses or apartments available here that meet the needs of my family. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| 5. The cleanliness of the area is satisfactory or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| 6. My family and I feel safe in the area. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| 7. The neighbors here are friendly. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| 8. The quality of schools in the area is satisfactory or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| 9. Access to transportation is satisfactory or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| 10. Access to employment centers is satisfactory or better. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
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Appendix G: Example of a Resident Satisfaction Survey (continued)

| SECTION 2 | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| Instructions: Answer the questions in this section only if you've lived here for one year or longer. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 = Much better, 4 = Better, 3 = The same, 2 = Worse and 1 = Much worse, please select the response that best describes how much each of the following items has changed in the last year. (If you've lived here less than a year, skip to Section 3.) | | | | |
| 11. Condition of houses and apartments in the area | | | | |
| 5 (Much Better) | 4 (Better) | 3 (The Same) | 2 (Worse) | 1 (Much Worse) |
| 12. Cleanliness of the area | | | | |
| 5 (Much Better) | 4 (Better) | 3 (The Same) | 2 (Worse) | 1 (Much Worse) |
| 13. Feelings of safety in the area | | | | |
| 5 (Much Better) | 4 (Better) | 3 (The Same) | 2 (Worse) | 1 (Much Worse) |
| 14. Friendliness of neighbors | | | | |
| 5 (Much Better) | 4 (Better) | 3 (The Same) | 2 (Worse) | 1 (Much Worse) |
| 15. Quality of public services | | | | |
| 5 (Much Better) | 4 (Better) | 3 (The Same) | 2 (Worse) | 1 (Much Worse) |
| 16. Quality of schools in the area | | | | |
| 5 (Much Better) | 4 (Better) | 3 (The Same) | 2 (Worse) | 1 (Much Worse) |
| 17. Access to transportation | | | | |
| 5 (Much Better) | 4 (Better) | 3 (The Same) | 2 (Worse) | 1 (Much Worse) |
| 18. Access to employment centers | | | | |
| 5 (Much Better) | 4 (Better) | 3 (The Same) | 2 (Worse) | 1 (Much Worse) |
| SECTION 3 | | | | |
| 19. Are you active in any neighborhood clubs, groups, committees or organizations? | | | | |
| Yes | No | | | |
| 20. Are you registered to vote in this location? | | | | |
| Yes | No | | | |
| 21. With how many of your neighbors do you regularly speak for 5 minutes or more? | | | | |
| 0 | 1-3 | 4-6 | 7-9 | 10 or more |
| 22. How many households in your neighborhood can you turn to in an emergency? | | | | |
| 0 | 1-3 | 4-6 | 7-9 | 10 or more |
| 23. What do you like best about this neighborhood? | | | | |
| | Safety | □ | | |
| | Cleanliness of streets/homes | □ | | |
| | Community pride or spirit | □ | | |
| | Friendliness | □ | | |
| | Available shopping | □ | | |
| | Nearness to work | □ | | |
| | Quality of schools | □ | | |
| | Parks or open spaces | □ | | |
| | Available jobs | □ | | |
| | Other | □ | | |

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Appendix G: Example of a Resident Satisfaction Survey (continued)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| 24. If you selected Other above, please describe what you like best about the neighborhood. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25. What is your second-favorite thing about this neighborhood? | <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Safety</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Cleanliness of streets/homes</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Community pride or spirit</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Friendliness</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Available shopping</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Nearness to work</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Quality of schools</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Parks or open spaces</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Available jobs</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Other</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> </table> | Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cleanliness of streets/homes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Community pride or spirit | <input type="checkbox"/> | Friendliness | <input type="checkbox"/> | Available shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> | Nearness to work | <input type="checkbox"/> | Quality of schools | <input type="checkbox"/> | Parks or open spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> | Available jobs | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | |
| Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cleanliness of streets/homes | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Community pride or spirit | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Friendliness | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Available shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Nearness to work | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Quality of schools | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parks or open spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Available jobs | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26. If you selected Other above, please describe your second-favorite thing about the neighborhood. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 27. What is the worst thing about this neighborhood? | <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Crime or other safety issues</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Litter, graffiti or other cleanliness issues</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Number of abandoned or run-down buildings</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Poor-quality schools</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Unreliable public services</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Police non-responsiveness or harassment</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Presence of undesirable businesses</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Lack of neighborhood friendliness</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Distance from shopping</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Distance from work</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Lack of quality parks or open spaces</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Lack of available jobs</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Other</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> </table> | Crime or other safety issues | <input type="checkbox"/> | Litter, graffiti or other cleanliness issues | <input type="checkbox"/> | Number of abandoned or run-down buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> | Poor-quality schools | <input type="checkbox"/> | Unreliable public services | <input type="checkbox"/> | Police non-responsiveness or harassment | <input type="checkbox"/> | Presence of undesirable businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of neighborhood friendliness | <input type="checkbox"/> | Distance from shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> | Distance from work | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of quality parks or open spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of available jobs | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Crime or other safety issues | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Litter, graffiti or other cleanliness issues | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of abandoned or run-down buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poor-quality schools | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Unreliable public services | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Police non-responsiveness or harassment | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Presence of undesirable businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lack of neighborhood friendliness | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Distance from shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Distance from work | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lack of quality parks or open spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lack of available jobs | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 28. If you selected Other above, please describe the worst thing about the neighborhood. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 29. What is the second-worst thing about this neighborhood? | <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Crime or other safety issues</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Litter, graffiti or other cleanliness issues</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Number of abandoned or run-down buildings</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Poor-quality schools</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Unreliable public services</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Police non-responsiveness or harassment</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Presence of undesirable businesses</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Lack of neighborhood friendliness</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Distance from shopping</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Distance from work</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Lack of quality parks or open spaces</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Lack of available jobs</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Other</td><td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> </table> | Crime or other safety issues | <input type="checkbox"/> | Litter, graffiti or other cleanliness issues | <input type="checkbox"/> | Number of abandoned or run-down buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> | Poor-quality schools | <input type="checkbox"/> | Unreliable public services | <input type="checkbox"/> | Police non-responsiveness or harassment | <input type="checkbox"/> | Presence of undesirable businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of neighborhood friendliness | <input type="checkbox"/> | Distance from shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> | Distance from work | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of quality parks or open spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of available jobs | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Crime or other safety issues | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Litter, graffiti or other cleanliness issues | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of abandoned or run-down buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poor-quality schools | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Unreliable public services | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Police non-responsiveness or harassment | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Presence of undesirable businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lack of neighborhood friendliness | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Distance from shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Distance from work | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lack of quality parks or open spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lack of available jobs | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 30. If you selected Other above, please describe the second-worst thing about the neighborhood. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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Appendix G: Example of a Resident Satisfaction Survey (continued)

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------|--|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Instructions: Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 = Strongly agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neither agree/disagree, 2 = Disagree and 1 = Strongly disagree, please select the response that best describes your feeling about each of the following statements. | | | | | |
| 31. If something is wrong in my neighborhood, I know that the people who live here will try to fix it. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| 32. I would recommend this neighborhood to anyone as a good place to live. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| 33. I would recommend this neighborhood to families with children as a good place to live. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| 34. I would recommend this neighborhood to seniors as a good place to live. | | | | | |
| 5 (Strongly Agree) | 4 (Agree) | 3 (Neither agree/disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 0 (Not applicable) |
| Instructions: Please answer the following questions about owning and buying a home. | | | | | |
| 35. Do you own or rent your home? | | | | | |
| Own | Rent | Neither (for instance, live with friend or relative) | | | |
| 36. If you own your home, how much do you think you could sell it for in today's market? | | | | | |
| | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| \$29,999 or less | | | | | |
| \$30,000 - \$49,999 | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| \$75,000 - \$149,999 | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| \$150,000 - \$199,999 | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| \$200,000 - \$299,999 | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| More than \$300,000 | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 37. If you don't own your home, would you like to buy a home in this neighborhood? | | | | | |
| Yes (if yes, skip the next two questions) | | | No | | |
| 38. If you would not buy a home here, what is the main reason why? | | | | | |
| | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Crime or other safety issues | | | | | |
| Litter, graffiti or other cleanliness issues | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Number of abandoned or run-down buildings | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Poor-quality schools | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Unreliable public services | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Police non-responsiveness or harassment | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Presence of undesirable businesses | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lack of neighborhood friendliness | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Distance from shopping | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Distance from work | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lack of quality parks or open spaces | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lack of available jobs | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 39. If you answered Other to the previous question, please list the main reason you would not buy a home in this neighborhood. | | | | | |

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Appendix G: Example of a Resident Satisfaction Survey (continued)

| | |
|--|---|
| 40. If you would like to buy a home in this neighborhood, what is the main reason you haven't yet bought one? | Don't make enough income <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Credit problems need to be cleared up <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Not sure how to start <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Can't find a good home <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Don't have enough for down payment/fees <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Not ready to buy yet <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | This isn't a good time for buying a home <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Other <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 41. If you answered Other to the previous question, please list the main reason you haven't yet bought a home in this neighborhood. | |
| 42. What do you think the people in this neighborhood could do to make it a better place to live? | |
| 43. What is your family's annual income? | \$9,999 or less <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | \$10,000 - \$19,999 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | \$20,000 - \$29,999 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | \$30,000 - \$49,999 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | \$50,000 or more <input type="checkbox"/> |

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