

Success Measures Outcome Indicators

Affordable Housing Indicators

Housing Costs and Affordability

This indicator measures total monthly housing costs including rent, mortgage payment, utilities, fees and property taxes. Affordability is assessed as a percentage of household income or the difference in costs compared to previous housing or housing of comparable size. The indicator is divided into two parts taking into account the different components of monthly housing costs for renters and homeowners.

Quality of Housing

This indicator is divided into three parts measuring different aspects of changes in housing quality for individuals or families assisted by affordable rental housing and homeownership programs. The indicator's components assess the quality of property maintenance and management, exterior and interior housing conditions and residents' perceptions of broader neighborhood or community housing conditions.

Wealth Creation through Homeownership

This indicator measures homeowners' accumulation of wealth over time as equity increases through the payment of borrowed principal and through increases in property values. It may also reflect decreases in property values and equity. Home equity is determined by subtracting the balance due on the mortgage (and any other debt secured by the property) from the market value of the property. The indicator provides an option for measuring total net worth (total assets minus total debts).

Environmentally Sustainable Design and Construction

This indicator measures the extent to which a housing development incorporates "green" materials and technologies. It also considers the development's adherence to "smart growth" principles such as conservation of natural resources and location relative to public transportation.

Personal Effectiveness and Stability

Access to affordable housing as well as counseling, education and other services, can lead to an improved sense of self. When affordable, housing enables people to gain control over their budgets and save for education and other means of improving their circumstances. This indicator assesses changes in personal identity, expectations and behaviors, and the way a person is able to function in situations of daily living.

Sense of Community

This indicator measures the extent to which residents know and communicate with their neighbors and participate in community activities. Increased association with others can lead to more willingness to take on community issues and projects.

Visual Attractiveness of Neighborhood

This indicator measures changes in the physical appearance of a neighborhood, including the housing, community facilities, streetscape, commercial areas and green spaces.

Neighborhood Security -- Residential

This indicator measures residents' perceptions of safety and security, including perceptions about the incidence of crime, police responsiveness, infrastructure and other conditions that can contribute to, or detract from, security. Perception of this essential quality-of-life component influences all aspects of community development and can often present a different picture from that presented by official crime statistics.

Property Values-Residential

This indicator measures overall value of residential property in a community in order to document the impact of housing and community improvements. Although the rapid escalation of real estate prices can have the negative impact of making a neighborhood unaffordable for lower income residents, a more gradual increase adds to the community's total asset base and its ability to attract needed investments and services.

Share of Owner-Occupied Homes

This indicator measures the ratio of owners to renters and other non-owners. Research has shown that homeownership increases family stability and resident commitment to the community.

Local Economic Impact of New Construction/Renovation

This indicator estimates the total economic impact of a housing project as each dollar spent on construction or rehabilitation flows through the local economy. It uses mathematical calculations to trace the original investment through the purchase of goods and services by the developer, construction workers, residents and the local government.

Duration of Residency and Resident Stability

This indicator measures the duration of time that residents remain in newly built or rehabbed housing, recognizing that housing stability is a factor in healthy families and healthy communities. The indicator can be used to measure the length of time a person remains in the neighborhood as well as in an individual housing unit.

Diversity of Incomes and Housing Values and Types

This indicator measures community diversity by showing housing price ranges, and distribution of units of different types and sizes. It reflects people and families at different stages of life and income levels needed for various housing choices.

Community Building Indicators

Awareness of Community and Organization's Effort

This indicator assesses residents' definition of their neighborhoods or communities including name and general boundaries, which may be different from official definitions. It also assesses residents' awareness of an organization's programs and community-building efforts. Awareness of both usually precedes residents' willingness to become involved with the organization.

Participation in Community Organizations

This indicator assesses the participation of residents in a building, neighborhood, or community organization, and the kinds of activities in which they are engaged. It can also provide an overall picture of how residents' participation changes over time.

Organizational Capacity for Developing Community Leaders

This indicator is an assessment of a community-based organization's (CBO's) leadership "style," the involvement of residents in leadership, and how well the CBO provides an environment for developing new leaders. Because historic inequities have generally excluded women and people of color from mainstream leadership positions, this indicator also assesses the responsiveness of the organization to specifically building the leadership of women and people of color.

Organizations Involved in Community Building Initiatives and Resources Committed

This indicator measures the number and type of organizations involved in collaborative community building and tracks them by their organizational missions. It includes an assessment of their commitments of resources.

Accountability to Community

This indicator measures the extent to which residents and other stakeholders are involved in organizational decision-making and the extent to which organization leaders are in touch with and responsive to community members.

Awareness and Understanding of Community Issues

This indicator assesses the degree to which residents can identify community issues and reach consensus on priorities. Resident awareness and understanding are connected to an organization's accountability to the community.

Capacity for Collective Action

This indicator documents evidence that, over time, community residents and community-based organizations are able to act together, to resolve issues of concern or achieve desired change.

Collaboration Achieving Economies of Scale and Scope

This indicator measures the extent to which the collaboration among participants has succeeded in enhancing the amount of progress, or the level of impact, the community building or development effort is having. Working collaboratively, individuals and organizations can take advantage of opportunities that would not be possible for them working alone. For example, organizations working together to improve a neighborhood can take advantage of each others' skill.

Resident Satisfaction with Neighborhood

This indicator measures changes over time in resident concerns and satisfaction with a variety of quality of life indicators in their neighborhoods.

Sense of Social Cohesion

This indicator assesses the degree to which residents have a sense of belonging and trust in their communities and can count on their neighbors to intervene or help each other. Such cohesion, or "collective efficacy" has been shown to strengthen communities and help residents work together to improve their quality of life.

Personal and Social Networks

This indicator assesses the strength and closeness of personal and social networks among neighborhood residents. Strong social networks contribute to the development of social capital, an essential building block of community-building.

Links Across Race and Ethnicity

This indicator examines the quantity and quality of interactions among people of different races and ethnicity.

Constructive Working Relationships among Individuals and Organizations Engaged in Community Building

This indicator measures the extent to which the individuals and/or organizations joining together on a community improvement effort have developed and maintained positive and productive working relationships. For example, constructive working relationships exhibit communication, power sharing, mutual respect, coordination, clarity of decision-making procedures and related factors.

Collaboration Promoting Shared Values

This indicator measures the extent to which a collaboration has encouraged the development and maintenance of a set of common values. These values can be something as straightforward as whether meetings start and end at the appointed times to values as complex as the role community members play in group decision-making processes.

Evidence of Community Power

This indicator measures the degree to which community stakeholders are able to influence local institutions and broader political and economic forces. It considers the degree to which resource providers honor local choices.

Voting Rates

This indicator measures the portions of eligible neighborhood residents who are registered and vote in elections. Registration and voting rates can be tracked over time and compared to national, state and local trends.

Leadership for Change: Extent of Leadership

This indicator measures changes in the number and breadth of leadership positions that program participants or residents assume within and outside of the neighborhood. It should be used when your organization has a specific leadership development program or when you think that your organization and programs contribute to the expansion of leadership roles within the community.

External Perception of the Community

This indicator assesses how the community is viewed by outsiders as reflected in media coverage, a variety of anecdotal evidence and interviews with selected key informants.

Public Services

This indicator measures resident satisfaction with the quality, responsiveness and availability of public services (police, fire, schools, sanitation, road maintenance, public works, libraries, etc.) in the community. Issues concerning inequality in the distribution and quality of public services are common in low-income communities. When communities begin to organize, improvements in public services are frequently a key component of revitalization strategies.

Private Investment

This indicator measures the level of private investment in the community by such institutions as banks, real estate developers, major employers and nonprofit organizations. Such investments contribute to the quality of life by providing needed services, stimulating the local economy and creating jobs.

Economic Development Indicators

Business Size, Type and Profitability

This indicator can be used to track changes in the number, size and type of businesses in a community. Business "size" takes into consideration both revenue and number of employees. "Type" captures both the classification of the business (such as retail shop, garment manufacturer, or nonprofit agency) and its ownership status (corporation, partnership, etc.). This indicator further identifies the number of businesses owned by neighborhood residents and the number of neighborhood residents employed by each business. Finally, it measures changes in business profits over time, a strong indicator of businesses stability and potential for additional job creation and expansion.

Job Creation

This indicator measures the number and quality of jobs created by a program that provides training, financial or technical assistance to businesses. It considers the number and type of jobs, job duration, wages and salaries, job benefits and other measures of job quality.

Benefits of Job Training Programs

Employment and Income from Job Training

This indicator measures how job training programs help trainees to prepare for, find, and keep good jobs. It measures the total number of jobs created in a given year, job retention, employment stability and wage progression. This indicator also measures outcomes of participation in on-

the-job construction training programs and job placement in construction trades. Therefore, the indicator can be used not only for economic development programs, but also for housing development programs to track the level of on-the-job construction training and construction trade job placement and retention for women, youth and other populations that have difficulty finding living wage jobs.

Trainee Evaluation of Job Training and Placement

This indicator assesses job training, employment readiness, job placement, supportive services and other programs concerned with increasing basic or employment skills, from the perspective of participants. It seeks to understand the degree to which a program succeeded in helping participants make progress toward their employment goals.

Skills Acquisition -- Basic Job Readiness

This indicator measures the effectiveness of job training programs by assessing changes in a participant's basic skill levels and job readiness and changes in the participant's educational and employment status. The indicator measures these changes both prior to program enrollment and upon completion of a job-training program. Skills assessed include basic skills (e.g., reading, writing, listening, speaking), life skills (e.g., time management, attitude), occupational skills (e.g., computer and technical skills), and job readiness.

Attractiveness of Business District

This indicator tracks perceptions of the appearance, appeal and convenience of a business district, taking into account business facades, pedestrian and car traffic, landscaping, signs, amenities and safety.

Extent to Which Basic Community Needs Are Met By Local Businesses

This indicator measures the degree to which residents can obtain the goods and services they need on a daily basis from nearby businesses and service providers. It can also indicate whether money recycles through the community through local business activity.

Local Business Support of and Participation in the Community

This indicator measures the commitment local businesses have to the health of the communities in which they operate. The support local businesses provide may be in the form of financial donations (such as a contribution to a neighborhood organization's annual fundraising campaign), in-kind donations (such as the provision of uniforms for a youth basketball team or providing space for meetings and events), or other types of assistance. Local businesses also support the community by volunteering their time and expertise as members of nonprofit agency boards, partnering with nonprofits on community initiatives and by participating in business and community associations (such as a local Chamber of Commerce).

Race, Class and Community Indicators

Racial Identity and Attitudes

People's awareness of their own racial identity often affects their understanding of racism as a concept. This indicator asks individuals about their personal identity in terms of race and their attitudes about racism in general.

Institutional Discrimination in Schools

A school that is free of institutionalized discrimination is vital to a student's success. A school that is perceived to garner fewer resources and to have inadequate facilities often has difficulty recruiting the best teachers or gathering community support, which are both necessary for successful educational experiences.

Parent Involvement in Community Schools

Parents' and guardians' involvement in and support of educational activities is vital to students' success. This indicator assesses the attitudes toward and involvement of parents or guardians in their child's school, as well as the school's responsiveness to parents or guardians. Community organizations can use this tool to initiate the creation of a parents' advocacy group within local schools or to monitor the effectiveness of current initiatives that encourage parental involvement.

Observing Classroom Routines and Instructional Practices

This indicator is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of classroom routines and instructional activities, paying specific attention to those demonstrated to improve student learning and performance among students of color. Instructional practices that promote equity in academic achievement include providing students with clear information about learning goals and standards and clear guidance about the learning process; flexibility and choice in learning activities; and opportunities to work in small groups and to get individual attention from the teacher. Equitable practices also include using instructional time efficiently, with little time spent on administrative or disciplinary activities.

Observing Classroom Environment

This indicator is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of the classroom as a physical and social environment that welcomes all students and encourages learning. Classroom environments can promote equity in academic

achievement by creating a positive learning atmosphere that acknowledges individual students and their families and cultures as being of unique value; celebrates the contributions of people of diverse cultural backgrounds in the United States and around the world; and arranges space and furniture to promote cooperative learning in small groups rather than isolated learning or learning directed at and by the teacher. The classroom environment includes objects inside the classroom as well as those on or around the door, and on bulletin boards or displays directly outside of the classroom.

Observing Teacher Communication in the Classroom

This indicator is intended to help parents, community residents, and school staff make systematic observations of teacher communication in the classroom setting. Some of the observations are of teacher communication to the class as a whole; others are of communication with individual students.