



Success Measures

Transforming Outcome Measurement

Success Measures is a participatory evaluation method designed by and for community-based organizations and their stakeholders to document outcomes, measure impact and inform change. This innovative, user-friendly process puts control of key decision-making steps about evaluation in the hands of community-based organizations. It was developed in response to a growing interest on the part of community development practitioners, resource providers, policy makers and intermediary organizations to define and measure the success of local housing, economic development and community-building programs.

The Success Measures Data System (SMDS) and related Success Measures training and technical assistance programs are an expansion of the Success Measures Project, initiated by the Development Leadership Network (DLN) and community-based organizations in 1997 and jointly conducted by McAuley Institute and DLN from 1999-2004. The method and a set of 44 outcome indicators were developed by over 300 practitioners, organizations and researchers and tested with over 50 community-based organizations.

Based on learnings from this extensive engagement process, the Success Measures Data System was developed as a web-based suite of tools to reduce the time, costs and in-house skills that community-based organizations need to conduct effective outcome-based evaluation. SMDS puts easy-to-use but powerful tools for conducting credible and flexible evaluations in the hands of organizations of any size and capacity. It offers fully defined and tested housing, economic development and community-building indicators and corresponding data collection tools that measure change at the individual, community and organizational levels.

The Success Measures Data System is the only national effort of its kind that is systematically supporting the collection and voluntary pooling of primary level organizational effectiveness data from the community development field.

In 2004, NeighborWorks® America (formerly the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation) assumed responsibility for Success Measures and its implementation in the community development field. NeighborWorks® America is very pleased to carry forward this effort within the NeighborWorks® Network and the wider community development field to measure and document community development outcomes in a manner that enhances community-building and participation.

“Success Measures provides organizations and funders with the tools they need to make a compelling and rigorous case for ongoing support of community development. In fact, it provides a new method of valuing community development work, so that funders can see that their contributions are not acts of subsidy or philanthropy, but instead are true investments in the future of our nation’s communities.”

George McCarthy
Program Officer,
The Ford Foundation

Success Measures

Benefits for Community Development Organizations and their Partners

Brings tested participatory method and cutting-edge evaluation tools and techniques into large and small organizations.

“The Success Measures process is cutting edge and well worth the investment to get started. It integrates into your regular management and strategic planning processes and truly helps the work you do on a daily basis, while also providing the evaluation approach and tools to give funders the solid details they seek.”

Jeanne Wardford,
Executive Director, Northern Area Association, Detroit

Provides funders with the outcome-based, participatory information they need to provide ongoing funding in today’s competitive environment for financial support.

“To survive and even thrive in today’s funding environment, evaluation is essential. However, until now, the field of community development has been stymied in finding a tool that’s accessible, simple, and strong. Success Measures answers this call, with its peer designed and tested system, and an evaluation process that is both meaningful and practical.”

Mary Jo Mullan,
Vice President, Programs, F.B. Heron Foundation

Illustrates in quantifiable terms the qualitative impacts of community development that you may have thought previously were immeasurable.

“Identifying and using metrics to measure the social return on investment in community development is not easy. Success Measures has created a system and an approach that does this and promises to become the standard for evaluating community development programs. It will better help us to support organizations working to create and sustain healthy neighborhoods.”

Darren Walker
Director, Working Communities, The Rockefeller Foundation

Involves your stakeholders every step of the way, so you gain their skills, their insight, and their commitment.

The SMDS participatory approach to evaluation opens a new way for working with your service recipients. It gives them a voice and serves as a great leadership development process, allowing small programs to meet many more objectives than just evaluation. With this process, your organization’s entire level of operation is raised.”

Ellen O’Neil
Development Director, Silver Spring Interfaith Housing Coalition, Silver Spring, MD

“Beyond the critical outcome measures it provides, the Success Measures process triggers strategic evaluation of our programs and allows us to ensure that we’re most effectively deploying our limited and valuable human resources for the best results in our communities.”

Thomas Chabolla
*Associate Director,
 Catholic Campaign for
 Human Development*

Success Measures

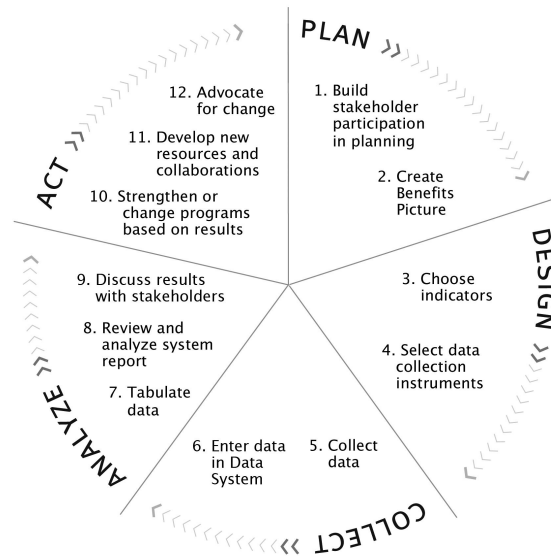
Created by and for Community Development

The Success Measures Program at NeighborWorks® America offers the following integrated package of services to support community development organizations and their partners in documenting real changes in the lives of people and communities.

Introductory Workshops are a good place to start for organizations with a desire to learn more about the Success Measures evaluation method and the Success Measures Data System. These workshops are offered in regional locations through the Success Measures program and periodically through the NeighborWorks Training Institute, www.nw.org.

Training through a 3 part series of workshops to prepare organizations to implement five key phases of the Success Measures participatory evaluation method.

Success Measures Evaluation Process



Technical assistance and coaching between workshops to support organizations in implementing each phase of the evaluation process in organizations and communities.

Subscriptions to the web-based Success Measures Data System (SMDS) which provides everything needed to do credible, useful evaluation.

Custom Services to individual organizations who are interested in creating additional indicators, specialized training, summary reports or desire other assistance.

Success Measures

Training and Technical Assistance

Success Measures offers a range of hands-on training and technical assistance services to community-based development organizations and their resource partners.

These services are offered to groups or networks of organizations in a peer learning format. These may be existing networks or ones formed by the organizations linked in this learning process. This approach builds on the experiences of organizations working in a particular community, on similar issues or providing similar services.

Community development intermediaries, funders and other resource partners can make Success Measures training, technical assistance and the Success Measures Data System available to their network groups, affiliates, members or grantees. Individual organizations can also participate in Success Measures.

In-depth training conducted through a series of three interactive, 2.5 day workshops over a 12 month period. Organizations leave each workshop ready to work through a key stage of the participatory, outcome-based evaluation process:

- **Workshop 1. Planning a Success Measures evaluation**, including developing stakeholder involvement, developing a statement of change (benefits picture), using outcome indicators, and navigating the Success Measures Data System.
- **Workshop 2: Using Success Measures outcome indicators and data collection tools** to track impacts, including selecting and using outcome indicators and data tools, entering data and generating tabulations of data collected.
- **Workshop 3: Analyzing data and using it to inform programs** and demonstrate success.

Workshop locations and dates: Washington, DC and regional locations. Please inquire for specific locations and dates or how to bring a training event to your community.

Registration Fees: \$7,500 per organization includes:

- Three 2.5 day workshops over a 12 month period for two representatives from an organization
- Up to 16 hours of one-on-one coaching between each workshop and following the final workshop -- via phone, email and web conference

“Organizations cannot afford not to do outcome measurement and program evaluation. These days, we all must get better at working with fewer resources, and continue to demonstrate to our stakeholders the importance of our efforts. We expect Success Measures will help us document our impact and avoid short-selling ourselves by helping us discover unknown impacts beyond our core expectations for programming.”

Amy LaChance
Neighborhood Housing
Services of Chicago

- Easy to use materials including a course participant guide, Success Measures Data System tutorial and a step-by-step implementation guide for conducting an evaluation.

Success Measures Data System

Linking the Power of Technology with the Power of Participation

The Success Measures Data System (SMDS) brings participatory outcome evaluations to your desktop and guides users through a clear set of steps in the evaluation process. From capturing an easy to understand picture of benefits achieved, selecting indicators, customizing data collection tools, collecting and tabulating results, and generating reports, SMDS makes outcome evaluation understandable and outcome data usable.

Here are just a few of the key features included in SMDS 4.2:

Online means no technology management or purchases required. Subscribers access the system via the Internet – a dial-up connection is all that is needed. There is no software to purchase, programs to download, or technical programming to be updated. SMDS manages the technology, security, maintenance, and back-ups on a 24/7 basis.

Ready-to-use tools. Subscribers identify the outcome indicators they want to focus on – from forty-four in total – and then select from a list of more than 100 data collection tools. Tools can be used in their standard format or customized for individual program use. Organizations decide the format best for them, and never need to start from scratch.

Tabulate, aggregate, and share data. The system tabulates collected data and allows users the choice of sharing data from evaluations with other organizations, including intermediaries and funders. Through an enhanced level of subscription,

intermediaries, funders or larger organizations with multiple locations, can easily aggregate data across programs to monitor large networks of impact.

Create custom indicators and data tools: An enhanced subscription allows users to add new sets of indicators and data collection tools to share with network members or beyond.

Help is always available. SMDS offers multiple levels of online help as well as live phone technical support for all subscribers.

Simple to use, but sophisticated in design and scale. For users, the evaluation process is clear and complete with all the tools and training needed to get started and keep going. Underneath is a sophisticated and powerful database system that provides scalability to grow to any level and depth of need and use within individual organizations and the broader community development field. There is also an ongoing process for system enhancements, new features and improvements that will be delivered to all users.

NeighborWorks AMERICA SUCCESS MEASURES

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Success Measures is an innovative approach for community-based organizations and their partners to document outcomes, measure impact, and inform change. Success Measures provides a practical and user-friendly participatory evaluation method that engages an organization's stakeholders in developing, implementing, and analyzing results.

Success Measures combines the power of technology into its approach through a secure, web-based evaluation and data management tool, the Success Measures Data System (SMDS). SMDS provides everything an organization needs to conduct credible, useful evaluations that demonstrate what differences community development activities make for individuals, organizations and communities.

The Success Measures Data System is offered by subscription. If you are currently a subscriber, you may log in now. If you would like to become a subscriber, or for more information, please browse the menu or contact the Success Measures program, SuccessMeasures@nw.org at NeighborWorks@ America.

NeighborWorks@America is a national nonprofit organization created by Congress to provide financial support, technical assistance, and training for community-based revitalization efforts.

Username

Password

Designed by Apex Digital Systems Version 4.2

SMDS Subscriptions:

- **Basic Subscription:** \$2,500 per year for unlimited number of users within an organization and an unlimited number of evaluations in process or stored in the database. Basic tabulations of data collected. Choice to share data on an evaluation-by-evaluation basis.
- **Enhanced Subscriptions:** Enhanced subscriptions add features useful to larger nonprofits with multiple program locations as well intermediaries and funders. The enhanced subscription levels include the ability to aggregate data shared by other organizations, grantees or affiliates and the ability to create and share new sets of indicators and data collection tools. Please inquire for pricing.

Success Measures Outcome Indicators

The Success Measures Data System's (SMDS) 44 indicators measure the impacts of housing, economic development, and community-building programs at the individual, organization, and community levels. There are over 100 data collection tools for these indicators. The data collection tools include interviews, surveys, observational protocols, focus groups and formats for analyzing program or public records and data sources.

I. AFFORDABLE HOUSING INDICATORS

Set 1. Measuring Benefits to Residents of New and Rehabilitated Housing

- H 1. Monthly Housing Cost and Affordability
- H 2. Quality of Housing
- H 3. Wealth Creation through Homeownership
- H 4. Environmentally Sustainable Design and Construction
- H 5. Personal Effectiveness and Stability

Set 2. Measuring Benefits to Community

- H 6. Sense of Community
- H 7. Visual Attractiveness of the Neighborhood
- H 8. Community Use of Public Space
- H 9. Neighborhood Security
- H10. Property Values -- Residential
- H11. Share of Owner-Occupied Homes

Set 3. Measuring Benefits to Municipality and Society

- H12. Local Economic Impact
- H13. Duration of Residency and Resident Stability
- H14. Diversity of Incomes and of Housing Values and Types

II. COMMUNITY BUILDING INDICATORS

Set 1. Community and Organizational Capacity

- C 1. Awareness of Community and Organization's Effort
- C 2. Participation in Community Organizations
- C 3. Organizational Capacity for Developing Community Leaders
- C 4. Organizations Involved in Community Building Initiatives and Resources Committed
- C 5. Accountability to the Community
- C 6. Awareness and Understanding of Community Issues
- C 7. Capacity for Collective Action
- C 8. Collaboration Achieving Economies of Scale and Scope

Set 2. Social Relationships and Networks

- C 9. Resident Satisfaction with Neighborhood
- C10. Sense of Social Cohesion
- C11. Personal and Social Networks
- C12. Links Across Race and Ethnicity
- C 13. Constructive Working Relationships among Individuals/Organizations in Community Building
- C14. Collaboration Promoting Shared Values

Set 3. Community Economic and Political Influence

- C15. Evidence of Community Power
- C16. Voting Rates
- C17. Leadership for Change: Extent of Leadership
- C18. External Perception of Neighborhood
- C19. Public Services
- C20. Private Investment
- C21. Healthy Environment
- C22. Racial Equity

II. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

Set 1. Measuring Benefits of Neighborhood-Based Business Support Programs

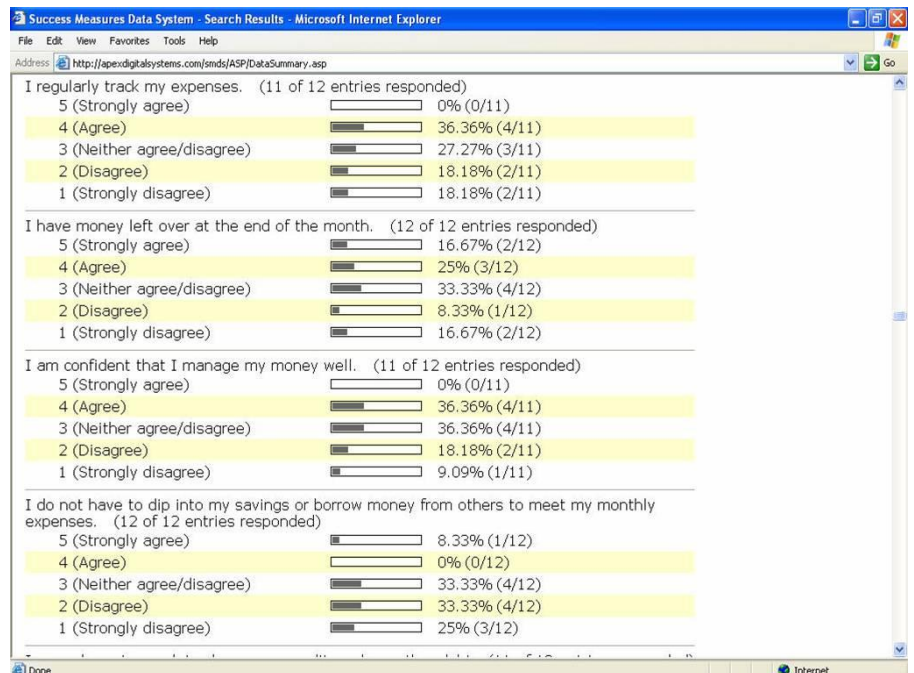
- E 1. Business Size, Type and Profitability
- E 2. Job Creation and Preservation

Set 2. Measuring Benefits of Job Training Programs

- E 3. Employment and Income from Job Training
- E 4. Trainee Evaluation of Job Training and Placement
- E 5. Skills Acquisition – Basic Job Readiness

Set 3. Measuring Contributions to Community

- E 6. Attractiveness of Business District
- E 7. Extent to Which Basic Community Needs Are Met By Local Businesses
- E 8. Local Business Support of and Participation in Community



“As an evaluator, I think SMDS’ use of a participatory evaluation process is quite innovative and very important. This is the best way for stakeholders to understand, believe in, and consider the results their own, and be motivated to commit to your organization for the long term.”

Dawn Hanson Smart
Clegg & Associates and the
Evaluation Forum, Seattle, WA

Success Measures

Supporters and Partners

Success Measures at NeighborWorks® America

The national dissemination of the Success Measures Data System and related training programs receive the generous support of the following funders:

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NeighborWorks® America
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“So much in community development can’t be measured in short-term impacts. Fortunately, Success Measures has developed short-term milestones that support long-term goals to allow us to view the nearer-term results of the work, and make the push for outcome reporting more realistic and achievable. CDOs benefit by no longer having to reduce their reporting down to simple unit measurements that do not completely tell the story of their good work.”

Gayle Williams
President, Mary Reynolds
Babcock Foundation

NeighborWorks® America

NeighborWorks® America is a national nonprofit created by Congress in 1978 to provide financial support, technical assistance and training for community-based revitalization efforts. This mission is achieved through the NeighborWorks® Network, a system of more than 220 community-based organizations that meet revitalization and affordable housing priorities articulated by local resident leaders. Network organizations operate in underserved urban, suburban and rural communities.

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